ROLE NATIONAL DRUG OBSERVATORIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANTI-DRUG POLICY

Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, Nov. 29 to Dec. 1, 2006
Decision theory can be defined as the logical, quantitative analysis of all the factors that affect the results of a decision in an uncertain world.

According to the previous definition, we have:
- Factors
- Analysis
- Decision.

In other words:
- Information
- Analysis
- Decision on action to take (policy, programs etc..)
EXAMPLE 1: MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS

- Age = 50 years
- Sex = male
- Blood pressure = 130/90
- Diagnosis = Hypertension
A problem can have more than one solution, nevertheless, the best solution is the one based on the best information.

Decisions based on evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information</th>
<th>NDO: Ability to generate and/or collect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>NDO : Ability to combine information of different origins, analyze and disseminate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision</td>
<td>Authority: utilize analysis results</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUALITY OF INFORMATION

- **Perfect Information**: Make decisions in conditions of certainty. The data are known.

- **Imperfect or Partial Information**: Two situations:
  - **Decisions with Risk**:
    - Availability of partial data
  - **Decisions with uncertainty**:
    - No data available

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Within the decision-making process, there is a shared responsibility:
  - NDO
  - Authority

  Nevertheless, the authority is also responsible for deciding what type of observatory they want to have.
WHAT IS A NATIONAL DRUG OBSERVATORY?

The purpose of a national drug observatory should be to *generate* information, *compile* data that exist in different institutions, *systematize* and *analyze* information and *disseminate* it, at both the national and international levels.

CONDITIONS FOR FUNCTIONALITY

1. Institutional understanding of the necessity of a NDO

2. Conditions for “Existence”
   - Integral part of the drug commission’s structure
   - Adequate and stable financing that allows the ndo to advance its own agenda (autonomy)
3. Clear Purpose and Objectives
   - Indicators clearly defined
   - Research program to generate information
   - Linear relationship with the MEM and Demand Reduction
   - Is logical in space and time

4. Specialized Human Resources
   - Probably the most important condition, and perhaps the weakest

5. Generate Strategic Alliances
   - Universities, Others

6. Relationship with the Inter-American Observatory on Drugs (OID) of CICAD.

GOAL: To be the official source of information on drugs.
ROLE OF THE CICAD/ OID

“I can teach you to fly, but not fly for you”. Alfredo Zitarroza, Milonga to a young girl.

Reflects what the OID can do: Guide, propose and support.

We can work with and for the country, but not in the place of the country

ROLE OF THE CICAD/ OID

OID Can collaborate in 3 aspects

- Providing Technical Assistance
  - Define goals, objectives, indicators, research programs
  - Provide methodologies
  - Help establish partnerships
  - Universities, other observatories, international organizations
- Financial Assistance: shared
**Project Status supported by the CICAD/ OID 2003-2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># of beneficiary countries</th>
<th>Total Projects</th>
<th>Total direct investment (thousands US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>$ 1,553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>$ 1,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>$ 1,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>$ 1,388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>133</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 5,818</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OID: FUTURE**

- **Publications and Reports 2007**
  - Households Central America
  - Secondary Schools in Caribbean
  - Households, 6 countries South America

- **Publications in scientific journals**
  - High priority
EMCDDA: Manual on the Functioning and Best Practices of Drug Observatories

UNDCP: Subregional project with 6 countries in South America

NIDA:
- Creation of the “REDLA” network
- Thesis project awards program
- Research Program with the NHSN

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December 2006
- Meeting of the Ibero-American Observatories on Drugs (previous meeting, 2004)

2007
- Meeting of the Caribbean Drug Observatories (Previous meeting, 2005)
OID: STRENGTHS/ WEAKNESSES

**Strengths:**
- Position in countries: Credibility
- Partnerships: EMCDDA, UNDCP, NIDA
- Advances its own agenda: Research program to build knowledge on the drug problem, CICDAT
- Professional group with experience in the drug field.

OID: STRENGTHS/ WEAKNESSES

**Weaknesses**
- Lack of vision on social aspects in the countries: strengthening professional team (sociologist)
- Financial Resources
  - In addition to the efforts of the Executive Secretariat, the OID will develop its own, complementary projects to raise financial resources.