



Creating Adaptive Policies

A Guide for Policy-making in an Uncertain World

CSIN 2010 Conference

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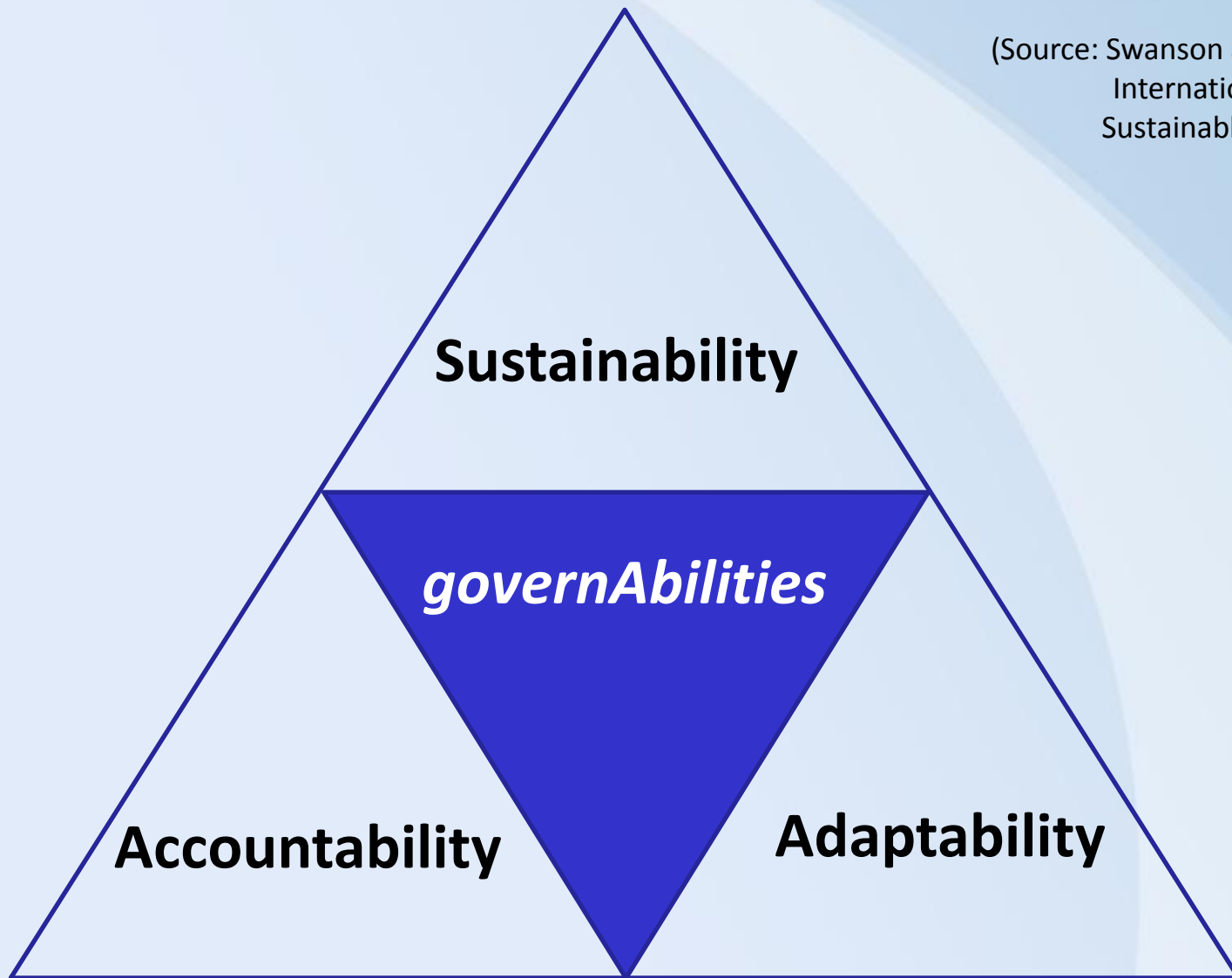
March 2nd 2010

GABLE @OFFTOSMAIL



OBJECTS IN MIRROR ARE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR

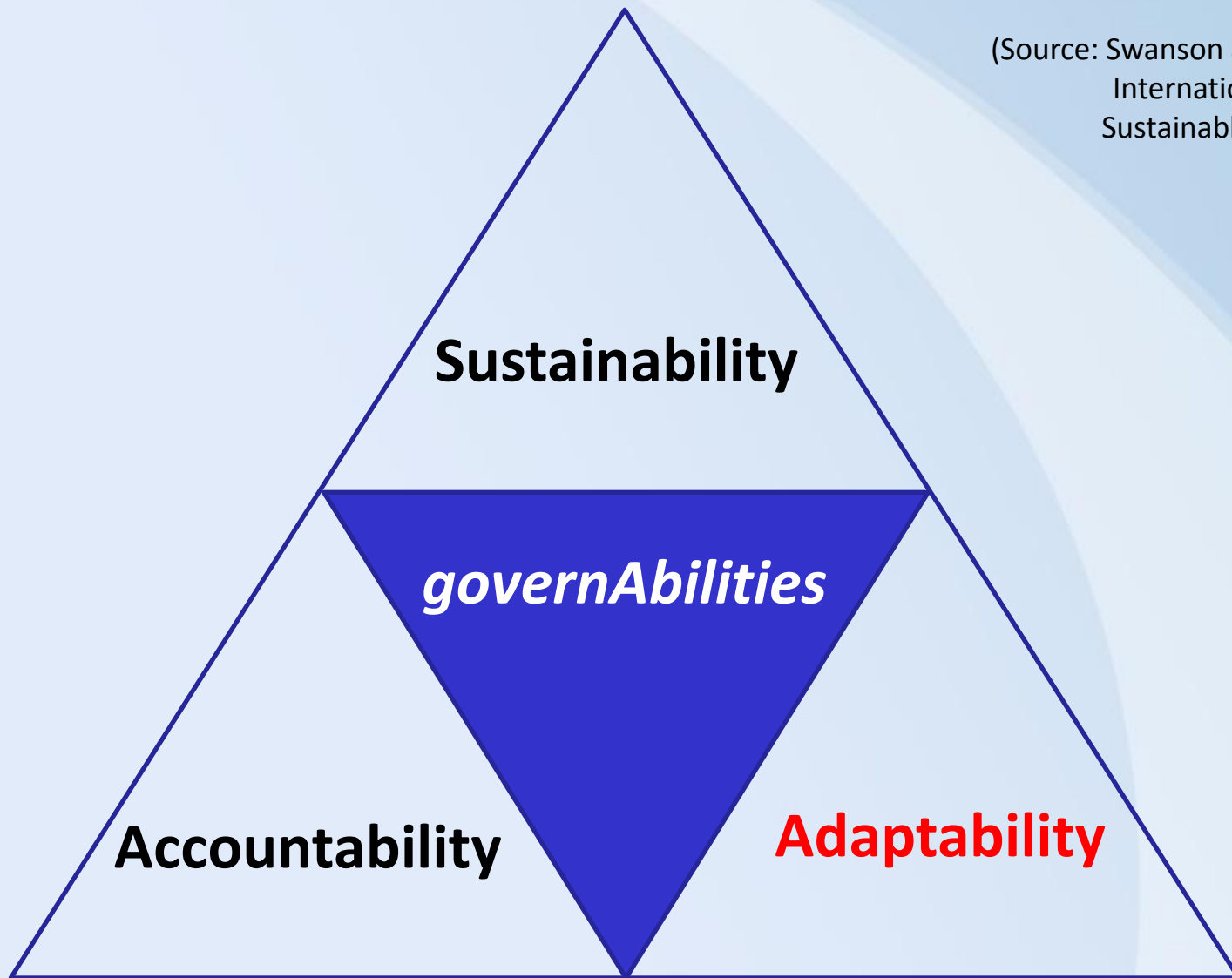
(Source: Swanson and Pinter 2009,
International Institute for
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*Core Abilities of Government
and Business*

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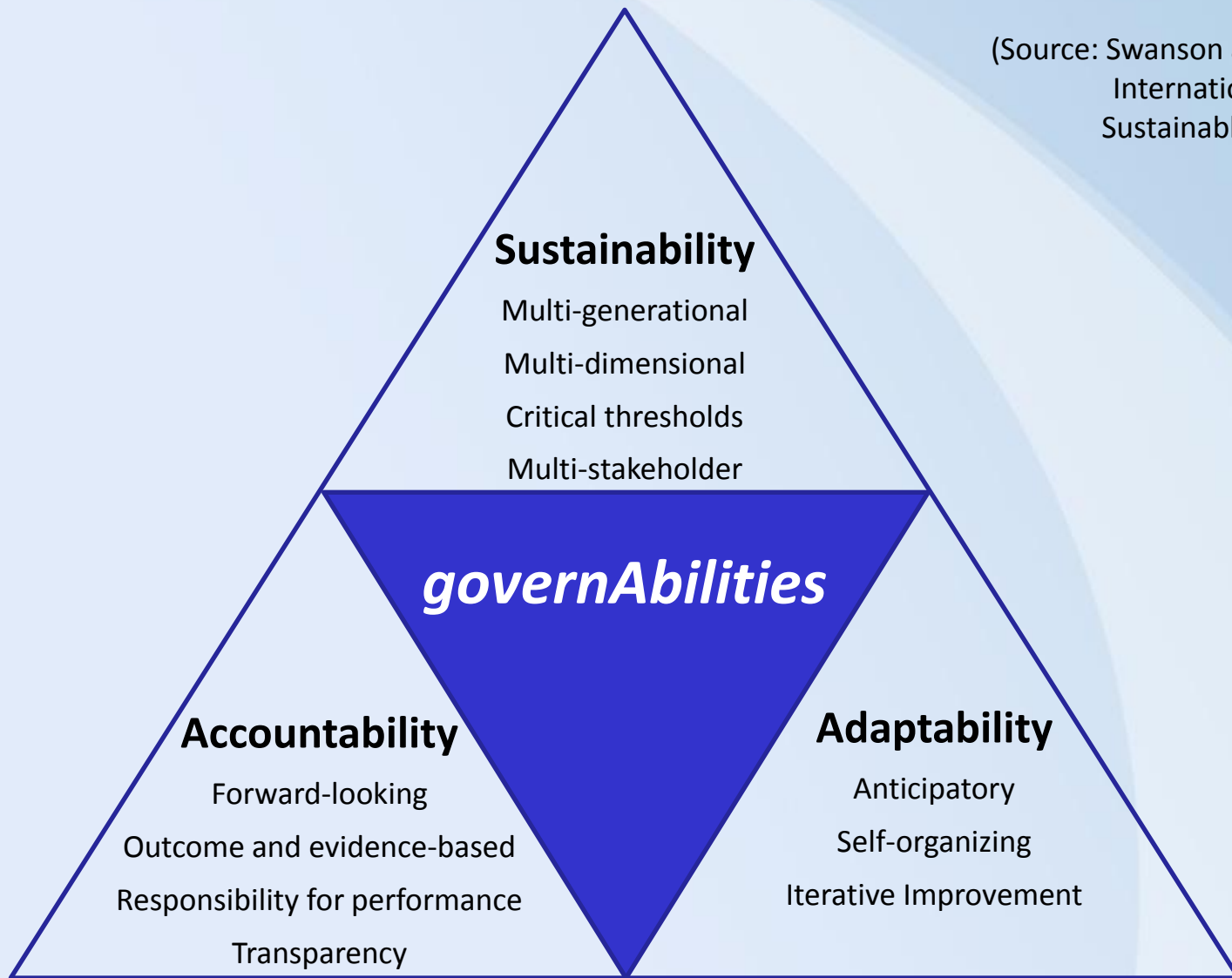
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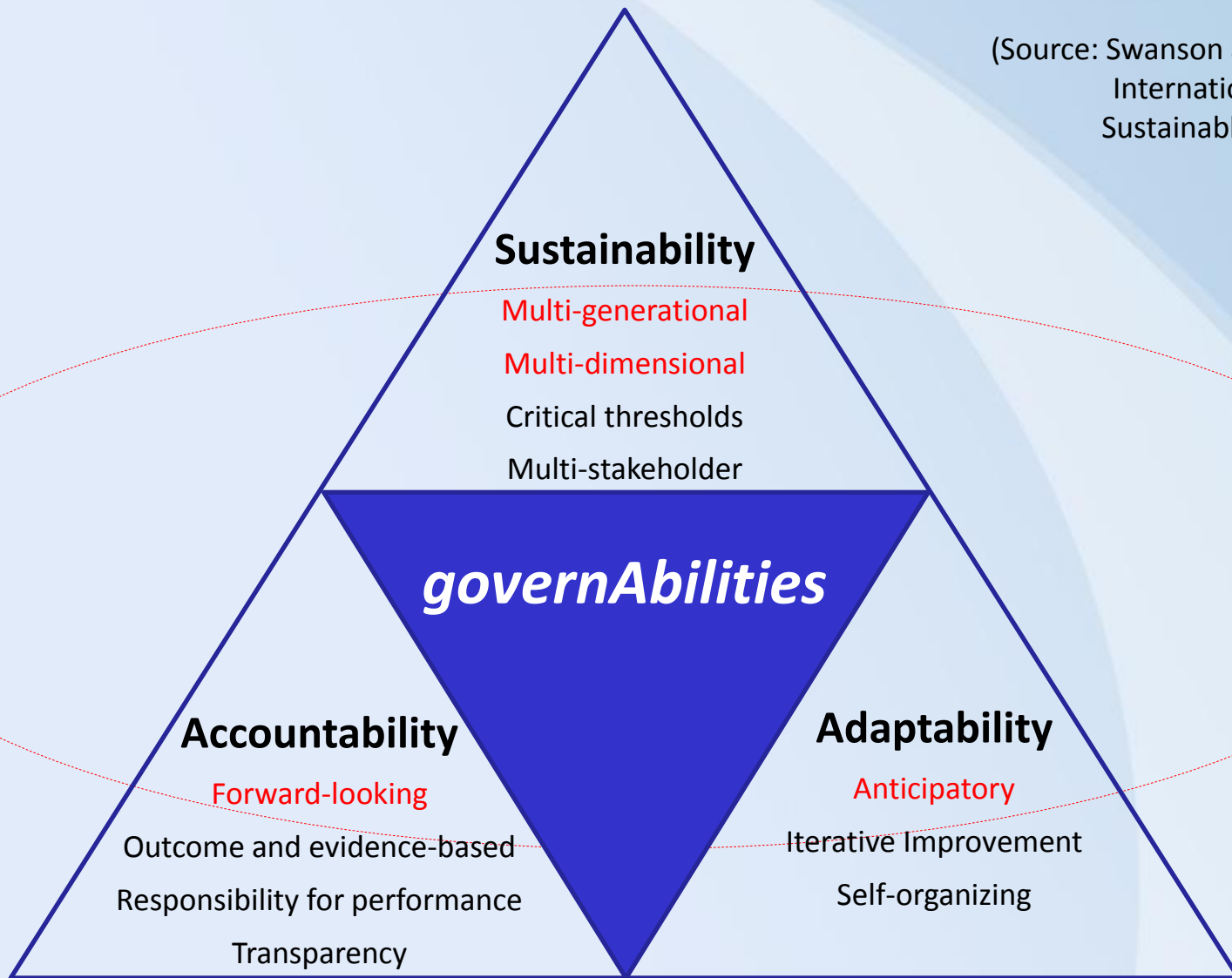
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Core Principles

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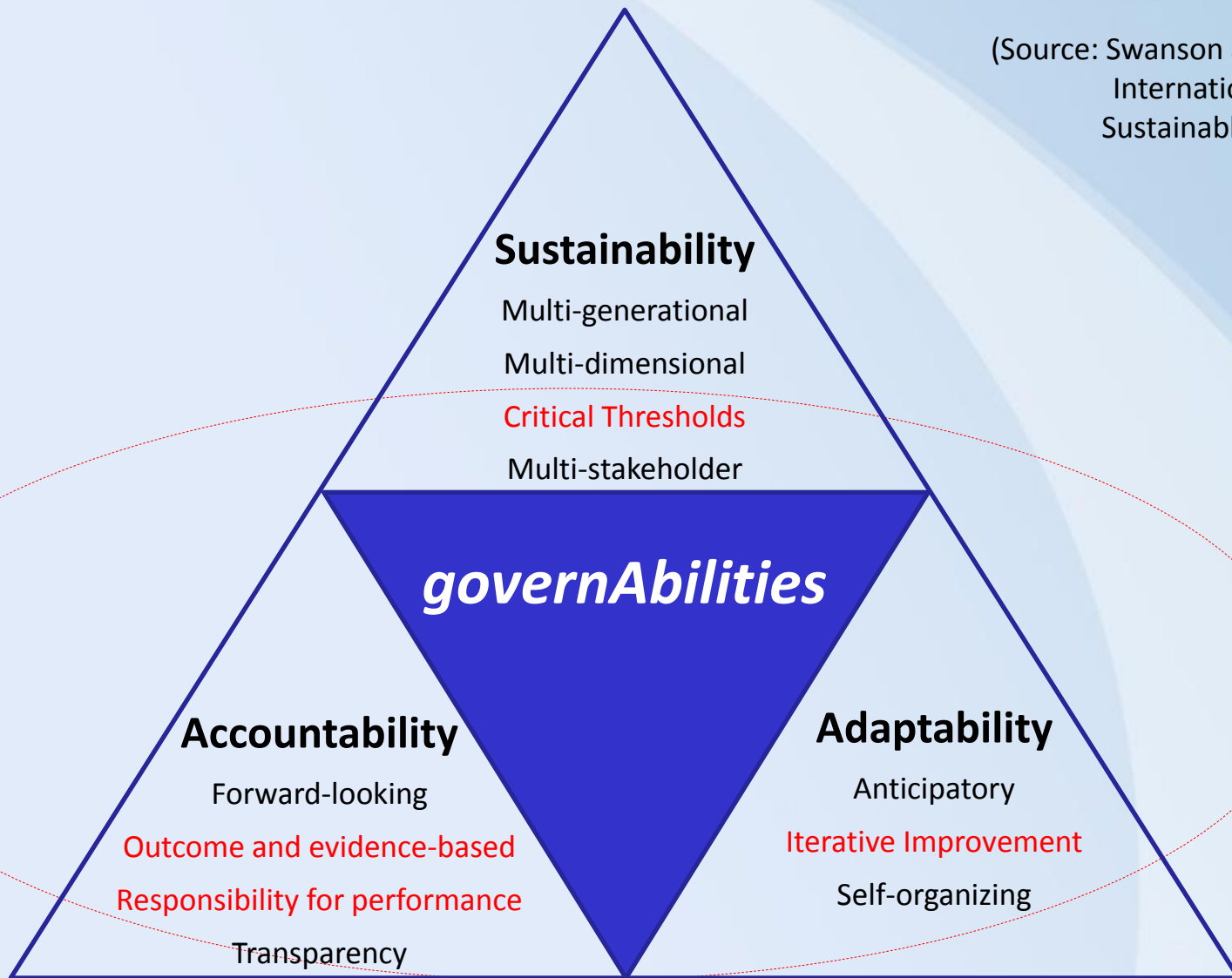
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Core Principles

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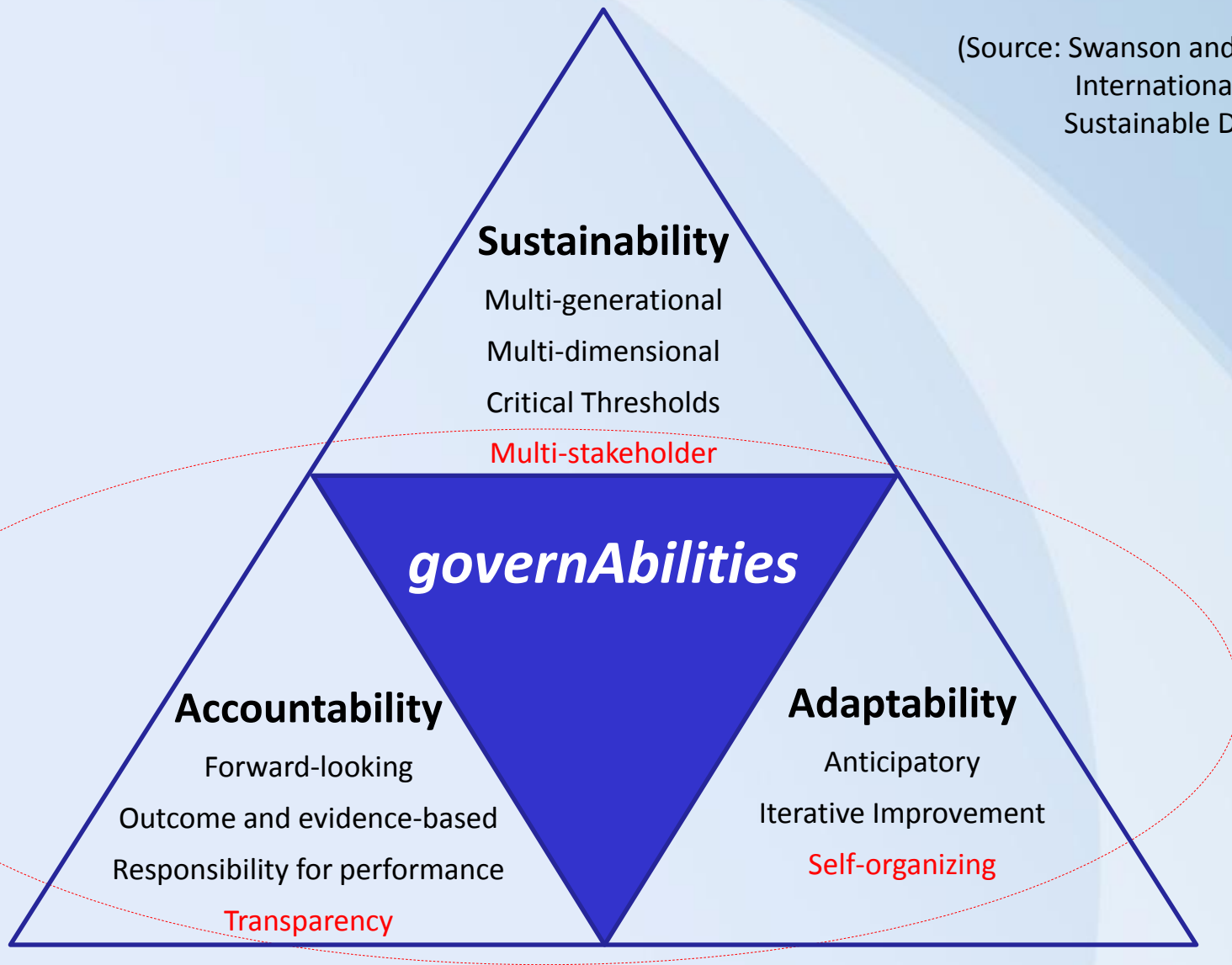
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Core Principles

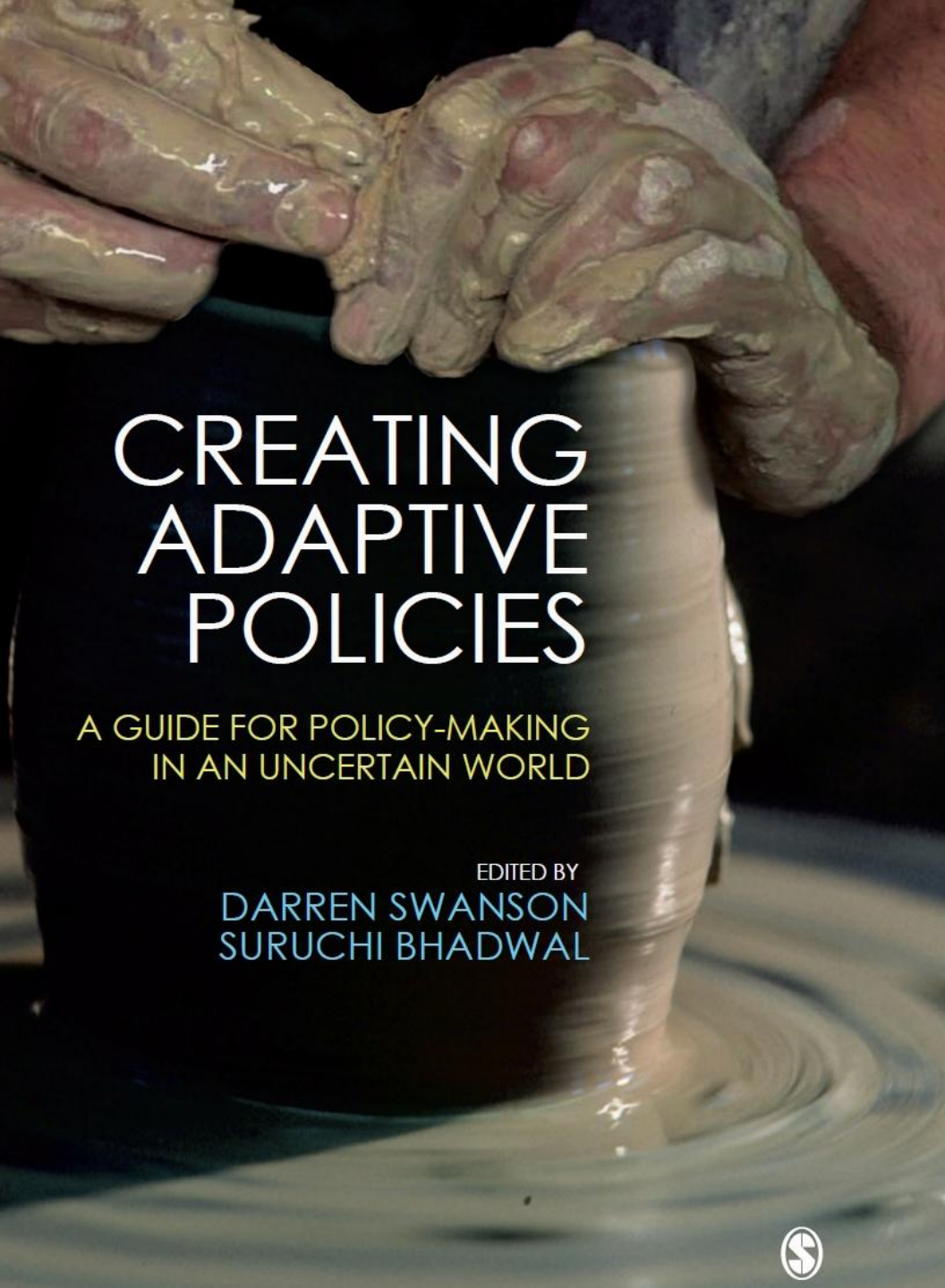
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(Source: Swanson and Pinter 2009,
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Core Principles

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CREATING ADAPTIVE POLICIES

A GUIDE FOR POLICY-MAKING
IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

EDITED BY
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Policies that cannot perform effectively under complex, dynamic and uncertain conditions run the risk of not achieving their intended purpose, and becoming a hindrance to the ability of individuals, communities and businesses to cope with—and adapt to—change.



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- ***“many individual, self-organizing elements capable of responding to others and to their environment.***
- ***network of relationships and interactions, in which the whole is very much more than the sum of the parts.***
- ***A change in any part of the system, even in a single element, produces reactions and changes in associated elements and the environment”***

**A Toolbox for
Improving Health in Cities:
A Discussion Paper**


by

**Sholom Glouberman, Phillippa Campsie,
Michael Gemar and Glen Miller**

February 2003

*The research for this paper was commissioned and funded by
Wellesley Central Health Corporation.*

Complex Adaptive Systems



- ***“system cannot be predicted with complete accuracy***
- ***system is always responding and adapting to changes and the actions of individuals.***
- ***At the same time, the tendency of elements within the system to organize themselves offers opportunities to bring out changes that benefit the system (Glouberman et al. 2003).”***

University

Complex Adaptive Systems



Business	<p><i>Leadership and the New Science.</i> Margaret Wheatly</p> <p><i>The 5th Discipline</i> Peter Senge</p>
IT Sector	<p>Harnessing Complexity Axelrod and Cohen</p>
Forest Management	<p>The Invisible Wand James Ruitenbeek</p>
Healthcare	<p>Complexity Science in Practice Mayo Clinic</p> <p>Toolbox for Improving Health in Cities Glouberman et al.</p>
International Development	<p>Complex Systems Theory and Development Practice S. Rihani</p>
Ecosystem Management	<p>Panarchy Buzz Holling</p>

The Challenge...

- Experience demonstrates that government and business policies are crafted to operate within a certain range of conditions and are often faced with unexpected challenges outside of that range.
- The result is that many policies have unintended impacts, don't accomplish their goals, or just get in the way.



Seven Guidelines for Creating Adaptive Policies



Adaptive policies anticipate the array of conditions that lie ahead using:

- (1) Integrated and forward-looking analysis*
- (2) Multi-stakeholder deliberation*
- (3) Automatic policy adjustments.*

Adaptive policies navigate toward successful outcomes in highly uncertain settings by:

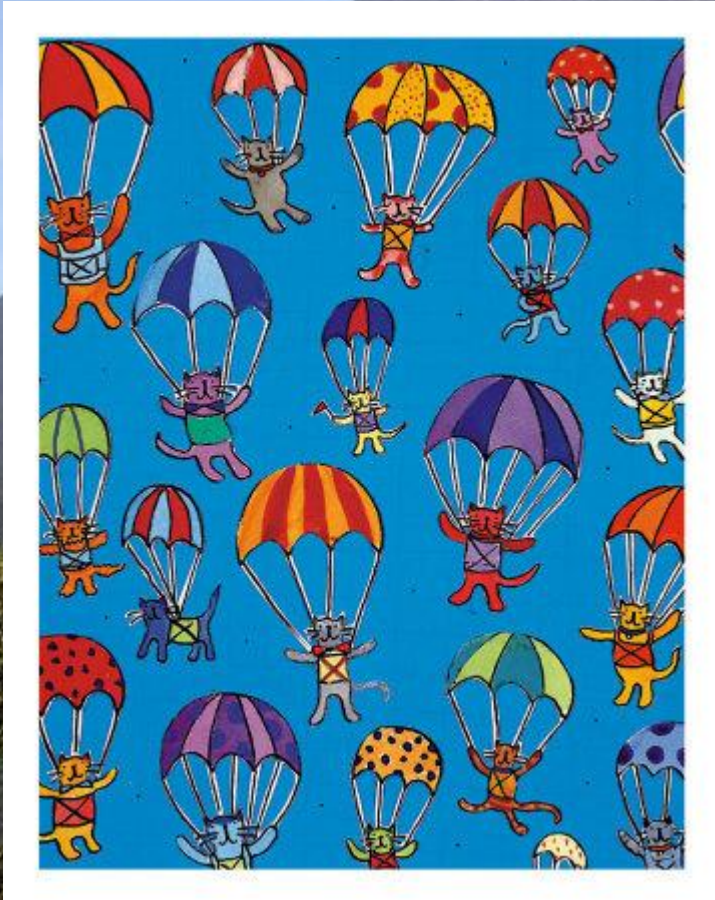
- (4) Enabling self-organization and social networking*
- (5) Decentralizing of decision-making*
- (6) Promoting variation in policy responses*
- (7) Formal policy review and continuous learning.*

#1

Integrated and Forward-looking Analysis

By ***identifying key factors*** that affect policy performance and ***identifying scenarios*** for how these factors might evolve in the future, policies can be made ***robust to a range of anticipated conditions***, and indicators developed to help ***trigger important policy adjustments*** when needed.

Why is an SD Lens Important?



Parachuting cats into
Borneo! A Cautionary
Tale of the World
Health Organization

Source: <http://www.cdra.org.za/creativity/Parachuting%20cats%20into%20Borneo.htm>

Laying the foundation for an adaptive policy (policy setup)

Defining the Policy

1. Understand the issue
2. Set policy goal (s)
3. Identify performance indicators and targets
4. Develop policy options

Identify key factors that will affect policy performance

Define scenarios for the plausible evolution of key factors and test policy options

Integrated and forward-looking analysis

Scenario Planning

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#2

Multi-stakeholder Deliberation

Strengthens ability of policy to address a range of anticipated conditions.

By providing access to different perspectives, different sources of knowledge, and different ways of knowing in order to consider new information and new views of the problem.

Rapid adjustment and response to unanticipated conditions.

By building the social cohesion, shared vision and capacity for collective action

**Why is it
important?**



**Priests and
Programmers:**
Technologies of Power in
the Engineered Landscape
of Bali



#3

Automatic Policy Adjustment

Some of the inherent variability in socio-economic and ecological conditions can be anticipated, and ***monitoring of key indicators*** can help ***trigger important policy adjustments*** to keep the policy functioning well.

Types of Automatic Adjustment

- ***Fully-automatic adjustment:***
 - Where a thorough understanding of the policy issue can articulate anticipated changes in underlying conditions, and allows for a specific policy adjustment to be pre-defined.
- ***Semi-automatic adjustment***
 - Where a thorough understanding of the policy issue can articulate anticipated changes in underlying conditions, but for which specific policy adjustments cannot be pre-defined.
- ***Requires signposts and triggers***

#4

Enabling Self-organization and Social Networking

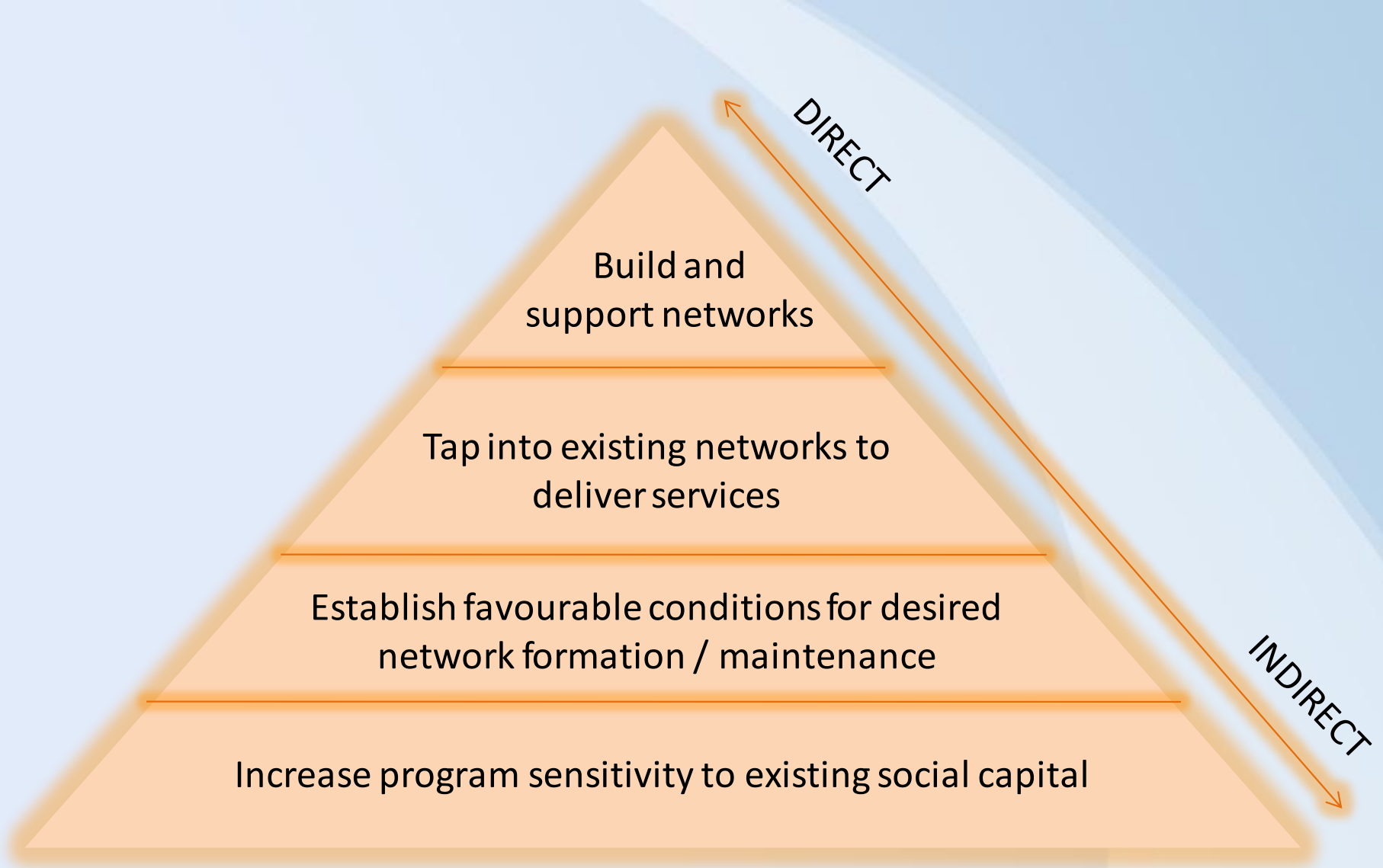
Ensuring that policies do ***not undermine existing social capital***; creating forums that ***enable social networking***; facilitating the ***sharing of good practices***; and ***removing barriers to self-organization***, all strengthen the ability of stakeholders to respond to unanticipated events in a variety of innovative ways.

**Why is it
important?**



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Making use of social capital in public policy: from direct to indirect influence (PRI, 2005)

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#5

***Decentralization of
Decision-making***

Decentralizing the authority and responsibility for decision-making to the lowest effective and accountable unit of governance, whether existing or newly created, can increase the capacity of a policy to perform successfully when confronted with unforeseen events.



JUL 11 2002

#6

Promoting Variation

Given the complexity of most policy settings, implementing a ***variety of policies to address the same issue increases the likelihood of achieving desired outcomes.*** Diversity of responses also forms a common risk-management approach, facilitating the ability to perform efficiently in the face of unanticipated conditions.

the Architect, the facilitator, the learner

- The policy-maker as an ***architect***:
 - Providing a range of policy options
 - Designing and using a mix of policy instruments to achieve a single policy objective
 - Seeing and making linkages with other policies that have similar intent
- The policy-maker as a ***facilitator***:
 - Creating an enabling environment for variation to occur
- The policy-maker as a ***learner***:
 - Observing which policies work well and strengthening those policies

#7

Formal Review and Continuous Learning

Regular review, even when the policy is performing well, and the ***use of well-designed pilots throughout*** the life of the policy to test assumptions related to performance, can help ***address emerging issues and trigger important policy adjustments.***



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Questions



Group Discussions [15 min]

Penetrating the Adaptive Policy Tools



- Each table is assigned one of the seven adaptive policy tools. Address the following questions:
 - **Q1:** *Have you seen this tool applied in your experience, and how did it help the policy or programme be more adaptive?*
 - **Q2:** *What do you perceive as the main barriers to using this tool?*
 - **Q3:** *How does this tool address accountability and does measurement play a role?*
- **Be prepared to discuss your answers**

Presentation of Examples [15 min]

Q1: Have you seen these tools applied in your experience, and how did the tool help the policy/programme be more adaptive?



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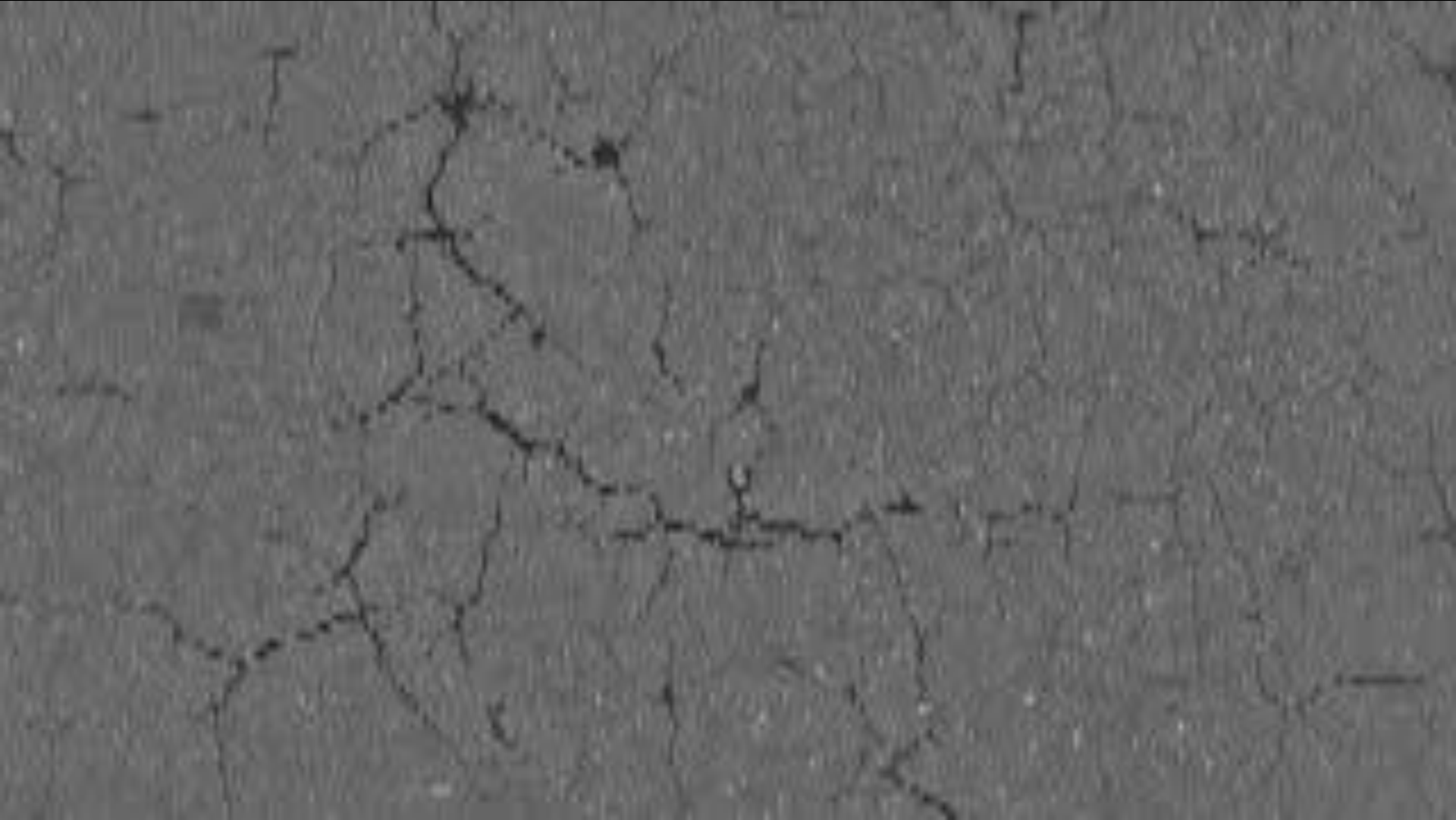
Plenary Discussion [15 min]

Q2: What do you perceive as the main barriers to using the various tools?

Q3: How do the tools address accountability and does measurement play a role?



Sustainable Development



Seeing the Big Picture

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