*** Adaptation Training Initiative ***

weADAPT

Module:
Climate Risks Communication

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WHAT IS RISK COMMUNICATION?

RISK is…

risk = hazard + vulnerability

where vulnerability = exposure + sensitivity (related to coping capacity)

WHAT IS RISK COMMUNICATION?

COMMUNICATION is…

dynamic, interactive process of sharing information and co-generating knowledge using one or a number of approaches, methods and tools, usually with a specific intended purpose

WHY RISK COMMUNICATION?

- Despite scientific progress in understanding potential impacts of climate change, communicating those impacts in the context of risks to society remains a challenge

- Those at risk have a wealth of experiential knowledge of past / current impacts and responses that can be shared

- Information in forms that are not readily useful to stakeholders and decision makers leads to misunderstanding and in-action

- Pro-actively engage stakeholders in an effort to create awareness, shared understandings and collaborative actions

- Support adaptation decisions and planning processes, means for empowerment, innovation and social transformation

LESSONS LEARNED ON KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- **Know the context:** What are the local perceptions of climate risks? How do people deal with risk? What is the knowledge baseline (gaps and strengths)? Who takes the decisions? What are the development priorities?

- **Build a two-way dialogue:** How can communities, authorities, and scientists share their understanding on climate risks? How can they explain the meanings that are difficult? How to define climate change in locally relevant terms?

This dialogue leads to collective generation of knowledge and shared understandings!

LESSONS LEARNED ON KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- **Engagement in the process:** What participatory and innovative approaches can be used to engage different stakeholder groups? How to support ownership and facilitate learning?

- **Diverse approaches:** How do we combine tools and methods to account for varying interests, capacities and backgrounds?

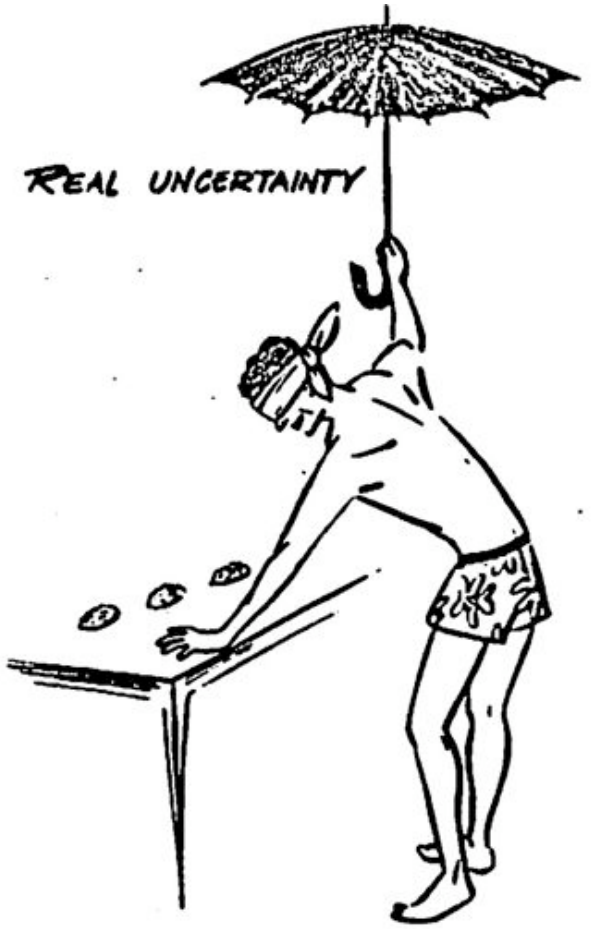
There are many tools and methods, the key is to choose the ones that best fit the purpose and the stakeholder group you would like to engage in the process!

TOOLS AND METHODS USED IN THE ACCCA PROJECT

LESSONS LEARNED ON KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- **Recognizing uncertainty:** This is maybe the most challenging one, as it is difficult to communicate uncertainty.

Some future climate scenarios say that it will rain more, some say that it will rain less… What should we do? Should we try to think about ways of using water considering both possibilities? On the other hand, what can we tell with certainty?

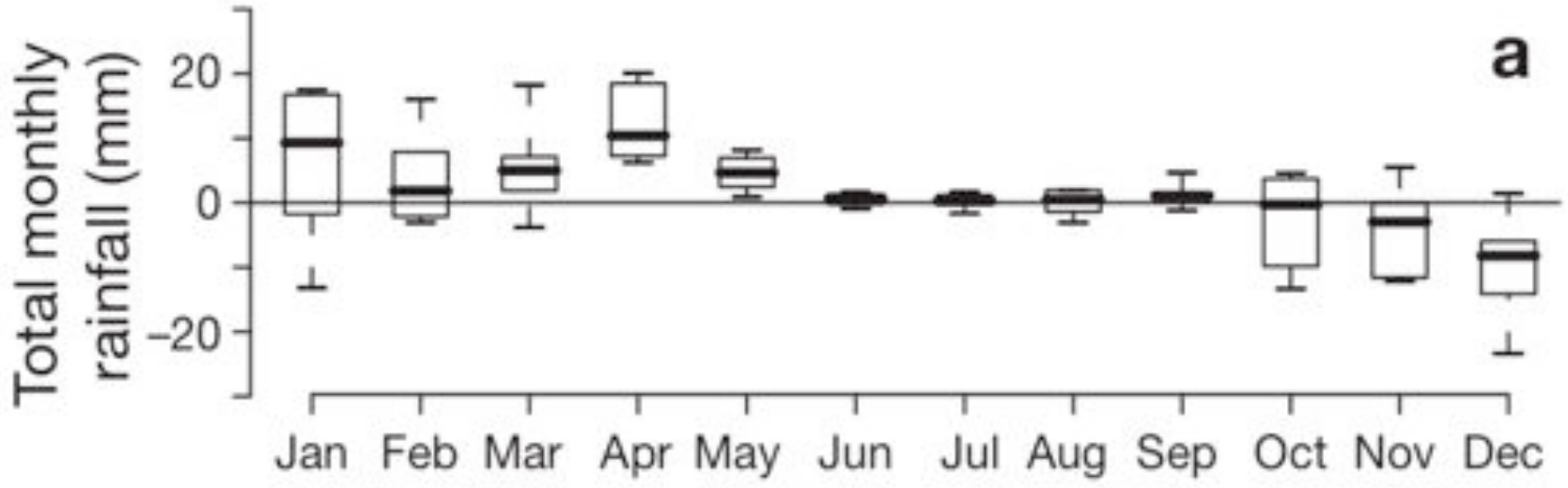


An example of uncertainty: how would you communicate this?

An example of projections for Livingstone station in Zambia for the period 2046-2065 using a range of climate models.

Analysis of the climatologist: There is likely to be a decrease in precipitation from Sep-Dec, although the magnitude of this increase is uncertain. Also, there is likely to be an increase in precipitation in later season rainfall from Jan-May. Heavy rainfall events will likely continue to be a major hazard in Zambia and lead to increased flooding.

For discussion: How did the climatologist deal with uncertainty? What risks for the agriculture sector do you foresee and how to communicate this to farmers?

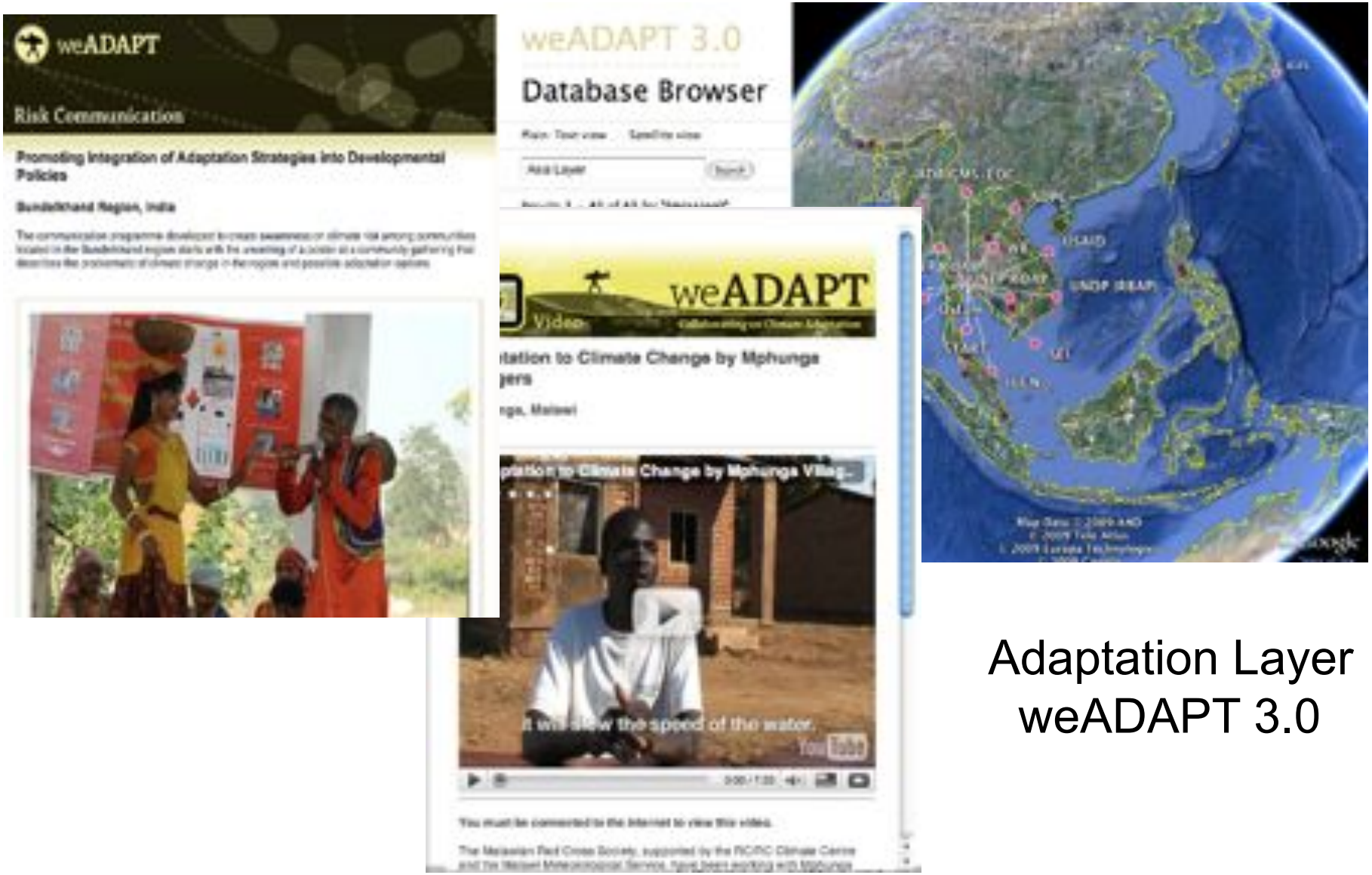


LESSONS LEARNED ON KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- **Building networks:** How can informal as well as formal structures be developed or strengthened to sustain the efforts achieved through climate risk communication?

There are different networks and ways of working together. This is an example of a tsunami early warning network in Africa. Networks can be local, national, regional, and international.

Networks: Sharing knowledge and learning on climate risk communication



Adaptation Layer
weADAPT 3.0

Networks: Local initiatives for climate risk communication

CONTENT OF RISK COMMUNICATION NEEDS TO ACCOUNT FOR…

• **Complex information in friendly formats:** Combine primary and secondary information and try to convert it into user-friendly formats, for example, try to represent data with pictures, or stories of familiar events, or illustrative graphs…

• **Relevant terms:** consider the local know-how and context, for example, take into consideration the time scales of local development plans, the local perceptions and priorities, the socio-cultural context, and the local meanings and language…

Validate the content of your tools and methods with the stakeholder groups before implementing them!

CLIMATE RISK COMMUNICATION EXPERIENCES…

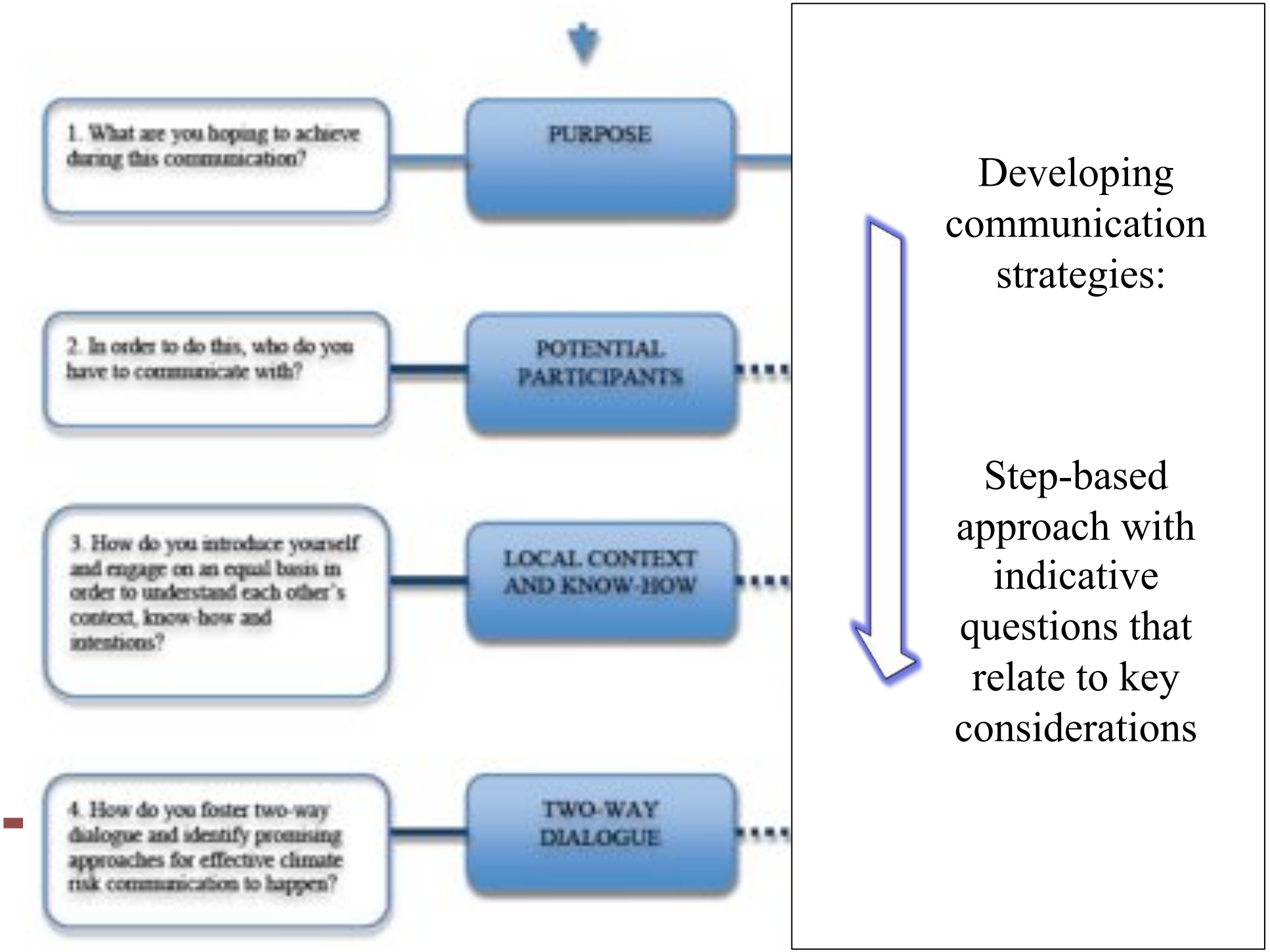
Musical performance in Mali, lyrics in local language

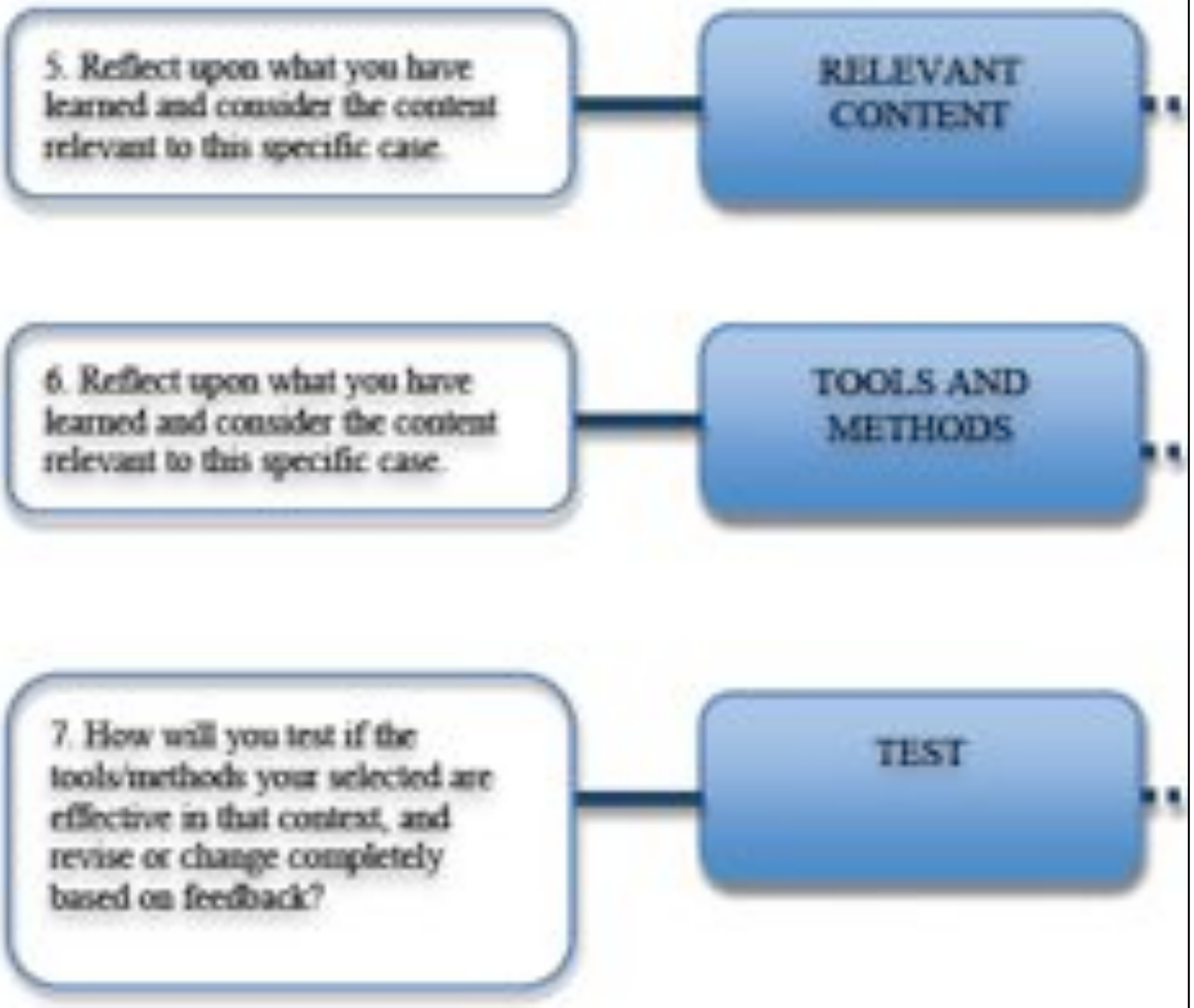
Focus group discussion with herders in Mongolia

Musical with lyrics pertaining to climate change risks in India, and poster discussion

Participatory video-making in Malawi

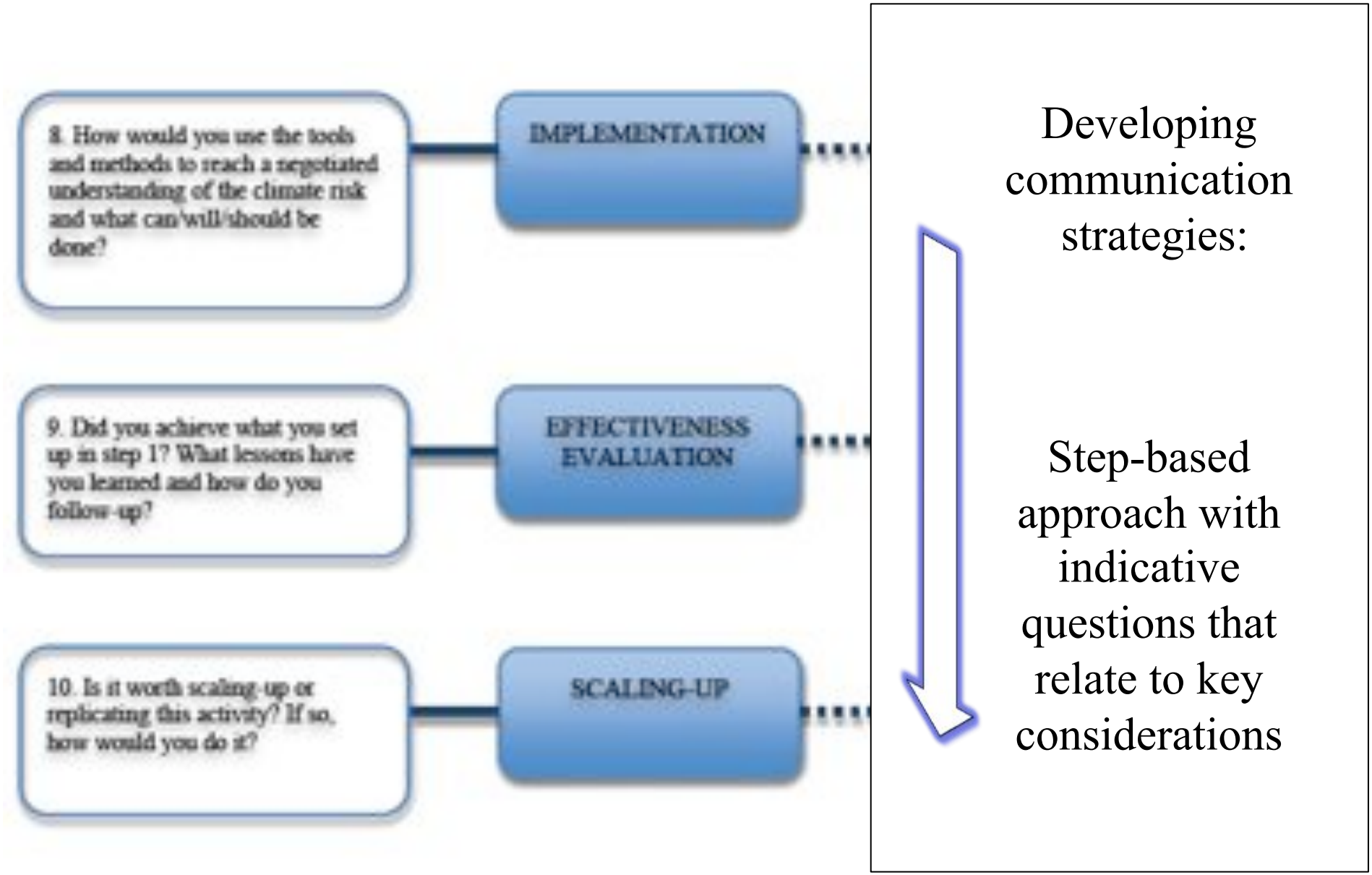
Workshops and trainings in Senegal


1. What are you hoping to achieve during this communication?
PURPOSE
2. In order to do this, who do you have to communicate with?
POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS
3. How do you introduce yourself and engage on an equal basis in order to understand each other's context, know-how and intentions?
LOCAL CONTEXT AND KNOW-HOW
4. How do you foster two-way dialogue and identify promising approaches for effective climate risk communication to happen?
TWO-WAY DIALOGUE
Developing communication strategies:
Step-based approach with indicative questions that relate to key considerations



Developing communication strategies:

Step-based approach with indicative questions that relate to key considerations


8. How would you use the tools and methods to reach a negotiated understanding of the climate risk and what can/will/should be done?
IMPLEMENTATION
9. Did you achieve what you set up in step 1? What lessons have you learned and how do you follow-up?
EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION
10. Is it worth scaling-up or replicating this activity? If so, how would you do it?
SCALING-UP
Developing communication strategies:
Step-based approach with indicative questions that relate to key considerations

TO SUM UP: ATTRIBUTES OF EFFECTIVE RISK COMMUNICATION

- Understanding the local decision-making context and baseline climate-related knowledge

- Encouraging interaction and dialogue between different stakeholders from civil society, government, academia and private sector

- Empowering through processes of negotiation and co-generation of knowledge to establish shared understandings around climate risks and promoting innovative practices

- Facilitating and supporting iterative processes of social learning through active partnerships, collaboration, and informed action

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THANK YOU

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