



# Lessons from Evaluating Electoral Campaigns

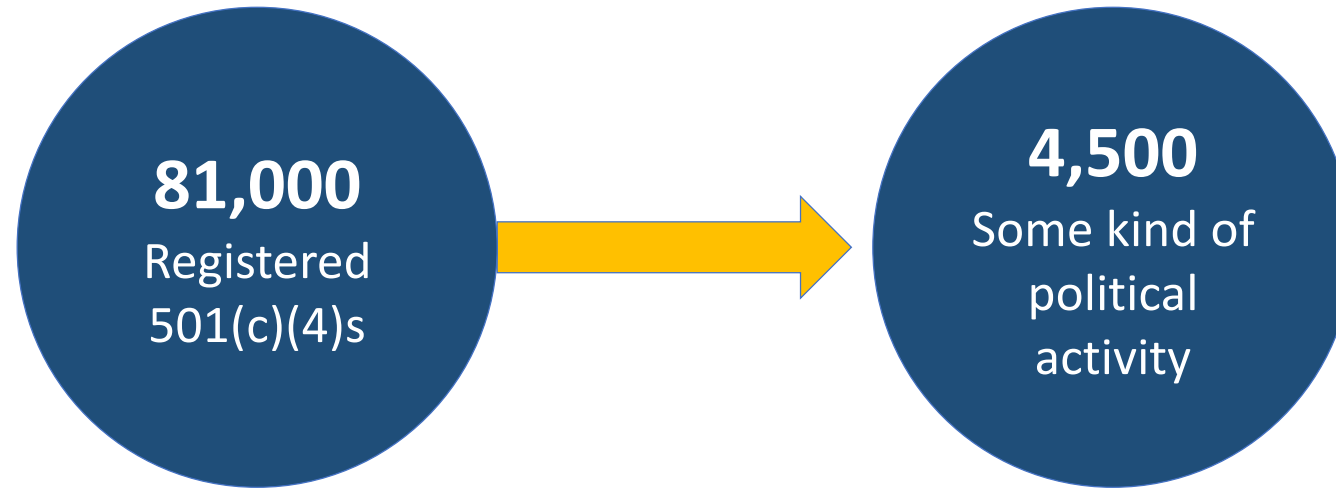
American Evaluation Association

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**BARSOUM POLICY CONSULTING**

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# 501(c)(4) Universe

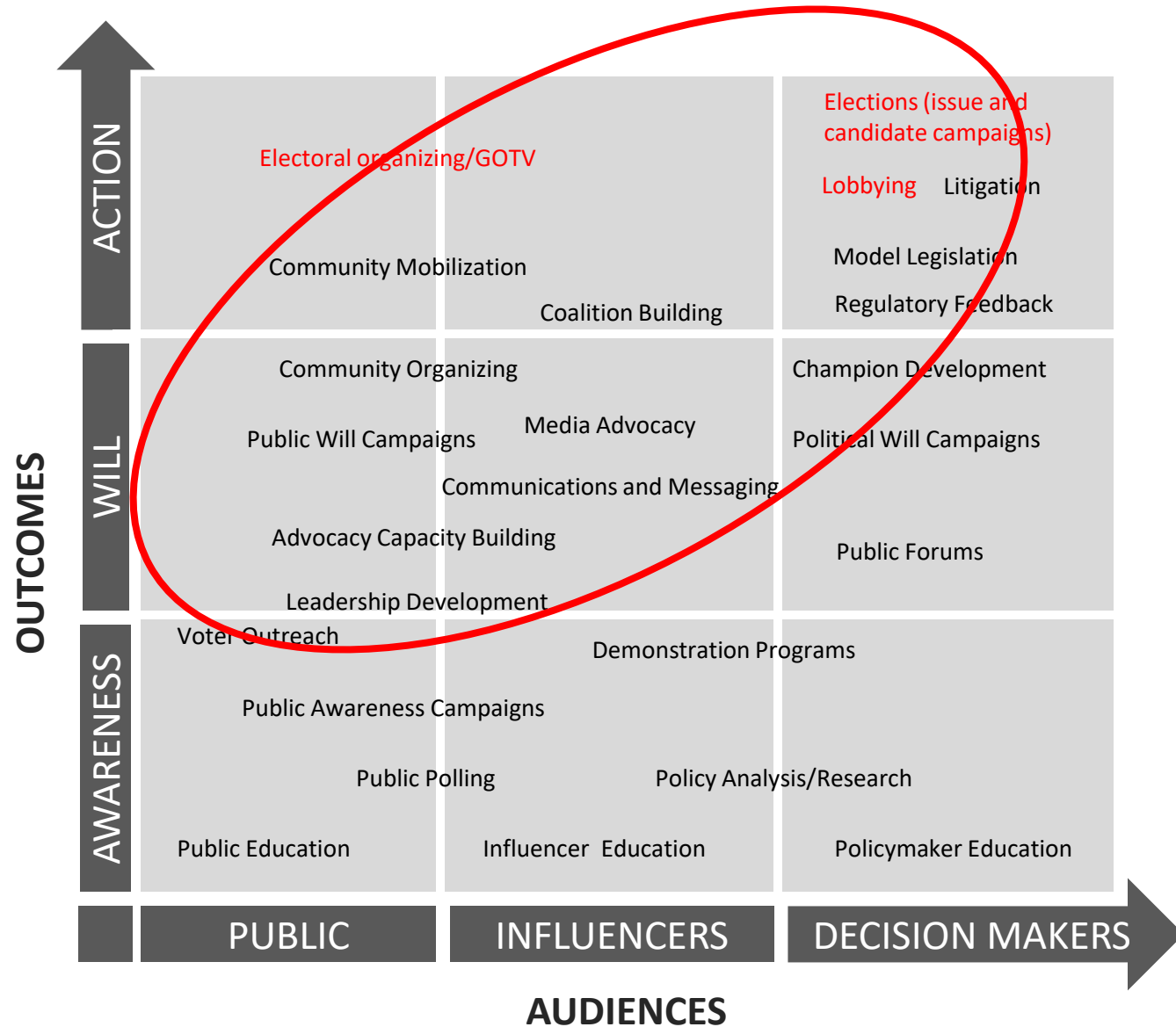


- Social welfare missions
- Most (c)(4)s do not engage in political activities
- Issue focused, partisan activities
- Affiliated orgs: (c)(3), PACs

“It’s the combination of the two components—issue-based advocacy and ability to engage in the political process—that makes (c)(4) organizations particularly potent in shaping policy outcomes.”

—*Alliance for Justice*

# 501(c)4 as Part of a Strategy and Ecosystem



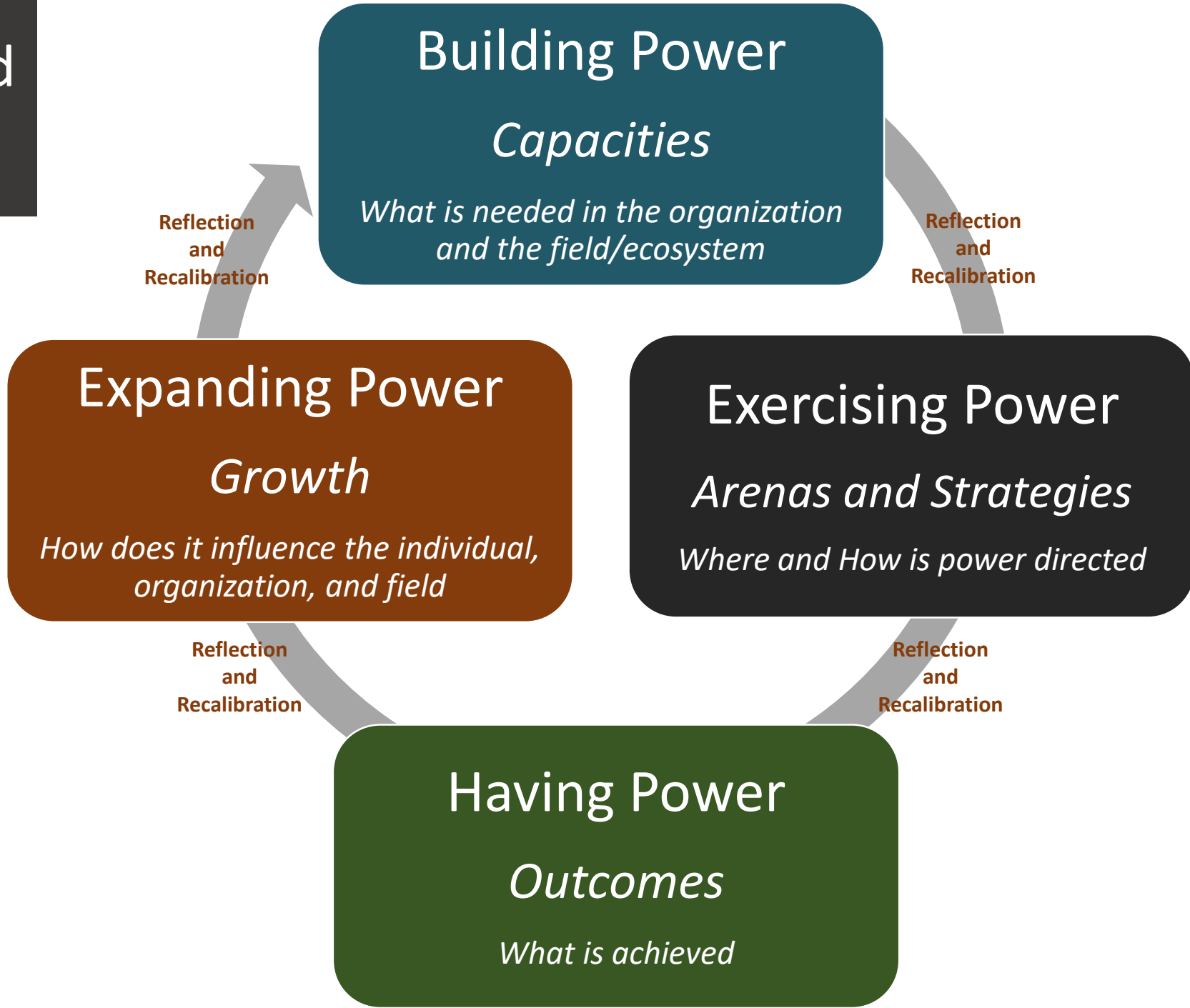


**Outcomes:**  
Beyond the  
electoral and  
legislative  
WINS

“Power properly understood is nothing but the ability to achieve purpose. It is the strength required to bring about social, political and economic change.”

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

# 501(c)4 To Build Power



## Building Power *Capacities*

What types of capacities are needed and built in both the organization and the field (e.g., scope and scale of members, coalition partners, expertise, resources, skills, and capacities related to grassroots organizing, electoral organizing, and legislative and administrative advocacy)?

## Exercising Power *Arenas & Strategies*

Where and how is power directed with regard to targets (legislative, administrative, judicial, electoral, cultural, and economic) and actions and activities (e.g., legislative advocacy, administrative and systems change advocacy, lobbying, grassroots organizing and base building, legal advocacy and litigation, electoral advocacy, research and policy analyses, and communications and messaging)?

## Having Power *Outcomes*

What are the outcomes of power (e.g., issue and candidate campaign victories, policy and systems changes, narrative change, and shifts in political dynamics)?

## Expanding Power *Growth*

How do the wins and losses affect the individual, the organization, and the field/infrastructure (e.g. new community leaders, perceptions of the organization as a power broker, a threat, and/or a go-to; the growth of the organization's base and membership, and geographic reach; and growth of the field with regard to number of partners, constituencies, and capacities)?

## Reflection and Recalibration

How do organizations translate their experiences in each phase into capacity changes and additional tactical and strategic modifications?



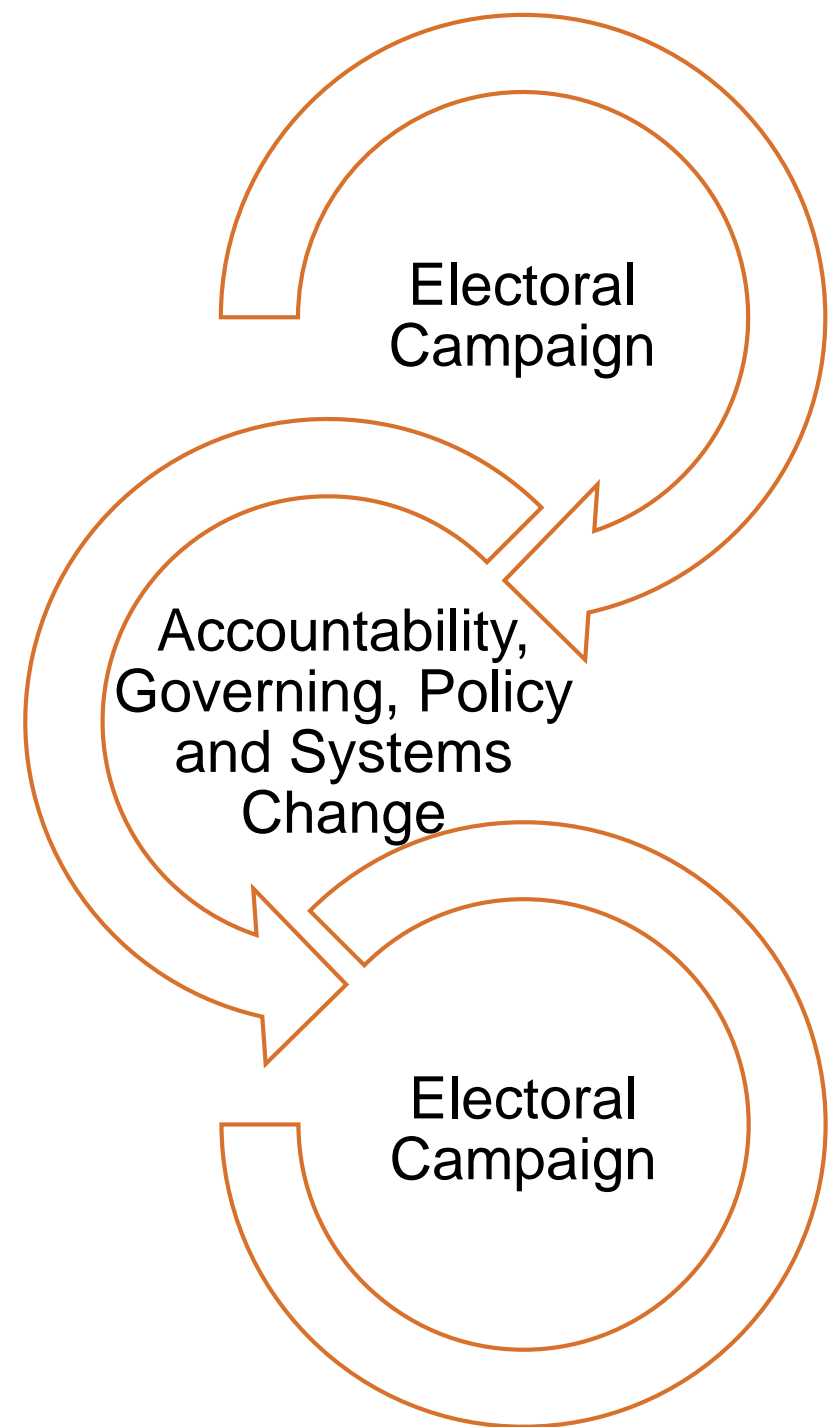
# 501(c)4 Wins Leveraged As Political Capital

“We are an organization that very strategically picks when to endorse candidates and when to put muscle behind those endorsements, and then **we work to make sure you keep your word. If you don’t, we will endorse someone else next time.**”

—Michelle Tremillo, *Texas Organizing Project*

“Mass incarceration was a clear issue identified by our base. We shifted full scale into putting all this energy into getting Kim Foxx elected to make change on these issues. **Now we are shifting that electoral energy back into the issue** work to engage the folks that worked on the election into a longer-term campaign on support and accountability of Kim Foxx.”

—Will Tanzman, *The People’s Lobby*



# ELEMENTS OF HIGH CAPACITY 501(c)(4) ORGANIZATIONS

Margaret Post 2019

