Theory of Change for Media Literacy

Theory of Change: 4 inter-related elements. These categories of change can be used to evaluate more specifically how media literacy changes things in people's lives and also to help to design projects with more specific change objectives in mind.

Access

Functioning civic societies require a diverse and pluralist media ecosystem and citizens being literate enough to make informed choices about what to access within the ecosystem, through digital connectivity, technological access and the skills to use the media and digital technology available to us.

Access involves who, when, where and how we have access to media content, information and digital technology, and having the knowledge and awareness needed to use it in everyday life and for citizenship, education, work and health.

Capabilities

This is where we use our media literacy more actively for particular purposes in our lives, rather than as passive consumers of information and content.

Media literacy capabilities range from access changes, the application of more critical or mindful decision making when receiving information, the use of fact-checking of information or sources, more informed attitudes to sharing content and information, or getting directly involved in the media ecosystem as creators of media content.

Increases in media literacy can also lead to new capabilities for civic engagement through digital media and technology and increased employability through the gaining of creative and/or digital skills.
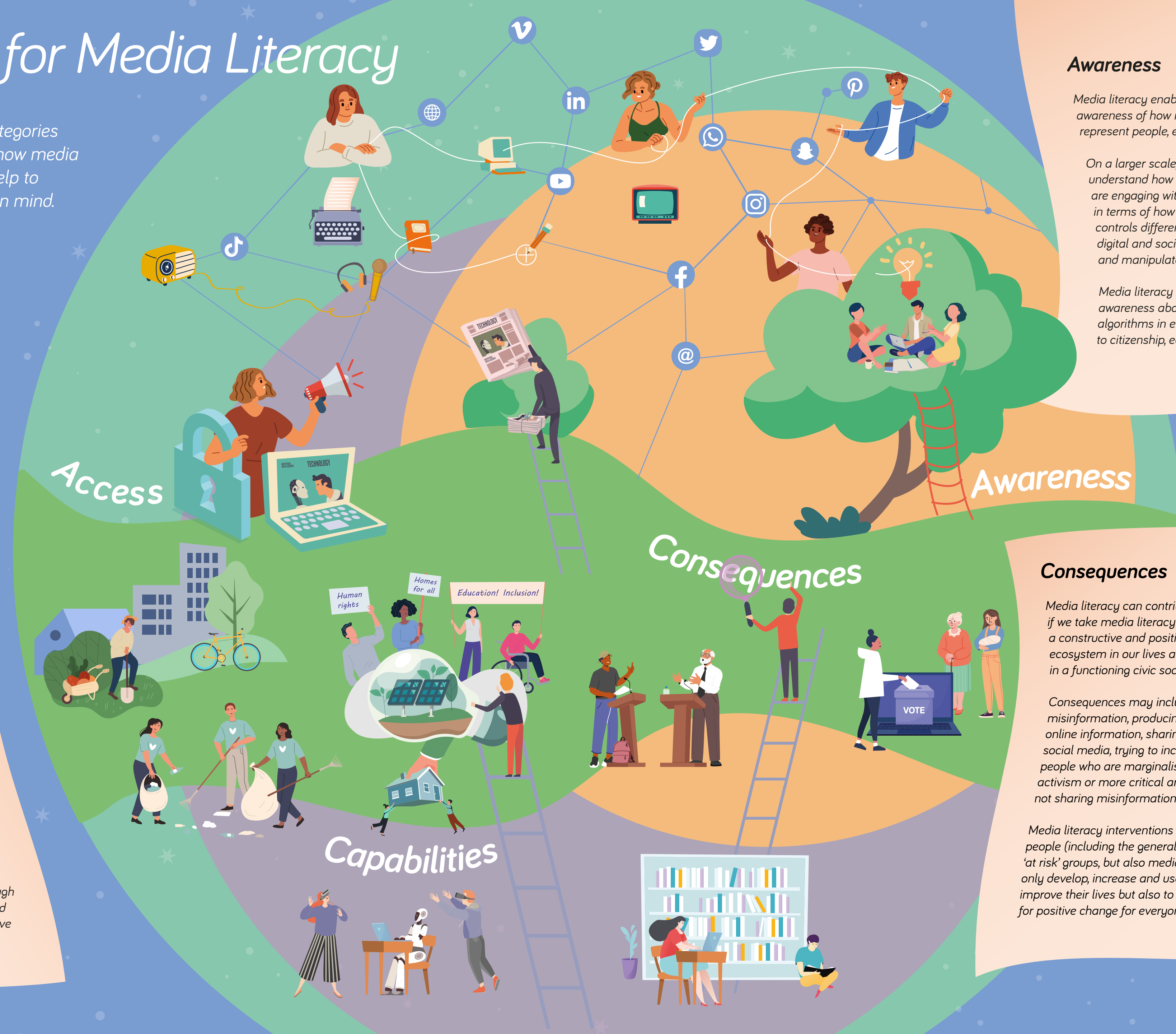
Awareness

Media literacy enables people to have a critical awareness of how media and information represent people, events, issues and places.

On a larger scale, media literacy helps us to understand how the media environment we are engaging with is constructed, for example in terms of how diverse it is, who owns or controls different media sources and how digital and social media is governed, designed and manipulated.

Media literacy also involves critical awareness about the role of data and algorithms in everyday life and with regard to citizenship, education, work and health.

Consequences

Media literacy can contribute to significant change if we take media literacy actions that can make a constructive and positive impact on the media ecosystem in our lives and on the lives of others in a functioning civic society.

Consequences may include challenging misinformation, producing media content and / or online information, sharing trustworthy content on social media, trying to increase the representation of people who are marginalised in the media, data activism or more critical and mindful non-action (e.g. not sharing misinformation, changing data settings).

Media literacy interventions should focus on how people (including the general population, children and 'at risk' groups, but also media practitioners) can not only develop, increase and use their media literacy to improve their lives but also to use their media literacy for positive change for everyone in the ecosystem.

Access

Awareness

Consequences

Capabilities

Human rights

Homes for all

Education! Inclusion!

VOTE

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