

**OECD/DAC Donor-Developing Country Dialogues on
Strategies for Sustainable Development**

DRAFT: 1 November 2000

**REPORT OF THE
MID-TERM REVIEW WORKSHOP, THAILAND
Phuket, Thailand, 9-14 October 2000**

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Notes:

1. This draft report has been prepared by IIED and is being circulated to all workshop participants for comment and clarification.
2. The term “strategy” when used unqualified in this report means a strategy for sustainable development.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Mid-Term Workshop brought together country teams from Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Nepal, Tanzania, Thailand (dialogue countries); representatives from Ghana, Namibia and Pakistan (parallel learning countries), members of the DAC Task Force on nssds (UK – DFID; EC; Japan – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and JICA; Netherlands - DGIS; Germany - GTZ), ‘resource’ persons with expertise in strategies for sustainable development, and staff from the OECD/DAC and International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) (the coordinating organisation) The Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) provided local logistical support for the organisation of the workshop (see Appendix 1 for list of participants).

This report provides a summary of the workshop, highlighting the key conclusions and recommendations. It will be posted on the project website (www.nssd.net), together with copies of the papers, project documents and overheads presented at the two workshops.

2. OPENING OF WORKSHOP

The workshop was officially opened at a reception for participants by the Ms Supatra Madit, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office, who stressed the importance of strategies for sustainable development and the key role of stakeholder participation in such approaches. Mr Adrian Davis (DFID – co chair of the DAC Task Force on Strategies for Sustainable Development) responded for the OECD/DAC and stressed they need to think in terms of principles for strategy development and implementation.

Subsequently, a letter from the Bolivian Minister for Sustainable Development was presented expressing continued support for the initiative.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop had several objectives:

- to review progress in participating countries;
- to develop a draft framework for policy guidance (aimed primarily at donors) on strategies for sustainable development;
- to exchange information and ideas on on-going strategy approaches, on emerging opportunities and challenges, and on international developments in the area of sustainable development strategies;
- to consider ways to improve and continue networking amongst project participants;
- to consider next steps in the project.

4. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

Peter Shelley from the UK Department for International Development (DFID) presented a reminder overview of the background and objectives of the project, and the roles of the different participants. Details can be found in project documents and in the report of the First Planning Workshop held in Arusha, Tanzania, in April 2000 (available on the project website: www.nssd.net).

4.1. Responding to nssd targets through a partnership approach

It was noted that Agenda 21, agreed at the Earth Summit in 1992, called on all countries to prepare a national strategy for sustainable development (nssd). Five years later, at a Special

Session of the UN General Assembly, a target date of 2002 was set for all countries to have introduced such strategies. In the run up to this event, the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) - a forum which brings donors together to harmonise policy – agreed its *Shaping the 21st Century* policy document which set a target of 2005 for nssds to be in the process of implementation in all countries, and made a commitment to support developing countries in the formulation and implementation of nssds.

However, no official interpretation of what a strategy for sustainable development is, or how to develop and implement one, has been given to assist countries in meeting these targets and commitments, and there is a risk that the targets could result in the production of strategy documents that are poorly implemented, as has often been the case with previous approaches.

The DAC Working Party on Environment (WP/ENV) therefore decided to develop guidance for donor agencies on how best to support countries in developing and implementing strategies for sustainable development, and appointed a Task Force for this purpose in June 1998. The Task Force identified the need for guidance to be developed in partnership with developing countries, through consultations and dialogues in a number of countries. Following a Donor - Developing Country Scoping Workshop, held in Sunningdale, UK, in November 1998, a project was launched with financial support from a range of Working Party members.

In parallel to the WP/ENV initiative, the DAC high level meeting in May 1999 defined a strategy for sustainable development as “a strategic and participatory process of analysis, debate, capacity strengthening, planning and action towards sustainable development”. It also noted that developing such a strategy does not necessarily mean launching a completely new planning process, but can be achieved by incorporating sustainable development principles into key existing policy and strategic planning processes.

4.2. Objectives of the project

The following objectives were re-confirmed:

- To elaborate good practice for donor agencies to support strategy processes in developing countries (the main objective for donor agencies); and
- To improve international understanding of how to develop and implement strategies.

It was stressed that the purpose of the country dialogues is not directly to initiate new planning processes, but to learn from those that already exist. However, it is hoped that, where possible, the dialogues will also make a substantive contribution to existing strategy processes in developing countries. It is also hoped that they will enable the identification of indicators to monitor progress towards successful strategies, and generate a better understanding of what constitutes a strategy.

The country dialogues are extremely important because the outputs will be used to develop policy guidance for donor agencies. This marks a significant new step for the OECD/DAC since, for the first time, policy guidance is being developed in partnership with developing countries. The guidance will be presented to OECD Ministers of Development Co-operation in April 2001 and, if adopted, may influence key actors such as the UN and the World Bank.

4.3. Roles of participants in the nssd dialogue project

These were noted as:

- In-country lead institutions/teams: to co-ordinate and implement the dialogues in each country, working closely with governments.

- In-country steering committees: to meet several times and provide a forum for a broader range of stakeholders to have input into shaping the dialogues.
- IIED: to co-ordinate the project, ensure consistency of approach and adherence to the timetable, develop draft guidance, and assist with the administration of funds.
- DAC Task Force: to listen and learn (the guidance will be informed by the dialogues), to assist IIED, secure and release funds, and provide feedback to the DAC WP/ENV and other donors and financial institutions (e.g. IMF, World Bank).

5. COUNTRY PROGRESS REPORTS

Representatives from each participating country presented a report on progress with the status reviews and dialogue activities:

5.1. Thailand

Nipon Poapongsakorn of the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) reported that the project in Thailand is being undertaken in two phases: (a) Phase 1 - a status review of past and current strategic planning processes and dialogue on issues concerning sustainable development strategies; (b) Phase 2 - a dialogue on developing a poverty reduction strategy for Thailand.

Phase 1

This has involved a review of the current status of national development strategies since 1960 and the factors explaining changes in strategies – focusing on growth-oriented strategies and recent sustainable development strategies (e.g. 8th/9th National Economic and Social Development Plans), and government-led and NGO-led processes. A dialogue has been conducted with a range of stakeholders on several issues:

- The concept of a sustainable development strategy;
- The development process and role of people's participation;
- Stakeholders' management technology and knowledge of the state of the economy, social and political situation;
- Stakeholders' political commitment;
- Role of donors (yet to be considered).

Mechanisms

The lead team comprises staff of Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI), the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MOSTE). A Steering Committee has been established, chaired by a distinguished medical professor, with nine other members from government, the private sector and civil society. Several resource persons have assisted panel discussions.

The approaches for phase 1 have involved:

- Literature review;
- Preparing five issues papers;
 - Rural historical development since 1957
 - Urban development and poverty issues
 - Environmental developmental process
 - Strategies for sustainable development: an overview
 - The 8th and 9th National Economic and Social Development Plan processes
- Consultations with the Steering Committee;
- Interviews with key stakeholders;
- Panel discussions and a special lecture;

- Workshop on Thailand development strategy
- A paper on the results of phase 1 as an input to developing the 9th National Economic and Social Development Plan;

Phase 2:

A dialogue on developing an appropriate process of formulating and implementing a poverty reduction strategy, drawing lessons from existing strategies, identifying areas of best practice, and identifying common constraints. It will involve:

- reviewing literature on poverty, the process of poverty reduction and implementing the poverty reduction policy during the 5th to 7th national plans (October);
- interviews with key resource persons (November);
- focus group meetings (December);
- two workshops on poverty reduction strategies – one technical, another for NGOs and community leaders (December);
- preparing a synthesis report (January);
- a national seminar – a dialogue on a possible mechanism to develop a national sustainable development strategy focusing on poverty reduction (January);
- Draft final report (February).

Key lessons to date

- People were allowed to participate in national planning for the first time in the development of the 8th National Economic and Social Development Plan – effectively the country's existing sustainable development strategy; more groups of stakeholders are involved in developing the 9th plan (but there is still an adversarial approach towards some NGOs);
- Sustainable development is defined by dialogue stakeholders as holistic development which involves six dimensions: economic, social, environment, politics, technology & knowledge, and a mentally and spiritually well-balanced mind;
- The NESDB has adopted these dimensions of sustainable development on a piecemeal basis with no coherent approach.

5.2. Bolivia

Anibal Aguilar of Bolhispania explained that significant reforms have been introduced in Bolivia in the last six years, resulting in a decentralised and participatory planning system. Roberto Rivero of UDAPE (the Unit for Economic Policy Analysis) made a short presentation on the government's consultation process for the development of the PRSP (the 'National Dialogue'). The work funded by the DAC project is being carried out in two phases: a status review and a dialogue phase. The work plan has been revised, and the main focus of the dialogue is now the 1997 Global Plan for Economic and Social Development (PGDES), which is effectively an nssd.

Mechanisms

The Lead Team comprises Anibal Aguilar, a consultant, and representatives from the Ministry for Sustainable Development and Planning, the Ministry for Economic Development and UDAPE. A Steering Committee has been established which is chaired by the Minister for Sustainable Development and Planning, and includes a representative from the Vice-Ministry for Public Investment and External Finance (VIPFE), Spanish Cooperation and DFID, the Parliamentary Commission for sustainable development, an NGO and a private sector representative.

Phase I: Status Review

The following activities have been carried out to provide an input for the Status Review:

- Observation and analysis of the government-led consultation process for the development of the PRSP (the National Dialogue)
- Observation of the parallel consultations facilitated by NGOs;
- Review of key planning and strategy documents;
- Consultations with key informants;
- A National Workshop in Santa Cruz to review experience with strategies.

The first draft of the Status review will be ready in mid November.

Phase II: Dialogue

The dialogue will examine how to improve the PGDES process, and the links between the planning processes at national, regional and local level, so that it best supports sustainable development at local level. An initial 'map' of these processes and links will be prepared to generate a provisional indication of their strengths and weaknesses. Local consultations will then be held in two regions to determine how the various planning processes support local sustainable development and where they do not. These will involve consultations with key informants based on the 'map' and key questions, followed by a one-day workshop. A small national workshop will then be held to discuss the findings.

Key lessons to date

- The 1994 Law on Public Participation requires a greater proportion of public funds to be administered at municipal level, through local participatory plans.
- To improve the implementation of the new planning system, there is a need to strengthen the capacity of municipalities, improve coordination between planning at the national, regional and local level, and strengthen public accountability mechanisms.
- Implementation of the PGDES requires much better coordination with sectoral investment and regional and local planning.
- There is a need to improve trust and collaboration between the state and civil society.
- The many political parties in government, and outside, make it difficult for coordination and continuity of policies and plans. There is a need to remove political-partisan habits in technical areas of government initiatives.

5.3. Tanzania

The Tanzanian progress report was jointly presented by Professor Lucian Msambichaka and Dr Oswald Mashindano of the Economic Research Bureau, University of Dar es Salaam. They noted that work in Tanzania is closely following the approach set out in the project document. It involves two phases: (a) a status review, and (b) a dialogue process on strategies for sustainable development. These phases aim to meet three key objectives:

- To develop guidance for Tanzania on how it can better prepare and implement a strategy for sustainable development, and how donors can assist;
- To identify weaknesses in existing strategies for sustainable development in Tanzania;
- To propose remedial measures/options to these weaknesses.

Mechanisms

The Lead team is based at the Economic Research Bureau of the University of Dar es Salaam. It comprises five members and is complemented by 3 short-term consultants. A Dialogue Steering Committee has been established, chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the National Planning Commission. Members include three other senior government Permanent Secretaries, and representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, a national NGO, a senior academic and a donor agency.

Phase 1: status review

This is now completed. It involved:

- A stakeholders' planning workshop;
- Desk review of existing strategy and initiative documents by lead team members and consultants;
- Interviews with key informants;
- Focus group discussion;
- Stakeholders' status review workshop (including developing a mock strategy to build awareness of strategies);

Phase 2: dialogues

In the period November 1999 – January 2001, the following activities will be undertaken:

- Identifying key stakeholders and institutions for consultations and interviews;
- Stakeholder workshop in Dar es Salaam;
- Two stakeholder workshop at district level in Arusha and Iringa regions;
- Summary of major issues emerging from DSM and District workshops;
- National-level stakeholder workshop;
- Synthesis report, and submission to government and donors.

Key lessons to date

- Stakeholders had difficulty conceptualising strategies for sustainable development;
- There was no clear knowledge of what a strategy document should contain;
- Preparation of strategies in Tanzania has been influenced by external factors – and they have no clear 'owner';
- There has been inadequate grassroots participation in strategies;
- Strategies have lacked implementation plans;
- There has been a long time-lag between policy formulation and implementation;
- There is no harmonised/standard approach to strategy preparation;
- Existing strategies have too many objectives;
- Strategies exist without policies; and vice versa;
- Capacity-building is needed at all levels
- The status review workshop identified a number of principles for strategies for sustainable development (these have been incorporated into the draft policy guidance framework – see Appendix 4).

5.4. Burkina Faso

In his report, Daniel Thieba of GREFCO pointed out that, in Burkina Faso, there is weak synergy between the various plans and programmes. In response, in June 2000, the government agreed to elaborate guidelines for developing a national strategy for sustainable development through a dialogue involving key actors. The key objectives of the work in Burkina Faso are:

- To undertake a status review to enable an in-depth analysis of existing national strategic planning frameworks;
- Dissemination and ownership of this status review by different stakeholder groups through workshops;
- Formulation of analysis and proposals by different actors (assisted by animators) to develop a strategy (building synergy and harmonisation between various plans and programmes);
- To debate points of convergence and divergence.

The work is arranged in four phases:

- (a) Sharing information and raising awareness about commitments and roles in relation to the Rio conventions (Desertification; Biodiversity; Climatic Change), and synergy in their implementation;
- (b) Review of the current situation and proposing mechanisms for dialogue;
- (c) Validation and building consensus to adopt a strategy and work plan;
- (d) Implementation of the action plan

Mechanisms

A full-time project team leader has been appointed from Groupe Recherches Formation & Conseil (GREFCO) and part-time consultants are providing support as needed. A Steering Committee has been established with members drawn from government institutions, the private sector and multilateral and bilateral donors.

Work completed

- Key questions for analysis and interviews elaborated by the lead team;
- Status review undertaken - covering 16 planning frameworks and processes, with 3 examined in depth (August). Report available in French; English translation being prepared; draft report submitted to Steering Committee plus summary version;
- Elaboration and distribution of guidelines for conducting dialogues;
- Several meetings of the Steering Committee;
- National information sharing workshop (80 participants) on process for developing a strategy for sustainable development (September).

Work in progress

- 3 synthesis workshops on consultations (October);
- Preparation of synthesis document (November);

Key lessons to date

- The implementation of most strategies is still in the initial phase and impacts are difficult to determine; older processes lack institutional systems for implementation;
- The process has been opened to civil society, but involvement quality is unsatisfactory. Most people involved so far are from government. A key question is how to secure the adequate and effective participation of more actors?
- There has been insufficient time (within the DAC timetable) to set up a good process and for people to prepare and present their views;

5.5. Nepal

Dr Badri Pande (IUCN-Nepal) reported on the process in Nepal which had started late in September 2000. It followed a two-day regional workshop in Kathmandu (July 2000), organised by IUCN, which shared experiences of Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Thailand

Its main objectives are:

- To identify strategic processes for sustainable development that have been successfully used in Nepal;
- To assess elements that work well and not so well in Nepal, in order to (a) inform the development of the sustainable development agenda in the country, and (b) inform donors

(OECD/DAC and donors with active programmes in Nepal).

The process will involve:

- A review of all national and local level strategies and plans, e.g.: the 9TH Five Year Plan, multi-stakeholder thematic strategies (e.g. National Conservation Strategy, Biodiversity Action Plan, Forestry Master Plan, etc), local initiatives such as the Sustainable Community Development Programme (SDCP) and community forestry – with a focus on processes and links;
- Defining sustainable development success indicators;
- A series of stakeholder workshops at national and sub-national levels (primarily targeted beneficiaries at the community level) to learn lessons about processes;
- Synthesis of findings and report preparation.

Mechanisms

IUCN-Nepal has been appointed to facilitate the process and provide technical support and programmatic management. A team leader will be appointed to work full-time assisted by experts and other support staff.

The National Planning Commission has established a Steering Committee – merging two pre-existing Steering Committees for the Sustainable Community Development Programme (SDCP) and for the development of the national strategy for sustainable development (a UNDP-supported initiative). The committee is chaired by the NPC and draws members from key ministries, UNDP, DFID, the private sector and NGOs.

Lessons to date

- The Kathmandu regional workshop identified a list of principles for effective strategies for sustainable development (these have been incorporated into the draft policy guidance framework – see Appendix 4)
- Any process that applies such principles could be recognised as a strategy for sustainable development

5.6. Ghana

Mr Seth Vordzorgbe (consultant) presented the Ghana report. He and another consultant have been commissioned to undertake a study with three broad aims:

- To identify successful and unsuccessful elements of the process of developing and implementing previous and current sustainable development strategies in Ghana, including Ghana Vision 2020;
- To contribute to identifying international best practice in sustainable development strategy design and implementation;
- To provide a useful input into the on-going process of developing the Second Step Policy Framework (2001-2005) for Ghana's Vision 2020 – particularly to enhance the effectiveness of participatory approach in the design of district plans under the Second Step, and to inform the design of next steps under Vision 2020.

The study is being conducted in several phases (September-November 2000):

- A review of key issues in implementing sustainable development strategies in Ghana;
- A stakeholder workshop to review preliminary findings;
- A second stakeholder workshop, with broader stakeholder representation, to consider a revised report incorporating feedback comments and ideas emerging from the Thailand mid-term workshop;

- Preparing a final report.

Lessons to date

- A number of success criteria for a strategic process for sustainable development have been identified – and incorporated in the draft policy guidance framework – see Appendix 4);
- For effective participation and quality of work, terms such as ‘strategy’ need to be clearly defined;
- To develop an effective sustainable development strategy needs an appropriate methodology for a visioning process (e.g. scenarios);
- Participation in the design of strategies has been dominated by government ministries, departments and agencies;
- For effective participation, stakeholders need time to prepare for their involvement in forums and workshops;
- The nominal group technique is more effective than brainstorming to ensure effective participation;
- Full participation by all social or pressure groups is enhanced by advance information to all potential participants, education and communication campaigns on the process, objectives, methodology and expected outcomes;
- Donor-led processes are not necessarily less participatory than home-grown processes.

Ghana Vision 2020 and decentralised planning

Dr Ferdinand Tay (Ghana National Development Planning Commission) made a presentation explaining the process of developing Ghana Vision 2020 and the decentralised planning system now in place.

5.7. Namibia

Mr Brian Jones (consultant) explained that support has been provided to augment work being undertaken under a DANCED-funded initiative which is assisting National Planning Commission Secretariat (NPCS) and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) to integrate environment and sustainable development issues in developing the second National Development Plan.

Consultants have been engaged through the Namibia Nature Foundation to:

Prepare a paper describing the process followed by the DANCED project and analysing what has worked well or not (successes and failures) and the reasons (September);

Assist the screening of the draft chapters of the second National Development Plan (i.e. for some 17 chapters on social, industry and infrastructure/institutions clusters and related cross-cutting topics) (August-October);

- Prepare a paper on the methods used for this screening analysis (yet to be written).

The support of the DAC dialogues project has enabled much wider coverage to the screening process. However, There has been slippage in the screening process due to delays in line ministries submitting their draft chapters for review. The comments from the screening will be incorporated by the NPCS into the chapters when they are revised following national consultations on NDP2.

Lessons to date

- The alliance between MET and NPCS has enabled MET to directly influence mainstream development planning and promote a sustainable development approach;

- Using (Namibian) consultants has filled a capacity gap in the Directorate of Environmental Affairs (of MET), but has meant that the DEA has not established strong institutional links with the NPCCS;
- The preparation of sector issues and options papers provided useful material for sectors to identify cross-cutting issues affecting sustainable development and provided key points for discussion in cluster workshops (clusters of related sectors);
- Cluster workshops had several benefits. They: provided an effective mechanism for representatives from a broad range of stakeholders to be exposed to the concept of sustainable development and key cross-cutting issues; helped different sectors to recognise the inter-relatedness of their various activities; led to the development of sector visions for sustainable development; and stimulated ideas about achieving better co-operation and integration;
- The DANCED-funded project has resulted in noticeably increased awareness of sustainable development and cross-sectoral issues within NPCCS – and the cluster workshop process will now be used for national budget preparation.

5.8. Pakistan

Mr Asif Zaidi and Ms Maheen Zehra (both IUNC-Pakistan) reported that following its approval and after five years of development, the Pakistan National Conservation Strategy is being implemented during the period 1992-2002. A mid term review (MTR) of the NCS was conducted between May 1999 and April 2000 in two stages: information collection through a year-long domestic process; and a month long external review based on background studies and consultations with NCS stakeholders.

Key lessons of the MTR

- NCS implementation and building consensus towards sustainable development has been inhibited by weak political structures and the fragile democracy; the NCS had no influence on key socio-economic issues;
- But the MTR has revitalised dialogue on national issues and provided space to renew directions for sustainable development initiatives in Pakistan; expanded the stakeholder base; raised debate on poverty reduction and economic development; generated a realisation that isolated sectoral initiatives need to be brought together on one platform; and identified guidelines for donor investment.
- NCS formulation was participative; but implementation was not;
- There has been a pervasive lack of co-ordination between donor-funded initiatives;
- Capacity to implement the NCS and any strategy for sustainable development is lacking; consensus is needed on what capacity is required;
- A strategy for sustainable development must be flexible to allow for its revision and translation into implementation in changing contextual circumstances.

Next steps

- A Steering Committee is being established to take forward the MTR and its recommendation;
- A synthesis report on the MTR recommendations will be prepared: under the DAC project, it is intended to Commission IUCN-Pakistan to prepare a paper (in collaboration with IIED) summarising the experience of the MTR process and the key lessons. This will be used as part of a process led by IUCN-Pakistan to broaden awareness and understanding of these lessons in building momentum for developing a sustainable development strategy;
- A dialogue will be instituted with consultations at national, provincial and district levels to gauge consensus for future directions, map institutional capacity and discuss how to move towards a strategy for sustainable development;
- A national forum for debate on sustainable development will be launched;

- A programme will be undertaken to advocate and build commitment for a strategy for sustainable development amongst decision-makers;
- Public debate will be initiated through the media and existing NGO and other networks;

5.9. Donors

Paula Chalinder (DFID) told participants about the work and responsibilities of the DAC Task Force on strategies for sustainable development that is co-ordinating 15 members of the DAC. She explained how donors are supporting the dialoguing initiative within their own agencies and stressed that donors are particularly keen that the process is of real benefit for the participating countries. A major aim is to improve coherence and co-ordination at international level. The DAC plays an important role because it is a much stronger force than individual agencies for agreeing and disseminating coherent and co-ordinated policy messages.

It is recognised that a range of homegrown strategies exist in most countries (conservation strategies, domestic poverty strategies, etc.) but there is a need to ensure common principles, and these are beginning to emerge from the dialogues. Donors are paying particular attention to the new initiatives concerning poverty reduction strategies papers (PRSPs) and Comprehensive Development Frameworks (CDF) and are trying to use the opportunity of the DAC initiative on strategies for sustainable development to share learning with the IMF and World Bank and others to recognise and to foster international recognition and adoption of the principles emerging from the work of the DAC-developing country dialogues.

In practice, the increasing number of strategy type initiatives (many externally driven) is leading to increasing duplication, confusion and burdening of institutions, and there is a real need to improve co-ordination, and for principles that all these strategies should follow and support.

The example of Uganda was discussed where the existing 1997 Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) was approved as the full PRSP (not just the intermediate PRSP). The PEAP was due to be revised in early 2000 and this process allowed for opportunities to ensure the revised PEAP met Uganda's needs as well as what was required for a PRSP. It also allowed scope for technical assistance to support the integration of environment considerations into the PEAP/PRSP and this resulted in the development of an improved PEAP. In the absence of developed and agreed principles for strategies for sustainable development, it is still too early to judge if the revised PEAP can be considered a strategy for sustainable development, but it appears to be moving in the right direction.

It is very important that the dialogue partners engage with others, including national planning commissions and finance ministries. In November 2000, the DAC is organising a meeting to bring together the Bretton Woods organisations, UN organisations and DAC members to discuss convergence between PRSP, CDF and other sustainable development strategy initiatives. It is also hoped to raise the policy guidance on strategies for sustainable development at the inter-sessional meeting that is preparing for the Rio+10 event and at Rio+10 itself to maximise its impacts. The World Bank will undertake a formal review of the PRSP in 2001. It will be important to take all opportunities to work with World Bank country offices to advocate recognition and uptake of the guidance and principles.

6. LESSONS FROM THE DIALOGUES

Throughout the presentation of country report, key emerging issues and lessons from the country teams were noted on flip charts. The common issues and lessons were summarised by Steve Bass (IIED) and Pete Shelley (DFID) (Appendix 2) as a possible starting point for more detailed

discussion by working groups. Participants then discussed these issues in plenary and emphasised the importance of:

- designing strategies from the bottom-up, based on what works at local level
- addressing major threats to strategies for sustainable development, e.g. AIDS, war, foreign debt;
- ensuring commitment to implementation by existing and successive governments;
- ensuring donors facilitate rather than drive the process, and that more powerful groups do not dominate;
- convergence when dealing with several strategies;

Four working groups were then assigned to consider three important questions:

- a) How to build strategies from the bottom up? What works?
- c) What are the threats and opportunities posed by other strategies (eg PRSPs, CDF, etc)
- d) What are the roles of stakeholders?

The reports of each working group are presented in Appendix 3. The outcomes from these working groups were fed into the subsequent discussions on the framework for policy guidance (see next section).

7. DRAFT FRAMEWORK FOR POLICY GUIDANCE ON STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Barry Dalal-Clayton presented a first cut of the draft policy guidance, prepared by IIED in consultation with the Task Force leaders (DFID & EC) as an initial basis for discussion. Participants then debated the basic structure and agreed on a revised framework of sections. Four working groups were assigned to discuss particular sections and consider which issues would need to be dealt with by the guidance under these sections, covering:

- Group A: The challenge of sustainable development;
- Group B: Practice under existing country-level frameworks; and evolving towards sustainable development strategies;
- Group C: The role of donors;
- Group D: Monitoring processes and practices

The section in the draft framework on principles/criteria for sustainable development strategies was considered to be adequate for the time being. It already captured much of the lessons from existing international experience and was based on experience already surfaced through the dialogues so far. It would be amplified further as the dialogues progress.

Working groups reported back and further inputs were made in plenary. It was agreed that, immediately following the workshop, IIED would prepare a revised first draft to incorporate the outputs of the working groups and discussion, and circulate this to all participants for further comment within a week.

The following timetable for developing and submitting the policy guidance into the DAC machinery was noted:

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| • Revised first draft to be circulated by IIED: | 23 October 2000 |
| • Note: DAC Task Force on Strategies for Sustainable Development meeting | 9 November 2000 |
| • All comments to be received by IIED: | 10 November 2000 |
| • IIED to revise further and submit second draft to DAC for submission to Senior Level Meeting | 17 November 2000 |

- Second draft considered by DAC Senior Level Meeting 12 December 2000
- Further iteration of draft guidance amongst all participants (by email) December 2000 -January 2001
- Final draft discussed at Bolivia Workshop 12-16 February 2001
- Final draft discussed by DAC Working Party on Development Cooperation & Environment 2-9 March 2001
- Submission of Final draft to DAC Secretariat 20 March 2001
- Final draft considered by DAC Ministers Early April 2001

Appendix 4 is the revised version of the first draft of the policy guidance circulated to all participants on 23 October 2000.

8. WORK PLANS AND SHARE FAIR

IIED held a series of meetings with each country team to discuss progress, workplans and next steps.

At the same time, a Share Fair was organised when each country was able to display information about the dialogue process in their country and to share documents and other materials concerning strategies and review processes.

9. NSSD KNOWLEDGDE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (WEBSITE, CD-ROMS AND E-MAIL DISCUSSION LISTS)

The project website has been operational since September 2000 on www.nssd.net and was demonstrated to workshop participants by Paul Mincher of IIED. It is updated every two weeks and is accompanied by a CD-ROM. The latter will be produced in three volumes during the project (October and December 2000, and March 2001). Copies of the new (October version) CD-ROM were distributed. The website has been developed by IIED and the Natural Resources Institute and is funded by DFID.

The website provides the architecture for holding: detailed information about the project, participating countries, organisations and individuals and the on-going dialogues; the texts of a wealth of documents on nssds and closely-related issues as well as documents from participating countries and other organisations; and hyperlinks to a wide range of useful related websites including those in participating countries. The basic structure of the website is as follows:

- Country area:
 - contacts
 - project details
- Reference area:
 - sustainable development
 - the project
 - key documents
 - tools
- Discussion area:
 - general topics
 - country topics
 - draft project documents

Promotion of the website has begun with registering the site with major search engines. Initial web statistics indicate a usage rate of some 1000 hits per month. The project collaborators were

requested to send new documents and news for the site as well as promote the site with colleagues and contacts. A short questionnaire was distributed to obtain feedback on electronic projects.

10. FINAL WORKSHOP, BOLIVIA

It was agreed that the final workshop will be held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, during the week 12-16 February 2001 and will need to include five full working days.

The agenda will need to include sessions covering:

- Country reports;
- Finalising the policy guidance;
- Defining the contents and approach to preparing the sourcebook;
- Follow-up on the dialogues (i.e. a possible continuing network)

11. CONTINUING NETWORK BEYOND FEBRUARY 2001

Participants from developing countries expressed a common view that the process set in place through the project to undertake dialogues and develop policy guidance as a partnership activity had provided a very useful and important opportunity for international sharing of experience on strategies for sustainable development. It was felt that this process was sufficiently valuable that it should be continued beyond the life of the project – which is due to finish with the final workshop in Bolivia in February 2001.

It was agreed, therefore, that a proposal should be developed for a continuing international sharing initiative to run through the RIO+10 event and beyond – say for a further 2-3 years. This could include a broadened membership beyond those currently engaged. Some countries suggested that they could act as focal points for their regions.

It was agreed to develop some objectives and a possible work plan for such a continuing process. IIED was requested by the group to co-ordinate this effort and to help develop and circulate a draft proposal for discussion through the nssd e-groups discussion list.

Donors signalled interest in assisting the emergence of such a network or learning group, but also suggested that participants could contribute either financially or in other ways.

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APPENDIX 2: KEY LESSONS FROM COUNTRY REPORTS

Notes:

1. The lessons identified below do not purport to be a comprehensive record of the lessons identified in the country progress reports. Instead, they identify some of the key lessons identified by the country teams as a starting point for more detailed discussion. More detail is contained in the progress reports that can be found on the project website (www.nssd.net).
2. Where countries are shown in parenthesis, this indicates the countries from which the lessons were drawn.

Summary of common issues/lessons learned

- Strategies must be country-specific and resistant to short-term change;
- National ownership is crucial. This implies ownership by civil society and the private sector as well as government;
- Donors should facilitate and support implementation, but should not be involved in strategy formulation directly;
- Strategies should be ‘demand-driven’, linking the local to the national;
- They should be developed in a consultative and participatory manner;
- Strategies should be home-grown and should, where possible, build on what already exists;
- Implementation is crucial. Often strategies have been developed but not implemented;
- Strategies should be comprehensive – integrating social, economic and environmental issues.

A CONTEXT

- The goals of any strategy are dependent on the specific circumstance of that country. For example, in Namibia the apartheid past and the current HIV/AIDS crisis provide the context. In Pakistan, there have been six governments in the past decade.

B ACTORS INVOLVED

National ownership

- Successful strategies must be home-grown, not externally driven (Tanzania);
- Building on existing strategies is one way of ensuring country-ownership (Tanzania, Uganda);
- Political commitment and multi-party support is important (Ghana);
- Many strategies are seen as externally driven, e.g. Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) (numerous countries).

Government Institutions

- Importance of a central administrative co-ordination unit (e.g. the Ministry for Sustainable Development in Bolivia);
- A Ministry of the Environment is not a suitable location for a sustainable development strategy (sustainable development is more than the environment) (Pakistan);
- The capacity of governments to formulate strategies needs to be addressed (Namibia).

Donors

- Donors should not be involved in strategy formulation. The strategy must be nationally owned. Instead, donors should concentrate on assisting the *implementation* of national strategies (Thailand);
- Donor co-ordination is essential but often missing (Burkina Faso).

Civil Society

- Increased participation of civil society is needed (Burkina Faso).

Private Sector

- The private sector is crucial to success or failure (Bolivia).

C INTEGRATING AND LINKING INITIATIVES

Linking the local and the national

- National plans/strategies/actions need to be linked to local initiatives (Burkina Faso, Nepal);
- Local ‘social’ capital is important (Nepal);
- Strategies need to be ‘demand driven’ (Tanzania);
- Decentralisation is a crucial process that needs to be addressed (Bolivia, Thailand, Nepal).

Competing and overlapping strategies

- A good strategy builds on what is already there, rather than creating an additional burden (Tanzania);
- There is often a failure to address synergies between different overlapping strategies (e.g. lack of synergy in Burkina Faso, PRSP and CDF developed separately in Pakistan).

D THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

Consultation/Participation

- Consultation with all stakeholders at all stages of strategy formulation (Ghana);
- BUT consultation can be slow, expensive and requires capacity-building to enable participation (Ghana);
- Increasing awareness and access to information is important (Pakistan).

Defining Objectives

- A vision for sustainable development is an important element (Bolivia, Namibia);
- Ghana’s Vision 2020 – an overarching framework for strategy in Ghana.

Transparency/corruption/governance

- Good governance is crucial. Need to ensure transparency in government - private sector – civil society consultations (Thailand)

E IMPACTS OF STRATEGIES

Implementation

- “Outcomes are more important than policy statements” (Bolivia);
- Implementation is often weak. So there is a need for indicators and monitoring (Burkina Faso);
- “From commitment to inaction” (Pakistan);
- Importance of linking strategy to finance/budgets (Bolivia).

Sustainability

- Importance of integrating long-term sustainability and environmental issues into national planning processes (Namibia, Pakistan);
- Environmental issues need to be integrated into socio-economic decisions (Pakistan).

APPENDIX 3: REPORTS OF WORKING GROUPS ON LESSONS AND KEY ISSUES

Four working groups discussed the emerging issues and lessons from the country reports and considered three important questions:

- a) How to build strategies from the bottom up ? What works ?
- b) What are the threats and opportunities posed by other strategies (eg PRSPs, CDF, etc)
- c) What are the roles of stakeholders?

GROUP A:

The process of democratization facilitates the bottom-up approach to development of nssds. Examples: Ghana, Bolivia

The subsidiarity principle promotes role delineation among various levels and actors. Ex: Bolivia

Linkages and networking among different community/civil society/territorial groups gives voice to civil society in facilitating bottom-up nssd. Ex: Thailand

Effective local-level capacity development as part of political devolution and fiscal decentralisation helps assure bottom-up nssd. Ex: Ghana, Bolivia.

Roles

a) Government

- Promoting trust/confidence-building among development partners.
- Ex: Nepal
- Creating the environment/conditions for effective public-private partnerships in nssd design/implementation. Eg. Nepal Dairy Development Program
- Fair application of laws. Eg. Competition laws in Thailand.
- Allocating necessary financial and other resources for developing nssd through the bottom-up approach.
- Ensuring constitutional and legislative requirement for participatory approach in development4 planning (Ex: Ghana) and methodologies/approaches for doing that (e.g. Bolivia)..

b) Donors

- Facilitate/promote homegrown nssds.
- All donors should respect/conform to nssds.

c) Civil Society

1. Networking among groups.

d) Private Sector

1. Ensure investments that supports nssd

GROUP B:

What makes a bottom-up approach work ?

- Facilitators of ideas/initiators
- National co-ordination, partnership
- PRSP – nssds should be a common framework because sustainability is fundamental to everything else – so nssd should be a principle for all strategies

4 Partnership bet. Central and local govt – partnership approach should be part of the strategic framework

- Not practical or desirable to have an overall strategy – but need overall principles of SD for all strategies (devt, biod etc) - & national vision with principles, and enriched with B-U. Govt needs to facilitate B-U approach by ensuring there are links bet local, regional and national levels.
- Most of the countries are in a decentralisation process so nssd should work with decentralisation process – involve local authorities more
- Community facilitators can help to change national policy (eg. BF)
- Many strategic initiatives coming from outside could reinforce the tendency for T-D strategies. But with a set of principles we can encourage all these strategies to be conducted in a certain way and contribute to a common vision.

GROUP C:

- Not possible to have a truly B-U approach to nssds. We are already half way through a top-down process so how do we turn around at mid-stream and make it 100% upstream? Nssd concept came from Agenda 21, and then national governments, therefore it is top-down. ‘participation’ = consultation with key actors, not truly B-U – ‘participation’ has been romanticised
- Difficulty of making the step between the consultation process and the process of policy planning – how to prioritise after consultation? Those consulted are not present when drafting decisions are made, and the perceptions of the drafters, and timeframes are different – so the needs of those consulted are often lost – need for representatives of civil society to participate directly in drafting committees (ie. In decision making)
- To make the transition to a more bottom-up approach, ‘participation’ is not enough. Once you start developing an nssd at national level, prevent it from being bottom-up. Need to learn about successful initiatives that have been designed and implemented by local people, and ‘replicate’ these elsewhere. The Nssd concept can only be changed partly through ‘participation’. The govt. needs to learn from the people, not impose top down.
- ‘Replicate’ does not mean copy exactly – this would also be top-down, but it means sharing the experience with successful initiatives to help people in other areas to develop their own successful initiatives. So the govt. facilitates exchange of information and experience.
- The poor should be the main beneficiary group of nssds – an nssd is basically an integrated approach to development (ie. poverty reduction). The national govt, private sector and donors are secondary stakeholders – they should be involved as facilitators.
- Who are the poor? The definition is expanding – focus on the relative poor, but also need to involve other people (eg. economic actors) in strategy process – and for them to be truly involved, they need to benefit. Poverty has a physical and a spiritual dimension.
- Top-down ‘economic’ approach to development of the govt. has caused increased poverty (eg. Thailand) because resulted in environmental degradation and erosion of wisdom about natural resources. Therefore need ‘participation’, or co-operation between people and the govt.
- How to achieve a B-Up approach? Need to improve the information in govt; and reform education so people learn about their local area and resources, not just about western technology. This will help to create the local conditions to enable people to create their own plans. Has to be self-generated not imposed by the govt.
- Also need to strengthen local groups at national level so they can influence govt. policy.
- But also need a mechanism to filter out components which are likely to have negative impacts on neighbouring areas/regions/countries.
- Roles:
 - govt: catalyzer/facilitator (facilitate learning about what works by improving information flows and bringing groups together – use the people themselves to transfer knowledge; create enabling conditions; provide legitimacy for local initiatives)
 - govt. should work with existing civil society groups – not try to create new ones.
 - Management of knowledge by local people brings confidence and this is necessary for self-sufficiency

GROUP D:

- Ingredients of success – flexibility, having movers & shakers – drivers – to make it successful or survive in the govt; inf and communication; many conflicts in terms of setting priorities – cultural, resource etc. so should work only at local level 1st then take to national level. Some feel that there should be a national vision of SD – but others felt that there are lots of things at local level that won't fit into a national level;

Opportunities/threats:

- Culture is both
- Parallel strategies can be an opp. Cos there is overlap – can have set of SD strategies
- Donor funding is both a threat and an opportunity – threat cos something that is strongly donor funded can get a label as a donor driven agenda
- Government role – main role is networking cos in many areas the CS does not have access to all regions and people & they can change the way devt planning is done
- Bolivia experience - both processes are very important – top down & B-U; T-D makes a vision and B-U enriches it and makes it shared. Need indicators that allow transition from good intentions to real results. This monitoring needs to be done by govt and CS, so that plans/strategies can be improved yearly.

APPENDIX 4: DRAFT POLICY GUIDANCE FOR DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING COUNTRY-LEVEL STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This draft policy guidance will be posted on the website in late November when comments on the draft have been received from all participants in the Phuket workshop