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**2023 REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON  
COMPREHENSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT  
(GEDAIS) OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR DRUG ABUSE  
CONTROL (CICAD)**

# **2023 REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON COMPREHENSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT (GEDAIS) OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR DRUG ABUSE CONTROL (CICAD)**

## **BACKGROUND**

1. The Expert Group Meeting on Alternative Development (EGM on AD) and the meeting of the Group of Experts on Comprehensive and Sustainable Alternative Development (GEDAIS) was held in Lima, Peru, on October 11 to 13, 2023. Thus, for the first time, a sequential event on alternative development (AD) was held, enabling bridges to be built between the global work of both groups and facilitating the expansion of networks for the exchange of knowledge among AD experts.
2. Two meetings were held under the 2022-2023 Peruvian Chair of GEDAIS, with the support of the CICAD Executive Secretariat: A first preparatory meeting on July 12, 2023, in virtual format (dialogue), attended by representatives of the member states and invited guests and with the aim of presenting the details of the GEDAIS annual meeting to be held in Lima, Peru, in October, and to propose topics for the October annual meeting of GEDAIS. Then, the annual meeting of GEDAIS was held on October 13, 2023, in Lima, Peru, and was attended by experts from 15 member states, one observer state, and international organizations, in addition to experts from the CICAD Executive Secretariat.
3. Since 2016 the governments of Germany, Peru, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) have jointly organized seven Expert Group Meetings on Alternative Development (EGM on AD). This series of meetings serves as a platform for open discussion among AD experts from member states, international organizations, civil society, and academia, intended to exchange knowledge on AD topics and to prepare policies and decisions for adoption by the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND). The frame of reference for the discussions of the EGM on AD comes from several CND and General Assembly documents, including the relevant chapters of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, the 2013 UN Guiding Principles on Alternative Development, the 2014 Joint Ministerial Statement, the 2016 UNGASS Outcome Document, and the 2019 Ministerial Declaration.

## **GOAL OF THE GEDAIS ANNUAL MEETING**

Promote regional and global discussions on CSAD in connection with environmental sustainability, the gender approach, indigenous peoples and ethnic groups, and the incorporation of AD/CSAD into national drug policies, in light of the tenth anniversary of the UN Guiding Principles on AD.

## **ISSUES ADDRESSED AT THE GEDAIS ANNUAL MEETING**

1. AD challenges in natural protected areas and the preservation of biodiversity.
2. CSAD in the framework of designing national drug policies and strategies.
3. CSAD as a strategy to contain environmental crimes.
4. Marketing of AD products and positioning in sustainable markets.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MEETING**

1. The meeting highlighted the importance of the “Reference Framework for the Understanding of the Concept of Comprehensive and Sustainable Alternative Development,” approved by the member states in 2019 at CICAD 66.
2. It emphasized the contribution of CSAD programs as an effective complementary strategy in the fight against illicit drug trafficking (IDT) and as a licit form of livelihood that provides development opportunities and well-being to vulnerable families and communities.
3. IDT was identified as a highly profitable business model with a value chain that affects the most vulnerable families in each of its links. Therefore, the meeting recognized the importance of CSAD as a viable and effective model that allows the transit of those vulnerable families toward a path of development and competitiveness within a legal economy, generating socioeconomic profitability for them that means sustainable legal incomes and improved living standards.
4. Improving the living conditions and territorial security of families and communities affected by IDT are fundamental aspects in the implementation of CSAD programs. The presence of the state, the reestablishment of the rule of law, and socioeconomic empowerment are part of states’ strategies to reduce the vulnerability of families to the criminal chain of IDT, which seeks to penetrate deep into the social fabric and undermine democratic institutions.
5. CSAD was recognized as a successful, participatory, innovative, and flexible model than can produce a greater impact by incorporating environmental sustainability and approaches based on ethnicity, gender awareness, territorial considerations, security, and complementarity.
6. CSAD fosters positioning in competitive and sustainable markets by promoting access to financing and the establishment of value chains, as demonstrated by the Thai experience.
7. CSAD with gender awareness promotes the development of the potential of women program participants, raising the profile of their important contribution to CSAD.
8. CSAD with ethnic awareness proposes sustainable and balanced community development in harmony with respect for traditions and ancestral practices for the conservation and protection of biodiversity.
9. The illicit crops grown by IDT in the Amazon have an environmental impact with serious repercussions on the ecosystem, generating a major negative global impact that threatens health, food security, and survival.

10. In consideration of their successful experiences with CSAD in rural areas, the member states stressed the importance of expanding this strategy into urban communities.
11. That requires promoting collective brands and certifications and establishing clear quality standards for the production of AD products that respond to the needs and variations of the market and its trends in order to improve their positioning and sustainability.
12. A venue for dialogue and meetings was created through the participation of producers from the CSAD program's beneficiary organizations.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

1. It is important to incorporate a gender, ethnic, and environmental sustainability approach into CSAD programs and into the member states' policies to counteract vulnerabilities such as marginalization, violence, poverty, and environmental contamination among the families and territories of the communities affected by IDT and its activities.
2. The meetings of GEDAIS provide opportunities for coming together, discussion, and political dialogue at the regional and global levels among representatives and experts from the member states, international organizations, and civil society.
3. Combining the efforts of GEDAIS and the EGM on AD enables the exchange of AD experiences to have a greater impact.
4. One valuable contribution from this expert meeting is the increased visibility of women leaders of producers' associations and of ethnic representatives from communities in Peru affected by drug trafficking who are beneficiaries of CSAD programs.

The minutes of the GEDAIS annual meeting appear in this document's annexes.

Lima, November 2023