



Organization of
American States

SUB-REGIONAL SEMINAR: THE ROLE OF RESEARCH IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE POLICY IN THE FIELD OF DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION

Introduction

Pernell Clarke

Research Specialist, Inter-American Observatory on Drugs (OID)

Inter American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD)

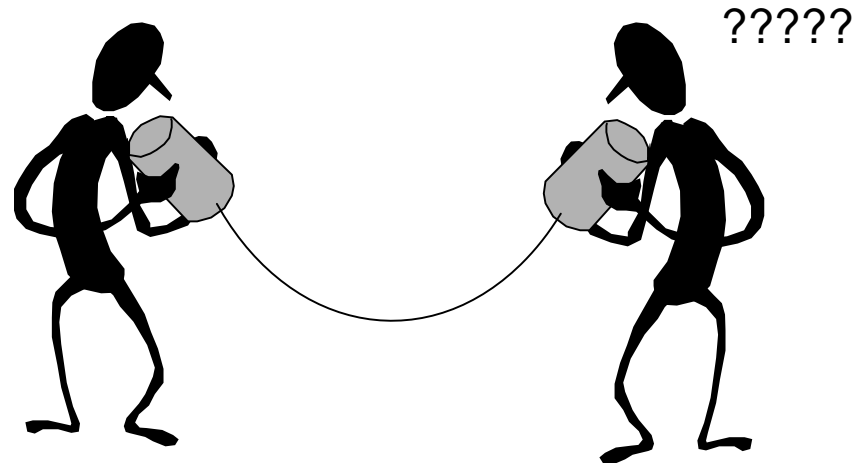
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Researchers and Policy Makers

- “There is often an uneasy relationship between researchers and policy practitioners. Each looks at the world through different coloured lenses.”
(Edwards 2004)





What is the perspective of researchers?

- There is a lack of Government interest in research
- Quite often there are impediments to researchers accessing data held within bureaucracies
- There is an anti-intellectual approach adopted within government
- There is a risk averse attitude to findings that practitioners could see as embarrassing to the Minister of the government
- Short time frames under which governments operate lead to preferences for immediate 'instrumentalist' policy advice.....in other words all we need are good ideas



What about policy makers?

- Research often deals with issues other than those that are central to and directly relevant to the political and policy debate
- It fails to take the reality of many people's lives into account when identifying research questions
- It is often driven by ideology paraded as intellectual inquiry rather than genuinely seeking to evaluate or interpret impact



Objectives of Seminar

1. To sensitize participants on the importance and usefulness of scientific information and research
2. To review actual data from participating countries
3. To identify patterns and trends
4. To demonstrate the process of translating data into information and policy
5. To discuss the prioritization of issues in the context of scarce resources
6. To walk through the steps in the policy development process



Objectives cont'd

7. To introduce the theoretical underpinnings of prevention science
8. To highlight the importance of the situation analysis and evaluation



Review of Agenda



Outcomes

By the end of this seminar participants will:

- have a better understanding of the link between research and policy development.
- be able to prepare a situational analysis of the drug problem in their countries based on facts and data
- be able to incorporate evidence into their program design and implementation
- be better able to monitor and evaluate their prevention programs.



Thank you for your attention

Pernell Clarke

OAS/CICAD

202 370 5494

pclarke@oas.org

www.cicad.oas.org