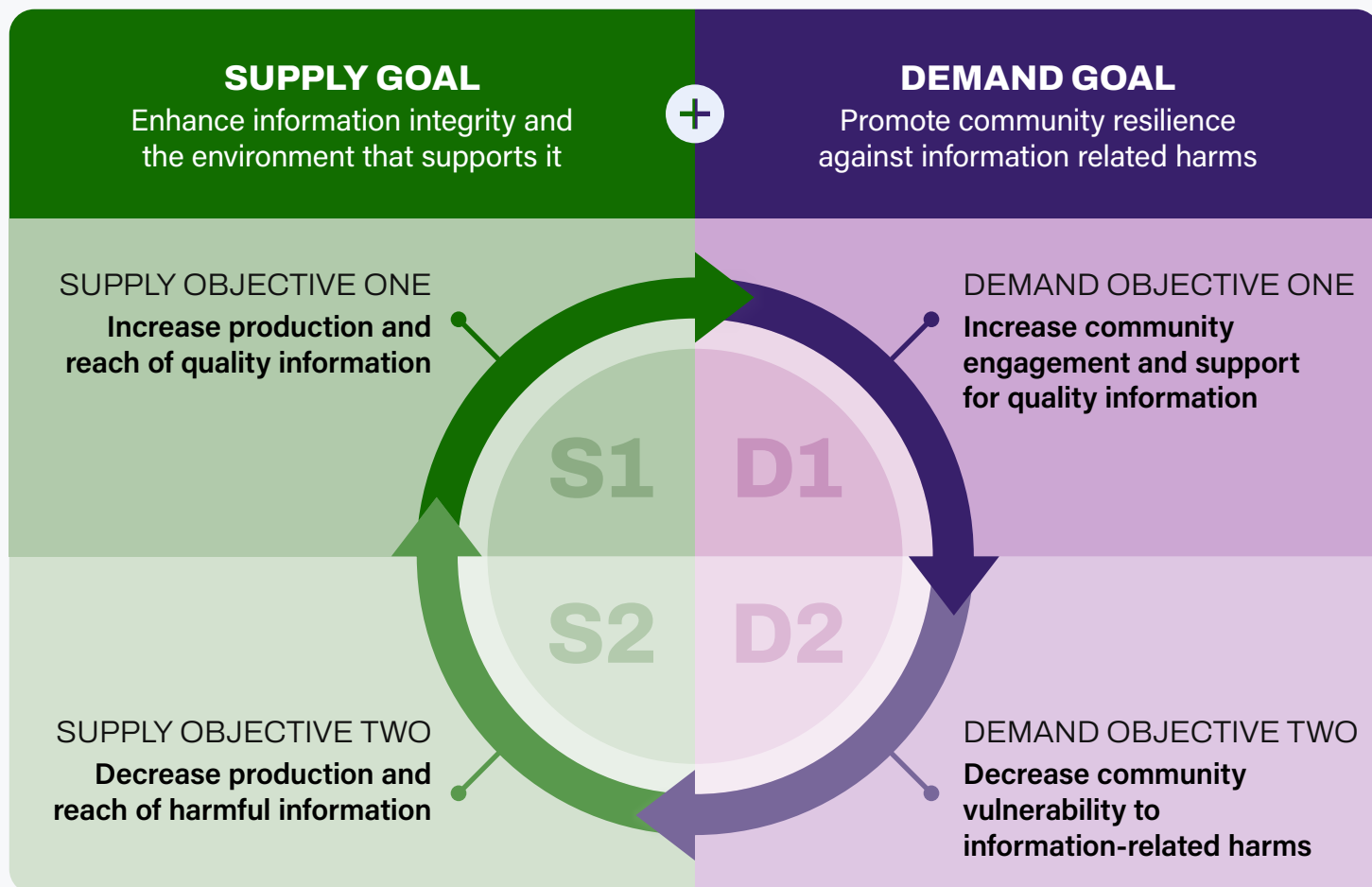# INTERNEWS **FRAMEWORK FOR**
INFORMATION INTEGRITY

A conceptual model to enhance quality information and promote community resilience against information related harms

Harmful information, such as disinformation, misinformation, and hate speech, complicates and exacerbates the worlds' most pressing societal and political challenges. Internews understands harmful information to be an ecosystemic problem. We believe that strong and resilient information ecosystems are our best defense against diverse information-related threats. 'Information Integrity' is a term that refers primarily to the qualities present in trustworthy information that helps and does not harm. However, ensuring that information integrity prevails over harmful information requires a diverse range of work coordinated across both the supply and demand sides of the information ecosystem.

As recent research has highlighted, there are many tactical approaches to addressing harmful information, but no one 'silver bullet' solution for protecting our information ecosystems. Navigating toward information integrity requires tools for mapping and understanding these complex and dynamic landscapes where harmful content arises and gains traction. Internews' Information Integrity Framework is a logical relational model, which allows us to conceptualize, structure and describe our work across all dimensions of any given information ecosystem.

The Framework is based on Internews formative Information Ecosystem work that conceptualizes an interactive relationship between a Supply Side (aspects of information production) and a Demand Side (aspect of 'information behaviors'). In the quest for Information Integrity, the Framework offers two overarching goals and four quadrants that lay out the objectives that need to be achieved to reach these goals. Together the Framework represents the full range of interventions required to advance information integrity.

SUPPLY GOAL
Enhance information integrity and the environment that supports it

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DEMAND GOAL
Promote community resilience against information related harms

SUPPLY OBJECTIVE ONE
Increase production and reach of quality information

DEMAND OBJECTIVE ONE
Increase community engagement and support for quality information

S1　D1

S2　D2

SUPPLY OBJECTIVE TWO
Decrease production and reach of harmful information

DEMAND OBJECTIVE TWO
Decrease community vulnerability to information-related harms

The Information Integrity Framework is a practical tool for designing interventions that work towards a logically coherent vision of success when dealing with what is a demonstrably wicked problem. The Framework is used to analyse the threat landscape presented by a given context or ecosystem, and to map out the work that is needed to strengthen each quadrant.

Some interventions may concentrate on a single quadrant – for example, decreasing the production and reach of harmful disinformation by identifying and disrupting malign actors – while in others a broader 'whole ecosystem' approach may be called for. In each case the Framework provides a model to structure these decisions and design relevant evaluation processes to assess their impact.

Addressing information integrity requires a range of approaches with distinct but complementary objectives. Internews' Information Integrity Framework is a mapping tool that locates discrete activities in relation to the objectives they are most likely to achieve, while at the same time reinforcing the ecosystemic view of information challenges and opportunities that lie outside the impact zone of any one specific activity. This allows donors and program teams to design actions that are contextually strategic, intentional and measurable within any given information ecosystem.

SUPPLY OBJECTIVE 1

S1

Increase production and reach of quality information.

Our work under this objective seeks to **ensure integrity of content from journalists, media outlets, civil society, online and community-based information sources**. We support them in creating quality content that addresses information need, does not amplify harmful information, helps people understand their information environment, and holds malign actors and other powerful stakeholders to account in the public domain. We provide the resources they need to safely navigate and understand harmful information landscapes, and to discern and safely access their own sources of quality information to use in their reporting.

Potential Interventions: Supporting good journalistic practices for media and other content creators; promoting viable media business models; protecting digital rights, internet freedom, media freedoms (media legal and regulatory); supporting fact checking and verification practices; building capacity in specialist journalism (beat journalists) and technical skills; supporting 'disinformation journalism' for journalists to understand specific disinformation narratives, strategies, actors and trends so they can specialize in reporting that exposes disinformation campaigns, educates the public and holds malign actors to account in the media; story grants and other direct support for content production; supporting journalist safety; building capacity of information providers (e.g. government officials, aid workers, etc.); developing information infrastructure; developing new communication channels and tools.

S2   SUPPLY OBJECTIVE 2
Decrease production and reach of harmful information.

Our work under this objective seeks to **make it harder for malign actors to operate** by multiplying their resource costs, limiting their reach, and increasing the risk of meaningful repercussions for their actions. We support the investigation, research, and documentation of harmful information, including attribution to responsible parties where appropriate. Our work under this objective includes holding platforms governments and business accountable for their influence on information ecosystems, and advocating for regulation, practices, and products that reduce the reach of malign actors and harmful content.

Potential Interventions: Monitoring, investigation, and documentation of misleading content; analysis of narratives and impact; attribution to disinformation actors; pursual via justice processes, including meeting potential evidentiary requirements; advocacy for regulatory and policy approaches (national, regional, etc.); working with digital platforms to limit reach and impact; deplatforming of disinformation actors and content; holding platforms to account for their role and/or failures; limiting amplification of disinformation narratives through good-faith media and information channels.

CROSS-CUTTING WORK TRACK

Build Knowledge:
Support Research, Intelligence and Design

We seek to continually improve and apply our knowledge of disinformation dynamics in the ecosystems where we work and to create a shared understanding of these dynamics as well as the potential and the limitations of various program approaches. This track has a strong emphasis on research to understand the drivers and dynamics of misinformation and disinformation, including the role of algorithms, human psychology, and social networks.

CROSS-CUTTING WORK TRACK

Be a Convenor:
Foster Collaborations and Partnerships

We seek to engage with global thinkers and innovators who focus on all aspects of information integrity to advance best practices in this rapidly evolving field. This track has a strong emphasis on collaborative thought leadership, including active participation in local, regional and global conversations; partnering with others to explore and document harmful information landscapes; and working with information providers who can demystify and make sense of their findings for the public.

D1 DEMAND OBJECTIVE 1
Increase community engagement and support for quality information.

Our work under this objective seeks to **collaborate with communities to understand the drivers and impacts of harmful information and to develop localized information responses**. We ensure that communities impacted by harmful information have recourse to locally relevant information that they value and trust, and access to channels through which they can make known their information needs and preferences. Our work is most effective when it is community-driven and demand-centered, so we start by listening in vulnerable communities and then we support them to develop localized content streams that build trust.

Potential Interventions: Information Ecosystem research; social media listening, rumour tracking and other "feedback loop" initiatives; support for community media, citizen journalism, civic media projects that raise local voices and local beat journalism; community engagement; town halls and focus groups; audience research; narrative testing; media models that foster community ownership and involvement; volunteer programs; support for youth programming and involvement.

D2 DEMAND OBJECTIVE 2
Decrease community vulnerability to information-related harms.

Our work under this objective seeks to **promote public awareness of disinformation campaigns and other harmful information, as well as media and digital literacy and critical thinking**. We ensure that communities targeted by harmful information can understand and navigate information landscapes, and that they learn to identify, avoid and not share or amplify malign content. We work with civil society partners to boost public awareness as well as media and digital literacy. We ensure that people are able not only to safely navigate and express themselves in different information spaces – online or offline, private or public - but that they also have access to sense-making context to help them understand the how, as well as the who, the what and why of disinformation.

Potential Interventions: Public facing digital or media literacy work through campaigns or digital content; large-scale media or digital literacy through public education, schools and other channels; public facing digital security education; digital security training and support for civil society and other key stakeholders; researching and tracking of disinformation to inform education and training activities; capacity building of civil society to detect and monitor harmful speech and information; capacity building support for civil society research and advocacy efforts.