

Communication for Governance
and Accountability Program (CommGAP)

Evaluation Framework for Governance Programs:

Measuring the Contribution of Communication

Development Communication Division
External Affairs



The Agora was the heart of the ancient Greek city—its main political, civic, religious and commercial center. Today, the Agora is the space where free and equal citizens discuss, debate, and share information about public affairs in order to influence the policies that affect the quality of their lives. The democratic public sphere that the ancient Agora represents is an essential element of good governance and accountability.

Using innovative communication approaches and techniques to strengthen the public sphere—by amplifying citizen voice; promoting free, independent, and plural media systems; and helping government institutions communicate better with their citizens—CommGAP applies the power of communication to promote good and accountable governance and better development results.

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Communication for Governance & Accountability Program
Development Communication Division
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Communication for Governance
and Accountability Program

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Communication for Governance & Accountability Program Evaluation Framework

I. Introduction

The **Communication for Governance and Accountability Program (CommGAP)** is funded through a 5-year, 5 million Pounds Sterling Multi-donor Trust Fund. This program, which was launched in 2006, seeks to confront the challenges inherent in the political economy of development. By applying innovative communication approaches that improve the quality of the public sphere – by amplifying citizen voice; promoting free, independent, and plural media systems; and helping government institutions communicate better with their citizens – the program aims to demonstrate the power of communication principles, processes and structures in promoting good and accountable governance, and hence better development results.

CommGAP defines Communication in its broadest sense to include the structures, principles and processes that define a society's socio-political context, with an emphasis on those institutions within society that influence and shape public opinion, including the media environment, and the legal and regulatory framework that enables or precludes the free flow of information from government to citizens and vice versa.

The program is divided into three complementary program areas:

- Research and Advocacy
- Capacity Building and Training
- Support to Development Projects and Programs.

Research and Advocacy: This program area is undertaking a substantial research agenda to develop a convincing body of evidence to demonstrate to the development policy community the contribution communication makes to development outcomes. This includes commissioning a series of case studies that can be used in scientific publications, capacity building and training programs, and in advocacy to promote the use of communication in development. The research program also seeks to develop practical frameworks and tools that can support development practitioners in their work.

Capacity Building and Training. This work program area seeks to develop a strong set of core training modules in Communication (particularly focusing on governance and accountability issues) that can be broadly used at the World Bank and other bilateral and multilateral agencies. The focus here is on expanding the narrow definition of communication as understood by development policymakers and practitioners (i.e., journalist training, press releases, and websites, public relations) to encompass the broad understanding of communication noted above.

Support to Development Projects and Programs. This program area supports selected governance-related operations in Africa and Asia, including stand-alone governance projects; public sector reform projects; post-conflict programs, and programs supporting decentralization, community-driven development, and social accountability. CommGAP-supported operations receive long-term, comprehensive communication support and, in most cases, are undertaken jointly with other donors.

Each operation will be evaluated with a rigorous evaluation framework as outlined in this document. Thus all interventions will include outcome and impact indicators to help determine the contribution communication interventions can make to the effectiveness of an operation (which in turn feeds into the research and advocacy and capacity-building work program areas).

II. Objectives of CommGAP's Operational Interventions

The objectives of CommGAP's operational interventions are to:

1. Support legal and regulatory reforms to improve access to information.
2. Strengthen government communication capacity (national and local), including accountability institutions: audit, Parliament, Ombudsman, among others.
3. Build citizen competence and demand for accountability (e.g., budget information and expenditure tracking).
4. Strengthen media systems (e.g., liberalization, licensing regime, ownership, and advertising).

The evaluation framework will be used to measure the impact of each type of communication intervention.

III. Tailoring Interventions to the Country Context

Although certain “universal truths” or “common situations” may exist across countries, the sociopolitical context for governance is distinct in every country. Thus, the precise interventions undertaken under the CommGAP Program will be tailored to the local context, consistent with the interest of each country. While it is difficult to say with certainty what exact form each intervention will take, the range of activities is quite predictable. This evaluation plan presents the Program's general approach to evaluation, but evaluation for each intervention will need to be adapted in each country to the specific project objectives and to the activities implemented.

CommGAP anticipates five types of projects:

- 1) Stand-alone governance projects;
- 2) Public sector reform programs;
- 3) Stand-alone decentralization, local government and CDD-type projects;
- 4) Programs for citizen participation and oversight; and
- 5) Programs that support communication enablers for good governance (e.g, media environment and civil society capacity building).

As this list indicates, in some cases the intervention may be “stand alone”; that is, it is not part of some larger set of activities. However, in other cases the Program will bring communication as one component of a much larger effort; communication will be “embedded” in other activities and cannot be disassociated or separated out for purposes of evaluation.

For stand-alone projects, it will be possible to evaluate the effects of the communication intervention. When communication is embedded, it will be necessary to evaluate the entire intervention. In the first case, one can potentially attribute change to communication (assuming the appropriate study design). In the second, one may attribute change to the effects of the larger intervention, to which communication contributes. But rarely can one then quantify the contribution of communication to the change observed.

It is likely that projects will differ from one country to another in terms of intensity (levels of inputs). For simplicity, we will classify two levels: “in-depth” and “light”. “In-depth” refers to countries in which the Program provides a high level of funding over a sustained period. “Light” characterizes those situations in which Program will provide assistance for a limited activity (e.g., training)

expected to influence one specific change. (Note: “stand-alone” and “light” are not synonymous. One could have an in-depth stand-alone intervention or a light, embedded activity.)

IV. Pathways to Achieving Impact

For purposes of designing and evaluating interventions, it is essential to have a model of how the intervention is expected to work. Different terms for such a model include a logic model, conceptual framework, program model and outcome line.¹ This model serves many useful purposes:

- It illustrates the chain of events that must take place in order to achieve the desired change.
- It makes explicit (and thus open for discussion) the implicit assumptions of how impact should occur.
- It provides stakeholders with a vision of the different components within a project.
- It provides managers with guidance on where to invest their resources, and it helps them to avoid squandering funds on activities that lead nowhere.
- It provides evaluators with clear guidance on what elements they should track to determine if the project achieves its objectives.
- It allows evaluators to test and document why a given intervention achieves its desired objectives; conversely, evaluators can identify where a given intervention broke down if it falls short of achieving its objectives.

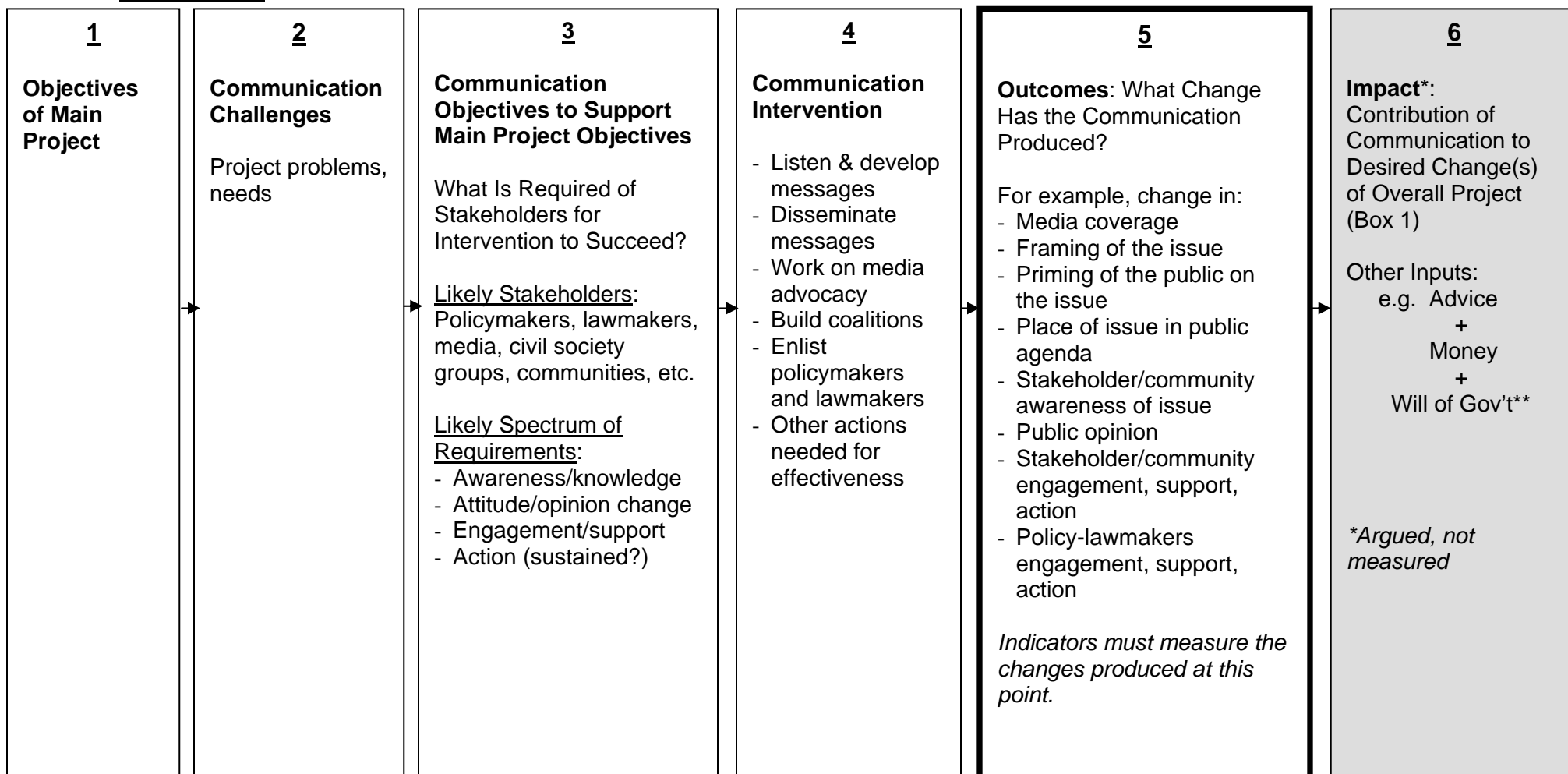
The logic model reflects the objectives of the project. That is, the final box in the flowchart (usually at the extreme right in a diagram that flows left to right) should correspond to the objective of the project. Thus, for each of the four objectives of CommGAP, it is useful to have an illustrative framework. This diagram will be adapted to the context of each specific country, depending on the objective(s) to be achieved, the strategy to achieve it, and the “theory” behind specific program interventions (i.e., what the different elements of the intervention are expected to change).

The following logic model will be used to illustrate how one might think through different kinds of interventions. Additional logic models are included as Annex 1 to illustrate four different types of objectives:

Objective 1	Support Legal and Regulatory Reforms to Improve Access to Information
Objective 2	Strengthened Government Communication Capacity (National and Local)
Objective 3	Build Civic Competence and Demand for Accountability
Objective 4	Strengthen Media Systems (Liberalization, Licensing Regime, Ownership, Advertising, etc.)

¹ Rossi, P., M. Lipsey, and H. Freeman. 2004. *A Systematic Approach*, 7th edition. Sage Publications.

Logic Model



** Advice (1) + Money (2) + Will (3) = Change

The Bank believes that with respect to (3), will of the partner government is enough. Our assertion is that wider participation is crucial for both success and sustainability.

V. Indicators

An important part of the evaluation design is to translate the concepts (shown in the boxes on the conceptual frameworks above) into measurable indicators. We hypothesize that the communication interventions in the program will bring about changes in the factors shown in the model. Thus, as part of the evaluation, we will want to track changes in these factors (the “intermediate steps” toward achieving the final result, as well as in the final result or outcome. At a minimum, the evaluation should measure change (or lack of it) in these intermediate steps. To the extent that time and resources permit, the evaluation may include a rigorous study design that tests whether the Program intervention causes the change.

Some indicators are relatively easy to “operationalize” (that is, define how to measure). For example, one could measure “trust in government to provide truthful information” via a survey among a random sample of the general public, based on their answers to a question on this subject. However, many concepts related to governance are far more difficult to operationalize. For example, how do we measure “civic competence?” In some cases, the implementers can use operational definitions that have been proposed and tested by other researchers or evaluators. In other cases, the implementers will need to develop new ways of measuring specific concepts.

The decision of how best to measure a concept may also depend on the availability of existing data. If data exist from existing studies that provide a close approximation or proxy of the exact concept of interest, it may be expedient to use the existing data to avoid the expense and delay of primary data collection. However, it is relatively rare that an evaluator has access to the data he/she needs that include the necessary variables for the relevant audience and appropriate time period.

This evaluation plan outlines a number of quantitative indicators. Some would argue that democracy and governance does not lend itself to evaluation based on quantitative indicators; that for many dimensions of governance, relevant objective data are difficult to obtain. “There should be no presumption that objective data are necessarily more informative than reports from experts, citizens, or firms with real-world experience.”² Although this evaluation plan proposes a series of quantitative indicators, evaluators would ideally combine the data on these indicators with qualitative assessments of these same factors, gleaned through observation, newspaper reports, or local experts on the subject.

VI. Data Sources

The logic model requires data from at least four sources. Depending on availability of human and financial resources for evaluation, those responsible for the program may have to settle for measuring some concepts but not others. The four main sources are as follows:

A. Population-based surveys. Population-based surveys are needed to obtain data on the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, behavior, or other “individual-level variable” among the general public. The most reliable data requires a representative sample of the population, which entails selection of respondents in a way that every person in the eligible age range has an equal chance of being selected. In relatively less developed countries, this entails face-to-face interviews in randomly selected households. In countries where the large majority of the relevant population own phones, random-digit dials affords a less expensive option.

An alternative means of obtaining data from “typical members” of the target population (not to be confused with a truly representative sample) is to conduct a central location intercept study using a quota sample. The central location might be a train station, central plaza, shopping mall, or

² The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/the World Bank, 2006. *A Decade of Measuring the Quality of Governance. Governance Matters 2006. Worldwide Governance Indicators.*

other location where large numbers of people from diverse backgrounds congregate. The quota sample refers to pre-defining and then interviewing a specific number of persons in different categories of age, gender, ethnicity, educational level, or other relevant factor.

B. Surveys with enterprises. Often, private companies are an excellent “barometer” for access to information and transparency in government, since their interests are threatened by limitations on these freedoms. Sampling of representatives from such companies is a frequently used source of data to evaluate D&G interventions.

C. Interviews with key informants (expert polls). In Democracy and Governance projects, many of the changes required to obtain a final outcome are “soft”; that is, they do not lend themselves to simple quantification (e.g., liberalization of the media). In such cases, evaluators may need to rely on qualitative data based on interviews with key informants, including persons closely involved in the political area (e.g., the equivalent to “staffers” in the U.S. context, political “observers”).

D. Legislative records. In democracy and governance projects, one possible outcome is to change legislation. In this case, the work leading up to the change is incredibly complex, but the final “measure” is not. Rather, it is simply obtaining documentation through official channels or the press that a given law or regulation has been changed. However, passing a law may not translate into enforcement of the law.

VII. Study Designs

At the risk of oversimplification, the approach to evaluation outlined above (using the logic models) lends itself to two types of evaluation. The first is **descriptive**: it tracks and documents changes over time on each of the results shown in the logic model. The second (more complex, more expensive, and generally more desirable where feasible) not only documents change but **measures the extent to which change can be attributed to the intervention.**

Study designs that allow for causal attribution may take the form of experimental or quasi-experimental designs.³ Alternatively, they may rely on post-intervention data only but establish an association between the intervention and the outcome using advanced statistical analysis.⁴

Given the dearth of rigorous evaluation on democracy and governance projects, let alone communication initiatives within democracy and governance programs, this framework begins

³ For an excellent, easy to follow description of experimental design, see Fisher, Andrew, James Foreit, et al. (2002). *Designing HIV/AIDS Intervention Studies: An Operations Research Handbook*. Population Council.

⁴ For an excellent source for a discussion on methods needed to establish attribution in the context of communication programs, see: Guilkey, D., P. Hutchinson and P. Lance (2006) Cost-Effectiveness Analysis for Health Communication Programs. *Journal of Health Communication* Special Issue 11: Supplement 2: 47-67.

with the more descriptive type of evaluation. However, it is possible to envision the more rigorous design where certain conditions are present:

- the intervention is sufficiently unique in the environment; that change, if it occurs, is not likely to be attributable to other factors (such as interventions of other organizations);
- the data on intermediate and final outcomes come from a single data source (e.g., a population-based survey);
- the communication component constitutes a stand-alone intervention; and/or
- the evaluator is able to compare a population exposed to the intervention with a similar one this is not exposed (a sort of natural experiment).

The choice of study design will depend on various factors:

- Resources available: funding; human capacity to design the evaluation, collect data, and apply advanced statistical techniques; time.
- Level of interest in rigorous evaluation among donor and implementing agencies.
- Stage of implementation of the intervention (can data be obtained from the pre-intervention phase?).
- Variables in the logic model (do they lend themselves to quantification)?

VIII. Limitations

The greatest limitation in the evaluation of communication interventions in the context of democracy and governance projects is the difficulty in isolating the effects of the communication initiative from other factors contributing to the desired change. In some cases, secular trends (e.g., related to greater exposure to media from other countries) may influence change in outcome variables in ways that are difficult to quantify. In other cases, if communication is “embedded” in a larger intervention, which frequently is the case, it becomes nearly impossible to isolate the effects of communication from the effects of other components in the intervention.

Another major limitation is the difficulty in operationalizing (defining how to measure) key concepts that have great conceptual power but do not translate easily into quantifiable indicators (e.g., civil competence). It becomes necessary to identify somewhat arbitrary “markers” that measure one part of the concept but do not fully capture the idea. In this case, it is useful to complement the quantitative indicators with qualitative assessments by key informants.

In some cases the “communication intervention” will include not only activities and actions by the World Bank or its recipient organization, but also by other partner organizations that work collaboratively toward similar goals. Assuming the combined efforts of these groups constitute the intervention, it is futile to try to tease out what part of the change is attributable to the Bank recipient versus other partner organizations implementing the program.

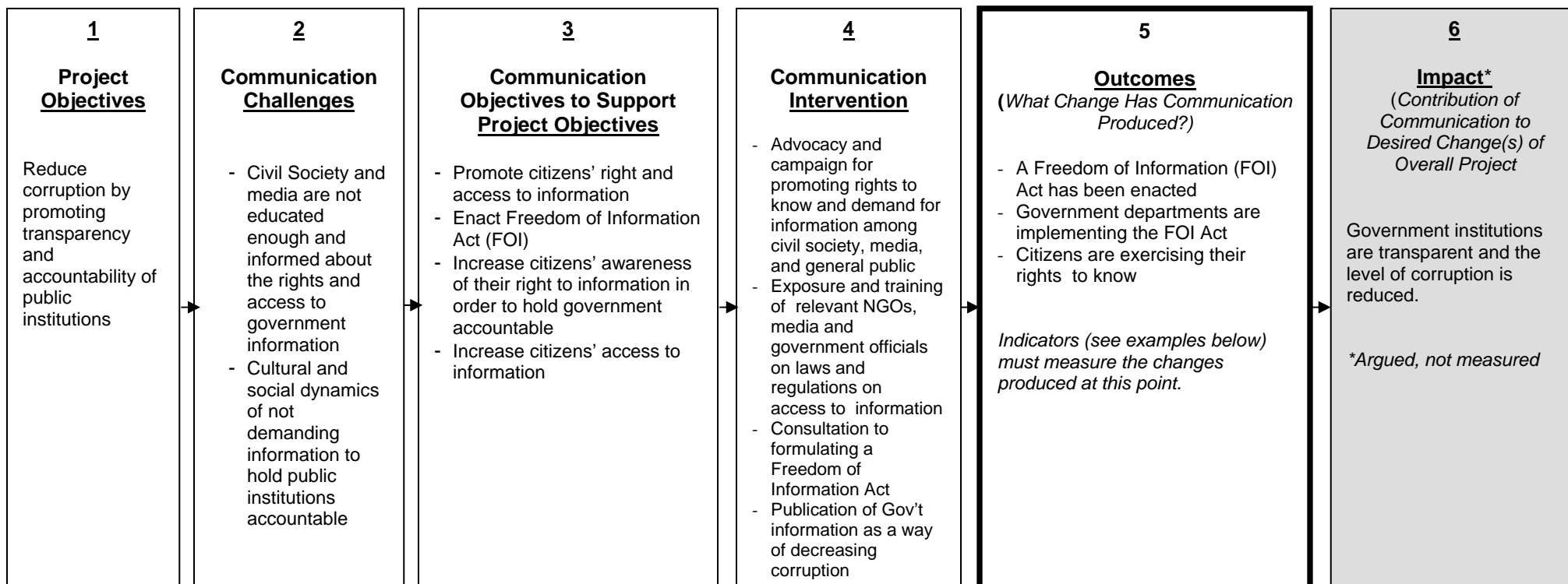
Objective #1. Support Legal and Regulatory Reforms to Improve Access to Information

The first step toward greater access to information often entails changes in the laws and regulations related to the flow of information. Such changes are necessary but not sufficient conditions for greater transparency or access to information. The logic model in Figure 1 addresses this set of legal and regulatory reforms. Illustrative indicators used to measure the concepts in each box on the model appear in Box 1, immediately following the logic model.

Please note:

a) This logic model should be viewed as illustrating what could be done in these situations and not necessarily what should be done.

b) This evaluation framework is not closed. It will be revised from time to time as it is adapted for use in actual interventions around the world.

Figure 1. Support Legal and Regulatory Reforms to Improve Access to Information**Box 1. Illustrative Indicators and Means of Measurement**

Outcome	Indicator	Means of Measurement
A Freedom of Information (FOI) Act has been enacted	Existence of the Act itself	Legislative records
Government departments are implementing the FOI Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of departments that have adopted the laws - Number of govt. employees having knowledge about it - Number of requests from citizens received and responded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stocktaking exercise - Surveys (Relevant survey population)
Citizens are exercising their right to know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of understanding of citizens about the Act - Number of requests made to govt. departments - Public attitude towards demanding govt. information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surveys (Relevant survey population) - Stocktaking exercise - Media content analysis

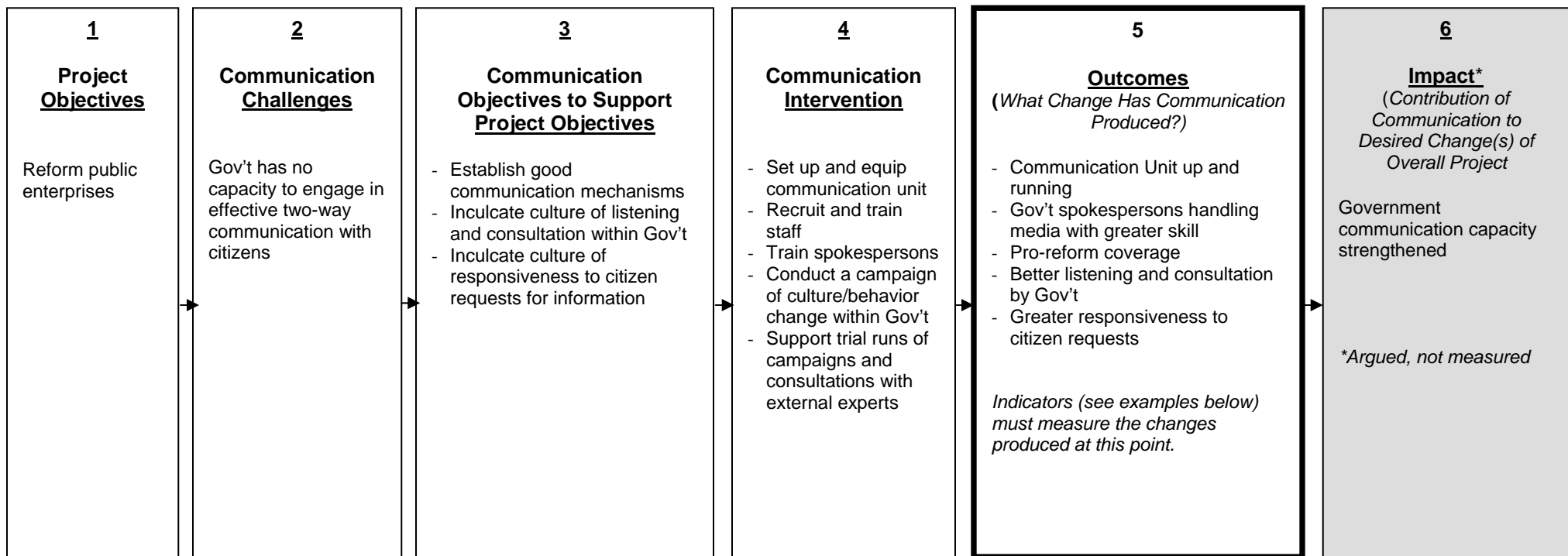
Objective #2. Strengthened Government Communication Capacity (National and Local)

Under this objective, the World Bank and its partners will try to strengthen the capacity of particular governments (whether national, regional, or local) to communicate effectively with their citizens. This involves both listening and talking, as well as the necessary equipment, training, and behavior change.

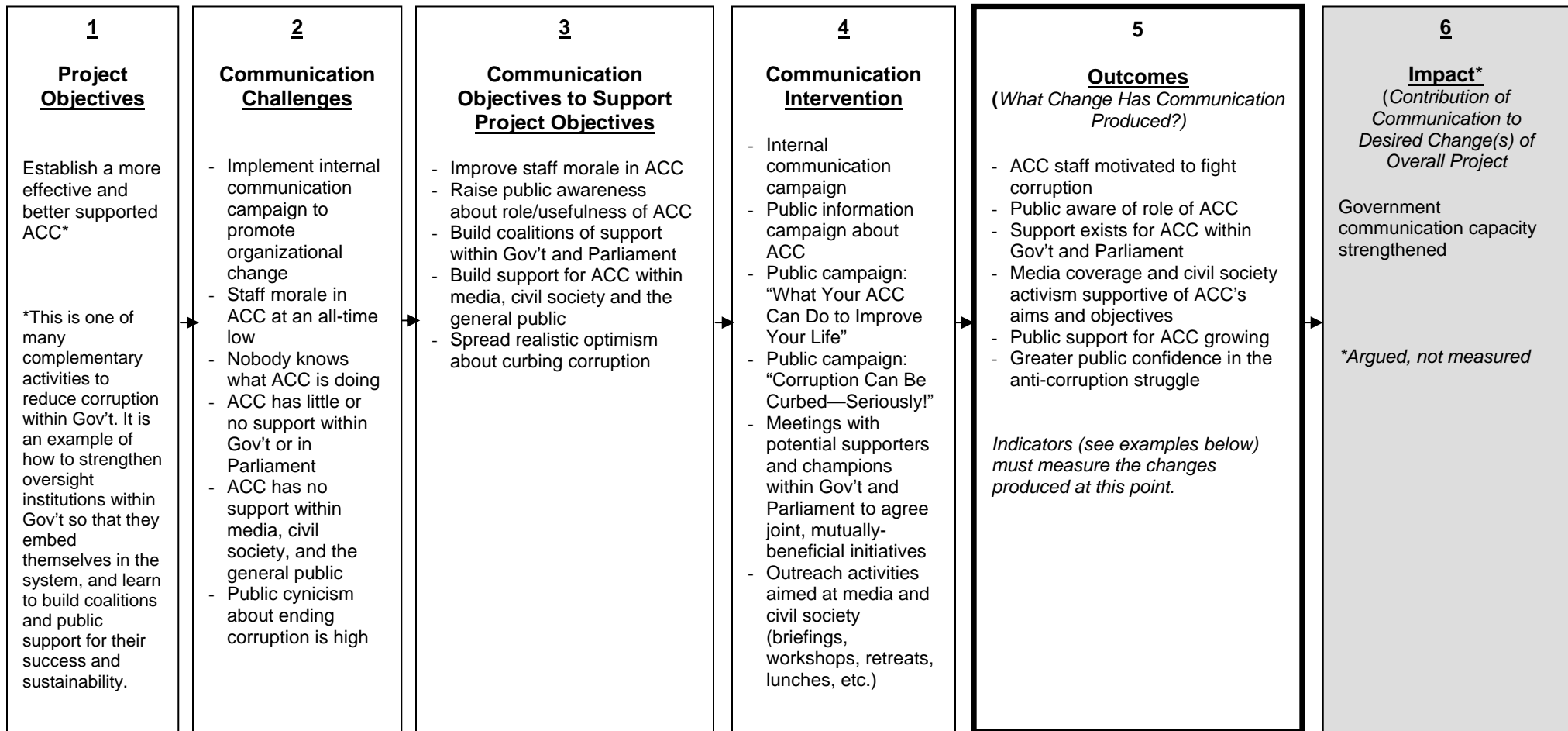
The first logic model (Figure 2A below) will illustrate the situation, where the support is for a national government. But sometimes, the objective will be to strengthen the communication capacity of an accountability institution within the country, for example, the Ombudsman's Office, the Anti-Corruption Bureau, an oversight committee in Parliament, the National Audit Office, and so on. Efforts will concentrate on the capacity of the oversight institution to build coalitions, build support within the general population, and have a media profile that helps and sustains its work. Figure 2B illustrates this situation. The relevant indicators are in boxes immediately after the logic models.

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Figure 2A. Strengthen Government Communication Capacity (National Government)**Box 2A. Illustrative Indicators and Means of Measurement**

Outcome	Indicator	Means of Measurement
Communication Unit up and running	Physical existence of Unit and team (with budgets and staff)	Observation
Gov't spokespersons handling media with greater skill	Perception of journalists dealing with Gov't spokespersons	Survey of journalists
Pro-reform coverage	Extent and quantity of coverage of Gov't priorities in the media	Media content analysis
Better listening and consultation by Gov't	Number of proactive consultations and other listening activities like focus groups, surveys, etc. of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Records - Key informant interviews from relevant government offices
Greater responsiveness to citizen requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - # of demands/requests made by citizens - Average response time per request made by citizen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surveys (Relevant survey population) - Records from relevant Gov't offices - Special study
Greater responsiveness to citizen requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Response rate to requests - Timeliness of responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surveys (Relevant survey population) - "Mystery shoppers"/"simulated clients" - Informant interviews of Gov't employees

Figure 2B. Strengthen Government Communication Capacity (Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC))**Box 2B. Illustrative Indicators and Means of Measurement**

Outcome	Indicator	Means of Measurement
ACC staff motivated to fight corruption	Level of staff knowledge/understanding re: importance of fighting corruption	Survey of staff attitudes
Increased public awareness of ACC	% of citizens (relevant populations) aware of ACC	Survey of public awareness/knowledge
Support exists for ACC within Gov't and Parliament	Number of joint or supportive initiatives with coalition members in Gov't and Parliament	Key informant interviews
Media coverage supportive of ACC's aims and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of news items reporting on ACC - Number of news items reporting on Gov't corruption 	Media content analysis
Civil society activism supportive of ACC's aims and objectives	Number of CSOs that speak publicly to curb corruption	Special study
Increased public support for ACC	# of civil society anti-corruption campaigns and activities in support of ACC's aims and objectives	Special study
Public confidence in the anti-corruption struggle	% of citizens that believe corruption is decreasing in Gov't circles	Surveys measuring attitude changes (hope vs. cynicism)

Objective #3. Build Civic Competence and Demand for Accountability

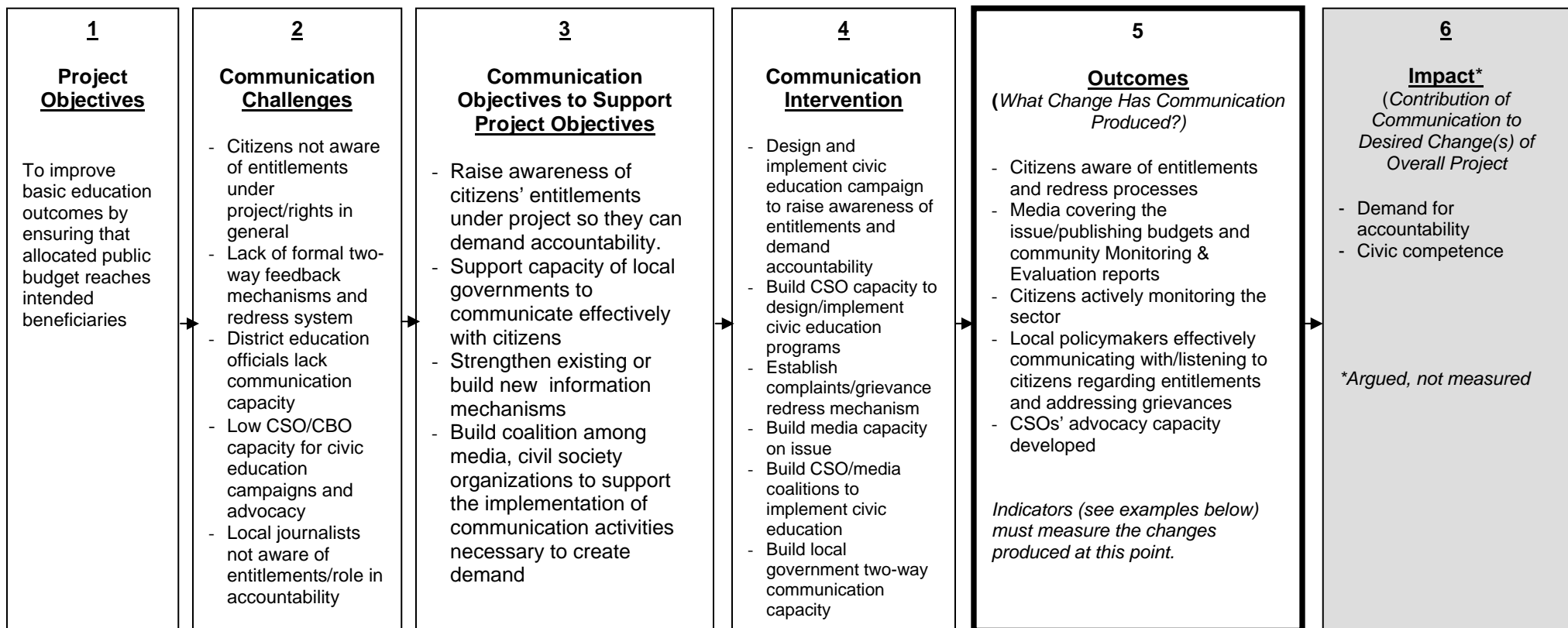
Under this objective, the World Bank and its partners will be seeking to strengthen the capacity of relevant communities to demand that the public institutions that serve them and deliver services to them are responsive and accountable; and to exercise this demand effectively.

Interventions of this sort will usually be in the context of social accountability mechanisms, employed to improve delivery of services to the poor (Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS), citizens' report cards, budget monitoring, participatory budgeting, and so on). In these situations, the role of communication is likely to be to inform, energize, and mobilize hitherto ill-informed and perhaps apathetic citizens. This is modeled in Figure 3, and the indicators are in Box 3.

Please note:

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- b) This evaluation framework is not closed. It will be revised from time to time as it is adapted for use in actual interventions around the world.

Figure 3. Build Civic Competence and Demand for Accountability



Box 3. Illustrative Indicators and Means of Measurement

Outcome	Indicator	Means of Measurement
Citizens aware of entitlements and redress processes	% of public aware of rights to services/entitlements, information & related issues	Surveys (Relevant survey population)
Media covering the issue/publishing budgets and community Monitoring & Evaluation reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - # of articles publishing entitlements/public budget/citizen monitoring outcomes; balanced reporting - qualitative research of journalists perception on ease of obtaining official information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Media content analysis - Key informant interviews with journalists
Citizens actively monitoring the sector	% of citizens who actively monitor the sector	Surveys (Relevant survey population)
Local policymakers effectively communicating with/listening to citizens regarding entitlements and addressing grievances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scale 1-5 on quality, timeliness of Gov't redress - % of public that believes that Gov't addresses citizen grievances in a timely manner - Mechanism in place for formal public feedback/grievance; - #/% grievances addressed through system - Timeliness of response to grievances 	Surveys (Relevant survey population) } Program records or special study
CSOs' advocacy capacity developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - # of CSOs engaged in civic education activities on this topic - # of orgs with civic education activities in Gov't accountability for service delivery 	Special study

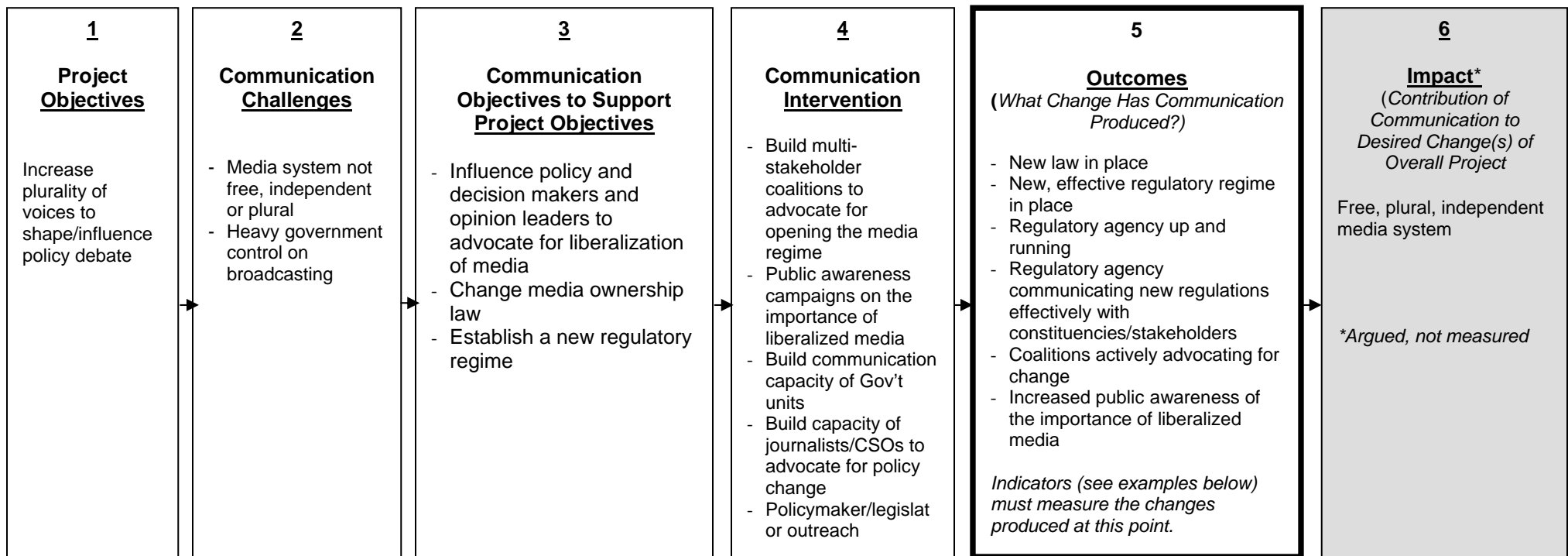
Objective #4. Strengthen Media Systems (Liberalization, Licensing Regime, Ownership, Advertising, etc.)

The objective here is likely to be to strengthen the media system in a developing country, with the aim of improving the quality of governance and strengthening the accountability of governments to those that they govern. Depending on country context, the objective will range from transforming the regulatory environment in the direction of creating a free, plural, and independent media system; reforming the advertising sector in order to increase income for the media; training journalists; training media managers; and activities designed to promote public interest journalism. The following illustrative logic model explores the situation, where the task is to liberalize the media system. The indicators are in Box 4.

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Figure 4. Strengthen Media Systems (Liberalization, Licensing Regime, Ownership, Advertising, etc.)



Box 4. Illustrative Indicators and Means of Measurement		
Outcome	Indicator	Means of Measurement
New law in place	Existence of a new law	
New regulatory regime in place	Existence of a new regulatory regime	
Regulatory agency up and running	# of broadcast licenses issued	
Regulatory agency communicating new regulations effectively with constituencies/stakeholders	% of regulatory agency stakeholders who indicate they can get the information they need in timely manner from regulatory agency	
Coalitions actively advocating for change	Number of coalition initiatives advocating for change	
Increased public awareness of importance of media liberalization	% of public aware of importance of media liberalization	Baseline quantitative study; follow-up study (Relevant survey population).