# Adressing the commercial determinants of health

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# Health is a political choice

## at all levels of governance

# Two major strands of public health

George Rosen (1910-1977)

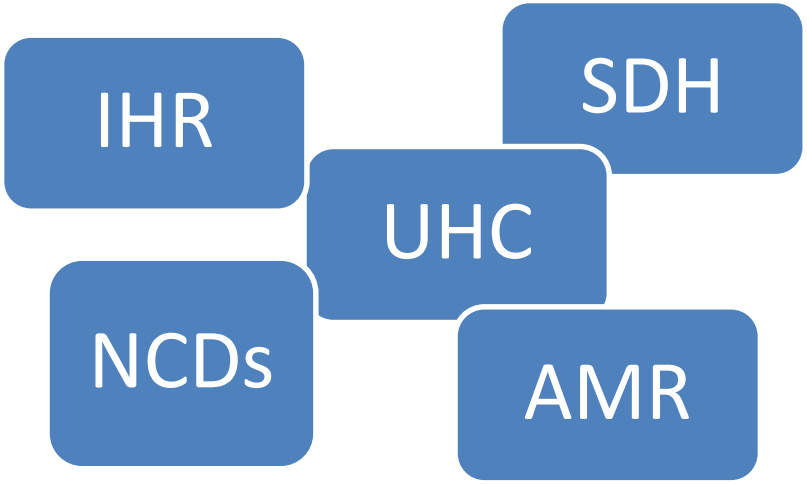
- **As context changes the health debate changes**:
- the medical and technical development dimension of public health is increasingly overlaid by a debate on the social, political and economic/commercial factors that determine health.

- In the *19th and early 20th century* the focus of public health was mainly national, social and political.
- *in the course of the 20th century* it moved to being national, medical and technical- then global, medical and technical
- *Early 21st century*: global, social and political

# The politics of health

- The challenges facing public health, and the broader world context in which we struggle, have become too numerous and too complex for a business as usual approach.

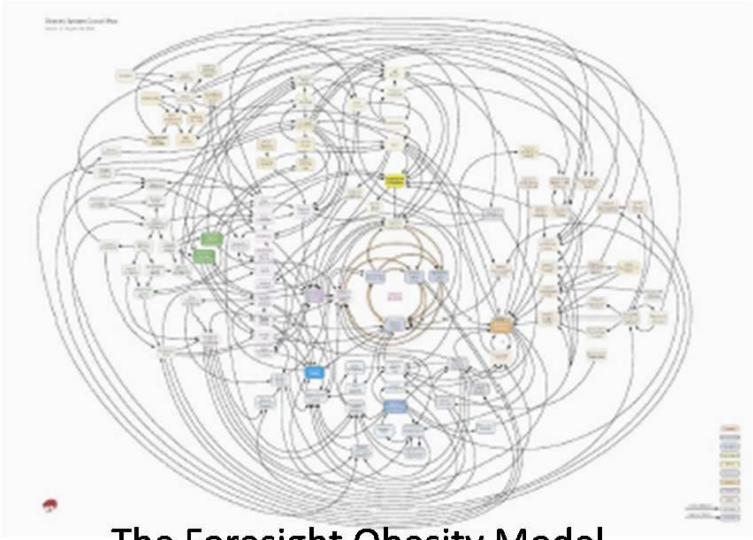
- Margaret Chan, DG WHO



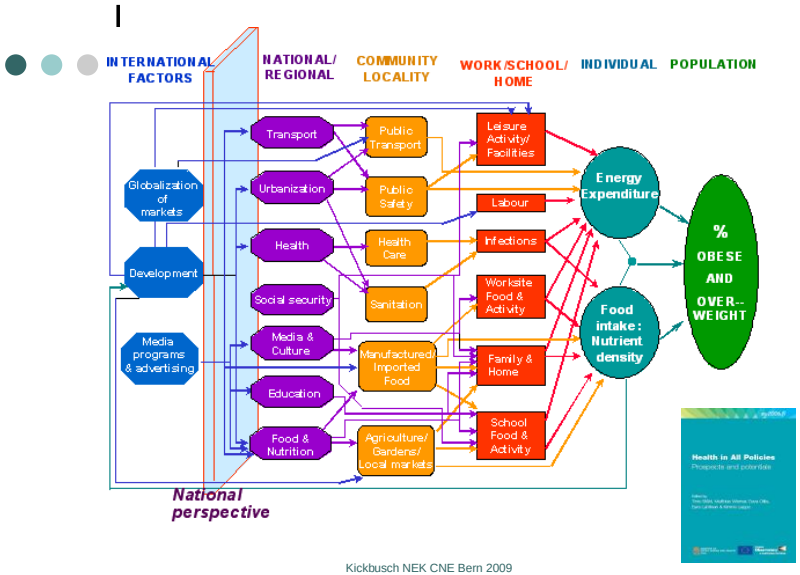
# Food system Policy response

The food and nutrition industry is one of the largest industries in the world: 10% of global gross domestic product, which makes for about $4.8 trillion.

Figure 12: Updated system map as basis for expert questionnaire



The Foresight Obesity Model

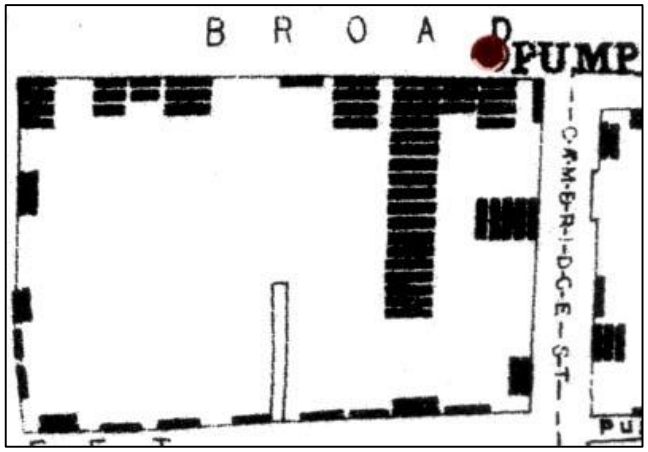


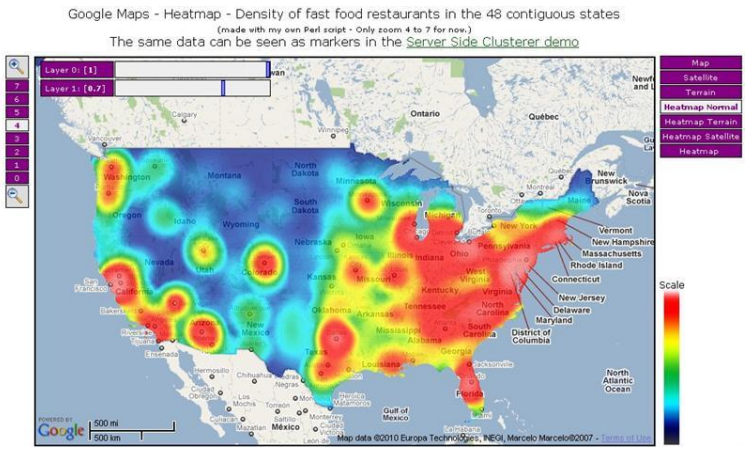

Kickbusch NEK CNE Bern 2009

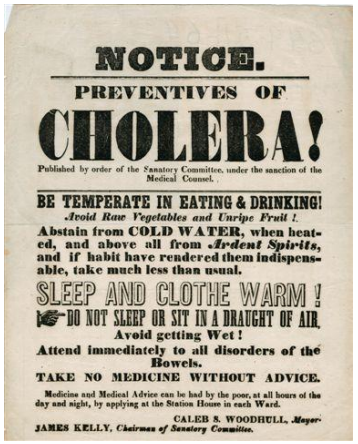
# Wicked problems

- Wicked problems require innovative, comprehensive solutions that can be modified in the light of experience and on-the-ground feedback.
- The solution depends on how the problem is **framed** and vice-versa (i.e. **the problem definition depends on the solution)**
- **A QUALITATIVE TRANSFORMATION OF PUBLIC POLICY**

# A new PH health revolution



NOTICE.

PREVENTIVES OF

CHOLERA!

Published by order of the Sanatory Committee, under the sanction of the Medical Counsel.

BE TEMPERATE IN EATING & DRINKING!

*Avoid Raw Vegetables and Unripe Fruit !.*

Abstain from COLD WATER, when heated, and above all from *Ardent Spirits*, and if habit have rendered them indispensable, take much less than usual.

SLEEP AND CLOTHE WARM !

DO NOT SLEEP OR SIT IN A DRAUGHT OF AIR.

Avoid getting Wet !

Attend immediately to all disorders of the Bowels.

TAKE NO MEDICINE WITHOUT ADVICE.

Medicine and Medical Advice can be had by the poor, at all hours of the day and night, by applying at the Station House in each Ward.

CALEB S. WOODHULL, *Mayor*.

JAMES KELLY, *Chairman of Sanatory Committee.*

**Sanitary Revolution**

Health in All Policies revolution

# One of the biggest challenges facing health promotion.

- Efforts to prevent noncommunicable diseases go against the business interests of powerful economic operators…it is not just **Big Tobacco** anymore. Public health must also contend with **Big Food, Big Soda, and Big Alcohol**. All of these industries fear regulation, and protect themselves by using the same tactics.

- Tactics: front groups, lobbies, promises of self-regulation, lawsuits, and industry-funded research that confuses the evidence and keeps the public in doubt; gifts, grants, and **contributions to worthy causes that cast these industries as respectable corporate citizens in the eyes of politicians and the public**.

- They include arguments that place the responsibility for harm to health on individuals, and **portray government actions as interference in personal liberties and free choice.**

Dr. M. Chan DG WHO 2013

# Clear message

- Governments can help people change their lifestyle by making new healthy options available or by making existing ones more accessible and affordable.
- Alternatively, they can use persuasion, education and information to make healthy options more attractive.
- **This gentle approach is more expensive, hard to deliver and hard to monitor.**
- A tougher approach, through regulation and fiscal measures, is more transparent but it hits all consumers indiscriminately, so **can have high political and welfare costs**. It may also be difficult to organize and enforce and have regressive effects. OECD

# Fiscal policy

The real novelty of the last three years has been a strong and increasing interest in **the use of fiscal measures to limit the consumption of foods high in fat, sugar and salt.**

Legislation was passed by several OECD countries and further countries are expected to follow through in the near future. (OECD briefing 2012)

# Public Health History in the making?

- San Francisco AND Berkeley Could Make History if they Approve A Controversial Tax On Soda

- Berkeley ‘s tax would add a penny per ounce on drinks with caloric sweeteners, such as sodas, energy drinks, coffee syrups and even some juices.
- ACCEPTED

- San Francisco’s tax would add two cents per ounce.
- FAILED BUT OVER 50%

# Our Community's Health Matters. Let's Fight For It.

# Resources

- **The beverage industry has spent more than $10 million to persuade the liberal enclaves Berkeley and San Francisco to vote against taxing sugary soda on Nov. 4**

# Political choice: taxation

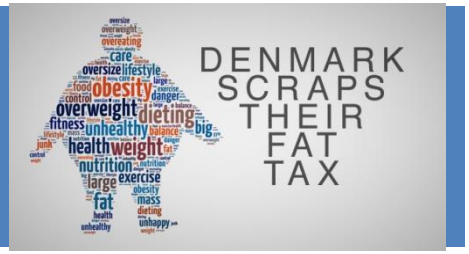
- A recent study in the USA estimated that a nationwide one-percent tax on sugary drinks would over the next ten years prevent up to 240,00 cases of diabetes, 95,00 cases of heart disease, 8,000 strokes and 26,000 premature deaths. Some $17 billion could be saved in medical costs.

- A recent study in the United Kingdom has found that the number of obese adults in the UK could be reduced by 180,000 with a 20% tax on sugary drinks. The tax could raise over £275 million for the Treasury.
- The implementation of such such a tax in Australia would lead to a 2.6% drop in the nation's obesity rate.

# Dedicated tax

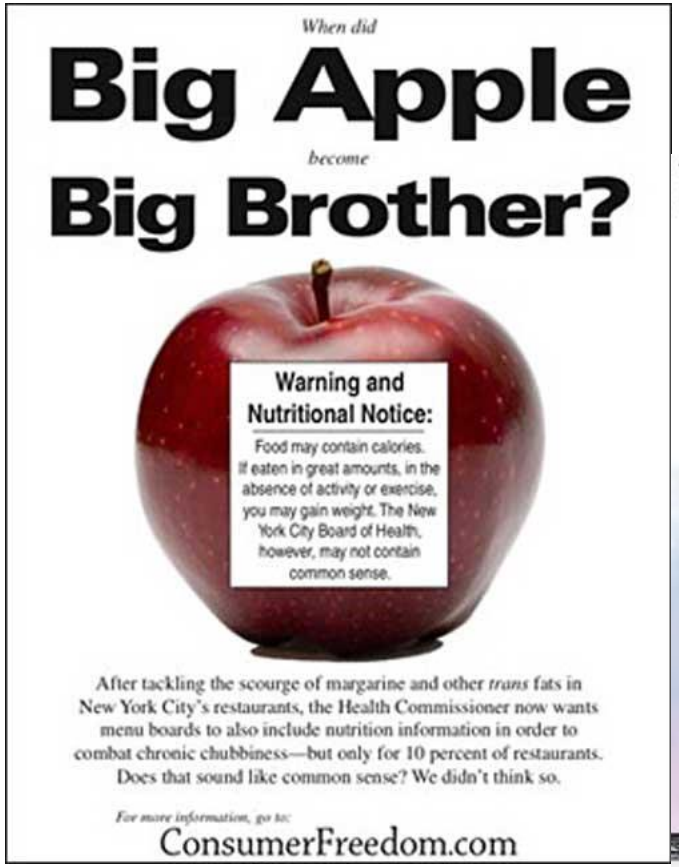
- “San Francisco’s proposed soda tax will reduce soda consumption and fund active recreation and nutrition programs in SF public schools, Recreation and Park Department recreation centers and sports programs, and food access and nutrition education through the Department of Public Health.”
- Mexico’s soda tax provides fresh water to all Mexican schools

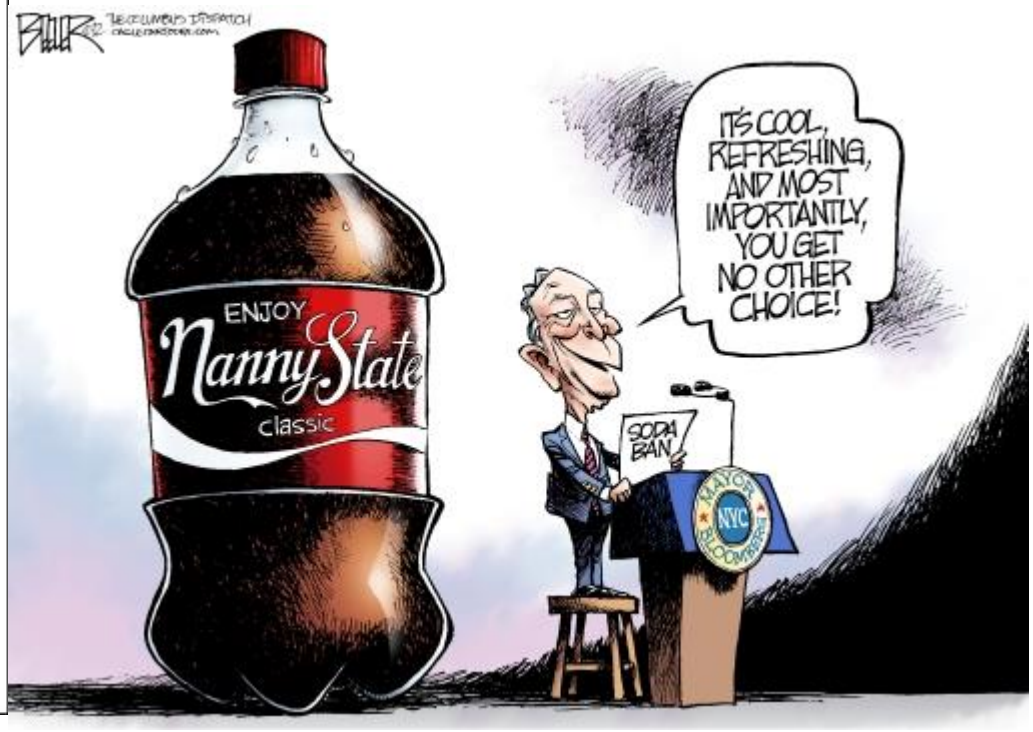
# Danish fat tax




- Was **introduced** 2011 based on 2 expert committees with majority in parlament as part of a larger economic reform package – it raised $216 million in new revenue.
- **Opposed** on 2 grounds: harmful effect on businesses and consumer buying power, would not impact health
- Had no strong proponents and many influential adversaries  -repealed in 2012
- Research now indicates that **the tax changed consumer behaviour**

# Competing values



# Political determinants of health

**The power constellations and ideological positions that impact on health**

**Kickbusch 2014**

# Choice at the ballot box not the supermarket aisle

- Overcome Equation of market behaviour with democracy
- Review notions of 24/7 consumer access and choice

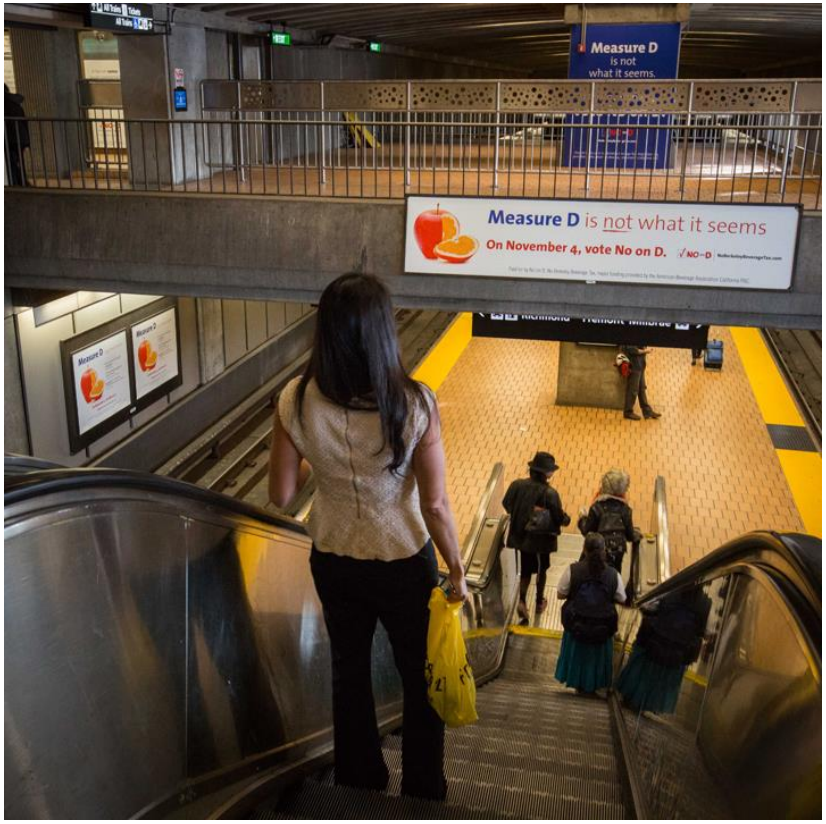
- **How to vote for health: health citizenship**

# Political determinants

- "The key point is that, while policy-making is a process, it is also a human endeavor and as such it is not based on objective and neutral standards. **Behind every step in the policy process is a contest over equally plausible conceptions of the same abstract goal or value.** Remember, those participating in policymaking are also driven by their belief systems and ideology. These values and ideologies precede and shape the decisions along every step of the policy process."

  (FrameWorks Institute, 2002)

# Power and ressources

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# Health in everyday life

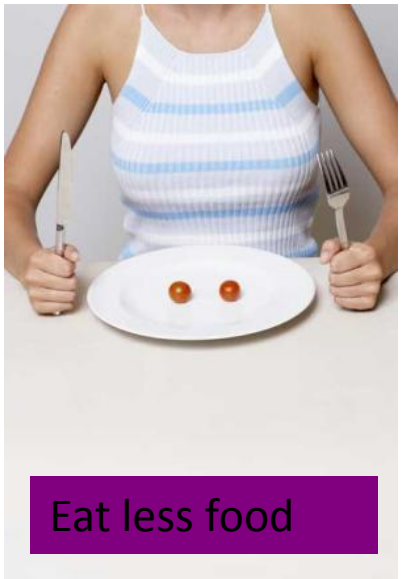
- the PROMOTION of health in the **settings of everyday life:** where people live, love, work and play – shop, google, travel……

- **HEALTH IN A GLOBAL CONSUMER SOCIETY**

# Consumer society MORE

# Individualization LESS

- In health as in the environmental debate there is a tendency to individualize the issues at stake



Consume less energy

# Happiness = consumption

# How to enter the political realm?

- **We must ensure that our democratic institutions value health**.
- We must invest in the **health literacy** of parliamentarians and of the citizens who elect them.

**ECONOMICS: Health is a precondition, outcome, and indicator of a sustainable society**

**THE SOCIAL STATE: Health is a social goal of governments WHO**

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: Health is linked to sustainable production and consumption**

# The politics of health

- Health has moved up in the political agenda in countries, in development policies and in global agreements precisely because of its relevance both to the economy, political ideology and legitimacy and to the expectations of citizens.
- It is of a highly political and symbolic nature: it concerns definitions of the common good, the role of the state, markets and individuals, as well as the interests of many stake holders.
- Is health and wellbeing something that „*we collectively strive to pursue*" (Sandel 2009) in a world of globalization, individualization and commercialization?

# Framing

- **Problems are socially defined**
- What frame transmits the policy with concepts that represent the values and worldviews of the public, policy-makers and other key groups **that you need to persuade?"**

- **Much of the future of health is decided in boardrooms not in ministries of health**

# Fiscal policy

- Tim Hortons has agreed to be bought by the company that owns Burger King in a deal that could culminate in the world's third largest fast-food company.

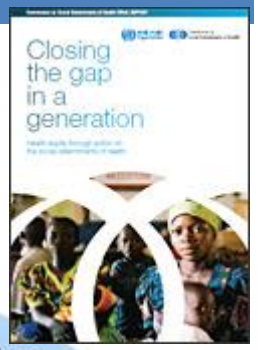
- 3G Capital, the Brazilian investment firm that owns Burger King, would pay $65.50 in cash for every Tim Hortons share already out there. **The new company would have combined global sales of $23 billion and have 18,000 locations in 98 countries.**

- Canada's basic corporate tax rate is about 26 per cent, while the U.S.'s is around 35 per cent. But Burger King already managed to get its tax rate down to 27.5 per cent last year, Tim Hortons paid 26.8 per cent tax in Canada last year.Warren Buffett's company Berkshire Hathaway is helping finance the deal with $3 billion of preferred equity financing. (CBC News 26. August 2014)

# Frame politically

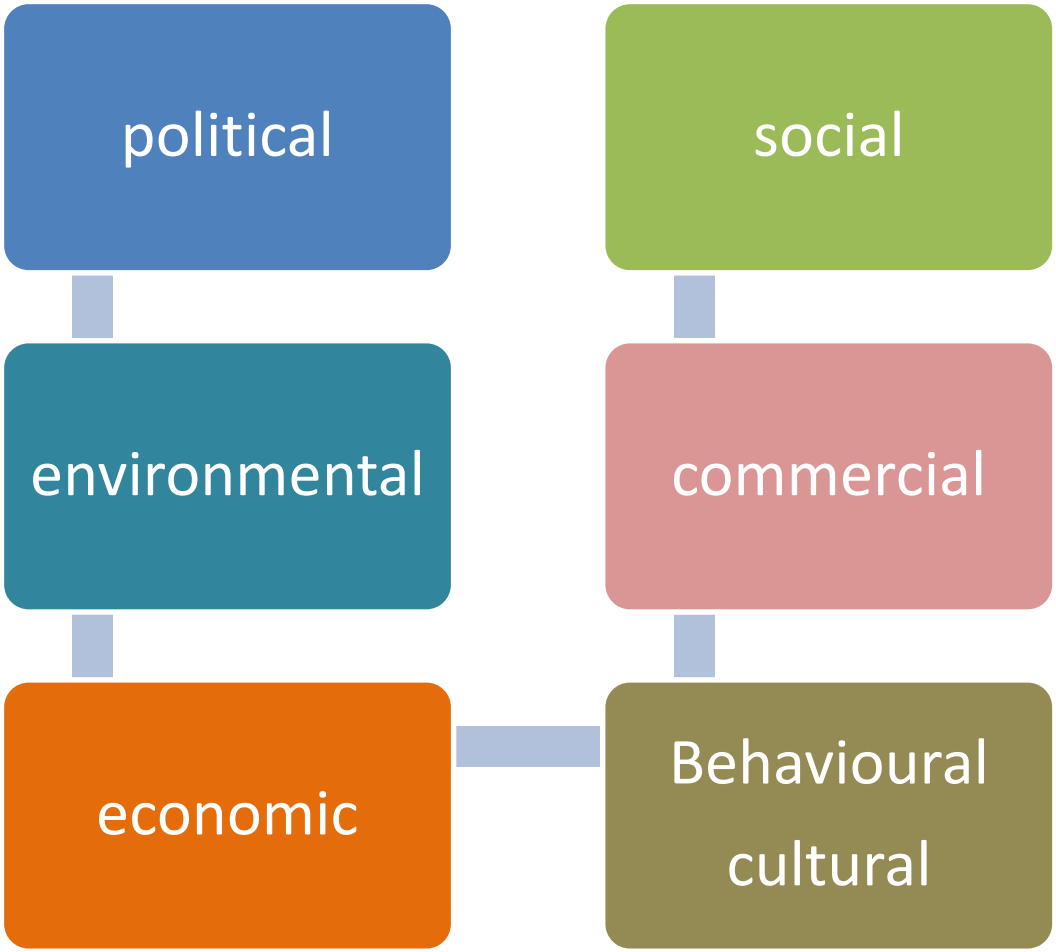
- The obesity epidemic - and the global system of food production, distribution, consumption and waste - is one of the most obvious symptoms of “unsustainable lifestyles” and unsustainable production and consumption patterns. **It reflects paradigmatically the global flow of ways of life, ideas and products and the global dimension of health promotion**

# Social determinants of health




- The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age.
- These circumstances are shaped by the **distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels.**

# Determinants framing

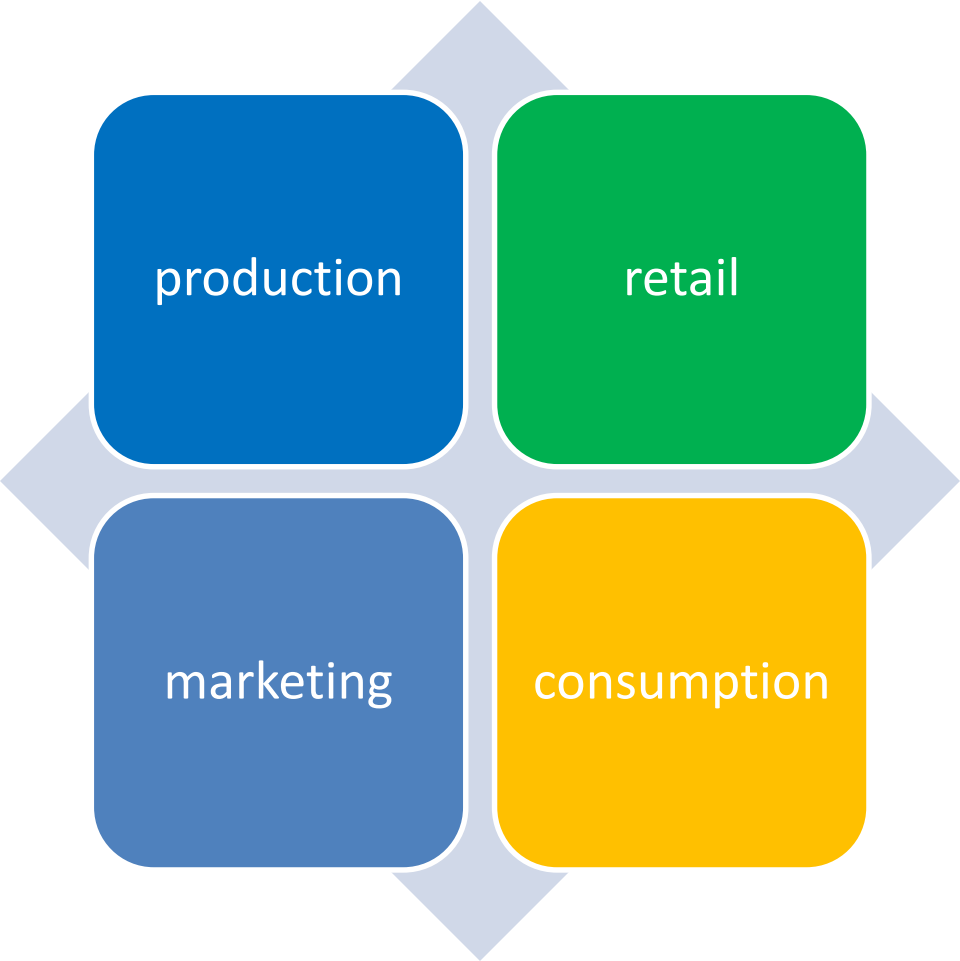


# Commercial determinants of health

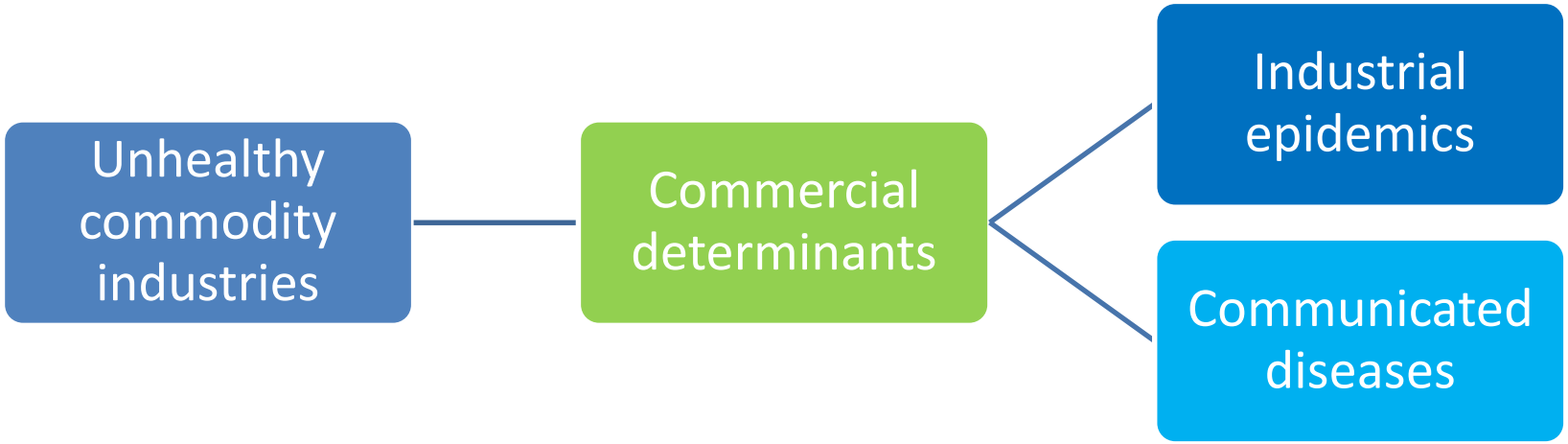
- **Promoting consumption at the expense of health**

- Kickbusch 2014

# The drivers

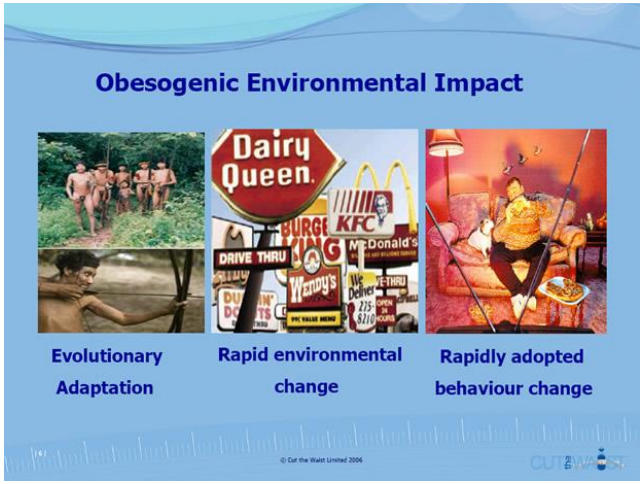


# CDOH: Promoting consumption at the expense of health

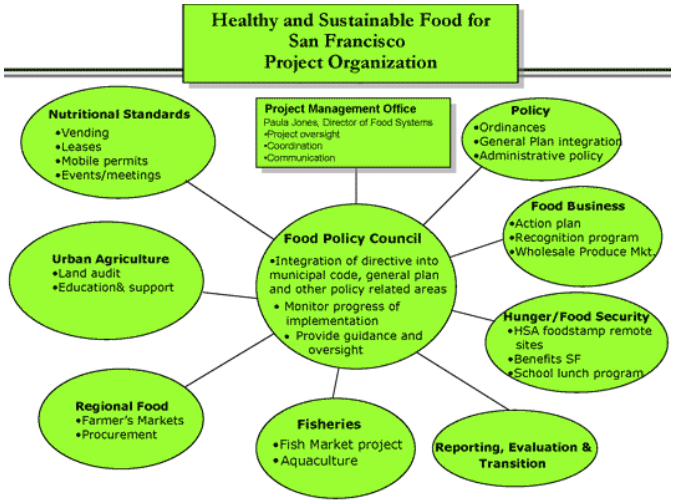


# CDOH: Promoting consumption at the expense of health

| Commercial determinants | | |
|---|---|---|
| Toxic products | Toxic environment | Toxic marketing |
| Industrial epidemics | | |



# Toxic products vs. Local action




CHICAGO
FOOD POLICY
ADVISORY COUNCIL

# Local action: Making diets more sustainable

- A recent study (SDC, 2009) highlighted the changes most likely to have the most significant and immediate impact on making diets more sustainable, in which health, environmental, economic and social impacts were more likely to complement each other. These were:

- reducing consumption of meat and dairy products, reducing consumption of food and drink of low nutritional value (i.e. fatty and sugary foods) and reducing food waste. All imply significant societal, environmental and economic challenges and significant conflicts, particularly with producers.

# TOXIC ENVIRONMENTS - URBAN SPACE

- Public space

- Advertising space

# MARKETING - PARKS

- MARKETING SPACE

- PUBLIC SPACE

# Marketing: creating environments

- "Alcohol marketing **creates an environment** around alcohol that is overwhelmingly positive; ads are designed to make alcohol use look sophisticated and like drinking will make you popular,"

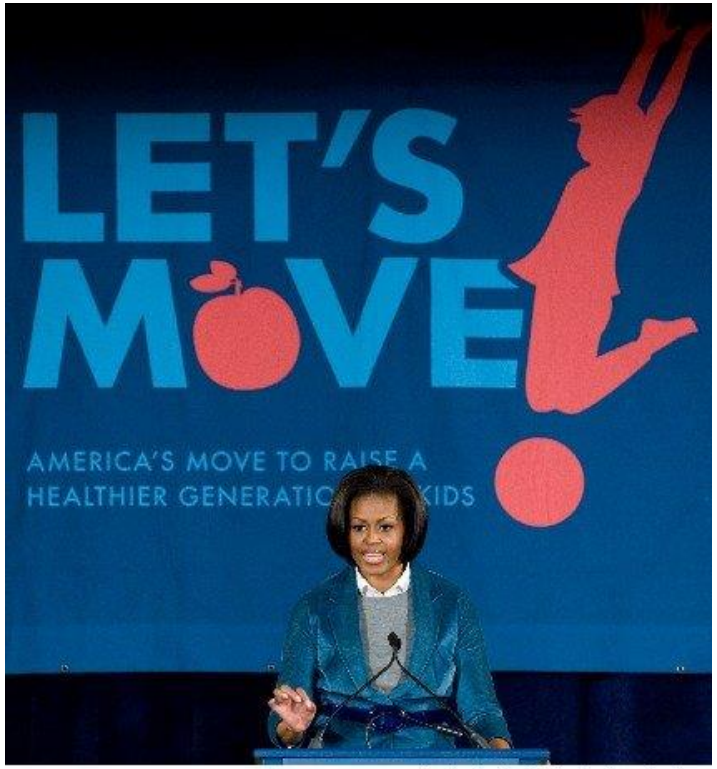
- WHO's Global Status Report: Young People and Alcohol in 2011.

# BRANDING environments - Parks

- **Attennnnnntion! Coca-Cola Wants America To Get Fit**

- Chicago's Mayor Rahm Emanuel, along with Coca-Cola Refreshments' President and CEO Steve Cahillane and Chicago Park District Superintendent Mike Kelley, announced a multi-year $3 million Coca Cola Foundation grant to Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance, part of the Chicago Park District (CPD). This grant will create the **"Park Families Wellness Initiative"** – the largest affordable wellness program in the city.

# Let‘s move



Saul Loeb, AFP, Getty Images

- The National League of Cities (NLC) is working in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and with the support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Association of Counties and other nonprofit organizations to assist local elected officials who join *Let's Move!* Cities, Towns and Counties (LMCTC) as they implement policy and environmental changes to prevent childhood obesity.

# Marketing

- **How we feel**

- **How we choose**

# ZONING

- ‘‘Ironically, our failure to adapt the land development regulations and transportation facility design standards over time has resulted in the **promulgation of health adverse environments as a norm and not the exception.’’**

Frank LD, Kavage S. Urban planning and public health: A story of separation and reconnection. Journal of Public Health Management and Practice 14 (2008): 214–220

Communities with wealth and political power are able to influence the zoning process to prevent undesirable uses from being sited within a particular location.

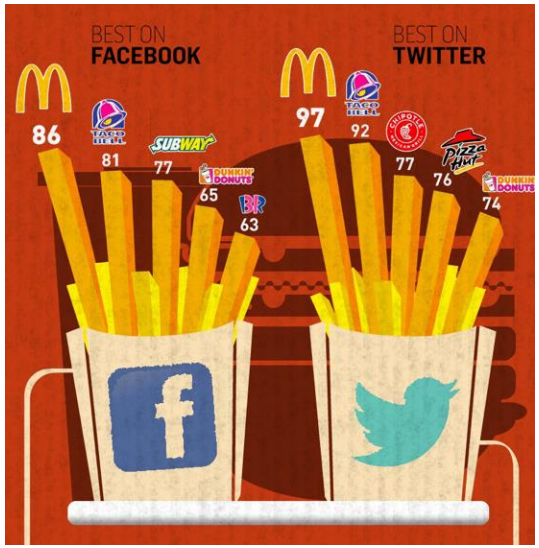
By contrast, segregated, low-income communities of color often lack similar access to political influence and power and therefore are unable to prevent noxious land Uses. Several predominantly Black communities have attempted to prevent the siting of fast food restaurants and lost.

# ZONING

- "The Clean City Law came from a necessity to combat pollution … pollution of water, sound, air, and the visual. We decided that we should start combating pollution with the most conspicuous sector – visual pollution."
- Mayor Gilberto Kassab
- SAO PAULO 2006

- A recent HIA of Baltimore City's **zoning code rewrite** reported several ways in which the changes could positively impact residents' health.

# Zoning the virtual?



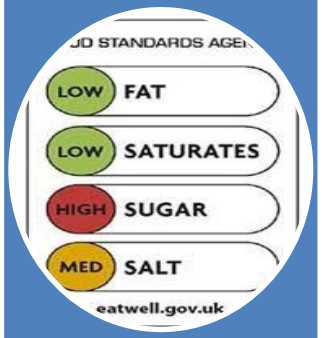
# Local action:food

Soda Tax Mexico - Nutella tax France - salt tax Finland

Standards for canteens, cafeterias

Restrict marketing to children

Change norms portion sizes




Food labelling

**Multiplier effects**

# Commercial determinants: creating a market for health

- "I don't like saying the H word because that's going to turn people off - I tell our people they have got to start every message with, **'Tastes great, tastes great, tastes great. And oh, by the way, it is good for you.'".**

- Mike Donahue, co-founder of Lyfe Kitchen, which has expanded to 13 locations since opening its first restaurant in Palo Alto in 2011.

# Justice can mean…….

1. ….maximizing utility or welfare – the greatest happiness for the greatest number
2. ….respecting freedom of choice

3. *….reasoning together about the meaning of the good life – developing a politics of the common good* – the solidarity of democratic citizenship

Michael Sandel What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets 2010