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

GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

CICAD/OAS XL Regular Session



Role National Drug Observatories in the Development of Anti-drug Policy

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DECISION THEORY

Policy Development



Decision Making

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.

DECISION THEORY

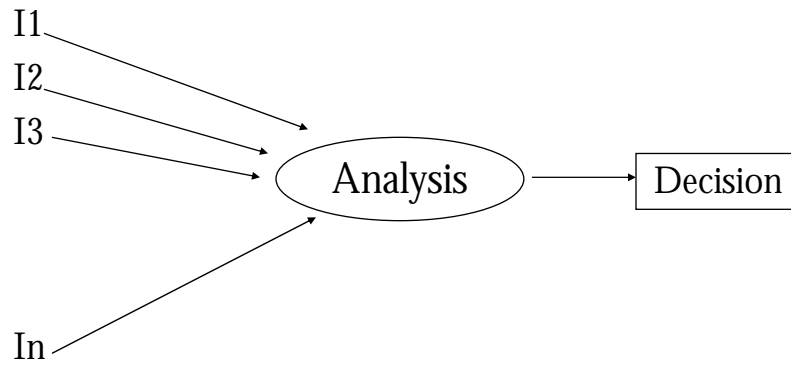
According to the previous definition, we have:

- Factors
- Analysis
- Decision.

In other words:

- Information
- Analysis
- Decision on action to take (policy, programs etc..)

DECISION THEORY



EXAMPLE 1: MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS

- **Age=50 years**
- **Sex=male**
- **Blood pressure =130/90**
- **Diagnosis= Hypertension**

QUALITY OF DECISION

- **A problem can have more than one solution, nevertheless, the best solution is the one based on the best information.**
- **Decisions based on evidence**

QUALITY OF DECISION

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Information | <u>NDO</u> : Ability to generate and/or collect |
| Analysis | <u>NDO</u> : Ability to combine information of different origins, analyze and disseminate |
| Decision | <u>Authority</u> : utilize analysis results |

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)

CONDITIONS FOR FUNCTIONALITY

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**

CONDITIONS FOR FUNCTIONALITY

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**

| Year | # of beneficiary countries | Total Projects | Total direct investment (thousands US\$) |
|-------|----------------------------|----------------|--|
| 2003 | 20 | 30 | \$ 1,553 |
| 2004 | 18 | 26 | \$ 1,527 |
| 2005 | 16 | 22 | \$ 1,350 |
| 2006 | 19 | 55 | \$ 1,388 |
| TOTAL | | 133 | \$ 5,818 |

OID: FUTURE

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

- **Publications in scientific journals**
 - **High priority**

OID: FUTURE

- **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**

OID: FUTURE

- **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.**