Communication for Sustainable Development

Roland Raoul Kouassi
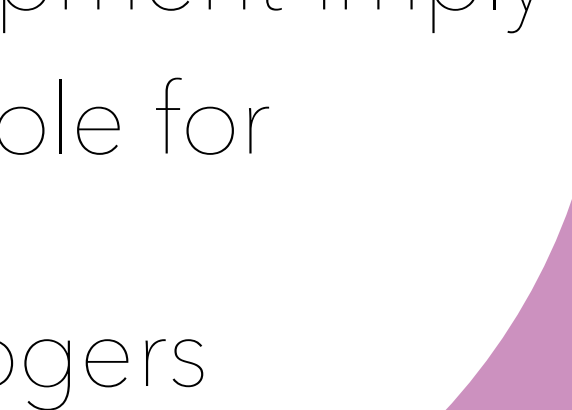
FHB University

Course description

- This course explores the basics and use of communication to design, implement and sustain positive social change and justice.

- Upon successful completion of the course, learners will be able to:
  - ✓ **compare and contrast theories of development communication and articulate their own theoretical position in the field**
  - ✓ **conduct critical analyses of communication activities**
  - ✓ **analyze the socio-cultural parameters affecting communication and recommend strategic choices**
  - ✓ **understand the interface between communication technologies and development and determine the most appropriate form(s) of communication for various development initiatives;**
  - ✓ **learn to work in teams and collaborate on development communication**
  - ✓ **organize campaigns based on an informed understanding of development communications**

References

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"Words do not only define reality, they create it. Hence, to speak true words is an act of transforming the world."

–Paulo Freire

"The newer conceptions of development imply a different and, generally, a wider role for communication."

-Everett Rogers

Introduction

- Development Communication (DevCom) as a field was set up in the early 1960s and first applied to 'nation building', rural development, agricultural extension, health and sanitation, as well as family planning.

- It was mainly a tool for policy success and behavior change.

- The field of DevCom is broad but rigorous

- DevCom is also referred to as "behavior change communication or BCC", "communication for development", "development support communication", "communication for social change", and more recently, **"Communication for Sustainable Development"**

- **In this course, we will study the foundational concepts, ideas, key methods and the strategy of Development Communication.**
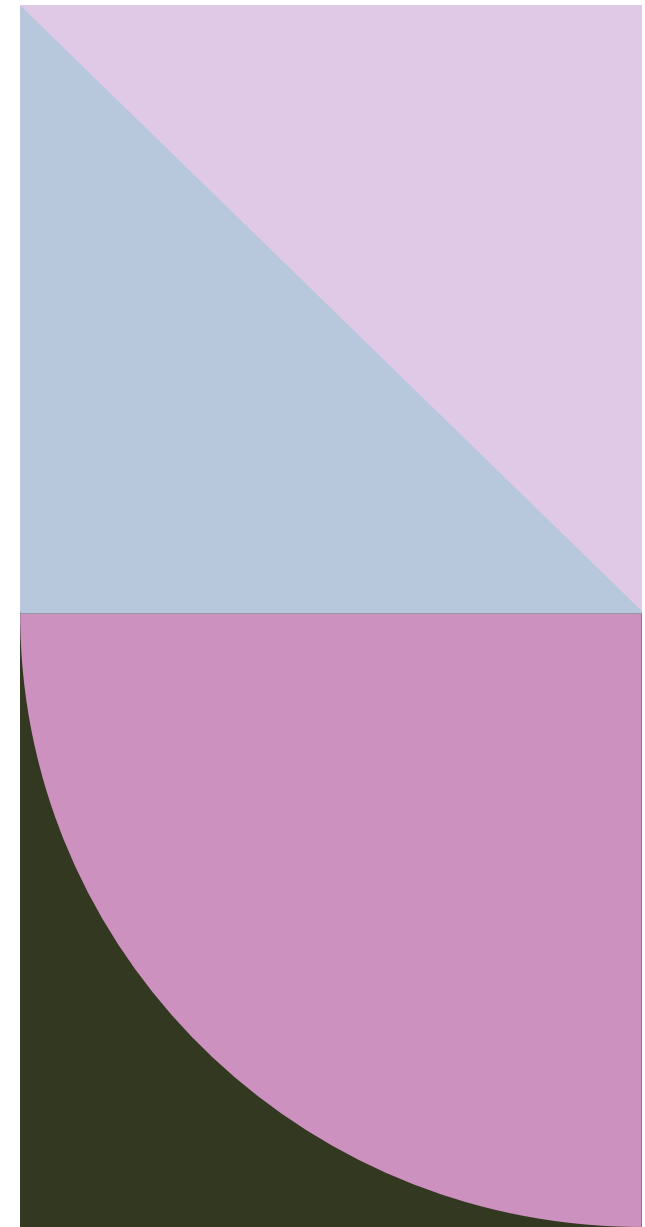
Dev Com defined

It is **an interdisciplinary field based on empirical research that helps to build consensus while it facilitates the sharing of knowledge to achieve positive change in development initiatives.**

It is not only about effective dissemination of information but also about using empirical research and two-way communication among stakeholders. (Development Communication Division of the World Bank)

*It is the planned use of communication processes and media products to support effective policymaking, public participation and project implementation geared towards social, economic, political and ecological development.

✳ Everett Rogers defines Development Communication as follows:

✳ It is the study of social change brought about by the application of communication research, theory, and technologies to bring about development.

✳ ***Development is a widely participatory process of social change in a society***, intended to bring about both social and material advancement, including greater equality, freedom, and other valued qualities for the majority of people through their gaining greater control over their environment. (1976)
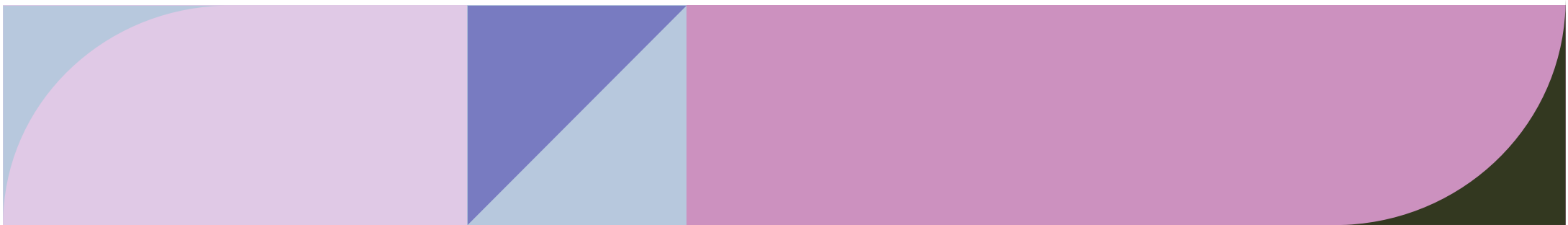
Dev Com Functions

✳ ***Support sustainable change*** in development operations by engaging key stakeholders.

✳ ***Establish conducive environments*** for social and economic development:

✳ **Assess risks and opportunities for development ;**

✳ Disseminate information for positive change;

✳ Construct shared meanings on development issues;

✳ Induce positive sustainable behavior and social change.
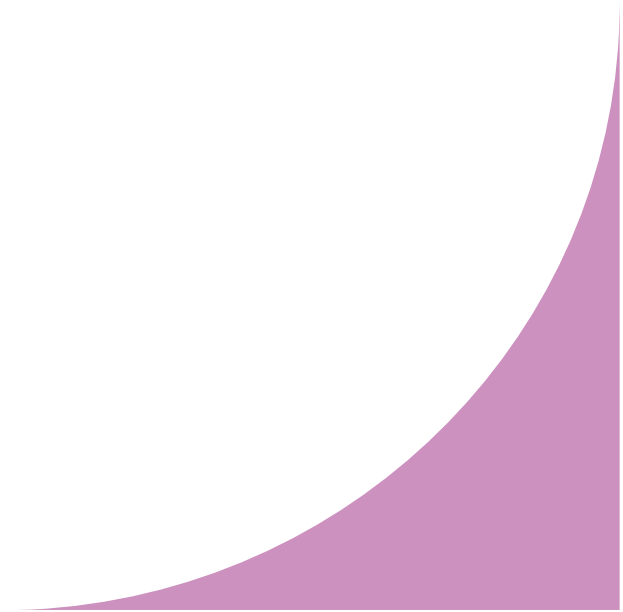
What is development?

✳ In his January 1949 inaugural speech, President Truman stated, "We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the ***improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas***."

✳ Truman's speech is considered to mark the beginning of the modern conception of development (Esteva 1992), and it synthesized the emerging vision of the world divided between richer and poorer countries.

**Means:
Economic growth[a]**
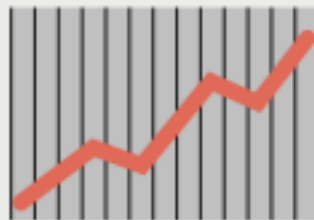
**Conditions enabling
economic growth**
- Qualified labor
- Technological innovation
- Sound management
- _____ ?
- _____ ?
- _____ ?

**Goal:
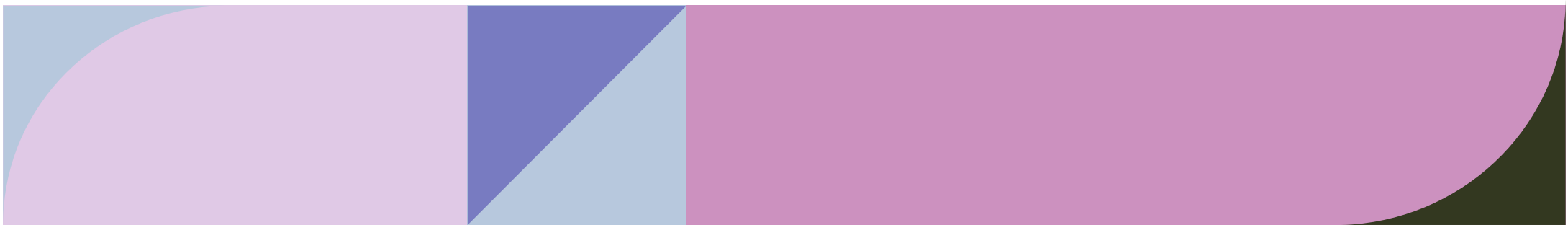Human development[b]**

**Conditions enabling
human development**
- Health services
- Education services
- Employment opportunities
- Democracy
- Environmental protection
- _____ ?
- _____ ?
- _____ ?

✳ The notion of human development incorporates all aspects of individuals' well-being, from their health status to their economic and people's **quality of life**: access to education and health care, employment opportunities, availability of clean air and safe drinking water, the threat of crime,

✳ According to the *Human Development Report 1996*, published by the United Nations Development Program, **"human development is the end—economic growth a means."**

- Development is a widely **participatory process** of **social change** in a society, intended to bring about **both social and material advancement**, including

   greater equality,

   freedom, and

   other valued qualities for the majority of people through their gaining greater control over their environment. (Everett Rogers 1976)
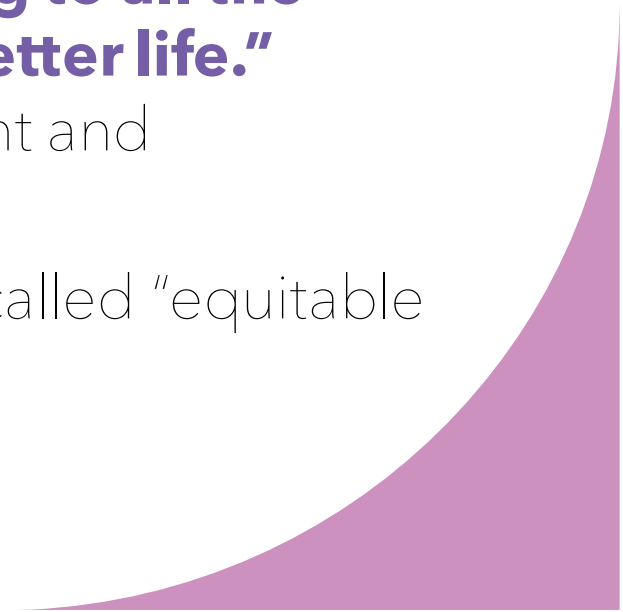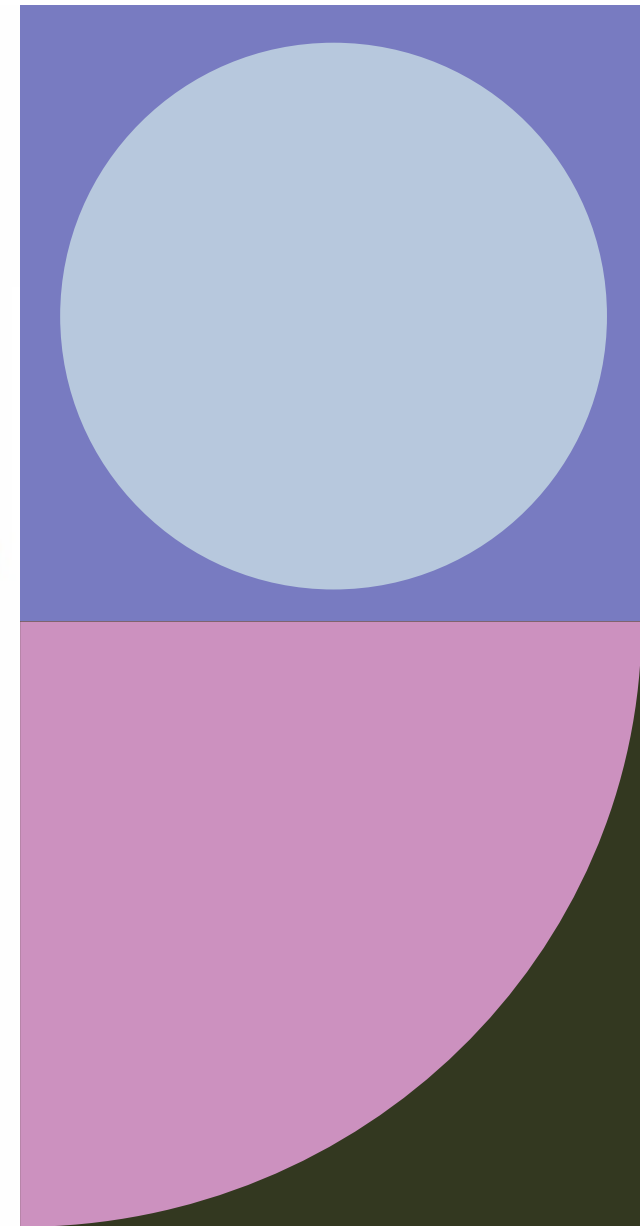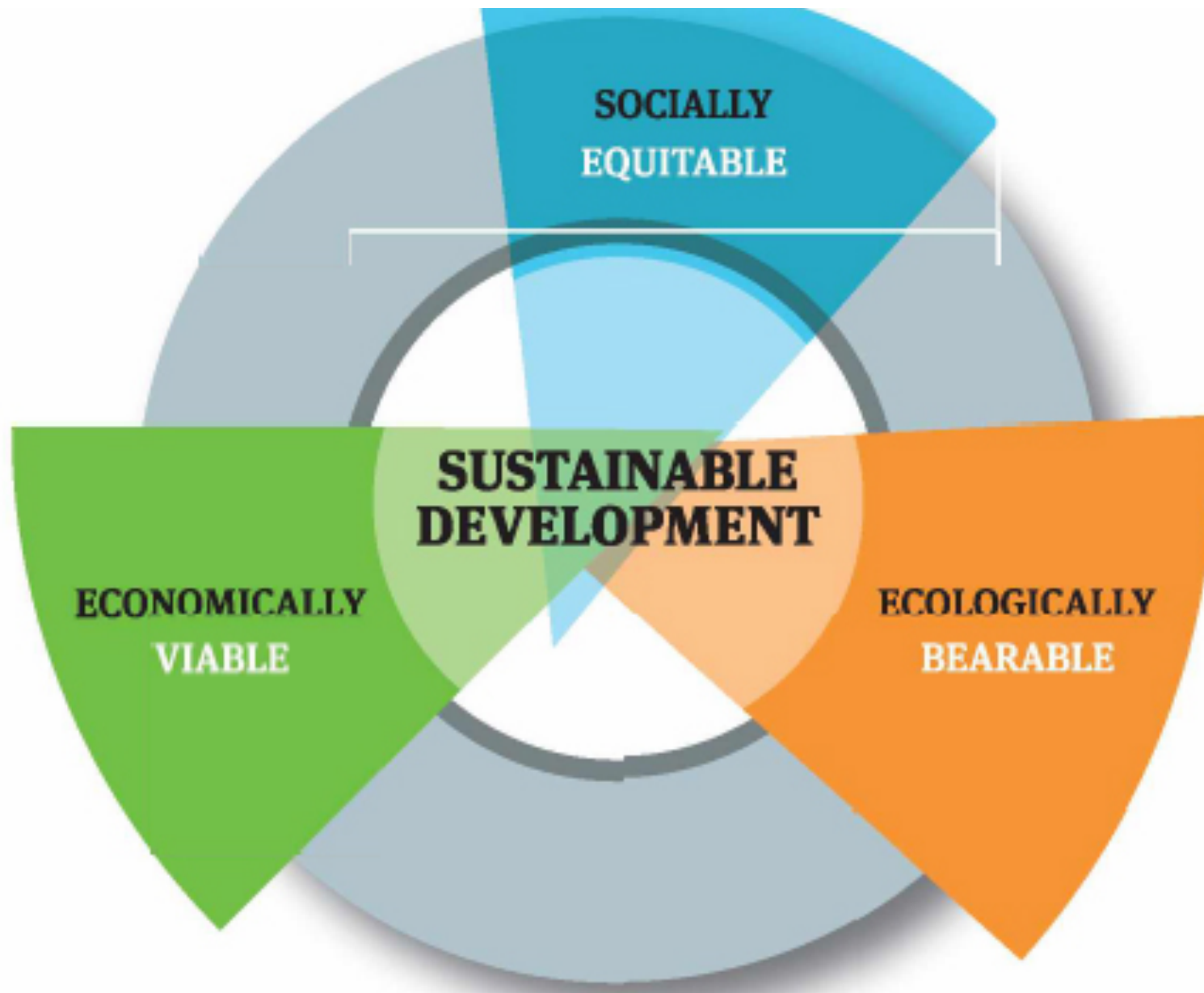
Sustainable development

- **"Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. sustainable development requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations for a better life."**
  Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future (1987)

- "Sustainable" development could be otherwise called "equitable and balanced,"

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SOCIALLY EQUITABLE

ECONOMICALLY VIABLE

ECOLOGICALLY BEARABLE

People — End poverty and hunger in all forms and ensure dignity and equality

Prosperity — Ensure prosperous and fulfilling lives in harmony with nature

Peace — Foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies

Partnership — Implement the agenda through a solid global partnership

Planet — Protect our planet's natural resources and climate for future generations

Sustainable Development

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1 NO POVERTY

2 ZERO HUNGER

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
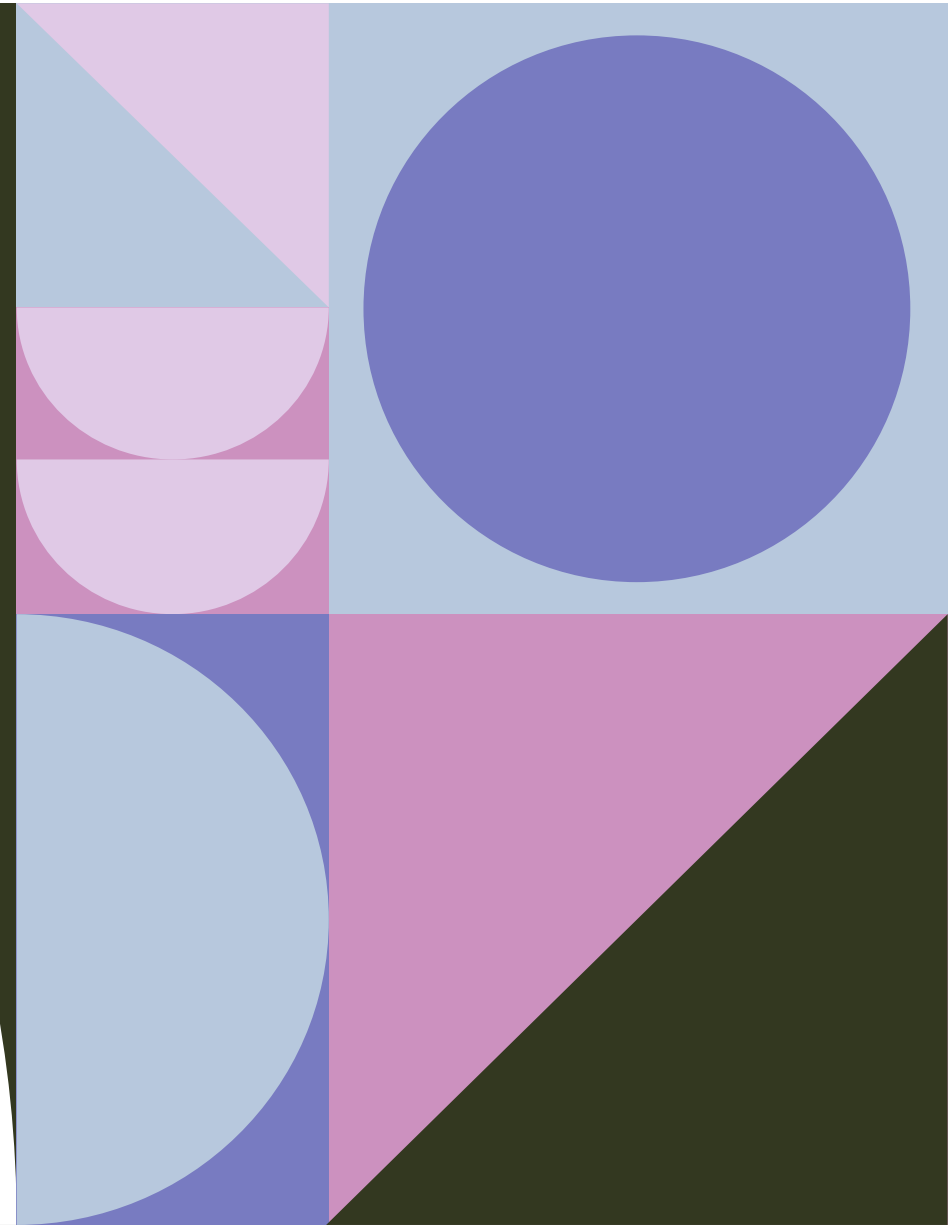
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

A Brief History of Development Communication

* **The Old or dominant Paradigm of Modernization**:

* Before the 1960s, DevCom was rooted in the concept of development as modernization,

* It dates to soon after World War II and has been called the dominant paradigm because of its pervasive impact on most aspects of development.

* The central idea of this old paradigm was to solve development problems by "modernizing" underdeveloped countries—advising them how to be effective in following in the footsteps of richer, more developed countries.
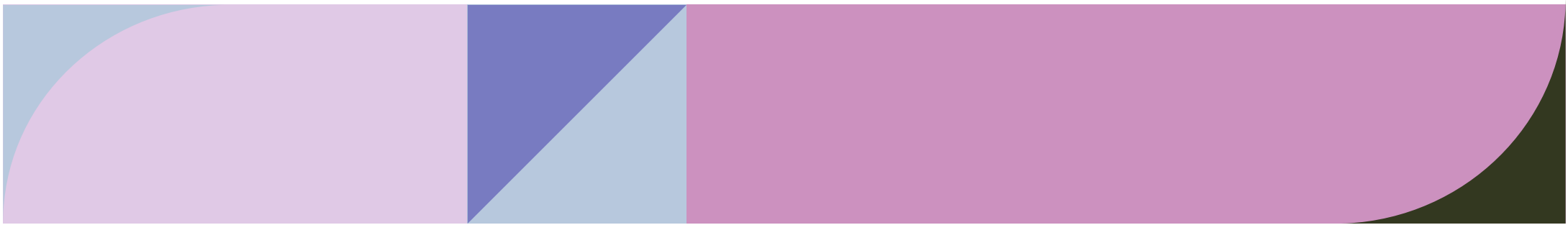
The Opposing Paradigm of Dependency

* In the 1960s strong opposition to the modernization paradigm led to the emergence of an alternative theoretical model rooted in a political-economic perspective: the dependency theory.

* The proponents of this school of thought criticized some of the core assumptions of the modernization paradigm mostly because it implicitly put the responsibility, and the blame, for the causes of underdevelopment exclusively upon the recipients, neglecting external social, historical, and economic factors.

* They also accused the dominant paradigm of being very Western-centric, refusing or neglecting any alternative route to development.

## *The Emerging Paradigm of Participation/multiplicity

* a different approach focusing on people's participation began to emerge.

* This participatory model is less oriented to the political-economic dimension and more rooted in the cultural realities of development.

* The development focus has shifted from economic growth to include other social dimensions needed to ensure meaningful results in the long run—as indicated by the consensus built in the definition of the Millennium Development Goals.

* Sustainability and people's participation became key elements of this new vision, as acknowledged also by the World Bank (1994: 3):

* "Internationally, emphasis is being placed on the challenge of sustainable development, and participation is increasingly recognized as a necessary part of sustainable development strategies."

* Meaningful participation cannot occur without communication.

* Development is geared to the satisfaction of needs, beginning with the eradication of poverty

* Development is endogenous and self-reliant

* Development is in harmony with the environment

* Development applies to all levels of all societies, not just the poor of the non-aligned world

* The new paradigm is also changing the way communication is conceived and applied.
* It shifts the emphasis from information dissemination to situation analysis, from persuasion to participation.
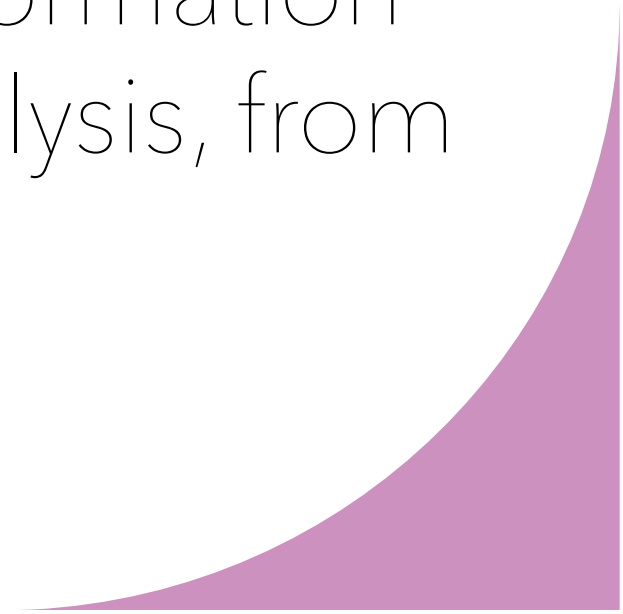
Participatory Development Communication

＊The models of *participatory communication* are closely related to both the access and the human rights approaches to development. Stemming from the theories of the Brazilian pedagogist Paulo Freire and the many experiments with alternative communications that appeared in the late 1960s and 1970s—this model explicitly affirms that **people's participation in communication is vital to the success of any given project.**

＊It is based on a conscious effort to involve people in their own development.

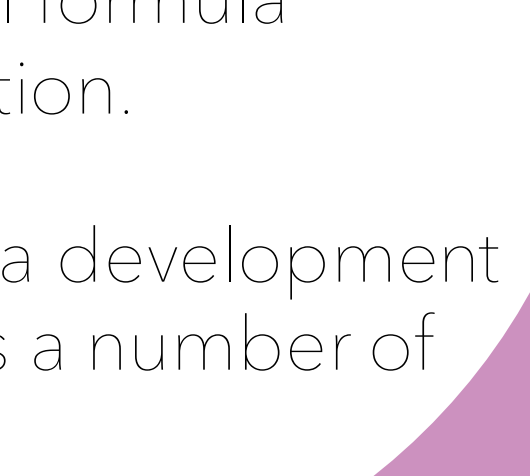＊If people should develop at all, they need to understand that
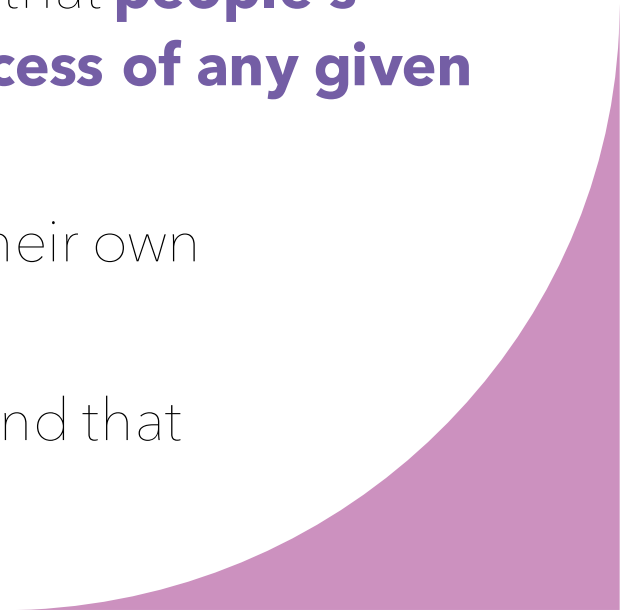
Types of participation

- **Functional participation**: Stakeholders take part in discussions and analysis of pre- determined objectives set by the project.

- **Empowered participation**: Stakeholders are willing and able to be part of the process and participate in joint analysis, which leads to joint decision making about what should be achieved and how.
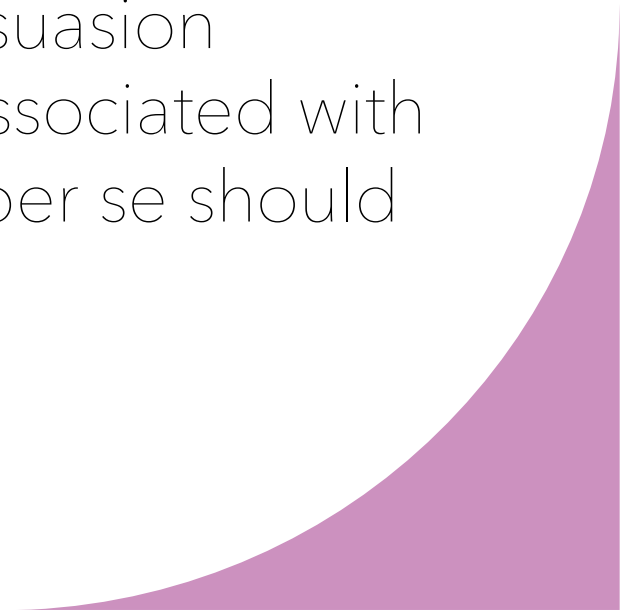
Principles of Development Communication

* ***Dialogic***—Dialogue is the heart of the new communication paradigm.

* ***Inclusive***—Inclusion is a first step in any situation analysis, whereby DevComm identifies, defines, hears, and understands relevant stakeholders.

* ***Heuristic***—The investigative use of communication to discover or solve problems during the initial phases of a development initiative is essential.

* ***Analytical***—Going beyond communicating could be a DevComm motto; a large amount of its work, such as the assessment of political risks and opportunities, is analytical.
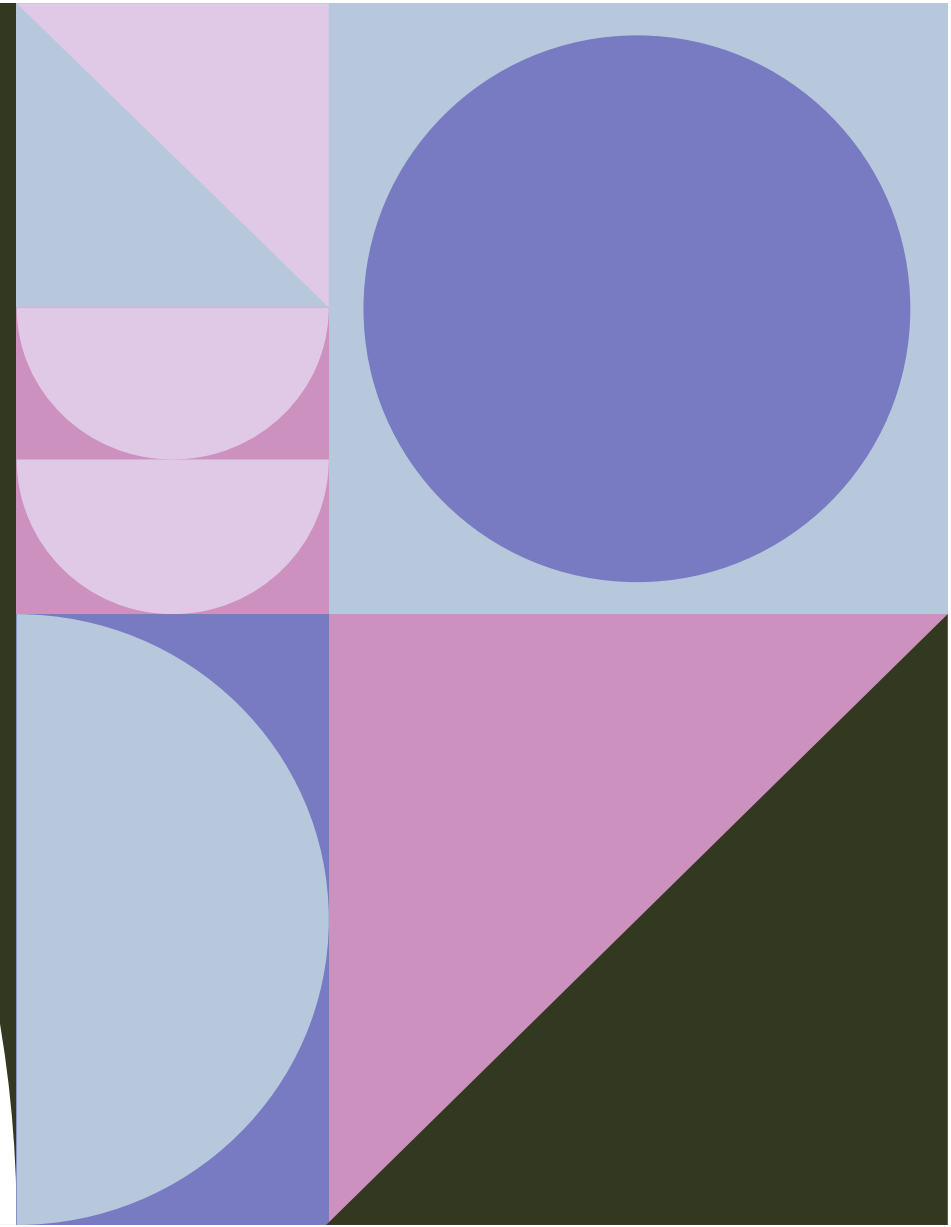
* **_Participatory_**—While rarely employed in practice to its ideal and fullest extent, participation is applied in different degrees according to the intervention. Its relevance is echoed in virtually all development organizations and communities, at the national and international levels

* **_Contextual_**—There is no precooked universal formula applied a priori in development communication.

* **_Interdisciplinary_**—To be effectively applied, a development communication body of knowledge includes a number of principles borrowed from other disciplines.
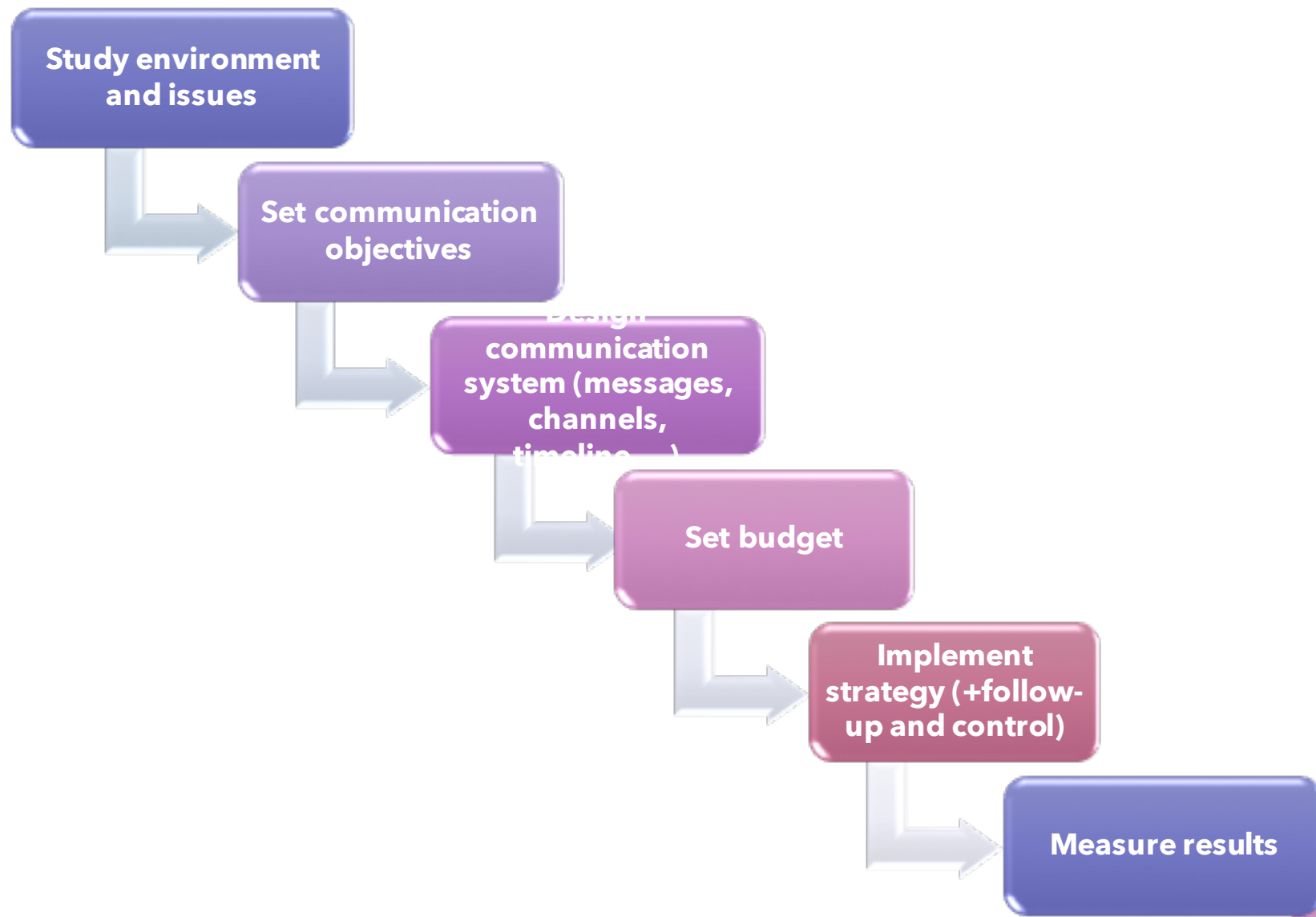
✳**Strategic**—The principle of strategy, which contains many of the previous elements, emphasizes the professional and timely application of communication techniques and methods to achieve intended objectives.

✳**Persuasive**—At times, this term has a negative connotation, mostly due to past uses of persuasion techniques taken to an extreme and often associated with manipulation and propaganda. Persuasion per se should not be thought of in negative terms.

Methodological Framework of Development Communication

Study environment and issues

Set communication objectives

Design communication system (messages, channels, timeline...)

Set budget

Implement strategy (+follow-up and control)

Measure results

Development Communication Tools

* Mass media (Radio, TV, outdoors ads, billboarding, Newspapers, Magazines…_

* Face to face

* Telephone

* Mailing

* Sponsoring

* Brochures and flyers

* Event

* Roadshows

* Street marketing

* Co-branding

* Specialist's voice

* SMS, MMS

* Websites

* Emailing

* Blogs

* Social media apps (Facebook, Facebook Messenger, Twitter, Instagram, Telegram, WhatsApp, Tik Tok…)