

# Deliberative Processes and Healthy Public Policies

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Centre de collaboration nationale  
sur les politiques publiques et la santé  
National Collaborating Centre  
for Healthy Public Policy

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Québec 

# Adopting healthy public policies

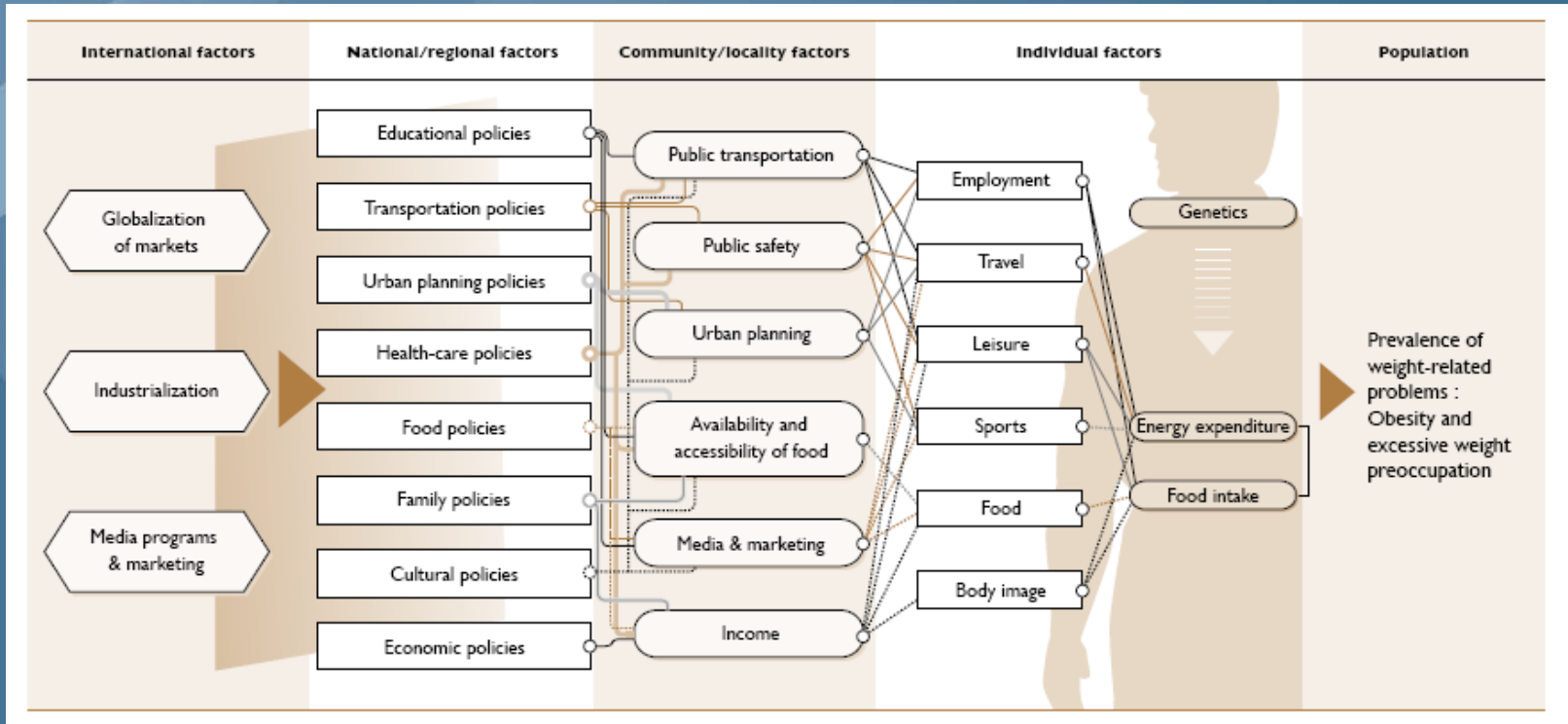
Not a mechanical process of matching well-defined problems to well-defined solutions



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# Complex problems

e.g. Obesity

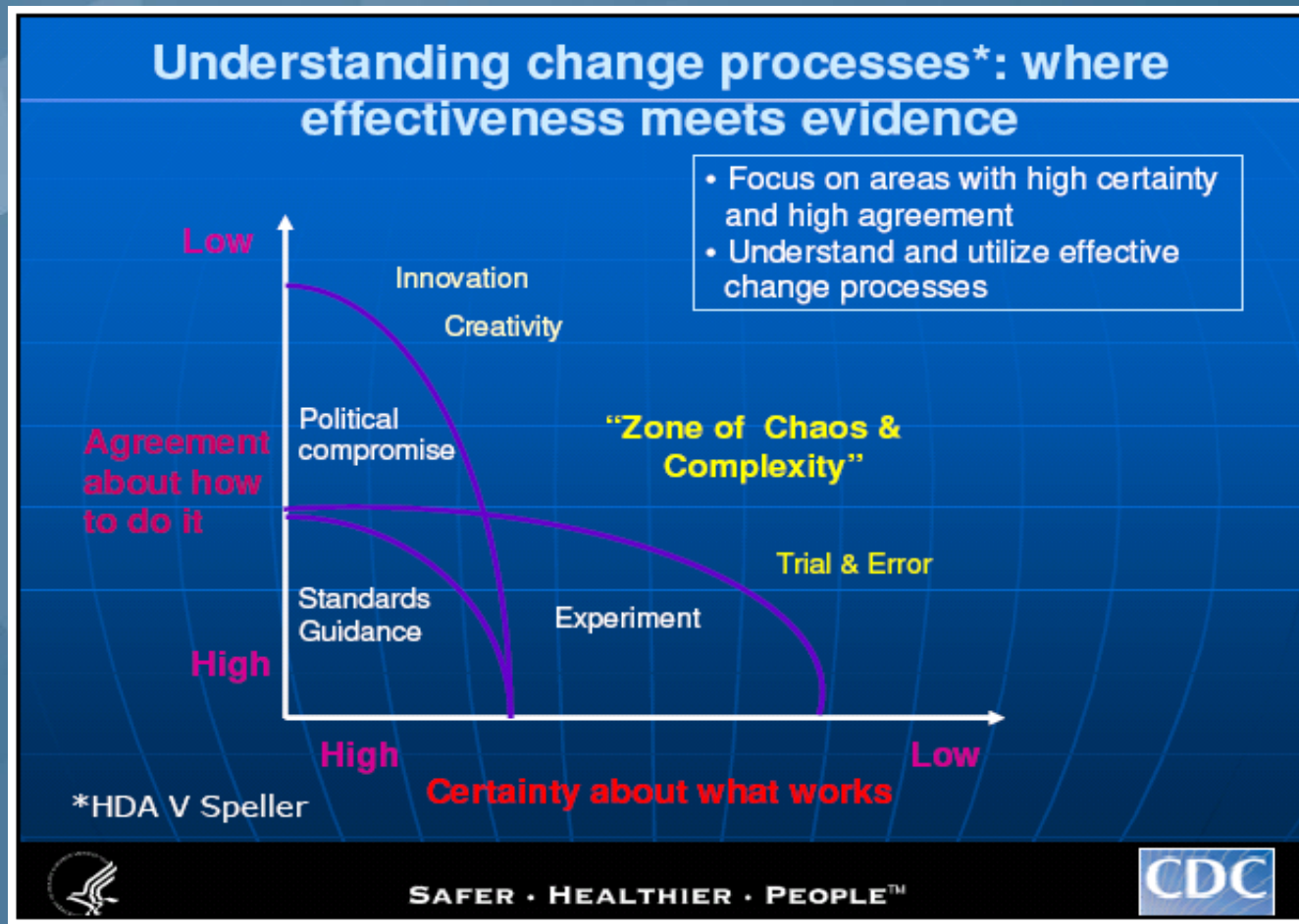


Source : Groupe de travail provincial sur la problématique du poids (2004). *Les problèmes liés au poids au Québec: Appel à la mobilisation*, ASPQ Éditions, p. 12.



# “Zones of chaos and complexity”

Source: McQueen DV. (2006) based on the work of Ralph D. Stacey



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# Deliberation

1. The act or process of deliberating.
2. Discussion and consideration of all sides of an issue.
3. Thoughtfulness in decision or action.
4. Leisureliness in motion or manner

Source: American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Online



# Deliberative processes

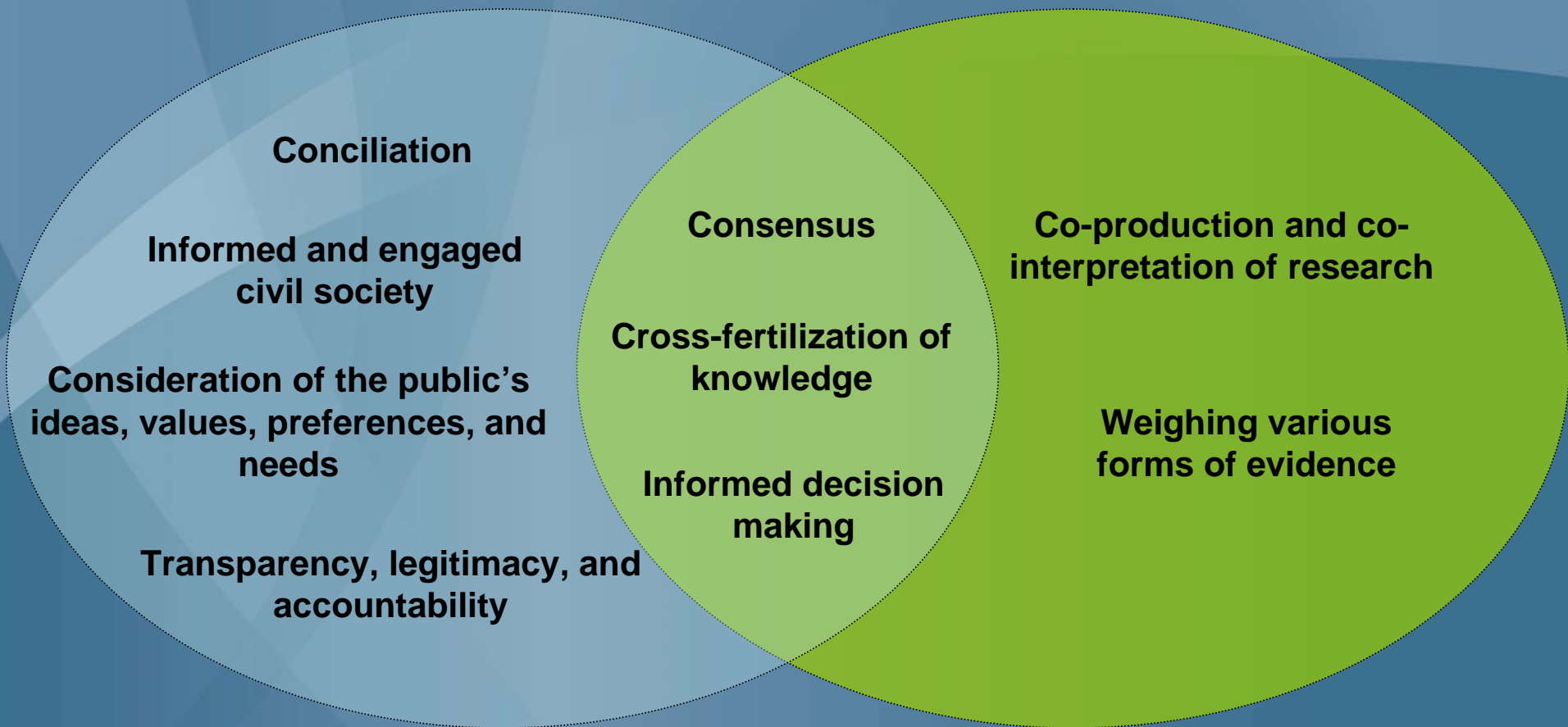
Processes allowing a group of actors to exchange information, critically examine an issue, and achieve a rationally motivated agreement that will inform decision-making



# Two deliberative approaches

1. Democratic governance
2. Application of research-based knowledge





**Conciliation**

**Informed and engaged  
civil society**

**Consideration of the public's  
ideas, values, preferences, and  
needs**

**Transparency, legitimacy, and  
accountability**

**Consensus**

**Cross-fertilization of  
knowledge**

**Informed decision  
making**

**Co-production and co-  
interpretation of research**

**Weighing various  
forms of evidence**

**Democratic  
governance**

**Application of research-  
based knowledge**







[www.nifi.org](http://www.nifi.org)

## Goal

Help people of diverse views find common ground for action on important issues (e.g. health, illegal drugs, social security, juvenile crime, and education)

## Format

Structured deliberative discussions led by trained moderators

Small study circles held in peoples' homes to large community gatherings modeled on New England town meetings

Nonpartisan issue books serve as a starting point to group deliberations



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# NIH Consensus Development Program



<http://consensus.nih.gov>

## Goal

Evaluate the available scientific information on a biomedical issue and develop a statement that advances understanding of the issue under consideration

## Format

Independent and broad-based panel composed of experts from non-advocacy group

Panel listens to the scientific data presented by invited experts and comments from the general public

Panel weighs the information and prepare a statement that addresses a set of predetermined questions



# A lot of promising efforts...

But little evidence of effectiveness



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“Is there **any scientific evidence** that deliberative processes actually work? The short answer is **‘not much’**. A lot of the literature on deliberative processes in healthcare has been and continues to be **advocacy rather than reports of the effectiveness** of well-defined processes.”

(Culyer and Lomas, 2006)



# Challenges to deliberation

1. Limited time and resources
2. Complex group dynamics
3. Changing traditional practices



# Small group activities

1. Key issues in developing deliberative processes
2. Effectiveness of deliberative processes
3. Scenarios



# Contact info

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