

Theories of Change & Conflict Escalation

Four types of action

- **Mobilize**

- Protest, action, strike, campaign, insurrection
- *DISRUPT*

- **Organize**

- Meeting, open assemblies, networking, alliances, groups/organizations/parties, (petitions)
- *POWER-WITH, EMPOWERMENT*

- **Raise awareness**

- Stands, media coverage (press release, interview), debates and lectures, articles and videos
- *REPRESENTATIVENESS*

- **Negotiate**

- Lobbying, reports and studies, officialize/institutionalize, professionalize
- *REASON*

MOBILIZE

M

take action against
the status quo



We (will) need to
confront the
decision-makers

O

ORGANIZE

reform the status quo
to facilitate change



We can/will
convince the
decision-makers

A

RAISE AWARENESS

N

NEGOTIATE



MOBILIZE

M

ORGANIZE

O

Note: These are not “boxes”, but more like “poles”. Each event and organization has these poles, but of different weights.

A

RAISE AWARENESS

N

NEGOTIATE

MOBILIZE

M

ORGANIZE

O

The underlying world analysis and theory of change guides strategy.

A

RAISE AWARENESS

N

NEGOTIATE

Extremes

M

V for Vendetta
No prior organization
Awareness “assumed”

O

Community centers
Discussion groups

Running a website

A

NGOs in UN
conferences
discussing use of
“shall, should, will”

N

Extremes

M

25 de abril
Act Up!

No legal path,
no media coverage,
no initial awareness

O

Spontaneous actions
(need O for sustainability)
including some social
massacres

Big Greens

A

Think-tanks
Environmentalists

N

Comprising a bigger space is not necessarily good or bad.

M

O

Note: Your position depends also on the “size” of the problem and on the “flexibility” of the status quo (see “Bad Timing”, TCE, Naomi Klein), and of course your own evaluation of these.

A

N

Stages of Escalation

0) Change needed



1) Status quo fails to implement



2) Raise awareness of the problem (A)



3) Reach out to sufficient people (mature A)
to form small groups (early O)



4) Bring the problem to public agenda (early M)

Stages of Escalation

2) Raise awareness of the problem (A)

3) Reach out to sufficient people (mature A)
to form small groups (early O)

4) Bring the problem to public agenda (early M)

eg. petitions

Problem solved
(early N)

Someone needed ORh- blood
Unnoticed problem

5) Organize to form interest groups (O)

Stages of Escalation

3) Reach out to sufficient people (mature A)
to form small groups (early O)

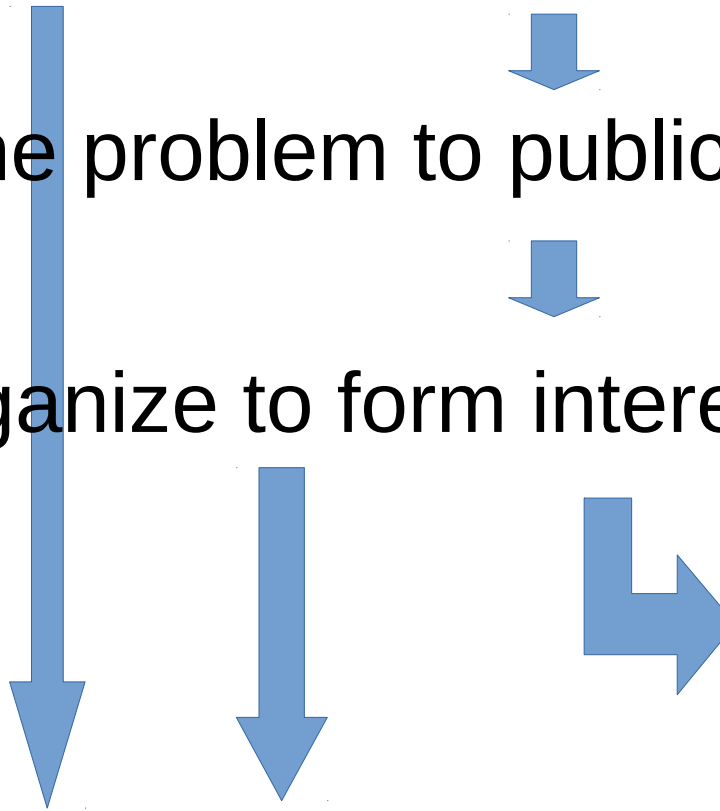
4) Bring the problem to public agenda (early M)

5) Organize to form interest groups (O)

eg.
networking

Negotiate
change (N)

6) Mobilize to “manifest” and “demonstrate” (M)



Stages of Escalation

5) Organize to form interest groups (O)

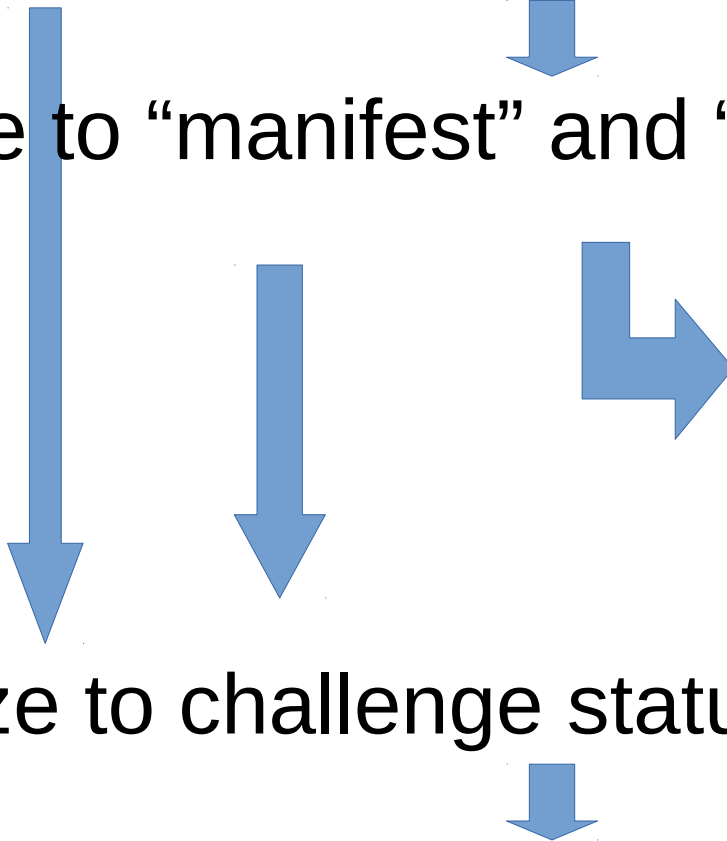
6) Mobilize to “manifest” and “demonstrate” (M)

eg. large
campaigns,
alliances

Status quo
compromises
(mature N)

7) Organize to challenge status quo (mature O)

8) Mobilize to disrupt (mature M)



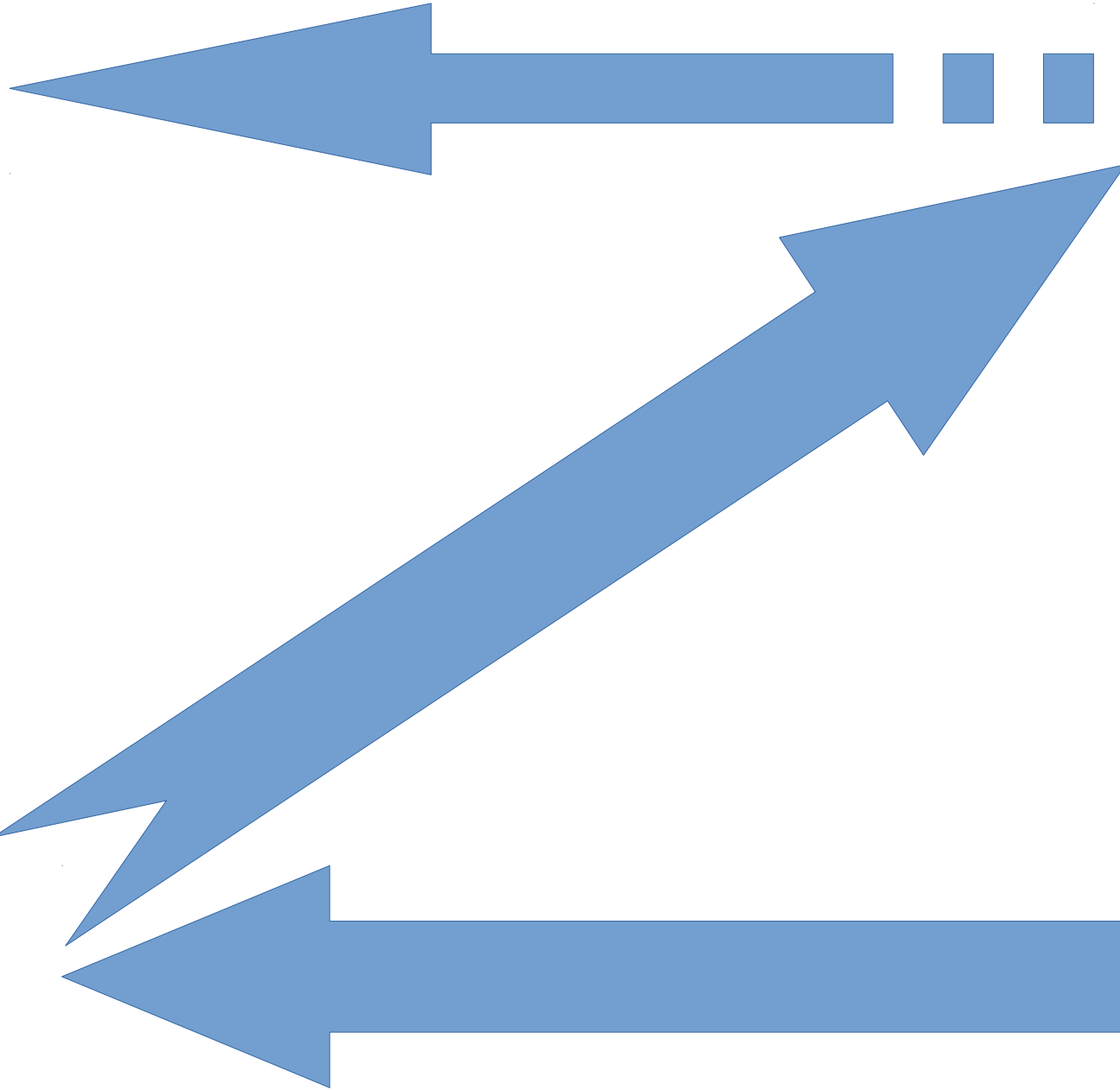
Stages of escalation

M

O

A

N



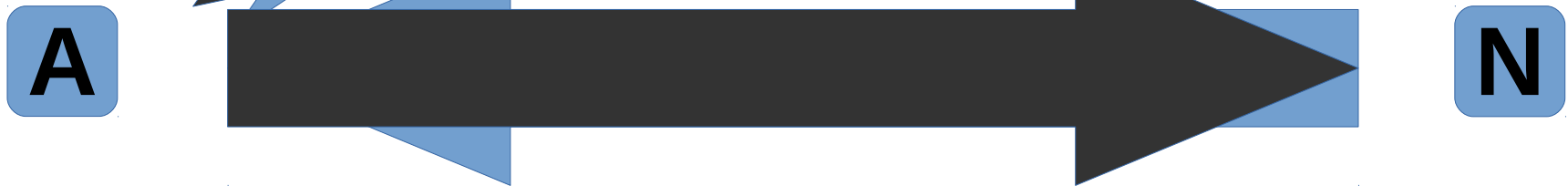
Problems in social movements



We-need-more-people loop
(instead of “What kind of mobilization is relevant with the people we have?”)

People-are-ignorant loop
(instead of “How can we get informed people involved?”)

We-need-more-research loop
(instead of “What is sufficient research for us to act?” and “What action can we take with our current knowledge?”)



Tools to invest in

- Mobilize
 - Action training
 - Team building
 - Social movements
- Organize
 - Activist tools
 - Effective meetings
 - Consensus decision-making
 - Networking & alliances
- Awareness
 - Media comms
 - Image/video editing
 - Presentation techniques
- Negotiate
 - Legal expertise
 - Financial expertise
 - Negotiation techniques
 - Scientific expertises