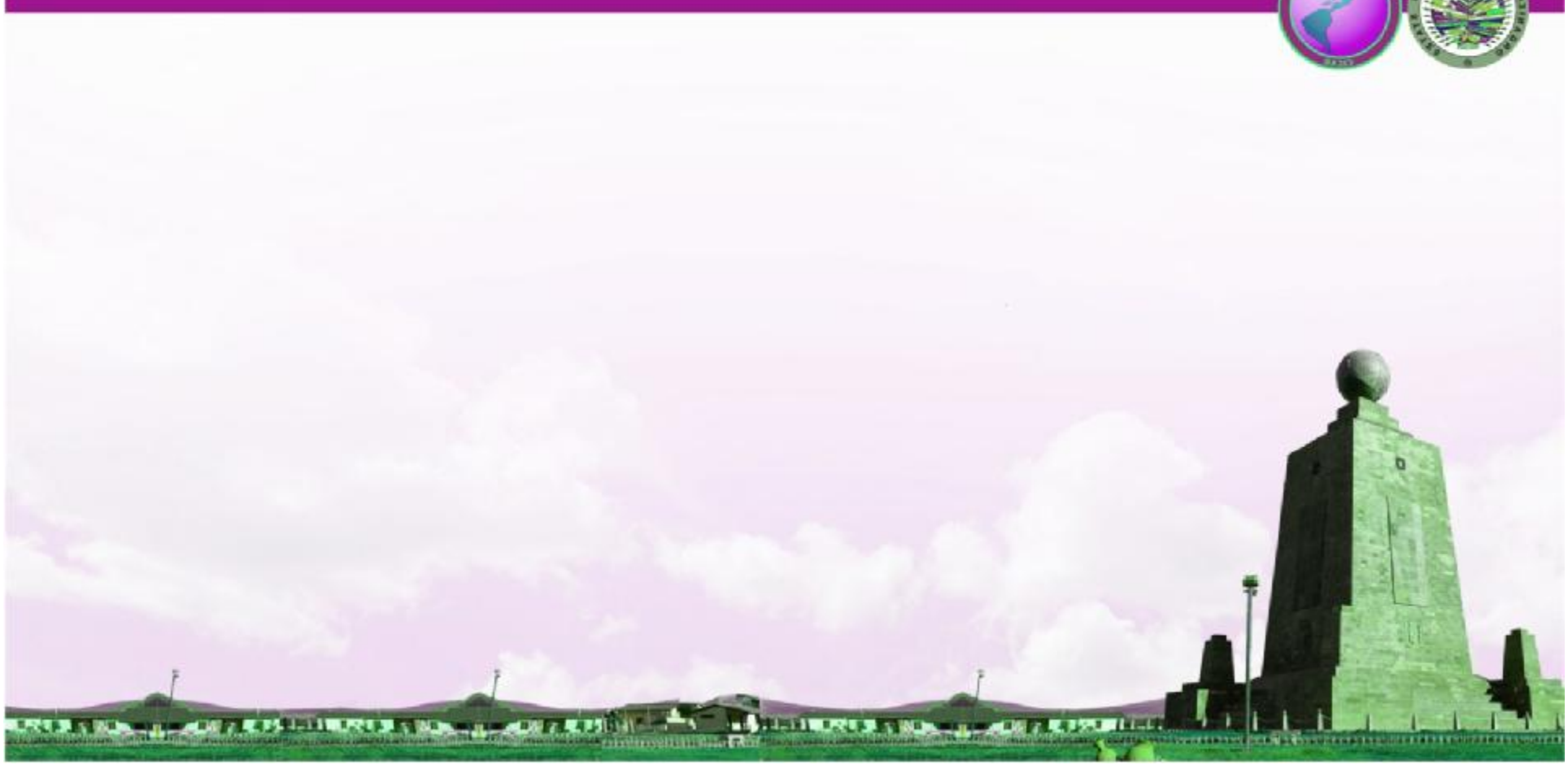
CICAD Meeting with Univertities in the Americas on the Drug Phenomenon from a Scientific Evidence Perspective

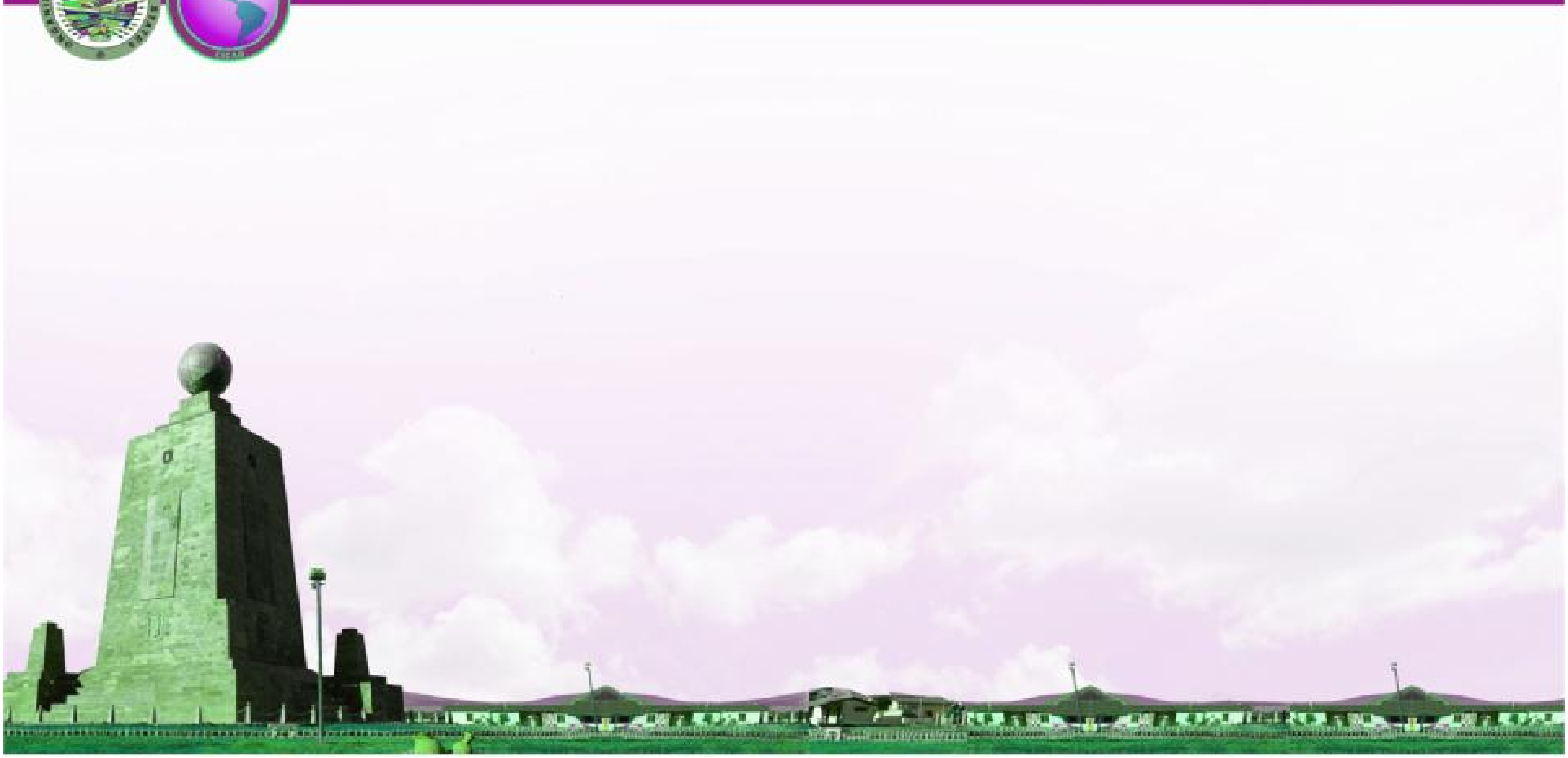
COMPLEXITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

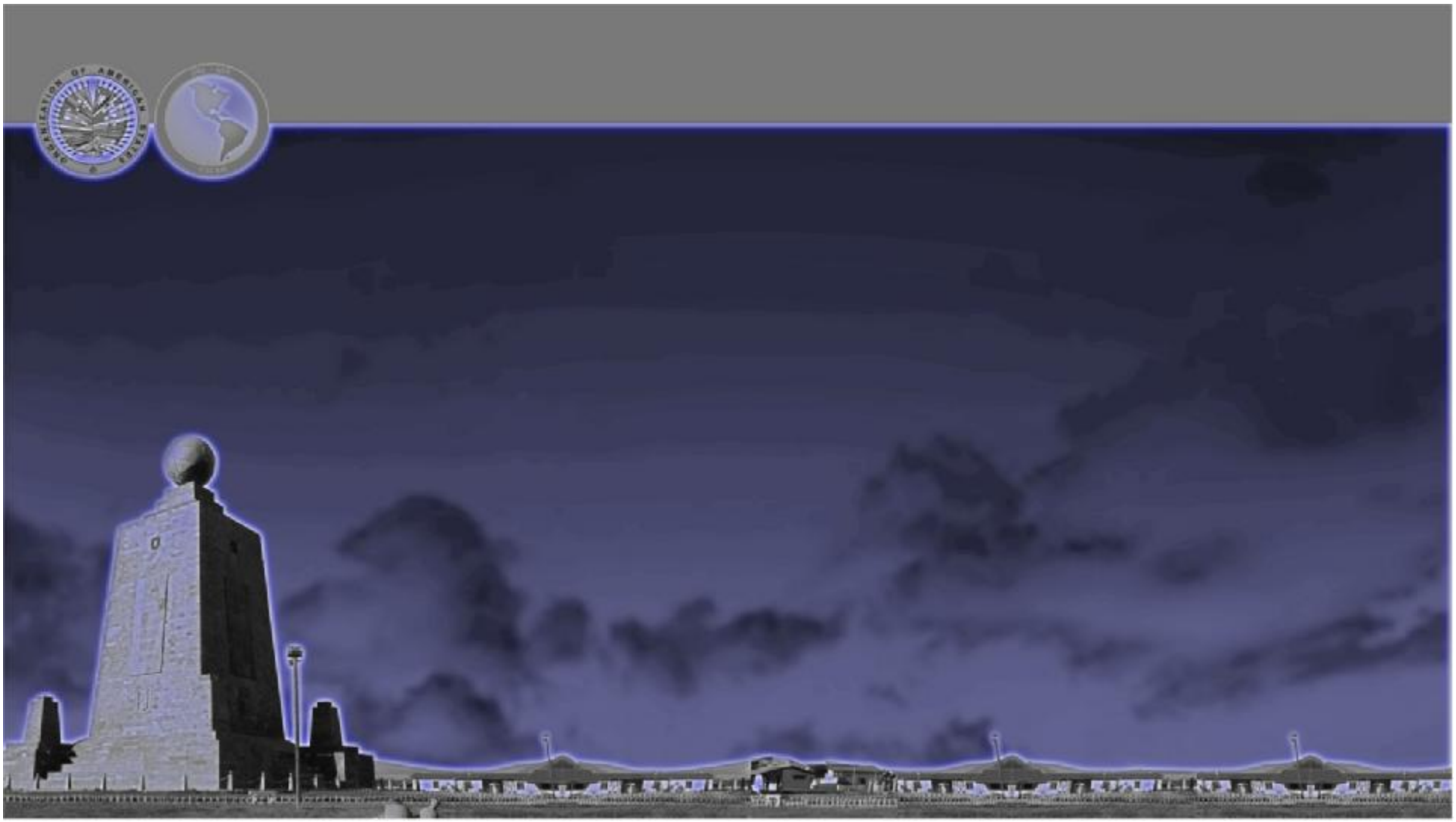
Key aspects for the development of a more effective drug policy

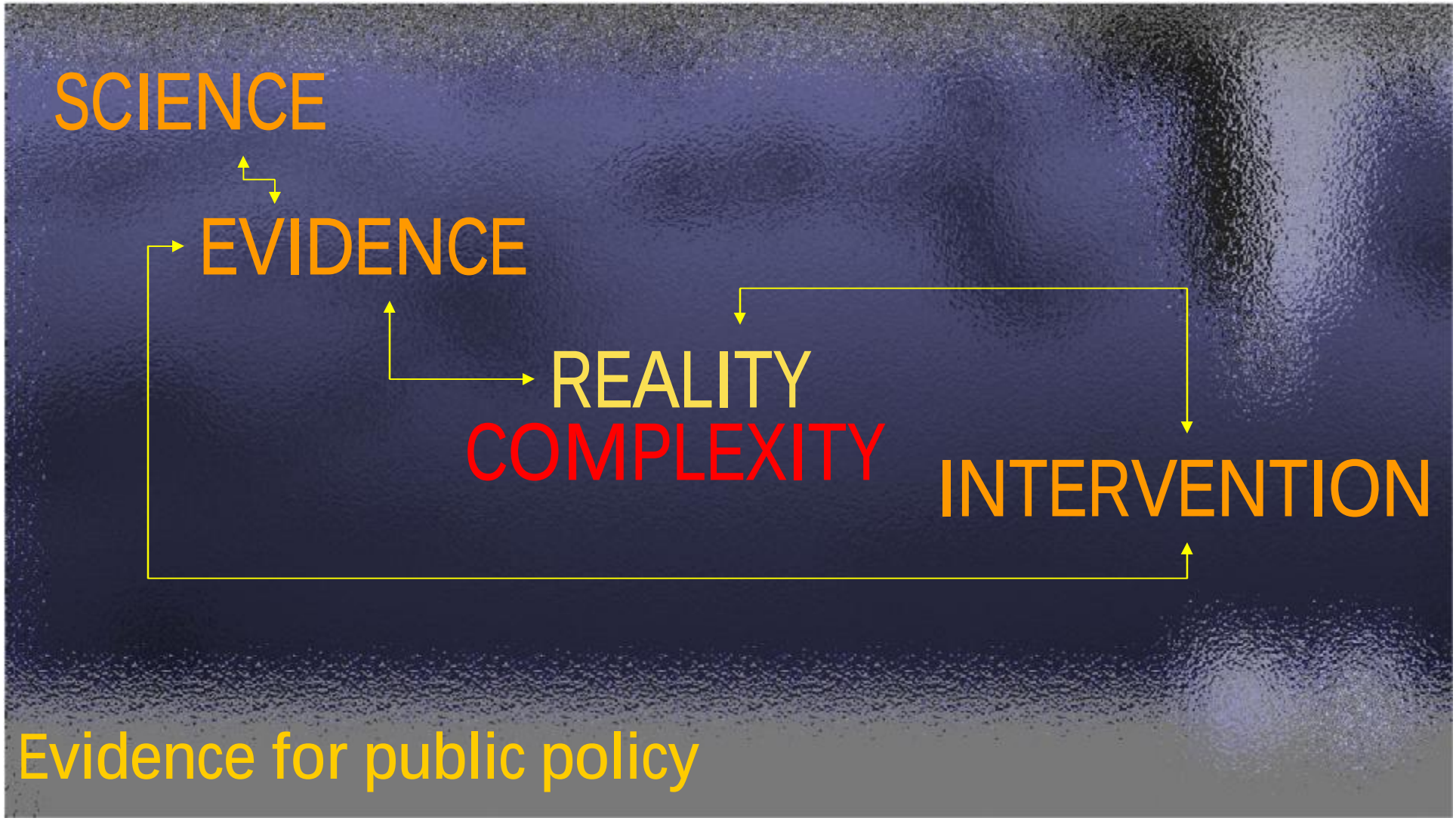
Javier Sagredo, Chief Institutional Strengthening Section, CICAD/OAS

September 12-14, 2012








SCIENCE
EVIDENCE
REALITY
COMPLEXITY
INTERVENTION
Evidence for public policy

- Information ≠ evidence.
- Little evidence.
- Poor participation of academic and scientific community.
- Plain, limited and sectorial approaches.

Evidence for public policy

- Focus on controversial and simple cause-effect approaches: drug use-violence, drug use-crime, drugs-narco-trafficking, drugs-dependence, drugs-mental health, drugs-social defragmentation.
- Drugs are an essential part of everyday life, together and in interaction with other phenomena: love/violence, peace/conflict, legality/crime, poverty/wealth, health/disease,...

Evidence for drug policy

COMPLEX
REALITY
+
SIMPLE
APPROACH
=
SIMPLE
SOLUTION
≤
0
Evidence for drug policy

- Simple solutions = radical policy.
- Efficacy curve becomes more rigid.
- Negative effects felt on other fields covered by other policies.

Evidence for drug policy

- Not based on evidence but on intuition and perceptions.
- Affected by strong social beliefs.
- Based on “fear of drugs, of those linked to them, of disease, of crime, of violence.
- Inadequate tools and insufficient and unbalanced resources.
- Direct impact on electoral logic.
- Similar prescriptions for everyone.

Present drug policy

DRUG USE

- "Sick"or "deviant" paradigm.
- Solution = profilaxis, sanitary tools, directed social insertion.
- Social beliefs: exclusion, internment, indifference (God & the stick).
- Lack of ways for social integration.
- Main impact on most vulnerable groups.
- Lack of assumption of the problem: policitians, professionals, civil servants, academia, media, society as a whole.
- Strong human right abuses and problems to access health and social services.

Present drug policy

DRUG SUPPLY

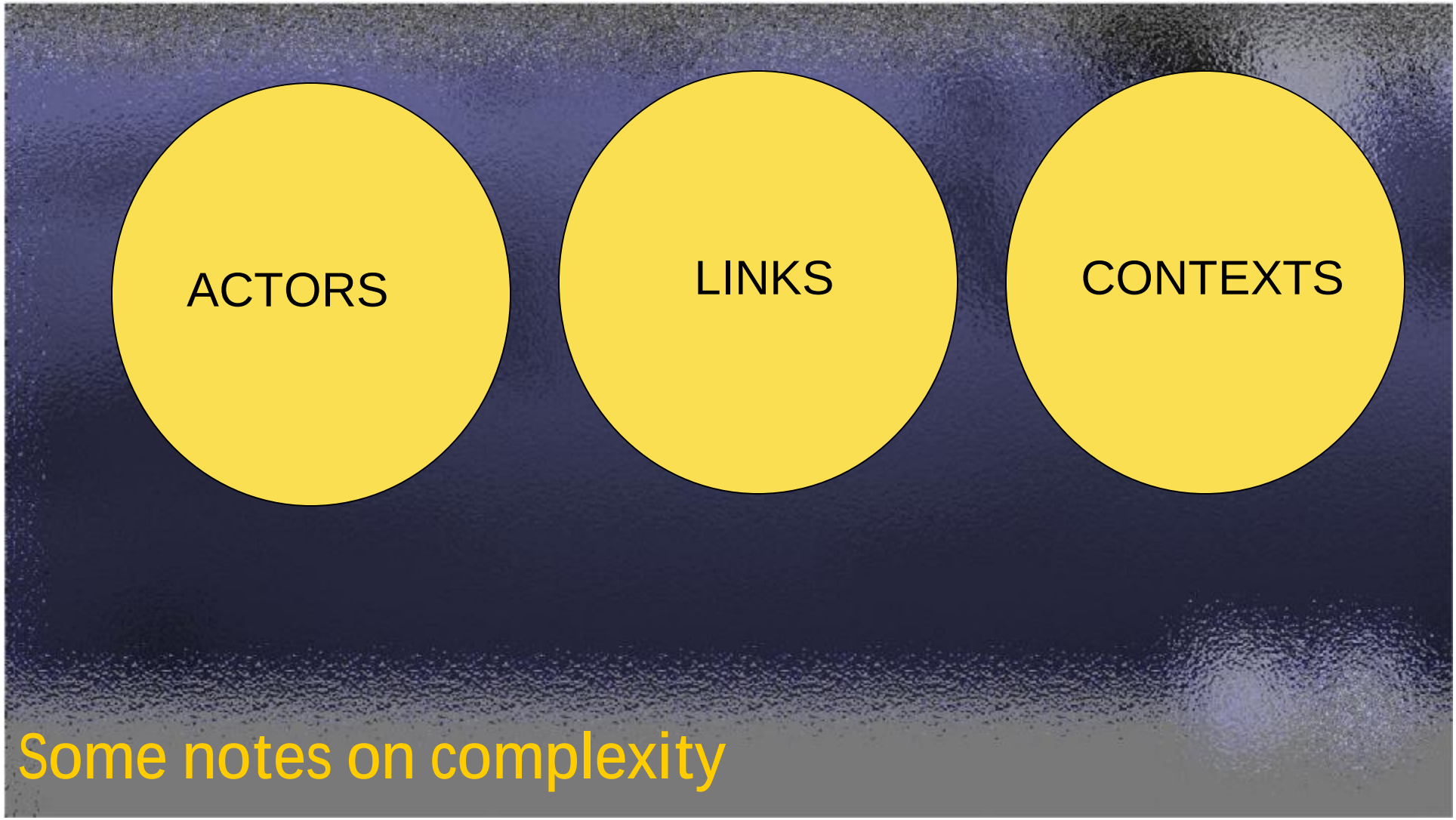
- "Criminal" paradigm.
- Solution = repression, penal law protagonism.
- Social beliefs: exclusion, internment, indifference (Justice & stick).
- Lack of ways for social integration. Prisons as crime universities, abuse, disease, death.
- Main impact on vulnerable groups.
- Lack of assumption of the problem: policitians, professionals, civil servants, academia, media, society as a whole.
- Strong human right abuses and problems to access health and social services.

Present drug policy

SUMMING UP...

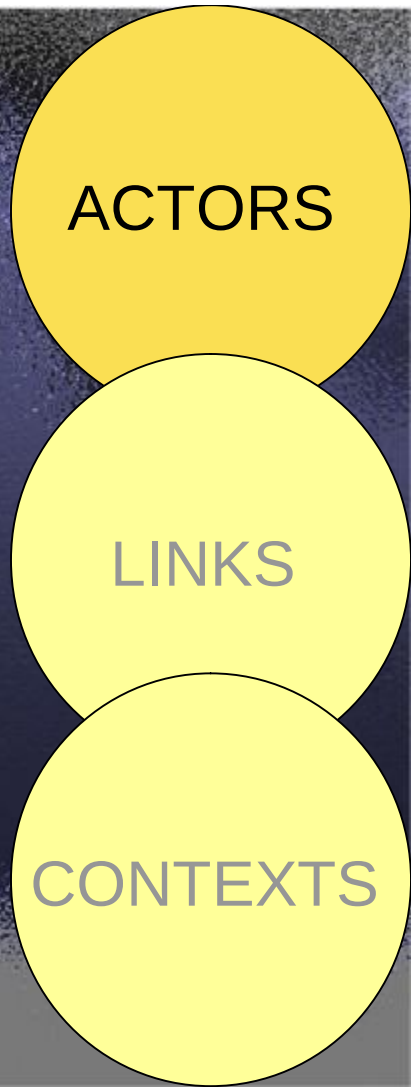
- Bad diagnosis, wrong cause-effect relations established.
- Inadequate or non existant tools.
- “Laissez-faire” policy, not doing anything.
- Limited resources.
- Negative or poor results.
- “Business going” and “trash controlled”.
- Poverty punishment.
- Work not done and everyone looking away, hoping it does not affect us.

Present drug policy

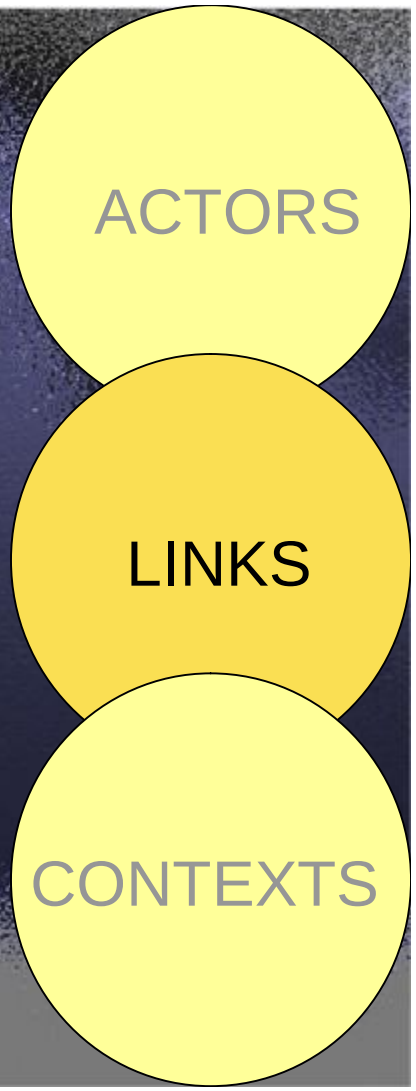

ACTORS
LINKS
CONTEXTS
Some notes on complexity

Some notes on complexity

- Individuals, families, groups, communities, society.
- Need to pay attention to roles:
  - Diversity of actors in the demand and supply chains.
  - Production, trafficking and use on one side, and control and fiscalization on the other.
- Actors generate and suffer problems.
- In-depth look at every actor's characteristics.



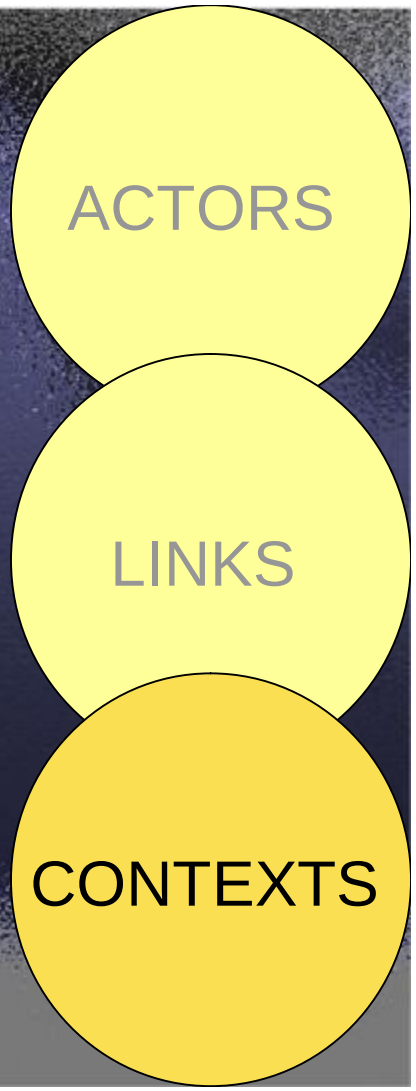
- In-depth look at social practices of people's relationship to drugs.
- Special attention to those social practices of interest for public policy because they "weaken people's social integration processes".



Some notes on complexity

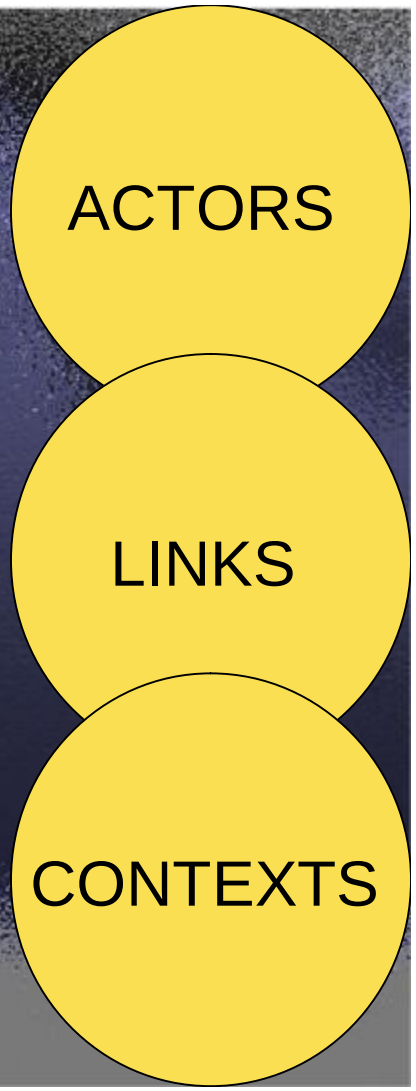
- In-depth study of variables linked to contexts.
- Places, spaces, cultures, relationships…
- Diversity of benefits, meanings, significances, impacts.

Some notes on complexity



Some notes on complexity

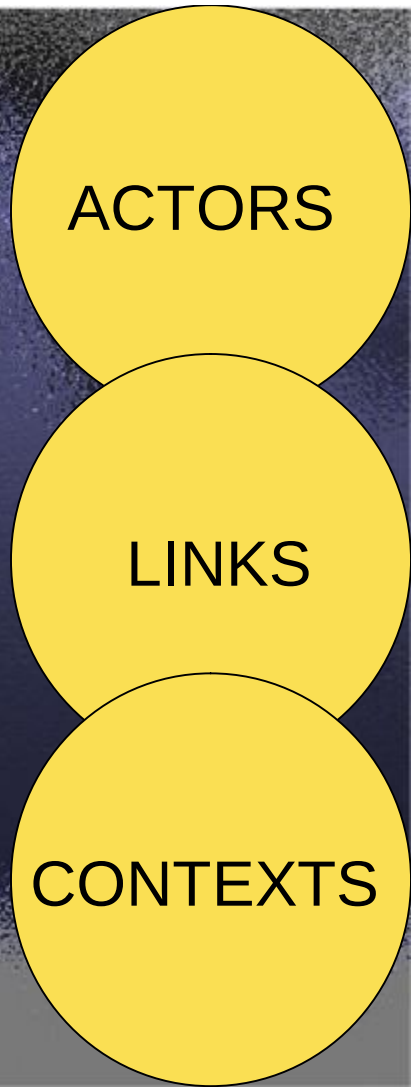
- Need to integrate all variables.
- Special attention to variable's interactions of interest for public policy.
- Need to adapt interventions to complexity.
- Theory of networking allows for a better understanding that takes into account this complex entanglement of relationships that, on one hand, build the drug phenomenon and, on the other hand, the needed changes.



What is the objective of public policy within modern and democratic societies?

To defend everyone's interest, generating social integration processes for all citizens, promoting human development within an ethical and human rights framework.

Drug policy priorities



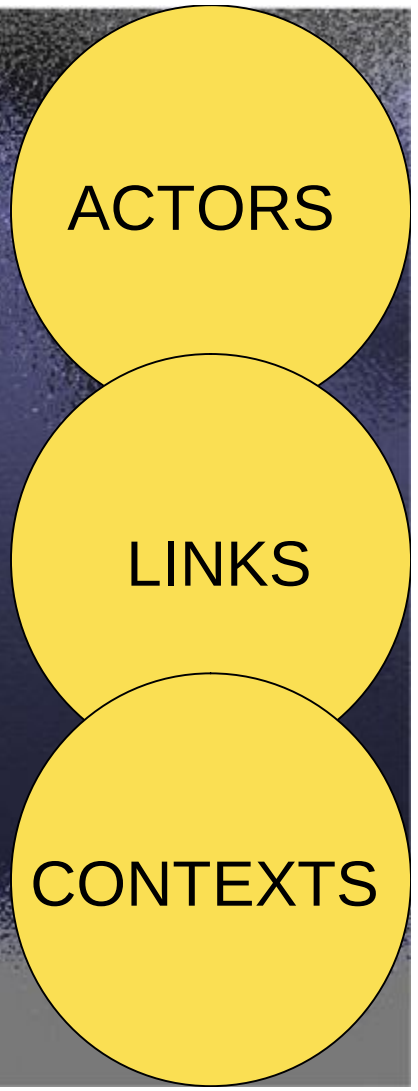
Initial statement

No one is spared

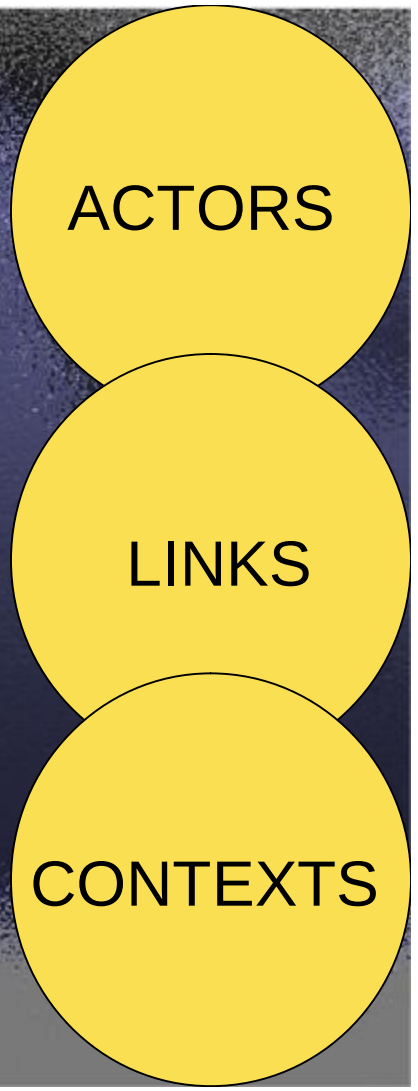
We all are, in a way or another, integrated within society.

There are ways to be socially integrated which are more or less affirmative for human and social development.

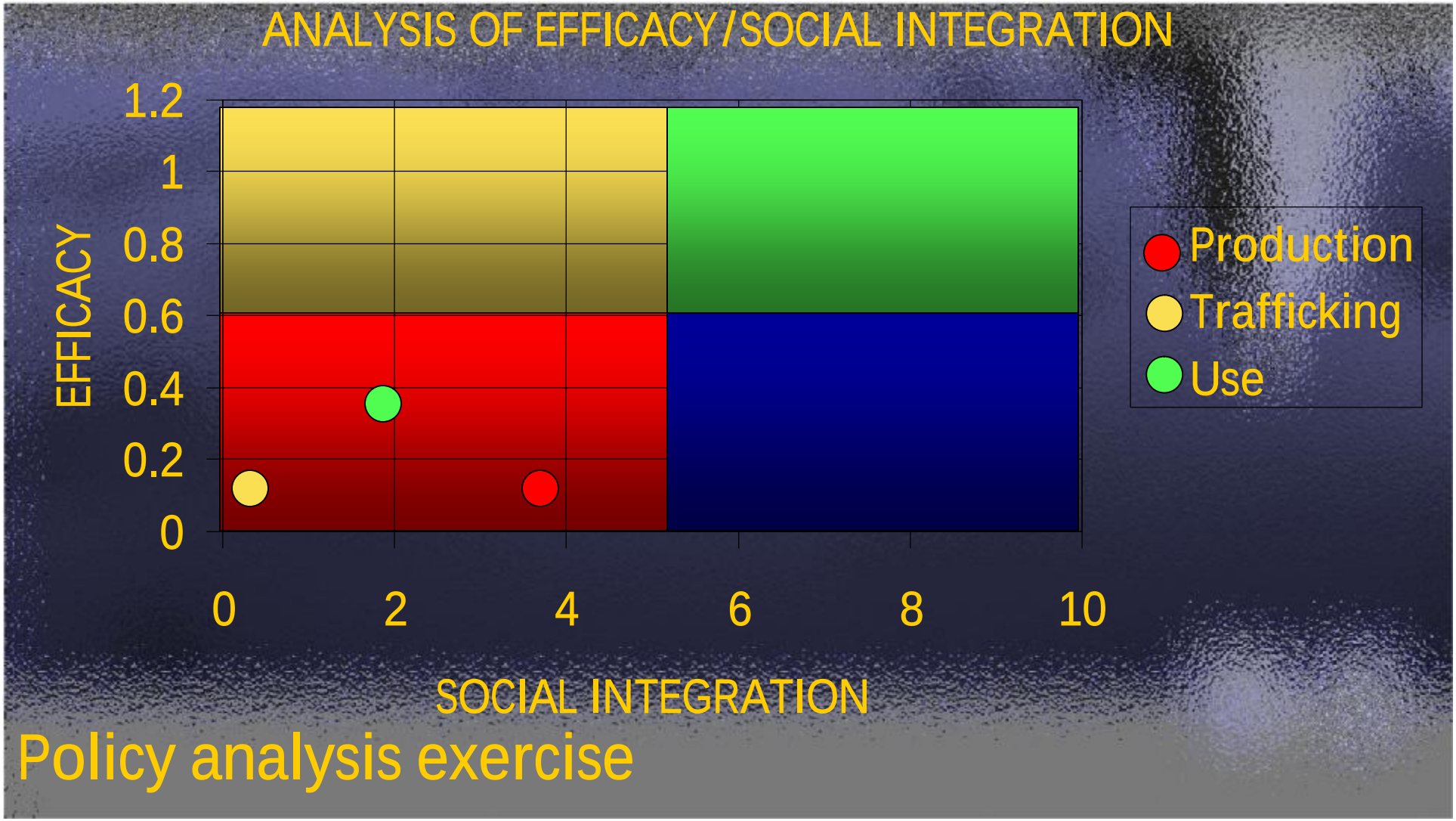
Drug policy priorities



- Need to generate more affirmative ways for individuals, families, groups and communities to be socially integrated
- We have to look at actors, links and contexts to identify those with a greater risk (vulnerability-threat) and to treat them adequately within their complexity.



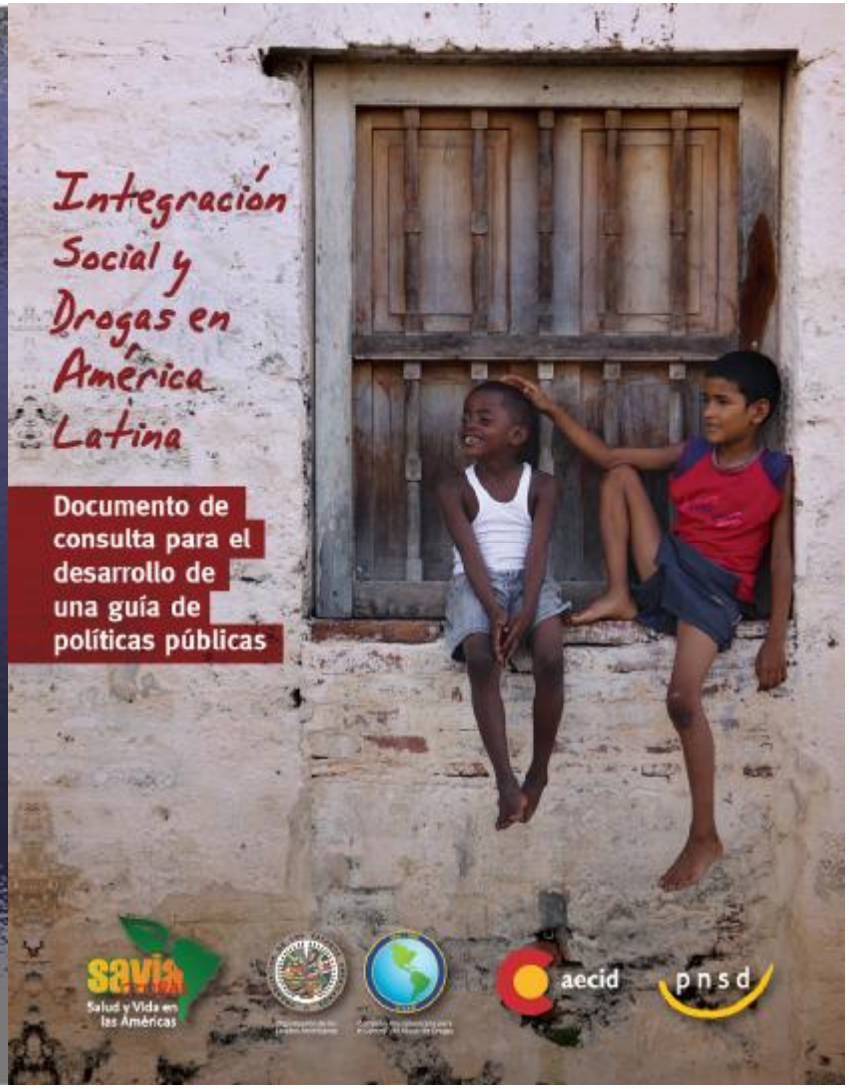
Drug policy priorities



Policy analysis exercise

Public policy guide on social integration and drugs

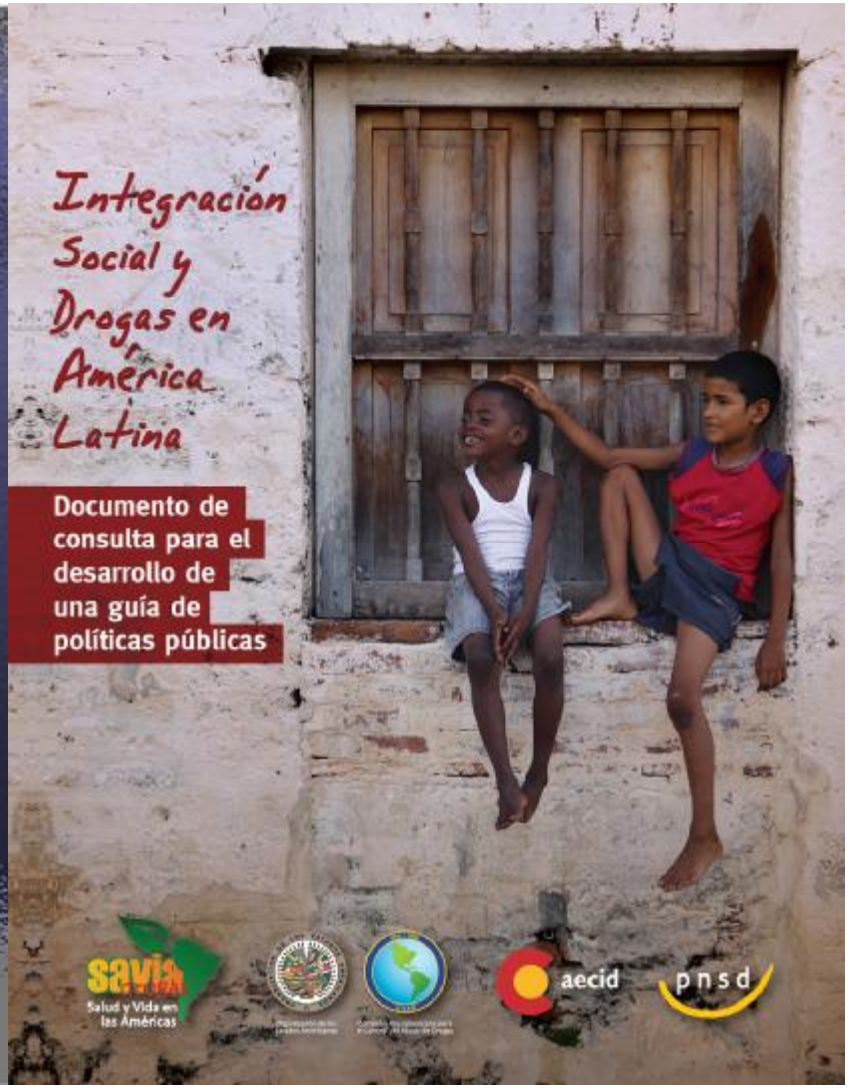
- Based on the 2010 Hemispheric Drug Strategy.
- Part of CICAD's Working Plan on Social Integration and of the SAVIA (Salud y Vida en las Américas) project.
- Wants to offer drug, social and development policy makers a frame of reference and a set of tools for the development of policy and programs on social integration for populations linked or at risk of being linked to drugs.



It will include:

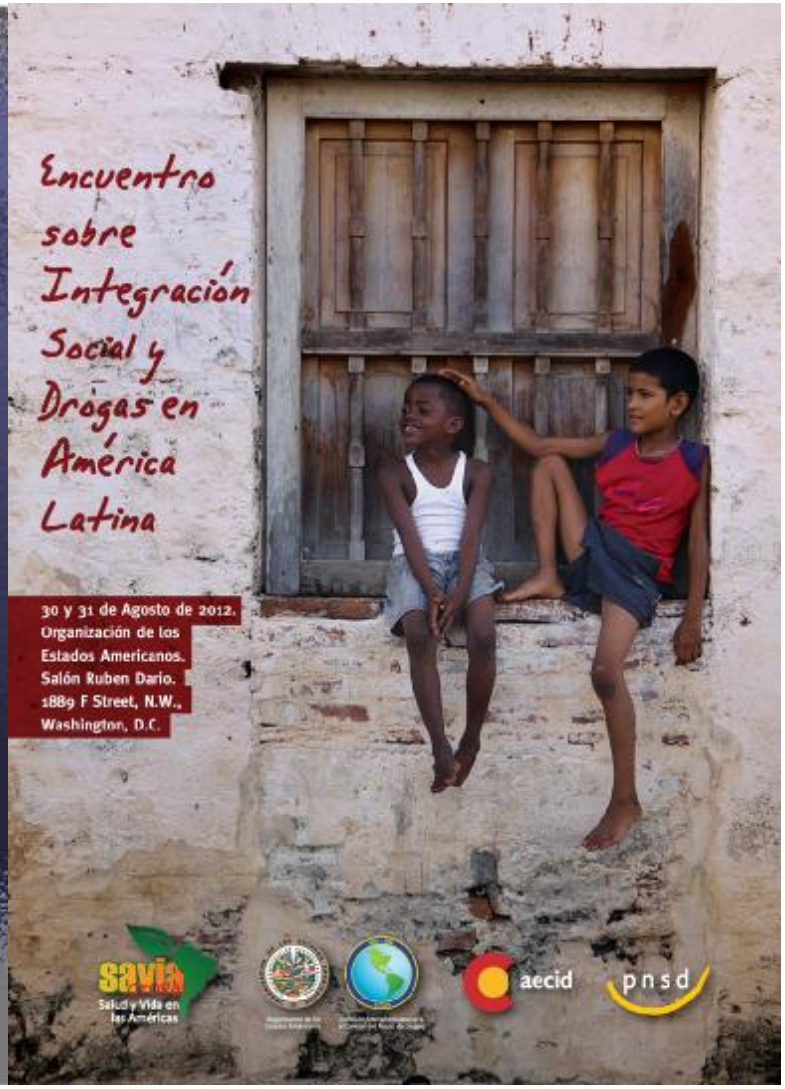
- Institutional and regulatory framework.
- Policy management framework.
- Approach perspectives and areas of intervention.
- Intervention modalities.
- Monitoring, evaluation and documentation mechanisms.
- Best practices on policy-making.

Public policy guide on social integration and drugs



- Scientific literature revision and drafting of first two chapters.
- First consultation meetings with development agencies and other experts. Revision on:
  - Social integration concept.
  - Actors, contexts and links of people to drugs.
  - Present policies' analysis, their limits and gaps.

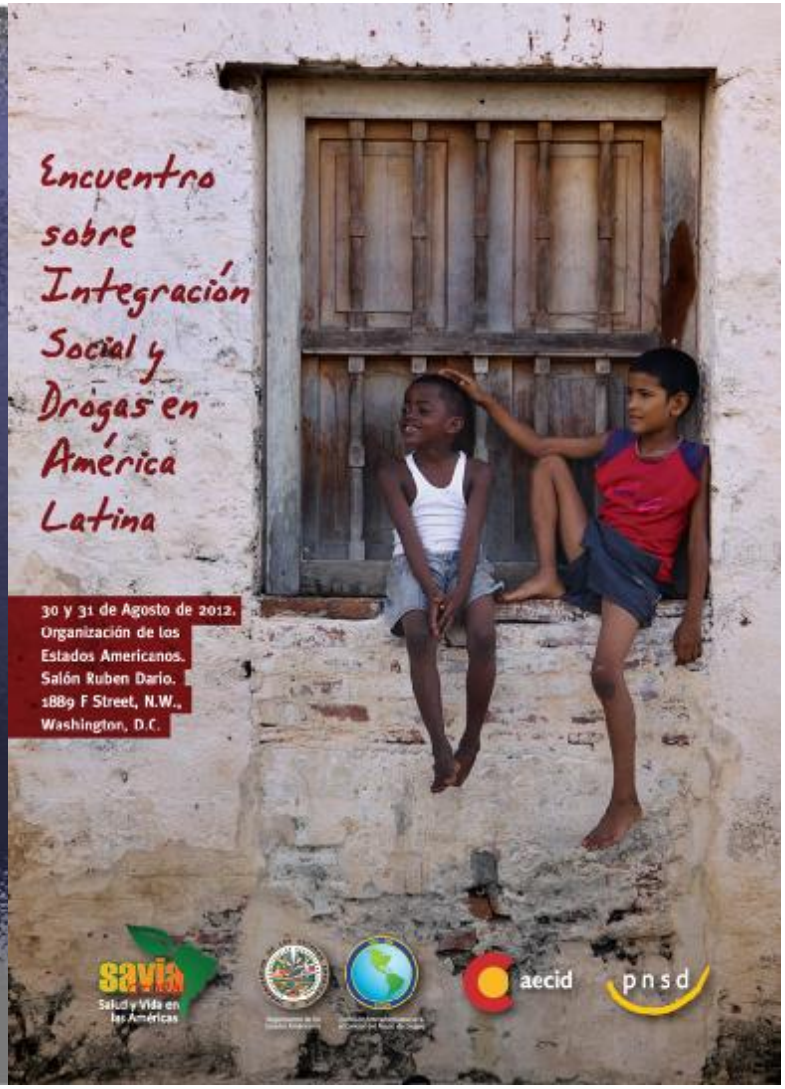
Working meeting on social integration and drugs in LA



Proposal for the participants of this meeting

Help us with the revision of the draft document and send comments to CICAD.

Working meeting on social integration and drugs in LA



Thank you

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