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FRAMEWORK TO EXPAND INTEGRATED, SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT IN THE AMERICAS

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FRAMEWORK TO EXPAND INTEGRATED, SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVE¹ DEVELOPMENT IN THE AMERICAS

Affected peoples and communities need two things: the implementation of proven initiatives and an honest admission that others have failed.

By: The Expert Group on Comprehensive and Sustainable Alternative Development CICAD / OAS²

Executive Summary:

OAS Member States are increasingly aware of the need to promote development and social integration strategies for vulnerable groups³ involved in drug production, transformation, distribution, trafficking, or consumption in both rural and urban areas. These must occur within a sustainable development framework⁴ and rule of law, to instill trust between the community and the government. As a result, the concept of traditional alternative development has evolved and changed with trends and their contrast to the social, economic and security realities that it tries to explain and solve. Currently, OAS member states are broadening their understanding of alternative development through lively debate. Therefore, this framework to expand of comprehensive and sustainable alternative development in the Americas must catalyze specific initiatives applicable to the different affected territories and populations. This framework must translate into comprehensive interventions to address economic, social, educational, public health, environmental and political issues,-through a multi-sectoral social inclusion-and a gender focused approach, taking into account local and regional characteristics and prioritizing welfare and human development. The Hemispheric Drug Action Plan 2016-2020, in conjunction with the outcome document of the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on the world drug problem (UNGASS 2016)

¹ Bolivia has designed its own policy and has transformed alternative development into comprehensive development. As the leaf is consumed in its natural state, there will be no alternative development, only integral and sustainable development. For this reason, Bolivia promotes eliminating the term, “alternative”, since its policies and interventions do not apply. Jamaica also supports this vision.

² Document prepared by The Group of Experts on Comprehensive and Sustainable Alternative Development CICAD /OAS, meet between October 17-19, 2017, at the Spanish Cooperation Training Center in Antigua, Guatemala.

³ Vulnerability: The characteristics and circumstances of a community, system or good that make them susceptible to the harmful effects of a threat.

⁴ Sustainable Development: Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

and the objectives and goals of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, set the stage for CICAD to contribute to this renewed perspective.

Objective:

This document contributes to a comprehensive and inclusive debate to create a framework to expand Comprehensive and Sustainable Alternative Development (DAIS) in the Americas, which can facilitate the formulation of better public policies, taking into account illicit economies in urban settings, as well as the traditional, rural approach, leading to effective program implementation and interventions tailored to the needs, priorities and challenges of OAS member states.

Background:

1. Comprehensive and Sustainable Alternative Development is part of a set of reasonable, long-term, wide-ranging measures for sustainable development efforts that address socio-economic drug-related factors. [The United Nations General Assembly Resolution of 19 April 2016](#) establishes a joint commitment to effectively address and counter the world drug problem. Comprehensive and sustainable alternative development, along with crop eradication and interdiction, constitute the three pillars of the international community's "balanced approach" to mitigate the world drug problem ([World Drug Report 2015: p. 77](#))⁵. The report acknowledges alternative development as an evolving concept that extends beyond supply reduction. This report and the [UN General Assembly Resolution 68/196, Guiding Principles on Alternative Development](#) highlight that advocating alternative development as a global policy to reduce the availability of illicit drugs and control the underlying causes of illicit drug trafficking is a global responsibility that transcends the so-called "producing countries" to include "consumer and transit" nations.
2. Furthermore, [the Declaration of Antigua Guatemala 2013 "For A Comprehensive Policy Against The World Drug Problem In The Americas"](#), asks members states to promote comprehensive and sustainable alternative development programs and policies [as part of national policies]—including integrated or alternative preventive development designed to eliminate the factors causing poverty, social exclusion and environmental degradation when appropriate—to prevent vulnerable populations from participation in illicit drug production and trafficking.

⁵ Other important documents and efforts include: The Thematic Evaluation of Alternative Development from UNODC of 2005, the Technical Guide of Alternative Development in the Andean Region 2008, in 2010 the Report on the exchange of experiences between South Asia and Latin America, Resolutions 57 - 58 of the CND from 2013 related to the guiding principles of the United Nations on Alternative Development.

3. The [CICAD/OAS Hemispheric Drug Strategy](#) also incorporates alternative development and related preventive, comprehensive and sustainable measures in accordance with respect for human rights and the realities of each country. An agreement among the member states in the current 2016-2020 Action Plan reflects these measures to “Design, implement and/or strengthen long-term programs which are broad and aimed at development that includes rural and urban alternative, integral and sustainable development programs, and, as appropriate, preventive alternative development, in accordance with the policies, legislations and needs of each country, as appropriate.” These initiatives promote activities aimed at mitigating the environmental impact of illicit drug cultivation and production; involving local communities in crime prevention, community-building, protection, security and justice, while stimulating innovation, entrepreneurial spirit, employment, and fostering trust between the people and their representatives.
4. In November 2015, during the presidency of Peru, [the Expert Group on Comprehensive and Sustainable Alternative Development \(GEDAIS\)](#) relaunched during the fifty-eighth regular session of CICAD-OAS in Trujillo, Peru. GEDAIS was a "highly technical space to address new problems, threats and trends that integrated and sustainable alternative development efforts focused on human development in different countries in the hemisphere.”
5. In 2016, the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Drugs (UNGASS) on the world drug problem analyzed seven pillars that represent significant progress towards a more balanced and inclusive international drug strategy. It encouraged Member states to work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and address to the drug problem, since they are they are complementary and interrelated. [The final UNGASS 2016 document](#) generates a blueprint, commitments and operational recommendations for states to design policies to shape the deeply interrelated/interconnected drug and development agenda. The document also emphasizes that the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) apply to drug policy. As a result, in compliance with the 2030 Sustainable Development goals, the social welfare impact should determine the failure or success of these policies and their impact on multidimensional factors, including higher social inclusion, crime and violence reduction, extreme poverty eradication, incorporating gender perspectives and protecting human rights.
6. In addition, during the UNGASS 2016 process, States agreed to put into practice the alternative development operational recommendations approved by the United Nations Resolution, reiterating their “joint commitment to effectively counter and address the world drug problem, the illicit cultivation of plants used for the production of narcotic drugs and the illicit drug manufacture, production and trafficking." Member states also agreed to address related socioeconomic issues, emphasizing the causes and consequences of illicit cultivation, production, manufacture and drug trafficking-in rural and urban areas, through the execution of comprehensive sustainable development policies and programs.
7. Therefore, it is crucial to develop a comprehensive, consensus-based approach incorporating these recommendations that translates into concrete actions and public

policies, taking into account the distinct realities, visions, priorities, implementation levels and experience of OAS member states.

Frame of Reference:

8. OAS member states took an important step identifying the magnitude of Comprehensive and Sustainable Alternative Development (DAIS), based on an all-inclusive, human-based perspective for all policies. In this way, DAIS works to address social, economic, educational, health, environmental and political "dimensions". Inter-sectoral social inclusion sustainability and environmental resource management, human rights gender equality, ethnic diversity and, age focused approaches for diverse populations affected by drugs to help achieve these dimension, always taking into account local and regional particularities.
9. Historically, DAIS focused on rural contexts, promoting licit alternatives for populations involved in the cultivation or manufacture of psychoactive drugs. Measures to prevent production of illicit drugs have also been combined with a preventive alternative development strategy, to reduce the factors at-risk population that motivate them to engage in illicit activities related to drug production and trafficking or joining or interacting with criminal networks.
10. However, in recent years, several OAS member states favor a broader approach due to country-specific contexts and needs. Primarily because these countries have been directly or indirectly affected, by illicit drug cultivation or production, transit and sales. This has further exacerbated some social problems, compelling countries to generate and promote legitimate, viable and sustainable economic options—such as sustainable livelihoods⁶—for vulnerable communities extending beyond rural areas to urban development initiatives.
11. It is important to remember that in recent decades, Latin America has become the most urbanized region on the planet, with significant growth in cities and metropolitan areas⁷. Not surprisingly, several countries face serious problems of micro-trafficking and drug consumption, fueled by migration to urban areas are Although urban development can be considered a global trend, its accelerated growth entails significant risks, particularly

⁶ Sustainable livelihoods: include the possibilities, assets, including material and social resources) and activities necessary to earn a living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can withstand tensions, shocks and recover from them while maintaining and improving its possibilities and assets in the present and in the future. Without damaging the existing natural resource base "include capacities, goods and activities that are required to generate income and sustain life. Sustainable livelihoods refer to people's ability to generate and maintain livelihoods and improve their well-being and that of subsequent generations. Families or households are considered to have sustainable livelihoods when of cope and overcoming economic crises and adversity, while preserving their resources and capabilities and avoiding—environmental degradation. "For the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean - ECLAC - livelihoods are the "mechanisms through which households meet their needs and face external shocks."

⁷ World Urbanization Prospects, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2014.

especially when it involves radical and powerful changes such as the substitution of rural-by urban culture. In turn, the drug issue can be interpreted as a concrete and problematic expression of some of the most complex global challenges arising from intense urbanization. It can be analyzed as a cause or consequence of other processes that affect human development, associated with insecurity and social exclusion. Moreover, the magnitude and impact of the problem make it critical⁸ to analyze trends and dynamics affecting urban space and social organization, as well as finding solutions for different contexts. However, these processes do not come about uniformly or linearly. they are not processes that are developed uniformly, consistently or linearly, and.–which requires a careful examination of country's particularities in addition to each intervention region

12. All of this feeds into to the need to strengthen urban and rural development to tackle the factors leading to social exclusion where drug trafficking and consumption manifest with greater intensity. Education, health, housing, and security needs, which affect the development of vulnerable peoples and communities must be met as well.
13. Migrants from rural to urban areas and viceversa, within and across borders, rarely have access to the wealth and opportunities created. For many, shift to the city means unstable, unequally paid or poorly paid jobs along with other forms of abuse and deprivation. Many migrants can only settle in marginal neighborhoods, exposed to crime, pollution, and environmental threats, as well as limited access to basic needs such as safe drinking water, and sanitation, healthcare, safety, and education. Their deprivations are often aggravated by the informal or "illegal" status of these transitions, resulting in a blind spot in drug and development plans and policies.
14. The approach emphasizes the importance of addressing the socio-economic problems, found after illicit cultivation, as well as production, trafficking, and consumption and related crimes. Strengthening the rule of law and governance is essential to reduce poverty and build resilience⁹ within vulnerable communities, those living in extreme poverty and scarcity are among the most vulnerable to drug-related problems. Therefore, preparing citizens for a future less vulnerable to drugs implies strengthening of the intrinsic resilience of communities and countries.
15. This expanded framework includes actors linked to every stage of drug production and trafficking: cultivation, transformation, distribution, sales, consumption, as well as the use of chemical precursors, or of New Psychoactive Substances (NSP), among others. It also includes alternative to incarceration for certain drug-related offenses under the umbrella of sustainable development, promoting human rights, the rule of law, peace, justice, security, a culture of legality and social integration.

⁸ See 2013 OAS Report: "The Drug Problem in the Americas" and, in particular, the thematic studies on: "Drugs and Development", "Drugs and Public Health" and "Drugs and Security".

⁹ Resilience: The ability of a system, community or society exposed to a threat to resist, absorb, adapt and recover from its effects in a timely and effective manner. This includes the preservation and restoration of its basic structures and functions.

16. It is important to note that human development is the path to and the objective of social and political processes. However, human development goes beyond economic growth, focused exclusively on the expansion of a single variable, income. The holistic development approach - like human development - includes other options such as those cited Mahbub ul Haq.¹⁰ Applied as a comprehensive, balanced and sustainable approach, it complements and-reinforces the objectives of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.
17. Economic growth is, consequently, a means to human well-being, as opposed to the end of development itself. This must include the advancement of human dignity, autonomy, empowerment and inclusion of the target population. Economic growth must start at the beginning of the intervention, taking into account the relationship with the value chain¹¹, where all the actors involved in production benefit through improving conditions (win-win) versus the vision of the production chain that favors select members of that chain.
18. Development is intended to expand all economic, social, cultural and political human options. In principle, these can be infinite and change over time. It is important to bear in mind that people often value achievements, at times not as immediately visible as income or economic growth rates. These include: greater access to knowledge, education, health, and nutrition, as well the expansion of human potential as a source of productivity, improved nutritional service, healthier environments, safety from crime and physical violence, sufficient leisure time, political and cultural freedoms and participation in community activities. Therefore, the States play an important role promoting sustainable, alternative and integrated development policies and strategies through security and governance, public investment in infrastructure and basic services, job creation, access to credit, harm and fostering environmental conservation, furthering sustainable livelihoods, and well-being – all with a gender perspective. These aims and challenges highlight the urgent need to coordinate between institutions and civil society essential to promote trust in affected areas.
19. DAIS is conceived as a State intervention to implement policies that promote harmonious, sustainable, integrated territorial development. In this way, it seeks a combination of measures to provide countries with integral, efficient and effective public services to guarantee the socioeconomic inclusion of at-risk or affected communities, of reducing the likelihood that urban and rural populations participate in illicit drug trade. Furthermore, as some countries propose to help people build productive enterprises that can create jobs

¹⁰ Economist Mahbub ul Haq developed the concept of human development. At the World Bank in the 1970s, and later as finance minister in his own country, Pakistan, Dr. Haq argued that the existing measures of human progress did not explain the true purpose of development: to improve people's lives. He believed that the commonly used measure of Gross Domestic Product failed to adequately measure welfare. Working with Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen and other renowned economists, Dr. Haq published the first Human Development Report in 1990, commissioned by the United Nations Development Program.

¹¹ The value chain is a sequence of related commercial activities (functions) from the provision of specific inputs for a particular product to the primary production, transformation, marketing and final sale of the product to consumers.

and opportunities, ultimately reducing relapse into drug consumption and abuse. In this way, and with the participation of all relevant actors, including civil society, in an effort to address the structural causes of the drug problem.

20. There are a number of cultural elements to be addressed in each country. It is important to remember that human development seeks to provide inclusive spaces for people to freely choose a life that fully meets their expectations. In this regard, some member states have recently prioritized strategies for integrated, territorial sustainable development¹², seeking open and inclusive involvement of populations affected by drug related illicit activities. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to create adequate spaces to plan and coordinate policies and strategies on the subject.
21. In 2009 Bolivia launched an innovative program known as community control of the coca leaf. This program works primarily to reduce the harm to coca producers, replacing a forced coca eradication system, based on military and police intervention, with one a unique model where producers participate actively in decision-making as citizens, thereby determining the future of their communities.¹³
22. Historically supply and demand have been treated as separate drug policy issues. In reality, they are two complementary elements of drug problem. In addition, the drug problem has in Latin America and the Caribbean has become multi-faceted. They cover intersectional issues such as drug trafficking, drug abuse-related crimes, violence and the drug use and abuse. The so-called producer countries are gradually realizing that drug use is increasing within their own borders, even in rural areas, and are starting to worry about the social and health-related consequences of addiction, in an effort to find the best measures to control them.
23. Finally, because of complex, drug-related issues, countries face the growing need for reliable and up-to-date data, new indicators and the generation of new knowledge to develop more efficient public policies. The goal is to apply best practices and successful lessons learned, to develop skills useful for organizations, beneficiary groups and stakeholders. It is important to advocate the systematization,¹⁴ including methodological

¹² Comprehensive and sustainable territorial development: a form of development promotion, although recent in Latin America, it has already been applied in several places and has produced positive results. Some entities and organizations are recognizing this knowledge as a methodology of structured, responsible, participative, dynamic action. Driven by the actors of the territory, which seeks the construction of a socially and territorially cohesive and just order, environmentally sustainable, democratic and culturally diverse. The Colombian State seeks through this approach, to facilitate the transformation of the territory and rebuild the social fabric in areas where the armed conflict and the use of illicit crops weakened for years the possibilities of having a stable future, is part of the vision that has an integral development, with opportunities for all.

¹³ For more information see: *Habeas Coca, Social Control of Coca in Bolivia*, Linda C. Farthing and Kathryn Ledebur, Global Drug Policy Program, Open Society Foundations.

¹⁴ The systematization processes include the identification, documentation and transfer of experiences and key lessons drawn from a project or an initiative, or a group of projects or initiatives to promote, learning and replication / expansion. The systematization does not end with the description of the experience and the results,

processes that order a set of elements (practices, knowledge, ideas and data) and experiences that contribute to the implementation of improved projects and practices, as well as their potential socialization in similar sociocultural and geographical contexts—These processes must reflect the connection between DAIS and broader human development goals, such as the SDGs.

24. The pending task in the process to expand integrated, sustainable alternative development in the Americas is to achieve this comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach, finding common ground to translate recommendations determined through consensus and meetings into actions and specific public policies based on data, information, knowledge and experiences, taking into account differences between countries, including their realities, problems, cultures, visions, priorities, level of implementation and experience.

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but implies a deeper vision of how to attain what was achieved: what worked and what did not? What were the key factors for success? What could have been different and why? - to facilitate the exchange and use of development solutions.