

DAC nssd Dialogue in Bolivia - Progress Report

August 11th 2000

This progress report provides information on recent activities undertaken as part of the DAC- Developing Country Dialogue on nssds in Bolivia, based on communications with the lead organisation (contact: Anibal Aguilar, Bolhispania, anibal.aguilar@bolhispania.org.bo). It is intended to complement the workplan for the dialogue in Bolivia, a summary of which is included in the report of the First Planning Workshop (the full workplan is available in Spanish).

Progress Update – 15th June

The status review and the dialogue process have been initiated, using the topic guide to orientate the process, and a number of specific activities have been undertaken:

- The Parliamentary Commission for Sustainable Development and Planning has become actively involved in the process. It was suggested that the Department for Public Policy of the Catholic University should be involved, and a meeting has been held with the Department.
- Marcos Castellon, a member of the lead team and Director of Strategies, Vice Ministry for Planning and Participation, Ministry for Sustainable Development has prepared a review of the history of sustainable development policy and processes.
- Officials from the National Audit Office (Controlaria General de la Republica) have been approached and have showed considerable interest in participating in order to track progress with policies, plans and strategies. They will be consulted to examine their role in supporting strategy processes. (One emerging conclusion is that most strategy processes have not had a legal framework to allow the Audit Office to ensure commitments made by the government and civil society is followed-up).
- A focus group meeting with officials responsible for Public Investment will be held in mid-June to examine their experience with investment related to strategy processes over the past 15 years (it is evident that mechanisms for social control over public investment are not working effectively).
- Following a meeting on May 26th, an agreement has been reached with the Confederation of the Urban Poor ('Confederacion de Juntas Vecinales') to include a consultation on SD in an information leaflet which will be distributed to 7000 towns/villages ('pobladores') throughout the country. Distribution of the leaflet has already begun and the consultation ends on July 31st.
- The DAC nssd initiative was presented at a recent meeting with the Donor Contact Group, chaired by GTZ, in which the Dutch, US, German, Spanish and Danish agencies participated. As a result, the Dutch agency has decided to become actively involved and USAID has offered its cooperation.
- Anibal Aguilar and the Donor Contact Group (GTZ, AECI, COSUDE) met with the Minister for SD in June to analyse the participation of the MSD and the nssds exercise in the National Dialogue process for the PRSP and to discuss how to incorporate SD issues into the process. It was agreed that a proposal would be prepared.
- A Bulletin has been prepared containing details of the first public event held on May 17th to present the DAC initiative to key actors (available in Spanish).
- It has been proposed that the nssd dialogue should include a regional event in Cochabamba, as well as events in Tarija and Santa Cruz.

The Thematic Workshops of the nssd dialogue will be small events, focusing on specific themes in order to provide a focus for the analysis, and will involve relevant experts and stakeholder groups. Many key actors (eg. decision-makers) are not well informed about the meaning of sustainable development and one of the objectives of the workshops is to raise their awareness.

The Thematic Workshop on Macroeconomics and SD, June 28-29, will involve decision-makers and civil society actors and examine key economic strategies e.g. the strategic agenda for economic development. It will aim to draw lessons on the development of economic strategies, the impact of SD policies on the design of economic policies and development strategies, and the integration of environment objectives into these policies/strategies. It will also examine the impact of structural reforms and macroeconomic indicators on the economic, social and political dimensions of SD and how structural reforms have influenced the design of SD strategies and the process of structural adjustment.

Progress update – July 26th

The National Dialogue 2000 for the PRSP was initiated on June 6th in Chuquisaca, and will conclude on August 6th, with a national statement from the President. The process, coordinated by UDAPE (the Unit for Economic Policy of the Finance Ministry), will allow the participatory development of the PRSP, which will be presented to the IMF and WB in August.

The 2nd National Dialogue was initiated on July 7th and has involved consultation with 318 municipalities, and 1,272 delegates from across the country, based on questionnaire-leaflets and discussions on poverty reduction issues. Dialogues have been held in Chuquisaca, Cochabamba, Oruro, Tarija, Pando, Beni, Potosi, La Paz, and Santa Cruz (July 11-13). Four representatives from each Municipality participate in the dialogue – the Mayor, the Vice-President of the Council (opposition), the policing committee, and a woman acting on behalf of civil society. The ND's approach is participatory analysis of the fight against poverty, strategic tools for poverty reduction, mechanisms for control/accountability of public expenditure and political reforms.

The ND is being closely followed by the lead organisation to draw lessons for the DAC nssd initiative. Anibal Aguilar and the Minister for SD plan to attend all the ND events to present nssds as the best path in the fight against poverty and to try to ensure that the analysis includes environment issues.

Complementary to the ND for the PRSP, consultations with civil society are being conducted on two themes:

- the strategic agenda for economic development, a process of consultation with companies and producers throughout Bolivia on sectoral strategic processes that will contribute to economic development, based on participatory analysis of productive sectors and production chains; and
- the political agenda which includes themes relating to constitutional reform, on the basis of which there will be a process of political reform.

Specific activities of the Nssd dialogue:

- Anibal Aguilar has prepared a document on SD processes in Bolivia as instruments for poverty reduction, which is being distributed to town Mayors and civil society actors who are participating in the Nssd exercise.
- The National Audit Office's 'Sub-Controller' (Renan Arce) will contribute his experience with environmental audits and implementation of government policy, and will appoint two technical experts to provide relevant inputs.
- Marianela Cury, Director of the Environment NGO network (LIDEMA) held an important meeting with Anibal Aguilar, in which she agreed to contribute to the SD status review and the dialogue workshops in order to draw key lessons from Bolivia's experience. They also agreed to co-ordinate activities to strengthen the National Council for SD.¹
- The consultation leaflet distributed by the Confederation of Urban Poor included the issue of nssds in order to assess the level of awareness of the population about SD plans and urban development plans. 100 village committees ('juntas vecinales') have already sent their replies.
- The Workshop on Macroeconomics and SD is being organised with the Economic Policy Unit (UDAPE) of the Ministry of Finance.

The ND for the PRSP is bringing key experiences on participatory dialogue processes for developing nssds. Anibal Aguilar has attended regional meetings of the ND in Oruro, Chochabamba, Tarija, La Paz and Santa Cruz, and distributed the document on SD as an instrument for poverty reduction. Specific environment issues are being addressed in the dialogues in each province and region: e.g. effects of petrol spills in Oruro, water problems in Cochabamba, river contamination from mining in Potosi and soil erosion in Tarija. In La Paz, there was strong support for environment and biodiversity issues - discussions were held on the distribution and exploitation of land and forests, waste management and river contamination, but unlike other in regions, the existence of a control mechanism was not considered important.

During the ND in La Paz, parallel meetings were held with Ing. Rene Zambrana, President of the Association of Municipalities of Santa Cruz, in order to co-ordinate activities for the Nssd process and the National Workshop in September.

Cynthia Yanez, a member of the lead team, is participating in the participatory process of the National Dialogue to develop the strategic agenda for economic development. The Nssd exercise has established an agreement for consultation with the Liaison Committee (through Jose Pinelo), which organises the national consultation with producers, where producers in different sectors define production strategies for their sector, so that SD can be included in the analysis. The producers have developed sectoral strategies that will contribute to development of proposals based on SD objectives and cross-sectoral integration of SD in productive sectors. Anibal Aguilar participated in a dialogue with textile businesses, and in early August discussions will be held with producers of grapes-wine in Tarija, grain and poultry, and later livestock and leather in Cochabamba, tourism in Sucre and transport in La Paz.

¹ LIDEMA has provided the following documents: Report of the Bolivian Consultation prepared for the Rio +5 Forum by MSD in March 1997; and Towards Sustainable Development, the Latin America Summit, Santa Cruz 1996.

The Vice President of Bolivia, Ing. Jorge Quiroga Ramirez has been informed about the nssd exercise of the OECD/DAC, and its links with the N.Ds. In July contact was also established with Ricardo Cuevas, the new President of the Civil Committee of Tarija, a gas producing region, and an important area in terms of soil erosion problems.

The Ministry for SD and Planning is analysing the proposal for the Biodiversity Strategy developed by the Vice-Ministry for SD with a view to disseminating it. The nssd exercise will analyse the contents of the proposal in order to draw lessons and establish key elements to contribute to the nssd exercise.

Update – August 11th

The National Workshop of the Nssd dialogue will be held on September 18-19 in Santa Cruz. The aim is to present the status review and discuss it with a range of stakeholders. Marcos Castellon (MSD) is preparing the status review document. The workshop will also involve presentations on the results of the ND (Technical Secretariat), and progress with the CDF and PRSP (Rodney Pereira, UDAPE).

Meetings were held with the Vice-Ministry for Public Investment and External Finance (VIPFE) (Monica Sanchez and Rodolfo Arostegui), to inform Miss Painter on her visit to La Paz that strong emphasis being placed on the co-ordination of the following exercises: CDF of the World Bank, UNDAF of the UN and the Nssd of the OECD/DAC. In this way important links are being made with donor agencies and the PRSP.

Lic. Jaime Aranibar of UDAPE has been replaced by Lic. Roberto Rivero, advisor for social policy to the Director of UDAPE in the lead team of the Nssd exercise. Rivero will participate in the development of the PRSP, and will co-ordinate inputs to the Nssd process with Anibal Aguilar.

At the end of July, Javier Medina, advisor to the Ministry of Finance, chaired a television interview with Anibal Aguilar and Jose Pinel of the Producers' Liaison Committee, where he indicated that the next challenge of the N.D. would be to promote the discussion and design of an Nssd.

- On July 24th, the Director of UDAPE presented a plan for the design of the PRSP and general conclusions of the ND to the international community and development agencies.
- A meeting was held on July 26 at the British Embassy, with Erick Cevallos and Claudia Fumo to discuss the Nssd exercise.
- On July 27th Anibal Aguilar attended a meeting of the informal network for bilateral cooperation (co-ordinated by DFID), where the plan for the design of the PRSP proposed by UDAPE and the National Government was discussed. The Nssd team are now participating in the bilateral support team that cooperates with UDAPE.
- An important meeting was held on July 29th July attended by the Nssd co-ordinator, the Director of UDAPE (Rodney Pereyra), Roberto Rivero (UDAPE), Daniel Alvarez and Dr Hidalgo, advisors of the Ministry for SD and Planning. The integration of SD and the PRSP was discussed, as was the importance of using nssds as an overall framework.

- A meeting was held on July 31st with the advisors of the MSD to discuss progress with the Nssd initiative and the role of the MSD, prepare the workshop in September and discuss ways in which the MSD can promote the development of an nssd.
- On August 1st the Nssd co-ordinators and AECl will attend a presentation by the World Bank on the CDF and its implementation.
- The nssd exercise is supporting UDAPE with the production and dissemination of CD Roms on the design of instruments for strategic planning.

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