ORBITS

Toolkit

Tools

The Orbits toolkit offers some ready-to-use tools for translating the Orbits tools into practice in your own work. They are all available under creative commons licence - feel free to use, adapt, and edit in your own work.

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Tools for technology designers	An audit template to review your product or service against the Orbits principles and identify areas for improvement.
Tools for researchers	A template consent form, research FAQs, and after-research care package for working with survivors.
Tools for policymakers and advocates	'A tool to scaffold your thinking when building policy interventions. Go to page 104.
Tools for movement builders and organisers	A template to design workshops based on the Orbits principles.

# How to build policy using the Orbits principles

If real change is going to be possible at a policy level, it is not through a perfect policy outcome. You must consider how your institutional infrastructures for building policy are set up - how do the invisible structures of your legislative and regulatory systems work and can you uncover, explore and add nuance and complexity to this process (at least in your area of work)?

This tool will allow you to apply the interconnected Orbits principles as a way to scaffold building an intersectional, survivor-centred and trauma-informed approach to your tech abuse policy interventions. Ultimately, it provides you with a way to be reflexive and explore the multiple complex layers of policy building as you are engaging with it. This structure of this tool demonstrates:

★ How multiple activities may need to happen at the same time with different groups in different places and in different ways.

★ The diversity in the scale of what may be needed depending on your context.

★ The tangible and less tangible aspects of building policy.

★ A visualisation of how we often need multiple interventions, approaches and innovations around a problem.

★ How, as you move towards the foundations of the building, some aspects may be more challenging, long term or complex to shift.

In this tool, inspired by Visualising and Communicating Complexity by Dark Matter Labs, each layer of building a policy is mapped against a structure and supported by the scaffolding of example questions you may want to think about when coming up with policy interventions for technology-facilitated gender violence (TGBV). Feel free to add more questions in the spaces provided as you start to engage with this tool. We recommend you start from the bottom up!
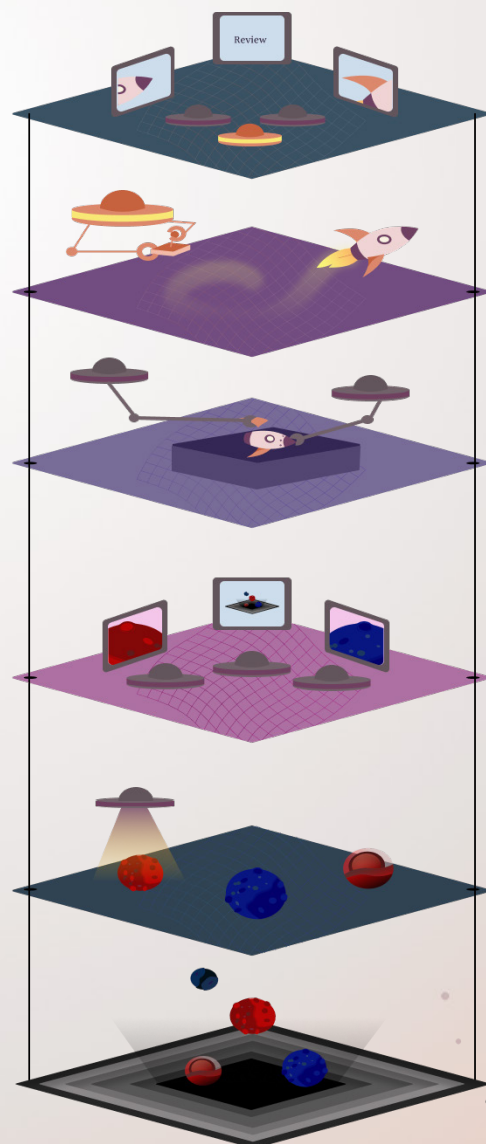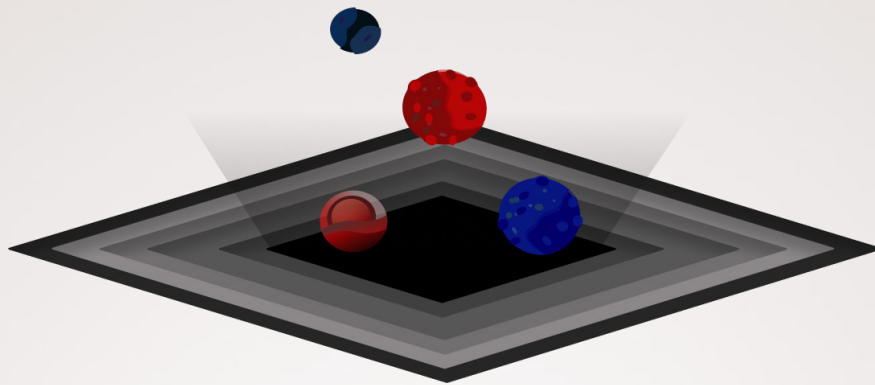
Sociocultural context:

This is the overall context in which your policy is being built, including the range of social and cultural factors many of which are not immediately present, such as historical factors, systems of oppression etc. For example, in the context of TGBV, we might think of sexism, transphobia and homophobia, as well as the historical use of technology (e.g. Facemash). All of this gives meaning to any policy you're pulling together. Crucially, as policy-makers, you are not merely situated in a sociocultural context. You also help shape the context. It would require a sustained long-term investment and effort to change this context.

Questions to consider:

★ How will you consider the impact of systemic inequities and the wider sociocultural context in your country when drafting your policy?

★ How will you ensure your policy is inclusive of and accessible to marginalised communities and individuals in your country?

★ How will you ensure you are avoiding racial, gender, class or other stereotyping happening when your policy is implemented?

★ What other ways will you consider equity when designing your policy?

★ Add your own question...

★ Add your own question...
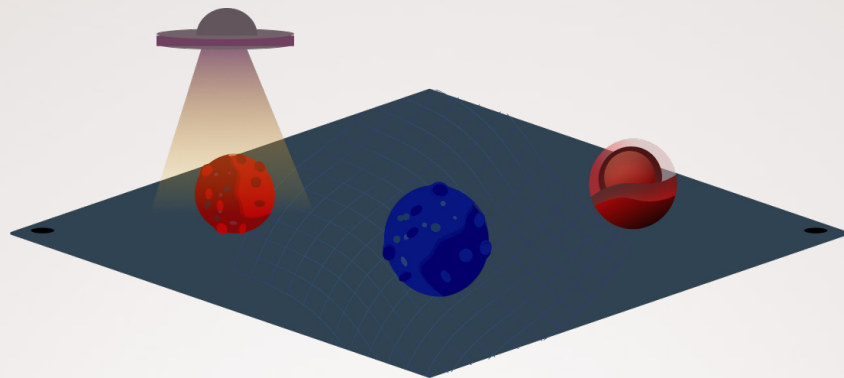
Agenda building:

Before a policy can be created, problems must be identified and be called to the attention of the government and you, as policy makers. This is often the stage where the challenge is laid bare for you to address and come up with solutions. There can be many things competing for attention here and, often, the agenda may be driven by the concerns of the day. This is where the sociocultural context might impact the agenda. However, individuals also have the power to shape, push and mould the agenda.

Questions to consider:

★ How will you include survivor representatives in the process of understanding the issue to better draw from their lived experiences?

★ How will you ensure you have the information you need to anticipate and respond to different needs and preferences of different communities?

★ Are there ways in which you can support community-led action to bring certain topics to the attention of the government?

★ Add your own question...

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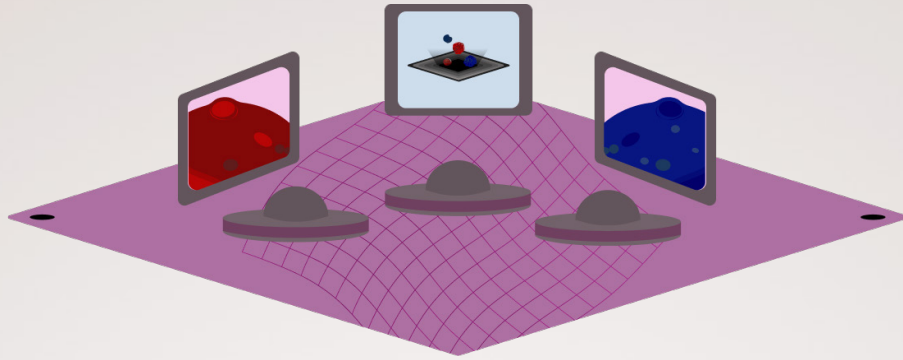
Policy formation:

Once you've understood the situation, this is where you're coming up with different courses of action as approaches to solving the problem. This may include development of policy options, debates, consultations, public or government readings, reviews etc. Usually the executive branch of government is involved in this, along with perhaps the courts and interest groups. The way this happens depends on the legislative process in your country. The process itself may be changed but it may take time.

Questions to consider:

★ Will your version of the policy prioritise physical and emotional safety of a survivor? How?

    ☆ If not, do you need to consult a group of experts on how to do this?

★ Have you thought about survivor consent when it comes to participating in any process you include in this policy?

    ☆ Will your consent processes facilitate consent which is voluntary, informed and reversible? How?

★ Will this policy interact with privacy laws and regulations to shield the confidentiality of survivors?

    ☆ Will you ensure that only the information that is absolutely necessary is collected, creating clear, optional options for more data?

★ Will your policy enable survivors to tailor any processes and support to their own needs and preferences?

    ☆ Will they be enabled to describe their own experience and share the remedial measures they wish for, rather than forcing reports into rigid, predetermined categories?

★ Have you referenced (or built the creation of) bodies that can support a survivor through any legal process?

☆ Will this policy allow for free legal assistance, support and counselling to survivors and individuals from low-income and marginalised communities?

☆ What other ways have you considered survivor agency in your policy?

★ Should there be additional guidance that accompanies this policy to ensure it is accessible and implementing bodies are fully resourced to support survivors in a holistic way?

★ Would a civil process be more suitable and supportive of a survivor here than (or in addition to) a criminal one?

★ Is there a way to include survivor-advocates who want to lead drafting or inputting on this policy?

★ Does this policy ensure that different bodies are working in unison, not siloes? Such as, engaging all the systems survivors find themselves in after experiencing sexual violence - social service system, health care system, education system, administrative (workplace) system.

★ Add your own question..

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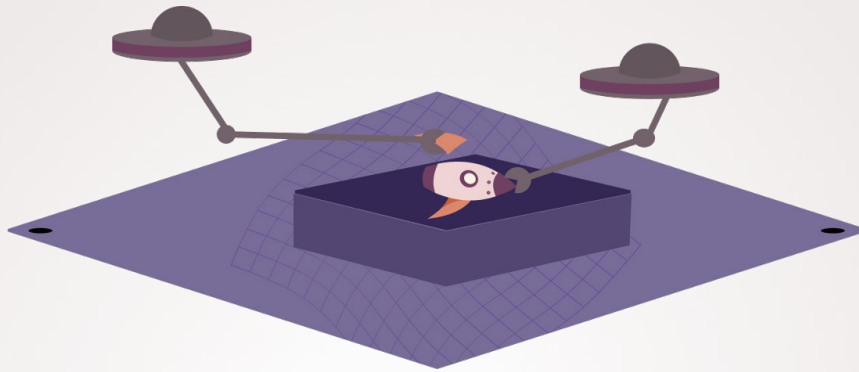
Decision making:

Governments single out a particular course of action towards the remaining policy choices, thinking about what is for the greatest public benefit. This decision itself is often centralised but there are options which have, hopefully, been shaped more widely.

Questions to consider:

★ Will the decision making process prioritise survivor expert testimonies and lived experiences?

★ What pathways will be available if survivors and experts want to contest a decision?

★ Add your own question...

★ Add your own question...
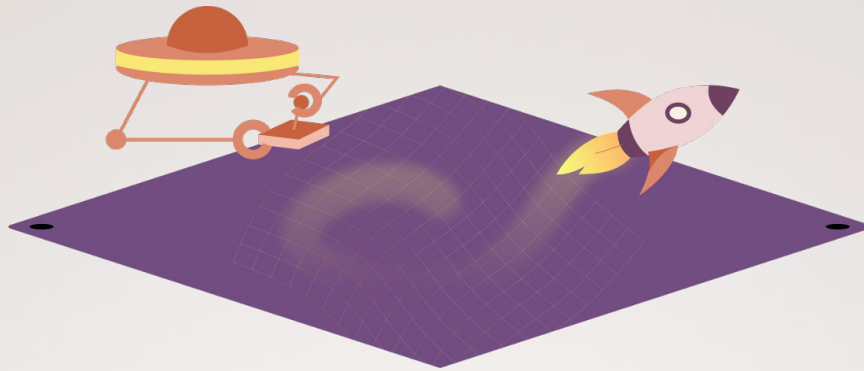
Policy implementation:

This is when you roll out the policy and through public administration tools, officials, resources etc. These people are often not the same people who formulated the policy itself. There are different levels of flexibility in implementation depending on how clear the policy is, the resources applied, existing knowledge levels, the sociocultural context etc.

Questions to consider:

★ Is your policy clearly and easily worded so it can be implemented seamlessly, even by those who may not have heard about TGBV before?

    ☆ If not, can you provide further support and guidance to those who will ultimately be implementing it so that survivors are not subject to further harm?

★ Can extra resources be created to make the policy easy to understand by the average person?

★ Will you include training on the impact of additional vulnerabilities (like that of caste, race, religion, sexual orientation, and disabilities) on survivors' experiences for those who are implementing the policy?

★ Will the processes arising from this policy cater to a range of accessibility requirements such as speech and hearing impairments?

★ Are there multiple ways for survivors to seek support for the rights outlined in this policy? For example, online portal, calling, in person etc.

★ What do the processes arising from this policy look and feel like for survivors'? Are they human-centred, warm and hopeful?

★ What have you done to reduce the risk of retraumatisation for survivors who will be impacted by this policy?

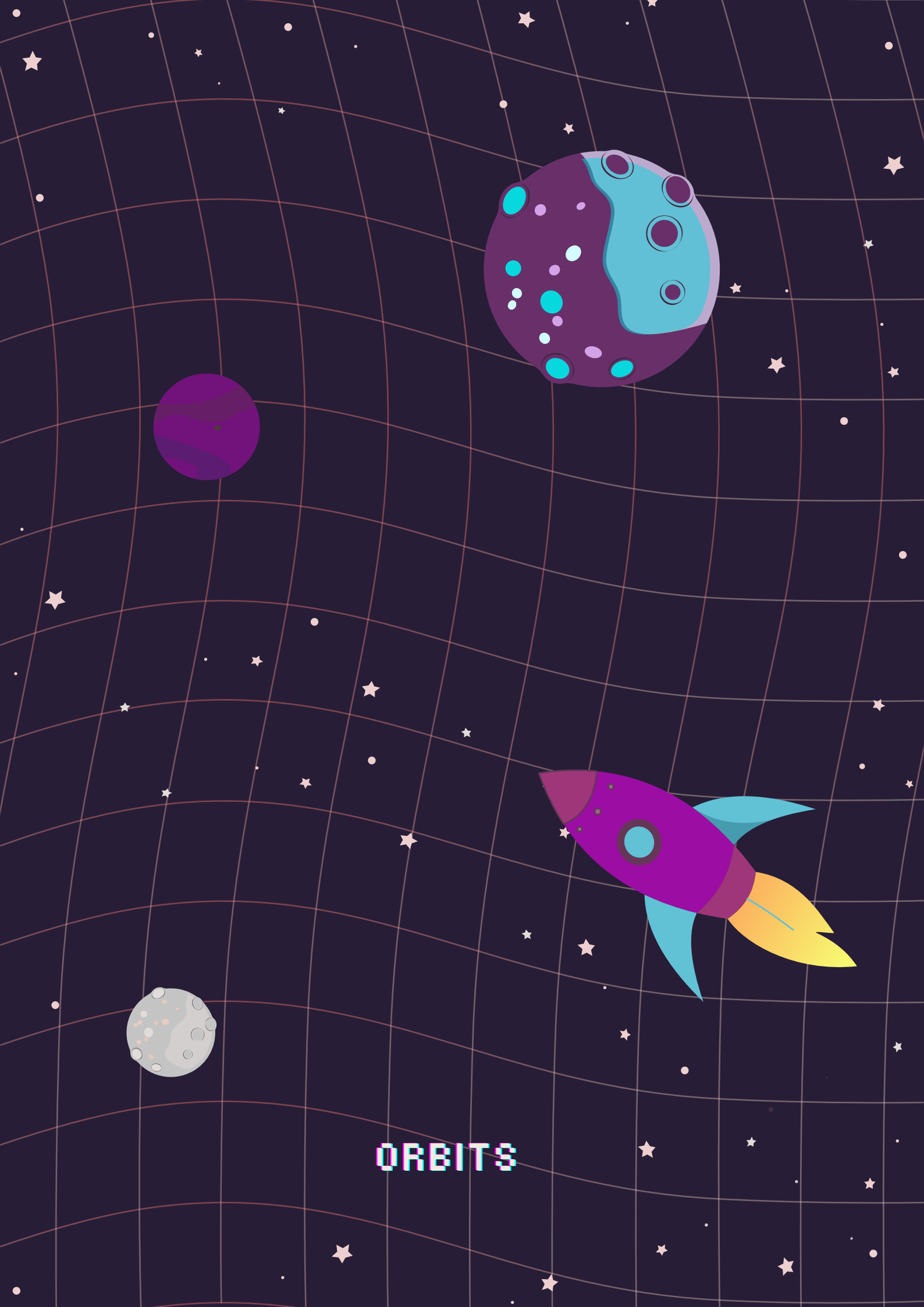★ Add your own question..
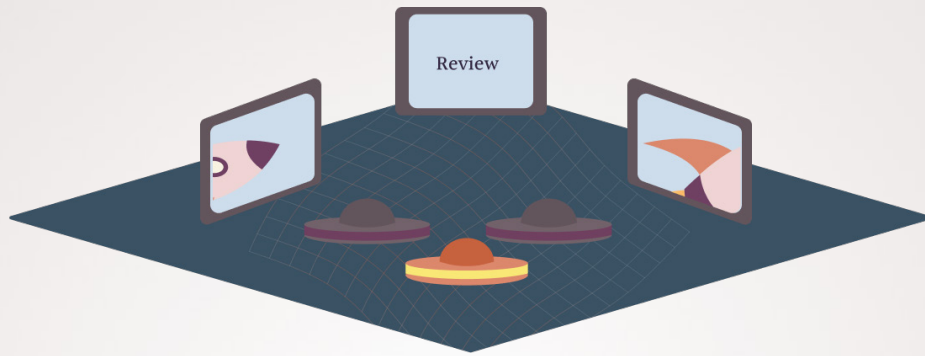
Policy evaluation:

Once a policy is live, it is reviewed for its effectiveness. This doesn't mean it will be repealed (this is generally difficult to do once in place) but amendments may be proposed in the future or it may impact future decision-making.

Questions to consider:

★ Are you building in ways to measure whether this policy actually works?

★ How does your evaluation process give power to and listen to those who may be impacted by it?

★ How will the learnings be fed back into future changes and how will policy makers be held accountable to that?

★ Add your own question...

★ Add your own question...

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