



***Dialogue Process on Chronic Renal Insufficiency
Facilitator's Summary
September 30, 2009***

1. Background

Between June 30 and July 15, in the city of León, two dialogue meetings and bilateral meetings took place, convened by the office of the Compliance Advisor/Ombudsman of the World Bank Group, (CAO), with the participation of Nicaragua Sugar Estates Limited (NSEL) and the Chichigalpa Association for Life (ASOCHIVIDA, Sp.), for the purpose of finding options for solutions to the problem of Chronic Renal Insufficiency (CRI).

This process was conducted under the guidelines established in the Framework Agreement for the Dialogue, proposed by CAO on November 20, 2008, to which NSEL and ASOCHIVIDA have separately adhered. According to point 6 of said Framework Agreement, the dialogue meetings shall be centered on, and limited to:

a) Identifying and addressing the causes of CRI. The subscribers agree to define, jointly, the necessary criteria and principles to perform a Study that will identify the causes of CRI, the results of which shall be transparent and reliable for all and shall provide feasible solutions.

- i) Expected results: An Agreement on the criteria and principles that shall guide the Study. An Agreement to abide by the results of the Study and the options for a solution to the problem.

b) Options to support the local communities where there is a prevalence of CRI. Out of good will and without any legal obligation, the subscribers agree to seek ways to relieve the situation of the families affected by CRI, involving local resources and State institutions.

- i) Expected Result: Relief for the situation of families affected by CRI.

2. Progress

Point 6.a of the Framework Agreement

Boston University (BU) is evaluating the scope of the study of causes, to offer an analysis of the range of options for epidemiological studies, indicate the probability to reach conclusive answers to the questions of NSEL and ASOCHIVIDA, include the time and effort required for each answer and objectively define the limitations and uncertainties associated with this type of studies.

Boston University (BU) has submitted to the dialogue table the preliminary results of its study, elaborated on the basis of information gathered during a visit to Nicaragua and the revision of the existing recommendation.

The BU team has stated that so far the cause of CRI in Nicaragua is unknown. According to its analysis, it is probable that there is not just one cause, but several. For this reason, BU presents a first plan to study three types of causes and the interaction among them:

- Occupational or environmental (e.g. pesticides, herbicides, dehydration, muscle damage, leptospirosis/hantavirus/malaria, heavy metals, toxic plants).
- Individual (e.g. use of certain medicines, consumption of toxins or alcohol).
- Medical conditions (e.g. hypertension, diabetes, infections, glomerulonephritis, genetic causes).

To analyze these causes, BU understands that it might become necessary to perform environmental samplings, observational studies, a retrospective study of cohorts, urine and blood tests and post-mortem renal biopsies. These hypotheses shall be adjusted in detail during the following months and revised by experts, peers in this project.

During the meetings, NSEL and ASOCHIVIDA came to know in detail the methodology used by the BU team and had the opportunity to ask in depth questions on the information used as a basis. Aiming at the fastest possible progress, NSEL and ASOCHIVIDA consider important that BU have access to all possible and available sources of information, provided that the BU team validates the methodology employed to produce it.

CAO, NSEL and ASOCHIVIDA believe that the presence of BU provides an excellent opportunity to have a professional team with high prestige, renowned for its impartiality, and ratify their commitment to respect its work and conclusions. NSEL and ASOCHIVIDA have said that, although they understand that rigorous scientific processes take time, it is important to achieve utmost speed for this study.

On their part, BU expresses its commitment to the dialogue process and its willingness to contribute all it can to deliver useful, rigorous and timely results.

Point 6.b of the Framework Agreement

According to the facilitator's summary of April 3, out of good will and without any legal obligation, NSEL shall give short-term aid to relieve the situation of the families affected by CRI for food, schooling, health and alternative income sources. As the implementation of this aid advances, some difficulties have arisen, some of which have been resolved at the dialogue table and others remain outstanding, according to the following detail:

Food Aid:

In April it was agreed that the company would give support for two years, for an annual amount of US\$ 300,000, for 1,153 heads of family members of ASOCHIVIDA, which could be extended up to a total of US\$ 500,000 per year, for 1,800 heads of family.

A doubt arose about the inclusion of widows of deceased workers who were members of ASOCHIVIDA. The subject was discussed at a dialogue table and it was agreed that they would be included within the agreed total, provided that they submitted the relevant documentation and ASOCHIVIDA would be responsible for resolving any dispute arising among the members over access to the aid.



Aid for health:

As to the commitment to complement the provision of medicines and reactives in the health center, the collaboration of the Ministry of Health is fundamental. AS for now, after intense action developed by CAO, the ministerial authorities have expressed their willingness to work together but progress is still slow.

NSEL's commitment to deliver ultrasound equipment to the Chichigalpa Health center and hire a radiologist to work every Saturday has been met.

Support for alternative sources of income:

NSEL assured its willingness to support members of ASOCHIVIDA to develop alternative sources of income that may be sustainable over time. Among other projects, they have mentioned the possibility to install a factory of uniforms, whose main buyer would be the Pellas group. In their opinion, there is equipment that can be purchased at a convenient price and there is adequate technology to build the plant. However, it is extremely necessary that ASOCHIVIDA obtain suitable advice for it, facilitated by CAO.

ASOCHIVIDA believes that, although not all their members will see this as a favorable option, it may be positive for those who have not had access to food and health aid, either because they were not members of ASOCHIVIDA, or because they did not have the relevant documentation. They agree with NSEL on the importance of an advisor's help, to understand how many people could benefit from the projects, what capacities should be instrumented and what level of income could be achieved.

CAO obtained the participation of Rick van der Kamp, officer of Corporate Advice and Supply Chains of the International Financial Corporation (IFC), who held bilateral meetings with NSEL and with ASOCHIVIDA to make a first analysis of the idea of the project for the uniforms factory. His report, given by CAO to NSEL and ASOCHIVIDA, presents his conclusions and recommendations to put the project in motion and to consider other options of income sources. He also insists on the importance of hiring a technical advisor for ASOCHIVIDA.

Other aspects:

- Office: ASOCHIVIDA has expressed its will to have the support of NSEL to build an office to keep files adequately and hold meetings in a more formal environment. NSEL expressed its willingness to support ASOCHIVIDA in the purchase of a house that may serve as an office, thus reducing the costs and efforts of construction. The Junta Directiva consulted the purchase option at their Assembly, but the answer was negative; they want to build. Since then, the issue has not been address again at the dialogue table.

- Incorporation of other actors: CAO requested NSEL and ASOCHIVIDA to consider the convenience of incorporating new actors to the dialogue table, who could add an important value to the process. NSEL and ASOCHIVIDA agree that it is convenient for the dialogue table to invite other persons and organizations, when their work agenda so requires. In such a case, they would



be invited for specific meetings according to their agenda for the process, but would not be called to attend formally as participants of the dialogue table.

3. Next steps

In CAO's opinion, the next steps in this dialogue process should be oriented to:

Point 6.a of the Framework Agreement

- BU shall complete the evaluation of the scope of the study on causes and shall submit it to revision by three experts whose names have been suggested by the participants of the dialogue table.
- A new meeting will be held to submit the final document to the dialogue table and to other organizations, and the following steps shall be agreed upon to start the study of causes in depth.

Point 6.b of the framework Agreement

- To continue the dialogue on the implementation to define how aid on health will be implemented and intensify the analysis of the recommendations submitted in Dr. David Silver's report, aiming to improve the response of the health system to CRI integrally.
- To accomplish the incorporation of a technician who can support ASOCHIVIDA in the analysis of the various options of projects for alternative sources of income.

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