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CONCEPT NOTE

Regular meeting of THE

Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI)

26 OCTOBER 2021

(Prepared by the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development)

THEME: **Science for Decision Making**

1. **Background/Justification**

The effects of the COVID-19, the disruption to global value chains and the scarcity of essential goods and services necessary to mitigate the health, economic and social crisis, has emphasized the importance of accelerating the deployment of resources available through science, technology and innovation. The global reach of the pandemic also highlighted the need for international, multistakeholder and inter-disciplinary cooperation to identify and implement effective solutions.

In its efforts to prepare for future global emergencies and to address the main imperatives concerning integral development in the Americas such as food security, disaster mitigation and preparedness, climate change, education, social and technology gaps, the region could benefit from the use of science and technology collaborative research, and data in driving their planning and decision-making. Sharing data driven inputs for decision making among member states can become an important source of resiliency.

Modeling scenarios and the possible outcomes of alternative public policy measures, play an important role on the ability of governments to plan and address the immediate, medium and long-term challenges. Modern computation technology and methods use statistical equations to calculate probabilities, compare results, observe patterns and calibrate potential scenarios. [[1]](#footnote-1)/ These capabilities are useful during crises as well as in the recovery process. Although modeling and simulation are eminently scientific and technical matters, the use of data and knowledge to understand regional development imperatives that OAS member states is now more important than ever.

Transformative technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, blockchain, quantum computing, new nano-structured materials and manufacturing, virtual-augmented reality, offer opportunities to leapfrog and maximize regional cooperation and support communities’ ability to prepare and respond to these challenges.

Based on the lessons learned from the pandemic, there is an opportunity to undertake a hemispheric effort to promote the use of scientific knowledge in OAS member states to create collective intelligence, and make available open data, resources and other tools, to allow governments and stakeholders from the science and technology community to tailor data sources, methodologies, carry out research and deploy tools and solutions adapted to match their own reality and needs.

If a resilience agenda is to be successfully implemented in the Americas, it will have to be underpinned by a robust science, technology and innovation agenda that feeds critical, evidence-based, data and information to decision-makers, regarding areas in which social, economic, and environmental vulnerability is most pronounced.

1. **Purpose of the meeting**

This CIDI meeting will offer member states the opportunity to address how to leverage data driven decision making in the Americas and highlight the importance of Research and Development (R&D) collaboration in addressing challenges for integral development.

At the subregional and national level, there are mechanisms and experiences in member states to engage universities, experts, private sector, think tanks, research centers, and other institutions supporting science and data driven inputs for decision making.

The meeting will offer the opportunity to share some of the models and results of initiatives in member states to advance science for decision making, identify which are the gaps or needs in different areas of development where member states would benefit from science and data driven inputs for decision making.

1. **Relevance to the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI) and OAS mandates**

The Inter-American Committee on Science and Technology (COMCYT) agreed on the main theme of the Sixth Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Science and Technology (VI REMCYT): “Harnessing the Power of Transformative Science and Technologies to Drive our Communities Forward.” One of the subthemes is “Technology Foresight as Input for Public Policy Decisions.” which is the topic under consideration for this CIDI Meeting with a focus on science and data driven decision making.

“Promoting inclusive and competitive economies” is one of the strategic lines for Integral Development in the OAS Comprehensive Strategic Plan [AG/RES.1 (LI-E/16)]. One of its Strategic Objectives (1.3) is to: “Increase cooperation for strengthening member States institutional capacities on incorporating innovation and transformative technology to create added value and diversification in their economies in a sustainable and inclusive fashion.”

The resolution “Advancing Hemispheric Initiatives on Integral Development” AG/RES. 2955 (L-O/20), urges member states to “through exchanges of good practice, experience, training opportunities, and technical assistance, to strengthen the Virtual Group of Experts within the framework of Prospecta Americas of the Inter-American Committee on Science and Technology (COMCyT) with the purpose of addressing development imperatives in the Americas, including those arising as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Likewise, member states with interest and existing capacities in transformative technologies are encouraged to join the COMCyT network of inter-American centers of excellence in technology foresight in order to complement regional resources and capacities, carry out studies, develop lines of research, and other collaborative activities to address strategic challenges in the Americas, and support economic recovery by bringing technologies, knowledge, jobs, and growth to the countries of the region. The contributions should not be interpreted as mandates that presuppose or promote financial disbursements as a condition of participation.”

1. **Structure of the meeting**

Experts will be invited as guest speakers to present experiences on the use of science, technology foresight and data driven approaches to support decision making to support economic and social development.

Member states will be invited to ask questions to the invited experts on their presentations and/or main points covered during their interventions as part an interactive dialogue guided by the Chair.

Expert Presentations (7 Minutes)

1. **Outcome of the Meeting**

It is expected that the meeting will contribute to:

1. Providing information on main trends, challenges and opportunities on leveraging science, technology foresight and data driven approaches to address development imperatives of OAS member states;
2. Identifying priorities and areas of regional cooperation in the Americas to promote science, technology and innovation for decision making;
3. Encouraging member states to present good practices with opportunities for cooperation to advance data driven decision making in development and identify partners to support OAS efforts in this area.

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1. . <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/heres-how-computer-models-simulate-the-future-spread-of-new-coronavirus/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)