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**Final Report**

**EL SALVADOR: LOCAL GOVERNANCE  
Democratic and Electoral Processes Project  
USAID Cooperative Agreement  
No. 519-0319-A-00-3204-00**

**September 30, 1993 to December 31, 1995**

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## **Final Report**

### **EL SALVADOR: LOCAL GOVERNANCE Democratic and Electoral Processes Project USAID Cooperative Agreement No. 519-0391-A-00-3204-00**

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#### **I. SUMMARY**

Because communication engenders responsive governance and enhances public confidence, many National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) programs focus on the need for more effective interaction between local officials and citizens. From 1993 to 1995, in three municipalities in El Salvador, NDI worked inside local government to help create avenues for citizens to voice their concerns and to help organize citizens to articulate their concerns more effectively to their local officials. In the municipalities of Santa Elena, Texistepeque and Tecoluca, NDI program activities led to greater citizen participation in local decision making. Communication among citizens and local officials improved and increased. Citizens participated more actively and more frequently in local planning and decisionmaking meetings, asked more informed questions about local issues, and generally became more directly involved in implementing plans to address local problems. As a result of the program, participants in the three communities gained a better understanding of, and thus a greater respect for, their local government processes.

#### **II. RATIONALE**

##### **Background**

A decentralized, efficient and politically responsive local government is one of the most important aspects of democracy, for it is most often at the local level where people seek solutions to their most pressing problems. For democracy to be sustained, public trust in local authorities must be won and maintained. The NDI program in was designed to help strengthen local governments which historically have been weak in El Salvador and whose power was eroded further during the 12-year civil war as the central government diminished the role of local authorities to confront the Farabundo Marti Liberacion Nacional (FMLN).

Elections in March 1991 marked an important step toward the consolidation of democracy in El Salvador as Salvadorans elected 84 members of the National Assembly as well as mayors and council members in 262 municipalities. In October and November 1991, NDI participated in a study to assess potential programs that could further the democratization process. Responding to a USAID request, and in cooperation with Freedom House, the International Republican Institute, and the Southwest Voters Research Institute, NDI surveyed 70 Salvadoran civic organizations seeking to

increase the citizen participation in a democratic society. The survey purpose was to gather information about the identity and quality of organizations working in the field of democratic development and to solicit the opinion of the leaders of those organizations on ways to increase citizen participation in the democratic process and strengthen civic groups. Among the conclusions of the study was the recommendation that programs be organized to strengthen local government by enhancing public input.

El Salvador's law on decentralization, the comprehensive Municipal Code of 1986, provided for a process of community consultation--*cabildos abiertos*--but these were not working well, according to the survey findings. Following the survey, NDI proposed a program to provide technical assistance to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of Salvadoran municipal governments. NDI would send municipal government experts to El Salvador to conduct training seminars and consultations with Salvadoran local government officials and with national legislators responsible for drafting legislation on local government reform. Through the program, NDI proposed to provide practical approaches to increasing public participation in addressing the most pressing problems facing local government, such as generating revenue, determining community priorities, and allocating resources to address needs.

### **Program Objectives**

NDI's specific program objectives were to:

- Improve community leaders' understanding of the scope and role of local government.
- Improve local officials' understanding of the benefits of including community organizations in decision making and problem solving.
- Foster communication between local government officials and community groups.
- Facilitate citizen participation in the decision making process at the local level.

### **III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

On September 30, 1993, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) entered into Cooperative Agreement No. 519-0391-A-00-3204-00 with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission to El Salvador to conduct a 15-month program to assist selected municipalities in El Salvador to strengthen participatory democracy within their jurisdictions. NDI was to accomplish this by training municipal leadership in coping with devolution of authority from the central Government of El Salvador (GOES); in promoting citizen participation; in planning municipal budgets, including revenues, expenditures, and program goals; and in the validation of municipal decisions through open town meetings and other means.

The agreement was amended three times over the course of the program to extend the termination date to permit NDI sufficient time to complete all program work and conduct a program evaluation. In each case, additional time was needed to assure that mayors and community leaders of the three municipalities with which NDI was working could be available to participate in NDI

program activities. All NDI program and evaluation activities were completed by December 31, 1995, the final agreement termination date.

### **March 1994 Assessment and Program Design Mission**

NDI conducted an initial assessment and program design mission from March 14 to 22, 1994. The mission purpose was two-fold: (1) to gather information on government processes at the local level in El Salvador and the issues addressed by local government; and (2) to begin to design the local government training program.

The NDI delegation included Raul Yzaguirre, NDI Board member and chairman of the Committee on Latin America and president of the National Council of La Raza; Jose Maria Fernandez, city council member from San Martin, Argentina; Jann Darsie, community organizer with prior experience in El Salvador; Julio Rovi Fong, Panamanian civic organizer; Santiago Canton, NDI senior program officer for Latin America; Katie Kelsch, NDI program officer; and Marissa Brown, governance programs assistant. The survey team spent two days in San Salvador meeting with representatives of local government institutes, civic organizations and political parties. They then divided into subgroups traveling to different regions of the country to meet with mayors and mayoral candidates in the departments of Santa Ana, Sonsonante, San Salvador, San Vicente, Usulután and San Miguel. Upon returning to San Salvador, they met with representatives of international organizations involved in local government and explored the relationship of organized community groups to the local political process.

The mission findings shaped NDI's workplan and guided the selection of three municipalities for the program: Santa Elena, Texistepeque and Tecoluca. Each municipality was governed by representatives of one of the three major political parties -- the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), the National Republican Alliance (ARENA) and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). The municipalities are located in different geographical areas, have populations between 25,000 and 30,000, and reflect a variety of war-time experiences.

The survey team found that an overwhelming obstacle to local government participation was the absence of opposition representation in the councils. The Municipal Code of 1986 established mechanisms for participation and outlined the role of local government. Barriers, however, still existed that impeded comprehensive and participatory local government. For instance, local government officials were elected from a party slate on a winner-take-all basis. Consequently, there was no opposition representation on local councils. The law created a structural impediment to bringing local actors from varied political parties into the governing process. Also lacking was meaningful citizen participation or involvement in the decision making process of local governments. Consequently, NDI designed a program to help local officials to better understand the importance of the participation of community leaders in the decision making process.

## **July 1994 Focus Groups**

In July 1994, with the assistance of consultant Carolina Rodriguez Loza, a Salvadoran psychologist, NDI conducted focus group discussions in each location to determine particular needs and concerns in each locality and to further refine program design. The results of these focus groups are included in the report "El Salvador: A Look at Local Government." Information gathered from the focus group discussions helped NDI refine program design and plans.

Seven discussion groups were conducted with town council members and community leaders in the three municipalities. Each discussion group consisted of a series of open-ended questions lasting one to two hours with nine to 12 participants. Questions explored: (1) the current manner and level of participation in local government; (2) how communities identify and solve problems; (3) the rationale, structure and function of community groups; and (4) the responsibilities and role of local government.

Findings, generally, were that community leaders desire more interaction and participation, and that local government officials likewise expressed interest in having community suggestions in the various stages of community project planning.

## **September 1994 Consultations on Working with City Councils**

In September 25 to October 2, 1994, NDI conducted consultations with local government officials on two key topics which emerged from the focus group discussions: (1) mechanisms for community involvement in the decision making process, and (2) regular local government communication with the public. NDI invited two local government officials -- Cecilia Gil Barvo, mayor of San Juan de Betulia, Colombia, and Roger Perez, city council member from San Antonio, Texas -- to share their experience and expertise with officials of the three municipalities. The visiting "experts" discussed various methods they used to broaden citizen participation in their communities and explained why this improved decision making as well as strengthened support for political leaders. Through the consultations, NDI hoped to expand understanding of processes and mechanisms available to create continuing dialogue between local government officials and the public.

NDI staff members and the international participants spent two days in each municipality. On the first day, they convened a meeting with community leaders to exchange information on community participation and their role in local government. The international participants discussed community participation in local government in their countries. Informal meetings with Salvadoran council members and community leaders were also held.

On the second day, NDI conducted a program with the town councils entailing presentations, discussion periods and case scenarios. In each municipality, the international experts and the

Salvadoran mayor began the program by explaining the structure of local government and mechanisms for citizen participation in their respective countries. Discussion periods followed in which the international and Salvadoran participants voiced their questions and ideas. Finally, hypothetical cases were used as a means of stimulating ideas and discussion.

Although discussions varied in each municipality, common themes emerged. Decentralization was a topic on people's minds, particularly in Santa Elena. (The department of Usulután in which Santa Elena is located was targeted for a government experiment in public administration which would devolve authority for various activities to municipal government.) Another topic of interest dealt with municipal finances, inasmuch as the municipalities visited then faced grave financing difficulties since many of the larger businesses did not pay taxes. Nor did many municipal residents pay taxes, since they perceived that they received no services from the town council. The case scenarios facilitated discussions, providing the opportunity for local officials to make presentations to the public or creating situations in which local officials had to decide when to bring the public into the process.

#### **December 1994 Program on the Role of Community Organizations in the Democratic Process**

In December 5 to 12, NDI brought two community organizers, Lauren Colleta of the Citizens Information Service of Chicago and Elias Santana of the Escuela de Vecinos (School of Neighbors) from Venezuela, to El Salvador to share their expertise with the Salvadorans, focusing on the role and development of community organizations in the democratic process. This phase of the program was designed to help Salvadoran community leaders improve organization within their communities, initiate or improve communication with local government officials and improve their participation in the decision making process.

With NDI staff members, Coletta and Santana spent two days in each municipality. On the first day, they met with the town council and mayor to discuss community organizing. In Tecoluca, the mayor and some council members were absent, so discussion focused on the interests of the councilors present. Coletta and Santana described specific activities which community groups had undertaken (such as communal nursery schools) to alleviate problems of concern to women. In Santa Elena, all of the council members including alternates participated in a structured discussion of local government and community organizing issues. In Texistepeque, a short discussion with 10 council members was followed by a discussion with a legislator from the region. Later, the NDI group visited various community projects and sites with the council and mayor.

The second day featured presentations, a discussion period and workshops. In each municipality, Santana and Coletta began with presentations explaining the structure of community organizations and the relationship between community organizations and local government in Venezuela and in the United States. Discussion then ensued. Finally, using examples that could be applied to conditions in El Salvador, Santana presented techniques on various aspects of problem

solving, and Coletta described methods of holding local government accountable. Santana stressed the importance of communication, responsibility and activism in community organizing. Use of the media was also discussed. Coletta discussed the use of "accountability sessions," or meetings community groups hold with public officials to determine responsibility for resolving problems.

Small group workshops were useful in motivating community leaders in Santa Elena and Texistepeque but could not be conducted in Tecoluca due to time constraints.

### **April 1995 Seminar on The Role of the Community Leader**

Based on recommendations from Coletta and Santana following the December forum, from April 26 to 30, 1995, NDI convened a seminar in Cerro Verde, El Salvador, on "Community and Municipality: the Role of the Community Leader." Sixteen dynamic community leaders and three observers from nongovernmental organizations in the target towns participated in the four-day seminar. The seminar objective was to empower participants to help other community leaders in developing their capabilities to transmit or exchange information, to teach them basic organization skills, and to motivate them to broaden their understanding of their role in local democracy. International experts Franklin Cisneros of the Escuela de Vecinos of Venezuela, and Oma Dieppa of the Comision de Justicia y Paz of Panama directed the discussions on the role of a community leader and the legal structure of community organizations, among other themes. During the seminar, participants discussed the relationship of community associations with local government. The community leaders concluded that community groups should coordinate with local government and not just depend on it. They also learned about legal structure for associations and mechanisms for participation, new themes for many of them. Following plenary discussions, the participants broke into small groups to read and discuss various articles of the Municipal Code relating to community participation. Later they contrasted the provisions of the law with everyday real experience. Participants found the exercise useful: many said they never thought they could read and interpret the law.

For the program, NDI produced in Spanish a training manual for local councillors covering such topics as: how to direct a seminar, how to train others, how to recruit and motivate, how to prepare internal rules, and how to cooperate with other groups. This manual was used extensively during the April 1995 program by the international presenters.

### **July 1995 Seminars**

In July, NDI conducted three one-day seminars for community leaders in each municipality, with leaders who participated in the April program serving as moderators. Alejandro Frigerio, a community activist from Washington, D.C., served as overall moderator and assisted other small-group moderators. Participants further read and analyzed the law defining local government and community associations. In these seminars, the participants from the April program had the



opportunity to direct small group discussions in a structured atmosphere. At the same time, NDI expanded the number of community members who read and could understand the municipal code and its implications for participation in local decisionmaking.

### **November 1995 Program on "Participation: Improving the Process"**

NDI's program culminated with a seminar on November 20 and 21, 1995, on "Participation: Improving the Process." For this seminar, NDI reconvened some 60 local officials and community activists from seven municipalities (the three NDI pilot municipalities and four other jurisdictions) to exchange and compare various methods of developing concrete plans for improving citizen participation in the community. The local councils of the three pilot municipalities each developed a plan that included tangible activities for promoting continuing citizen participation. The plans also represented a pact or agreement between the local councils and community leaders.

Through the seminar, participants were able to compare their experiences and plan future activities. An important aspect of each plan included the incorporation of ideas already implemented in another municipality. The Texistepeque plan included the organization of commissions for women and youth, a technique already used by local government in Tecoluca to hear these groups' concerns about the municipality. The Santa Elena plan included the establishment of a civic education program related to elections and local government in the Santa Elena schools, similar to the program in Texistepeque. Finally, Tecoluca suggested that meetings should be held before the *cabildos abiertos* in order to communicate the priorities of the council and the limitations of the *cabildos abiertos* then existing in Texistepeque.

NDI did not invite outside international facilitators to participate in this seminar because the objective was to generate local initiative to improve citizen participation in the plans. Instead, NDI produced a moderator's guide and had three Salvadoran NGO representatives serve as moderators for the seminar. The moderators, who had observed various elements of NDI's overall program, also polished their own skills and broadened their understanding about civic participation in local government.

### **Evaluation Mission**

From December 11 to 16, NDI conducted an evaluation of the program which is discussed in greater detail in the Evaluation section of this report. A two-person team traveled to El Salvador to conduct a week-long evaluation, interviewing program participants or persons otherwise familiar with the program to obtain their comments and assessments of the program. The evaluation sought to measure the impact of the program on the three participating municipalities and to elicit comment on NDI's program methods, content and personnel.

#### **IV. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

##### **Survey/Design Mission**

Through the meetings, interviews and background research conducted as part of the March 1994 assessment and program design mission, NDI was able to gather information on the current processes of government at the local level in El Salvador and the issues addressed by local government. The information guided NDI in determining in which municipalities to work and in designing program activities to provide technical assistance to local government officials and community leaders to assist them in developing practical approaches to addressing the most pressing problems facing them.

The survey team found that the absence of opposition representation at the local councils, exacerbated by a lack of genuine consultation, was leading to alienation of the voters. Consequently, NDI designed a program on citizen participation in local government which included focus group discussions, as well as a series of consultations, seminars and workshops in the three selected municipalities. These activities were designed to help officials to better understand the importance of the participation of community leaders in the decision making process and to enhance leaders' understanding of the scope and role of local government.

##### **Focus Groups**

The seven focus group discussions conducted in the three municipalities achieved their purpose in helping NDI determine the particular needs and concerns of each locality and in further guiding NDI in refining program content.

The discussions elicited information on: the structure of local government, attitudes towards local government, the structure of community groups, attitudes regarding community groups, and the various mechanisms for citizen participation in local government (*cabildos abiertos*, *consultas populares* and open council meetings).

Generally, the discussion findings revealed that community leaders wanted more interaction and participation in local government; and local government officials also desired greater community participation in the various stages of decision making and community project planning.

##### **Consultations, Seminars, Workshops**

NDI had five specific program objectives: (1) improve community leaders' understanding of the scope and role of local government; (2) improve local officials' understanding of the benefits of including community organizations in decision making and problem solving; (3) enhance municipal council members' abilities to meet their responsibilities; (4) foster communication

between local officials and community groups; and (5) facilitate citizen participation in the local decision making process.

Participant comments immediately following the various program activities and statements to evaluators regarding the overall program indicate that the five objectives were met. Local officials said their understanding of their own roles and responsibilities was greater, as a result of the program, and they appreciated the benefit of involving citizens in the local decision making process. They also reported that they felt they had gained new insight and problem solving skills through the program. Community leaders and citizen representatives reported that they were using techniques learned during the NDI program to promote and maintain better communication, and that citizens were more involved in developing plans for addressing local needs.

The September 1994 series of consultations, presentations, discussion periods and case scenarios elicited questions and ideas from both government officials and community leaders, and amplified understanding on both "sides" about the benefits of community involvement in decision making. The practical case scenario sessions gave local officials the opportunity to make presentations to the public or created mock situations in which local officials had to decide when to bring the public into the decision making process. The sessions fostered communication between local officials and community groups and also enhanced the participants' understanding about the benefits of community involvement and the role of local government.

The December 1994 program and the April and July 1995 seminars focused on the role of community organizations and community leaders in the democratic process. Participating community leaders gained a better understanding of the structure of community organizations in the United States and Venezuela, techniques for problem solving which they could apply in their own communities, and methods of holding local government accountable to the community. Participants reported that the sessions motivated them to become more active within their communities and to develop plans for resolving problems. During the April program, participants gained a better understanding of the legal structure for associations. They also learned that they could read and interpret the Municipal Code and could apply it to develop practical approaches to addressing day-to-day community concerns.

Plans were developed by each municipality during the culminating November 1995 seminar. The plans included practical approaches to promoting greater citizen participation and each served as a pact or agreement between local councils and community leaders. People interviewed by program evaluators reported that the plans were being used and updated following the program.

### **Coordination**

Throughout the program, NDI consulted often with COMURES and coordinated efforts and activities with those planned or conducted by Freedom House and the International Republican

Institute. Exchange visits for Salvadorans to the United States were organized by Freedom House as a parallel program to bring Salvadorans to U.S. communities so they could witness firsthand the process or the results of initiatives by their U.S. counterparts to address local needs.

Representatives of two of the three municipalities in which NDI worked, Santa Elena and Texistepeque, participated in such exchange visits to the United States. They reported that they found the experience to be invaluable in broadening their understanding of their own capabilities and the potential of their home communities to resolve problems. They were particularly impressed to learn that many U.S. communities have problems quite similar to their own and, in many cases, financial or material resources just as limited as their own.

In coordinating program planning and implementation with these organizations, NDI advanced the idea of expanding program focus to include not just local officials but community leaders as well. This worked well to expand and reinforce the information shared and the techniques, skills and strategies learned.

## **V. EVALUATION**

### **Ongoing and Mid-term Program Review**

Evaluation of the program was an ongoing process. NDI reviewed and evaluated the program throughout its implementation, soliciting feedback from participants and trainers after each program activity, and conducting a mid-term review trip in February 1995. NDI Program Officer Marissa Brown, Program Assistant Darren Nance and Javier Varani, general secretary of an Argentinean municipal association, conducted the one-week mid-term review from February 5 through 10, to consult with members and staff of COMURES, the Salvadoran association of mayors, and with local official and municipal leaders in the three municipalities participating in the NDI program. The mid-program consultations helped NDI plans for the final component of the program which focused on bolstering citizen participation in local government by strengthening community organizations in the three participating municipalities.

### **Final Evaluation Methodology**

From December 11 to 16, 1995, NDI conducted an evaluation of the program. Executive Director Elias Santana of the Escuela de Vecinos (EV) of Venezuela and NDI Deputy Director for Program Coordination Christine Ryland traveled to El Salvador to conduct the week-long evaluation, interviewing persons familiar with the program in San Salvador, Santa Elena, Texistepeque and Tecoluca to elicit their comments and assessments of the program. Persons interviewed included program participants, observers and representatives of counterpart development organizations also working in El Salvador, as well as USAID officials. The evaluation sought to measure the impact

of the program on the three participating municipalities and to elicit comment on NDI's program methods, content and personnel.

### **Criteria**

The evaluators attempted to obtain information so as to gauge whether program objectives were achieved, namely:

- Is there improved understanding of the scope and role of community government?
- Is there better understanding by local leaders of the benefits of community involvement in decision-making?
- Are municipal council members more capable than before they participated in NDI's program? How so? In what ways?
- Is there better communication between local government officials and community groups?
- Is there more/better citizen participation at the local level?

The evaluators also asked interviewees to comment on: overall impact of NDI's program; NDI's methodology; NDI's materials; program personnel (both NDI staff and non-NDI presenters); how participants have or have not implemented lessons learned from the NDI program; and program strengths and weaknesses.

### **Results/Impact on Municipalities**

Information obtained through the evaluation indicates that the program's objectives were met, if not entirely, at least to a significant degree. Community representatives in the three municipalities and the NGO representatives in San Salvador expressed the view that NDI's efforts served as a catalyst that inspired and awakened community residents to the notion of citizen participation in municipal government. The representatives of Texistepeque indicated that a direct benefit they have felt from the program is that nearly 70 new community leaders have emerged after participating in the program.

Program participants reported that NDI's program generally helped them improve annual planning and actual project implementation. Following their participation in NDI's program, two communities either developed or refined annual community development plans and then completed specific community projects. The third municipality planned to implement their plan in the coming year.

Participants further reported that since the NDI program, they have witnessed more participation in municipal decisionmaking, and many people are more active and more vocal.

Mayors and community leaders also reported that citizens in general were more aware of the importance of participating in local planning and decisionmaking. They were also communicating more within their municipalities and using diverse methods of communicating such as radio, public address systems, door-to-door notices of meetings, written memoranda on citizen concerns, and brochures publicizing community developments.

Mayors and other community leaders indicated that NDI's program helped them better understand their own roles as well as the value of public participation in community planning and decisionmaking.

### **Program Methods, Personnel**

Most of the persons interviewed expressed the view that NDI's interactive discussions and training methods/techniques were effective. The community leaders of Santa Elena, Texistepeque and Tecoluca who actually participated in the interactive sessions expressed more positive enthusiasm about NDI methodology than did USAID or NGO representatives in San Salvador, who commented that they had some initial doubts about NDI's approach and about participants' ability to assimilate the information presented. Many felt that more seminars in each local municipality and even in smaller towns and villages would have been more beneficial than a few programs in the capital. The international exchange component of NDI's program was praised as especially beneficial to those individuals and the municipality that participated, as were the canton-to-canton exchange opportunities within El Salvador. Exchange participants learned from firsthand exposure to others' planning, decisionmaking and project implementation techniques.

Nearly everyone interviewed had the same comment -- that "although young," NDI's staff members were very effective presenters. Concern about "NDI's youth" was nearly always offset by the observation that NDI staff possessed energy, confidence, and knowledge and communicated effectively. Opinions were mixed about the capabilities of NDI's international trainers or presenters; Spanish language proficiency and size of home municipality were cited as factors.

## **V. CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

Overall, program objectives were met in the three targeted municipalities. Program participants reported that the NDI program served as a catalyst, motivating mayors and community leaders in the three selected municipalities to understand, embrace and promote the concept of citizen participation in local government and decisionmaking. There was broad agreement that NDI's positive initial effort would have been even more effective had the Institute maintained an in-country staff to provide sustained technical assistance and to respond to specific local needs and priorities.

Comments on NDI's role as a catalyst were offered as both positive effects of NDI's program and to introduce the NDI program shortcoming, i.e., that there was no follow-on. General observation was that NDI was effective but would have been even more effective had the Institute placed a permanent field representative in country to maintain daily contact with the municipalities and with other NGOs. NDI could also have been more effective, many commented, had it sought to coordinate its program more closely with efforts of other NGOs and agencies.

The NDI program was seen to have been effective in method, materials, capabilities of personnel, and short-term impact; and the Institute was encouraged to conduct further work. Consensus opinion indicated that, should NDI decide to conduct further programming, the Institute should work much more intensively in-country, placing a field representative in El Salvador to assure ongoing, closer communication and technical assistance to a broader number of municipalities.

Recurring recommendations made by those interviewed were that, if NDI were to undertake follow-on programming, the Institute should: (1) place a field representative in-country on a long term basis for more intensive follow-up and reinforcement; (2) coordinate efforts with other organizations; (3) replicate the program in more communities; (4) publicize the program more, and disseminate more information; (5) continue the exchange component of the program, within El Salvador and internationally; (6) use more non-U.S. "experts"; (7) tailor future program design more closely to individual community needs, i.e., decentralize the program; and (8) emphasize youth programs and involvement.

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**El Salvador:  
A Look at Local Government**

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## **I. Introduction**

This report is based on the findings of a series of consultations and discussion groups conducted by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) as part of a program to strengthen local government in El Salvador. The one-year program is designed to improve communication and interaction between local government officials and community leaders as well as support the development of mechanisms for citizen participation. This effort is being supported by a grant from the United States Agency for International Development/El Salvador.

In March 1994, NDI conducted a survey mission to El Salvador to prepare for the implementation of a local government program. The objectives of the survey mission were to gather information on the structure and needs of local government and determine the municipalities with which to work. Following this initiative, NDI staff returned to El Salvador in July 1994 to conduct discussion groups to further refine NDI's program on citizen participation in local government. The discussion groups were conducted between July 23 and August 2, 1994 in the three municipalities chosen to participate in NDI's local governance program: Texistepeque, Tecoluca and Santa Elena. The three localities are situated in areas affected by the twelve-year civil war and each is governed by representatives of one of the three major political parties: the National Republican Alliance (ARENA), the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the Christian Democratic Party (PDC).

This report will detail the discussion group findings and recommendations of both the participants and NDI. As background to the work carried out on the municipal level, a brief overview of government in El Salvador is provided. Following the overview are the findings of the discussion groups. Preceding each section of findings is a detailed description of the relevant aspect of local government.

## **II. Summary of Major Findings**

In order to gain a qualitative understanding of the level of citizen participation, NDI conducted discussion groups in the municipalities of Texistepeque, Tecoluca and Santa Elena. A total of six discussion groups lasting one to two hours were administered with community leaders and local government officials.

The most prominent criticism concerning citizen participation in local government is that the existing structures do not allow continual and constructive citizen input. *Cabildos abiertos*, the most cited example of participation, are open town assemblies or meetings. Held four times a year, they are infrequent and often too large a forum to allow in-depth discussion of local priorities. Many of the ideas suggested in the *cabildos* are not given further attention or funding by local or national agencies. Furthermore, other mechanisms of participation, such as *consultas populares* and open council meetings, are rarely utilized. There is no formal structure for regular communication between local government officials and community leaders. This lack of regular communication has, at times, created an environment of mistrust between the local

town council officials and the community leaders.

Community groups face barriers in their organizing efforts, as well. Legal status, which confers the ability to manage funds, is a requirement for effective operation of a community organization. The process to obtain legal status is arduous. Although the difficulty of the process is changing, the small number of community organizations reduces citizens' potential for full participation. In general, individual citizens are not given enough of a voice in their government.

Both community leaders and local government officials expressed interest in increased communication and collaboration. Suggestions extracted from the discussion groups regarding increased participation include: (1) more meetings in the community; (2) smaller community-based meetings to increase individual community interaction; (3) visits by the mayor to each community; (4) better organization of the communities involved; and (5) increased civic education about local government. NDI believes that concrete mechanisms need to be introduced to incorporate public opinion into planning and prioritizing needs.

### **III. Discussion Group Methodology**

Discussion groups are a public opinion research tool designed to qualitatively measure attitudes and opinions of individuals. Public opinion research of this nature does not result in findings that can be expressed in numerical values or percentages, rather it provides insight into people's beliefs and perceptions. Through its work with discussion groups between July 23 and August 2, 1994, NDI gained an understanding of the level of citizen participation in local government.<sup>1</sup>

The Institute concentrated the discussion groups in three municipalities populated by less than 30,000 people and consisting of a small "urban" zone and a larger rural area.<sup>2</sup> Local government officials assisted NDI in arranging discussion groups in each location. A total of six discussion groups were held. Two discussion groups were conducted with council members

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<sup>1</sup> Originally conceived as a series of focus groups, the discussion groups differed in that they included non-random samplings of people. Furthermore, the town hall, the most common site employed, was not a neutral location nor were the discussion groups segregated by gender or age. Designed to specifically explore the attitudes and opinions of the people with whom NDI expects to work, this exercise was not a methodologically rigorous examination of the larger community. The findings of the discussion groups can not be generalized across El Salvador. Moreover, it would be a misuse of the data to disaggregate the information by locality or party.

<sup>2</sup> The municipalities visited in NDI's survey mission were chosen based on the criteria outlined in the AID grant and conversations with USAID officials and representatives of local government institutions in El Salvador. The criteria in the AID grant include: (i) population of less than 100,000; (ii) financial viability as a municipality; (iii) a demonstrated institutional capacity; (iv) a demonstrated interest in citizen participation; and (v) logistical concerns. The municipalities initially visited were Apopa, Nahuizalco, Santiago de Maria, Sonsonate, Tecoluca, Texistepeque, el Tránsito and Usulután. The towns NDI chose are represented by the three major political parties. In addition, all expressed interest in participating in NDI's program. The localities Tecoluca, Texistepeque and Santa Elena were chosen as sites as sites for the discussion groups and the program.

and four with community leaders. As an additional source of information, two extra group interviews were conducted; one with council members and one with community leaders.

The discussion groups lasted one to two hours with nine to 15 participants. Each session followed a format outlined in a moderator's guide. Carefully written in Washington and refined in close consultation with a Salvadoran moderator, the guide contained open-ended questions exploring: (1) the perceived responsibilities and role of local government; (2) the current manner and level of citizen participation in local government; (3) the identification and resolution of problems by communities; and (4) the rationale, structure and function of community groups.

The semi-structured format of the discussion groups enabled participants to answer freely while remaining focused on the relevant topic and, in turn, helped NDI clarify perceptions of community participation in local government. Word association activities were utilized during the discussion sessions to elicit perceptions and feelings held by individual group members. Participants responded with the first thought or word that came to mind when presented with a particular topic.

#### **IV. Background on Governmental Framework**

##### *Central Government*

Executive power rests in the hands of the President who, serving a five-year term, is assisted by the Vice President and an appointed Council of Ministers. The National Assembly holds legislative power and comprises 84 elected members serving three-year terms. In the recent March 1994 elections, the right-wing National Republican Alliance, won a 39-seat majority in the Assembly. The leftist Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, participating in the elections for the first time, garnered 21 seats. The traditionally centrist Christian Democratic Party won 18 seats.

While civil and political unrest disrupted the realization of an effective central government during the 1980s, the signing of the 1992 Chapultepec Accords brought an end to the 12-year civil war. A presidential election followed in March 1994 in which ARENA secured the presidency. This election also marked the inclusion of the former guerrillas, the FMLN, as a political party at all levels of the political process.

##### *Local Government*

The comprehensive Municipal Code of 1986 established mechanisms for participation and outlined the role of local government. Barriers, however, still exist that impede comprehensive and participatory local government. For instance, local government officials are elected from a party slate on a winner-take-all basis. Consequently, there is no opposition representation on local councils. This law creates a structural impediment to bringing local actors from varied political parties into the governing process.

In the March 1994 elections ARENA won 206 of the 262 municipalities, 29 were won by the PDC, 16 by the FMLN, 10 by the National Conciliation Party and one by the Authentic Christian Movement. In the nine municipalities visited by NDI during these elections, seven were won by ARENA, one by the PDC and one by the FMLN.

*Actors and Mechanisms of Participation in the Local Government*

The main actors in local government are local government officials and community groups. The existing mechanisms of participation are: *cabildos abiertos*; *consultas populares*, council meetings and community organizations. While the functions and responsibilities of these actors and the uses of these mechanisms of participation will be further detailed throughout the report, the following is a brief description of each:

- (i) The Municipal Code establishes the structure of local government.
  - **Mayor:** Serving as the legal and administrative representative of the township, the mayor is the most visible member of local government and the person to whom people present their problems. The mayor is elected for a three-year term.
  - **Town Council:** Comprising from two to ten members, the council is generally charged with protecting and preserving the funds and property of the township. Each council has four alternate members who are allowed to attend meetings but are not permitted to vote. Elected on a list from the same political party as the mayor, town council members serve three-year terms.
  - **Town Clerk:** A hired municipal employee, the clerk is responsible for the daily administrative operations of the town hall, including the maintenance of the official records of the various town meetings and any other official business.
  
- (ii) The Municipal Code establishes four basic mechanisms of participation.
  - **Cabildos Abiertos:** These are open town meetings where citizens have the opportunity to voice their concerns and problems in their community or neighborhood.
  - **Consultas Populares:** These are forums with a particular community regarding a specific problem. A resolution, decided by majority vote taken during the meeting, is binding on the town council.
  - **Council Meetings:** Every two weeks the council meets officially to discuss municipal business. In the meeting following the *cabildo abierto* the council prioritizes community needs to submit projects for funding.

- Community Groups: These consist of a number of citizens from a geographic area organizing to discuss and attempting to resolve community issues and/or problems. Community group leaders are elected by an assembly of the entire community. Selected on their personal leadership qualities, community leaders represent the members of their community at *cabildos abiertos* and communicate with the mayor, municipal council and other official entities.

## V. Discussion Group Findings

### A. Local Government

#### *Structure of Local Government*

As stated in the Municipal Code of 1986, local government consists of a mayor, council and municipal employees. The mayor and the council are elected for three-year terms on a party list system. This electoral system makes no provision for opposition representation at the local level. The party receiving the majority of votes, including a plurality of less than 50%, wins the mayoral post and all the council seats. As the legal and administrative representative of the township, the mayor is the most visible member of the local government and the person to whom the people present their problems.

The town council comprises two to ten members. In addition to the regular members, there are four alternate council members who fill temporary or permanent vacancies. The alternates are allowed to attend council meetings and speak but are not permitted to vote. *Sindico* is the title given to the elected council member that deals with the legal and financial issues of the local government. Preferably a lawyer, he or she is responsible for the contracts, audits and investments of the council. Council members must be Salvadoran citizens of at least 21 years of age and have lived in the township for at least one year prior to registering their candidacy. Candidates must also know how to read and write and have full rights of citizenship.

Council meetings are regularly held twice a month. Under certain conditions, special sessions may be called. The council is generally charged with protecting and preserving the funds and property of the township. It is also required to keep the community informed of the progress of municipal activities and engage the community in the resolution of local problems. The public is most often informed about local government activities by talking to the mayor, speaking with community leaders who are directly in contact with the mayor, or attending *cabildos abiertos*.

Generally, each council member assumes responsibility for a particular aspect of local government, such as sanitation or health services. Sometimes a citizen's committee is formed to assist the council members with their duties. In at least one town interviewed, however, council members only assumed responsibility for these issues in the urban area of the municipality and relied on community leaders to provide them with information regarding these

issues in the rural areas.

NDI found through its consultations and interviews that council members commonly reside in the urban areas. When asked what had happened to the candidates who lost local government elections, community leaders from the rural area said that they did not know since the town council candidates all lived in the urban area of the *municipio*. In one of the three *municipios* examined, an exception was found. Each of the members of the council came from different communities in the *municipio*. In NDI's opinion, this system facilitated communication between the council and the public.

#### *Attitudes Regarding Local Government*

The participants stated their belief that local government exists to serve the communities of the *municipio*. In their view, the government should serve the people regardless of political loyalties. The participants saw local government as responsible for the economic development of the *municipio*. As one council member added, "The Council Members should try and fulfill the promises that were made during the campaign."

The word association component of the discussion groups elicited interesting responses. The participants' most frequent association with "local government" was "mayor," showing that the public sees the mayor as the local decisionmaker. Participants identified the mayor as the "boss," "leader" or "administrator." The council is perceived as performing an advisory role to the mayor, reflected in responses such as, "the mayor's team" and "a board of directors."

There is a sentiment that local government could solve all manner of problems. One participant said, "Local government can solve whichever problems that the community proposes." Other participants reinforced the perception with statements such as "all" and, "Whatever the people demand." Such responses were not limited to the community leaders. Council members concurred with the idea that local government could solve problems ranging from taxation to helping sick people. In general, local government is perceived as responsible for solving "daily problems."

Local government officials expressed frustration, however, with the number and type of problems referred to them. "The reality is that people come and want the municipal government to solve the problem, but they are a part of solving it." Another local government official added, "Each community thinks their problems are worse than anyone else's in another community." The apportionment of scarce resources and the reconciliation of competing interests is the role of elected officials. It does seem that there are few other interlocutors. Although some mentioned priests or nongovernmental organizations, most participants indicated that they would take most problems to their local government.

While frustrations were expressed in the discussions with council members, council member participants indicated that they accepted the responsibility of being on the council because of a commitment to public service and loyalty to their party. One council member



stated, "I am here to make the town hall representative of the people." Other council members mentioned their earlier service activities in the Red Cross or as community leaders. But in every group someone indicted that ultimately they were on the council because they were asked to serve by the party. In one instance, party members from the separate communities of the *municipio* each selected a candidate. Then, party representatives from the entire *municipio* met to determine which of these candidates would be placed on the party list. The person receiving the most votes was placed on the top for the mayoral position and so on down until a comprehensive list of the preferred candidates was completed. In another, the candidates were chosen by the party.

The council members indicated that they had several ways of prioritizing the needs of the citizens. Council members use *cabildos abiertos* as a means of ascertaining what the community views as important. Then the council members apply their own calculation of costs and benefits to the situation. One council member gave the example of three projects typically presented: a school, a soccer field and street repairs. He said that he would choose the school because he believes educating the young people of the community is the most important of the three subjects. In addition, some decisions on which projects to pursue were based on the conjecture that certain projects were more likely to receive funding at the central government level.

## B. Community Groups

### *Structure of Community Groups*

Each *municipio* consists of a number of different communities. Many of the communities are organized into community groups. These consist of a number of citizens from the same geographic area organizing to address community problems and issues of importance. In the past, community groups were groups centered on a single issue, such as repairing a bad street or building a school. After the particular problem was resolved, the group would dissolve. More recently, community groups have been created which work on behalf of the community on all issues relating to that community. These permanent community groups or associations represent the community to other institutions, such as local government, nongovernmental organizations, the Ministry of Education or the Secretary of National Reconstruction (SRN).

Community groups without legal status are known as *directivas tradicionales* while community groups which have acquired legal status are known as *Asociaciones Comunes de Desarrollo Comunal* (ADESCOs). The difference between the two rests on the achievement of legal status, *personería jurídica*. *Personería jurídica* entitles associations to petition for projects and funding directly from the local government, central government institutions and nongovernmental organizations. The process of obtaining legal status as a community association is complex. First, a group of at least 25 members must write a constitution and by-laws. Second, the documents must be approved by the group and then a board of directors must be elected. Third, a general meeting must be held and the mayor must attend. The group must then submit the request for *personería jurídica*, certification of the organization's constitution, the by-laws, and a signed list of the members of the organization as official documents to the

local government. Finally, the by-laws must appear in the official government paper.

While the law requires the mayor to grant official legal status to groups once they have completed all these requirements, in practice this does not always happen. Mayors are at times fearful of the power community groups can wield. In addition, representatives from nongovernmental organizations working with community groups indicated that this process is difficult, particularly for people with limited written language skills. Without the legal status conferred by the mayor, the community groups are unable to manage projects, solicit funds or receive funds to implement a community project.

Both the community groups and community associations are directed by a board of approximately 11 leaders. These leaders are elected by an assembly of residents from the respective community. Discussion group participants explained that community board members are elected on the basis of their personal characteristics. One participant indicated that communities seek to select individuals who will appeal to the varied groups the board may deal with. For example, one member may come from the ARENA party to deal with people from the governing party while another may be from the party in control of the local government. The community leaders who make up the board work closely with the members of the community to solve problems and discuss issues. Community leaders also represent the members of their community at town meetings and in communicating with the mayor, municipal council and other official entities. These leaders appear to genuinely represent their communities as elected officials outside the formal government structure.

#### *Attitudes Regarding Community Groups*

Some of the characteristics attributed to community leaders by the discussion group participants are that these leader are, "an example for the community," "an intellectual," "someone disposed to serve the community" and "who puts the needs of the community before their own." One participant described a community leader as "someone who knows all the people in the community; has the desire to move the community forward and to improve all the things in the community: health, roads, electrification, or a health clinic." Another participant stated, "A community leader cannot be too rich or too poor. He has to be from the community. He has to have a job and be a good example." Through statements of individuals, community leaders clearly have to have the respect of the community.

The leaders are responsible for helping the community determine its needs and then, helping to resolve those needs by communicating them to institutions and officials outside of the community. "To see the needs of the majority, not just of his own house," as described by one individual. Leaders represent the community in different types of meetings. They also inform the local government about the community. Moreover, community leaders are responsible for recruiting people to participate through manual labor in community projects. The community leaders function as supervisors in the implementation and progress of projects. They also guard against people cheating the community including, as one individual indicated, the local government.

The relationship between local government officials and community groups is generally characterized as one of coordination and communication. One local government participant described community groups as "a means of communicating with the most remote areas of the municipality." Another person referred to community groups as representative of "unity within the community because the work of local government cannot be done alone."

Several participants, however, reported that community leaders from other parties did not communicate with the town hall. "I don't see any difference on the part of the town hall. The difference is in the people from other parties within the communities who say they don't want to participate because the mayor is a member of a certain party." A participant also noted that community leaders from the opposition party are sometimes given a hard time by their fellow party members if they participate in activities with the local government. All reported that in the past there had been instances of favoritism based on party loyalty. In conversations, it was clear that the perception was that the political leanings of a community played a role in the decisionmaking of the local government. This can have a converse effect. In one town, the market was built first to appease the urban area which represented a different political party than that of the local government. NDI accepts that this may or may not be true, however, the reality is less important than the perception. Local government generally faces a perception of unfairness. As one participant pointed out, "This mayor is not only working in one sector, he is also working in an ARENA sector. This is a new example we are seeing."

It is important to note that all of the discussion groups were organized through the town hall. Not every community leader who participated in the discussions came from the same party as the mayor, however, there was a seeming reluctance to criticize the mayor on the party loyalty issue. One response began with the phrase, "In my community, the relationship is very good, but..." This seemed to imply that the relationship between community groups affiliated with another political party and the town hall was not always good.

While frustrations among community leaders arose due to party affiliation, when asked about partisanship within the community groups, community leaders hastened to say that the community groups are unaffiliated. "My community group has a rule that we can't talk about politics or religion in our meetings. We meet to talk about health and how to resolve problems in our community."

The problems discussed by the community groups are first publicly identified by community leaders. They become aware of problems through the people in their community or their own interactions as a citizen of the community. According to the community leaders, problems are prioritized by their level of urgency. "There are always some that are more serious than others." As a participant indicated, "If someone is sick, that is the most urgent." If a large problem or a question arises in a community, a community assembly is organized to discuss the problem and decide how to solve it. If there is a disagreement, it is decided by majority vote.

According to the community leaders, they are the first line of problem solving. If it is

possible, the community board and the community try to solve the problem. If it is a large problem, however, it is presented to the mayor or another interlocutor, such as a nongovernmental organization or a church leader. When the mayor is approached with community problems, it may be in a *cabildo abierto* or, more likely, in a bilateral meeting between the community leaders and the mayor.

There was some mention made of the role of nongovernmental organizations or the central government in dealing with some community problems. In regard to nongovernmental organizations, however, some people did not know what a nongovernmental organization was nor of their presence in the *municipio*. Those who were familiar with nongovernmental organizations viewed them as helpful because they provided materials and training programs. They were also perceived as being able to respond to health, education, literacy and other social needs, but only in the limited geographical area in which they operate. When questioned about the role of the central government, the participants said the central government "channels funds from outside the country" and "generally works through local government."

### *C. Mechanisms of Participation*

#### *Structure of the Mechanisms of Participation*

According to both the council members and community leaders, people participate in local government through *cabildos abiertos*, *consultas populares*, functional committees associated with the council (e.g. market, slaughterhouse, garbage collection), conversations with the mayor and manual labor in the projects being carried out in the community. In two of the three localities, the mayor also spent time visiting with communities. In one community, this constituted a more formal meeting in which the mayor and one or more council members visited the community for "a closer encounter and a more direct participation, not only to discuss the physical needs of the community but also, the larger problems that exist in that community." In another, a more informal communication structure existed in which the mayor infrequently visited the individual communities.

#### *Cabildos Abiertos*

The *cabildos abiertos* are public town meetings or assemblies at which community leaders formally present the needs of their communities. The municipal code requires at least four *cabildos abiertos* each year. In conversations with mayors and candidates, the role and structure of the *cabildos abiertos* were explained as a mechanism for citizens to come forward and present problems of their community or neighborhood. Some problems include local road repair, the building of a school, or another community need. A project must originate in a *cabildo abierto* in order to receive funding from the Municipalities in Action (MEA), an AID funded program administered through the Secretary of National Reconstruction.

In most cases described by mayors and community members, *cabildos abiertos* are fairly formal. The mayor, the council, and often representatives of the Secretary of National

Reconstruction, the provincial government and nongovernmental organizations occupy the head table situated in front of the crowd. The meeting begins with an official greeting from the mayor or a council member. The mayor, or occasionally the municipal secretary, then gives a short description of the projects which were approved since the last *cabildo abierto*. They also explain the cost of each project and a progress report on the projects underway or completed, including an accounting of the money spent. In one community which participated in the discussion groups, this report is sometimes supplemented by a more complete description of the municipal budget, including the income and expenditures of the town hall.

After the mayor's report, representatives of each community advance to the microphone and present their community's list of priority projects that they would like to undertake. For example, the representative may ask for a project to provide potable water, sewage drainage channels, a new school or road repairs. Each community presents one to four project ideas for which it would like funding. The leaders also give the council a sheet of paper on which these ideas are written. In some areas more than 500 citizens attend these meetings which can last for six hours. A council meeting is held following the *cabildo abierto* to determine which projects will be submitted as requests for funds to government institutions. The most common way for projects brought up in a *cabildo abierto* to be funded is through the Secretary of National Reconstruction. Once recommended for action by the council, the Secretary of National Reconstruction determines how much each project will cost and then may approve the project.

#### *Attitudes Regarding Cabildos Abiertos*

Participants associated the *cabildos abiertos* with participation. The mayor and council set a time and place and issue invitations to all the community leaders. The community leaders assemble the people in their respective community and as an assembly of the community, they decide which problems are priorities and which projects they will present at the *cabildo abierto*. Often the *cabildo abierto* is held on Sunday after mass in the town square or the town hall.

The council members and community leaders like that the *cabildo abierto* gives people the opportunity to verbally express the needs of their community. As people arrive they can sign up to speak. One council member indicated that the best aspect of the *cabildo abierto* is that "A leader comes and speaks. He takes off his hat and participates in the discussion. For us, this is a significant step toward democracy." Others suggested that the *cabildos abiertos* unify communities because the members of the community have to agree on community priorities. Continued attendance at these meetings despite, a lack of projects in many communities, indicates a genuine desire to participate. When asked why people attend *cabildos abiertos* people said that they wanted to hear about the work of the local government or the mayor, as well as to hear the needs of other communities.

Although community interest in participation is high, both local officials and community leaders expressed great frustration with the inability of the local government to address all of the pressing needs which exist. Community members also expressed frustration that the *cabildos*

*abiertos* raised hopes and expectations for future community projects, many of which will never receive attention or funding. One participant noted a loss of faith in the process. "I came to a *cabildo abierto* and listened to the petitions of the community and listened to their hope. Well, then I went to another *cabildo abierto* and heard the same hopeful voice asking for the same project. It was never given." A council member expressed the same sentiment, "The *cabildos abiertos* are not a good moment for us. Nearly all of the people meet. The problem for us is that all of them ask us to provide an infinite amount of assistance and there are not enough dollars to cover the problems that exist." There is also a frustration with certain community leaders who do not consult adequately with their communities. Instead, they present essentially personal needs instead of community problems.

Asked for ways to improve participation in the *cabildos abiertos*, the discussion group members suggested that the local government's report read during the *cabildo abierto*, be expanded to include everything the local government had done, regardless of size. Other suggestions included: holding *cabildos abiertos* on a rotating basis in each smaller community within the municipio; conducting them more frequently; and holding *mini-cabildos* in each town separately instead of one large all town *cabildo abierto*. The *mini-cabildos* were seen as a way to facilitate participation and increase individual communities' interaction with the mayor and the council. Participants noted the need for improved community organizations and the need to dispel fears about participating in community organizations. Participants also encouraged a more realistic mechanism for project funding other than returning to a *cabildo abierto* every three months and asking for the same things. As one participant stated, "They can improve things by putting in practice what they promise."

### *Consultas Populares*

*Consultas populares* are single community meetings directed at making a decision on a specific issue or proposal. Like a public hearing, anybody can speak. People from the community vote on the proposal, the result of which is binding on the council. Although they had been held in two of the three *municipios* visited, many community leaders and council members were not familiar with the term.

In one community a *consulta popular* was held on the subject of a school that needed to be constructed. Initially, when the community had proposed the project, they had asked for three classrooms. The Secretary of National Reconstruction, however, had approved a project with two classrooms. A *consulta popular* was held in that community because, as the council stated, "The people in the community had to decide. It is not our decision." The community voted to build three classrooms by supplementing the extra work and supplies.

### *Attitudes Regarding Consultas Populares*

In the word associations, it became evident that the term *consulta popular*, is not widely known. In the communities and in the councils, there is clearly a confusion between a *consulta* and a *cabildo*. In fact, in a *cabildo abierto* attended by NDI representatives the words, *cabildo*

and *consulta*, were used interchangeably. *Consultas* have been held in two of the three municipalities visited by NDI. However, even in these municipalities the term did not provoke immediate reactions nor were deeper explanations of the concept forthcoming.

One council member indicated that the Secretary of National Reconstruction gives money through the *cabildos abiertos* and the Social Investment Fund through *consultas populares*. While this is not completely the truth, it reflects the deeper reality that the public is unaware of the provisions for participation in the Municipal Code. The Secretary of National Reconstruction does require that projects be raised initially in a *cabildo abierto* in order to obtain funding.

### *Open Council Meetings*

Currently, the municipal code allows for open council meetings but does not require them to be open. In fact, the general practice is that council meetings are closed. Individuals or representatives of groups, however, have been invited to sit in on meetings or make presentations. Council meetings are held twice a month. In the council meeting following the *cabildo abierto*, the mayor and the council assess the needs of the community, prioritize them and decide which projects funds will be requested.

### *Attitudes Regarding Open Council Meetings*

When asked whether council members had held an open council meeting, the council member participants became confused. One council member proclaimed, "Our doors are always open, anyone can come in at any moment to ask us for something." On occasion, the council has invited a community whose problems they were discussing, to attend the council meeting. However, it was unclear to NDI if that was at the initiative of the council or the community.

Often council members are assigned a functional responsibility such as garbage collection, the municipal market, road repair. The council members said that they rely on the community leaders regarding these issues in the rural areas of the municipality. Citizen committees are also organized to assist the council members with these responsibilities. It is unclear how often they meet or how these citizens become part of the committees, yet, through this mechanism, community members do occasionally participate in council meetings.

## VI. Conclusions

The lack of opposition representation at the local level limits citizen participation. In other countries adequate participation is facilitated by inclusive electoral processes. Local councils are elected on a proportional representation system or ward system which provides other political parties access to the decisionmaking process. Because there are not several parties involved in the policy process, the participatory mechanisms that exist assume greater importance.

The existing structures are not sufficient to facilitate citizen input. The *cabildo abierto* is not sufficient to incorporate public opinion in decisionmaking. The meetings are held infrequently and are often too large a forum to allow in-depth discussion of local priorities. Over 500 people attend *cabildos abiertos* in rural areas, which can last over five hours. As expressed by the participants, a five-hour meeting, four times a year, cannot involve the public in the continuing planning and decisionmaking process. The *cabildo abierto* is structured as a forum for people to petition for redress of the needs of their communities. As structured, it does not allow for other issues such as documentation, land tenancy, and crime, among others, to be discussed. Community members hear about funds spent for capital projects but not about the municipal budget.

This is not to argue that *cabildos abiertos* are not useful. Clearly, they provide a good, albeit insufficient, opportunity for participation and greater transparency in local government than had existed previously. For example, many people cited, as a motivation for attending the *cabildo abierto*, the opportunity to hear about the work of their local government and how money had been spent. In general, the *cabildo abierto* does not give individual citizens enough voice in their community.

In addition, there are no formal structures other than *cabildos abiertos* for regular communication between local government and community leaders. The lack of ongoing communication has, at times, been detrimental to the relationship between local government officials and community leaders. The communication that does exist outside of the *cabildo abierto* is often one-on-one requests to the mayor. Community leaders from each community in the *municipio* rarely see each other and almost never exchange information. As individuals, community leaders play an important informal role in relaying information between the town hall and the community. However, there is no regular meeting with community leaders only ad-hoc meetings.

Because of this lack of communication, mistrust can exist between the councils and its constituents. One council member told NDI that the people believed the council was stealing from them. This situation can be attributed, in part, to a lack of communication and openness regarding the use of funds.

In various places positive steps have been taken to remedy the lack of communication. In one *municipio*, each community association has *personería jurídica* and representatives of each group meet on a *municipio*-wide council. This council discusses issues that affect all the communities of the *municipio* and takes part in economic development planning. In another, the community organization working on a project receives a copy of every receipt and can see where money has been spent on a project. These positive innovations need to be encouraged and publicized within El Salvador so that others can emulate successful programs.

Many suggestions for improved citizen participation arose from the discussion group sessions. Some of the more relevant ones included:



- more meetings in the communities;
- *mini-cabildos* to increase individual community interaction with the mayor and the council;
- visits by the mayor to each community and meeting with the people to discuss their problems;
- an expanded report of the local government activities read at the *cabildos abiertos*;
- rotating *cabildos abiertos* to each community; and
- better organization on the part of the communities involved.

Clearly, there is a desire for more interaction and participation on the part of community leaders. Local government officials likewise expressed interest in having community input. In some cases local officials felt that they were not sufficiently involved in the entire process of project planning.

The inclusion of citizens in the process of local decisionmaking will not, as many participants said, take place between "night and the next morning." Concrete mechanisms need to be introduced to incorporate public opinion into planning and prioritizing at the local government level. At the same time, the professionalization and improved organization of local government and community groups will assist in this process.

The information provided by the discussion groups has served as a guide for NDI's program to foster the consolidation of mechanisms of participation. NDI's program will encourage local government officials and community leaders to look at expanding current mechanisms of participation. Ideas and suggestions raised by discussion group participants will be expanded on in the program. Furthermore, new mechanisms of participation and ideas for expanding existing mechanisms will be raised by international participants.

In all aspects of the program, NDI will sponsor the participation of international practitioners who have worked in the area of local government and community development. They will share their experiences from their respective countries regarding local government and community participation.

## Questions for Local Government Officials

### A. Concepts (10 minutes)

1. I am going to read to you a few words and I want you to tell me the first two words that come to your mind after hearing each word:

Mayor  
Community Leaders  
City Council Member  
Public Consultations  
Director  
Open City Council meeting  
Local Government  
Community Group  
Open Town Council  
Secretary of National Reconstruction

### B. Participation (30 minutes)

1. How do people participate in local government?
2. Tell us about a town assembly?
  - a. How do people participate in the town assembly?
  - b. Who attends the town assembly?
  - c. Why do people attend?
  - d. Describe a town assembly, how it operates.
  - e. What motivates people to participate?
  - f. How do people participate in the town assembly? (suggestions, projects, problems)
  - g. Is there another way for people to participate in the town assemblies? (e.g. To give suggestions or ideas as to how to resolve certain problems)
3. What do you like about the town assemblies?
4. What do you not like?
5. Explain two ways to improve community participation in the town assemblies.
6. Is there another way for the community to participate? Explain?
7. Explain what a public consultation is. Have you ever held one? Why?
8. Now that the municipal code establishes that open town council meetings can be held? Have you held one? (Why or Why not? )

C. Problem Solving (30 minutes)

1. How are problems identified in your community?
2. How do you make yourself aware of problems in your community?
3. Who is responsible for solving community problems?
4. How is it decided what problems will be solved?
5. On what basis are the problems prioritized?
6. What type of community involvement is there in the resolution of problems?
7. What role do the NGO's play in resolving problems?
8. What role does the central government play in resolving problems?

D. Community Groups (15 minutes)

1. Why are community boards or associations formed?
2. How are community leaders chosen?
3. Please describe a typical community leader.
4. What role do the community leaders play?
5. What responsibility do the community leaders have in local government?
6. Describe the relationship between the town council and the community.
7. If a council member is from another party than the Mayor, is there a different relationship between the two? If so, how?

E. Local Government (15 minutes)

1. Before being a city council member, how did you participate in local government?
2. Why did you become a city council member?
3. How do people from other parties participate in your local government? And the ex-opposition candidates?
4. What type of problems can the local government solve?
5. What do you believe to be the responsibilities of the local government?
6. How is the community informed of what the local government does?
7. What is the role of the mayor? the council? the community? the secretary? the central government?

G. Summary (20 minutes)

1. What suggestions do you have to improve the communication between the community groups and the local government?
2. Suppose that you were meeting with a person that had a complete knowledge of local government. What would you ask him/her?
3. Summary of ideas.

## Questions for Community Leaders

### A. Elections

1. In the last elections you voted to elect your local government. What factors did you take into account in voting?
2. There are always candidates that don't win. How do these people participate in the activities of the community? in local government?

### B. Concepts

I am going to read some words and I want you to tell me quickly in one or two words the first thing that comes into your head. There are no right or wrong answers just tell me the first thing that occurs to you.

Mayor  
Community Leader  
Municipal Council  
Consulta Popular  
Community Board  
Open council meeting  
Local Government  
Community Association  
Cabildo Abierto  
National Reconstruction Agency

### C. Participation

1. how do you participate in your local government?
2. As representatives of your communities, you have attended cabildos abiertos. Tell us what they are like:
  - a. How do you know there will be a town assembly?
  - b. Who attends? Why do you think people go?
  - c. What are the town assemblies like?
  - d. How do you take part in the town assembly?
  - e. Is there any other ways to take part?

3. What do you like about the town assemblies?
4. What don't you like?
5. Tell us two ways of improving citizen participation in town assemblies?
6. Have you attended a public consultation or referendum? What is it like?
7. Is there any other way that you take part in local government?

#### Problem Solving

1. How do you identify problems in your community?
2. How do you let the local government officials know what your problems are?
3. As representatives of your community can you tell us what are the pressing problems in your communities?
4. Who is responsible for solving the problems in your community?
5. How do you decide which problems you are going to try to solve?
6. What role do NGOs play in resolving problems?
7. What role does the central government play?

#### Community Groups

1. For what reasons do you form a community association?
2. How do you choose the people who represent your community?
3. Describe a community leader for us.
4. What role do community leaders play in your community?
5. What responsibilities do community leaders have in terms of local government?
6. What is the relationship between town hall and the community like?
7. If the Community Board is from a different party than the mayor is there a different relationship with the mayor? How is it different?

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN EL SALVADOR

**Saturday, September 24**

### BRIEFINGS

Overview of El Salvador  
Decentralization  
Municipal Code  
Local Government  
Community Groups

**Sunday, September 25; Tuesday, September 27; and Thursday, September 29**

### MEETING WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS

- 2:00 pm            Introduction  
                         NDI  
                         NDI's Program in El Salvador  
                         Present Internationals  
                         Purpose of the Meeting
- 2:30 pm            Brief Presentation by the Internationals
- Their Background  
                         Purpose for Their Visit  
                         Question and Answer
- 2:45 pm            Open Discussion
- Questions for Consideration:
- What types of problems are brought to the local government?
  - What are some examples of project that have not been funded?
  - Why were these project not funded?
  - What actions were taken to try to obtain funding for your project?
  - How did you find out that your project was not selected or was not going to receive funding?
  - What other things could have been done to push for funding?
  - How can you develop a case for you project?
- 3:45 pm            Closing Remarks -- Questions and Answer

Monday, September 26; Wednesday, September 28; and Friday, September 30

DAY WITH THE COUNCIL

8:30 am Coffee

9:00 am Introduction

NDI  
NDI's Program in EL Salvador  
Present Internationals  
Purpose and Format of Today's Program

9:30 am Presentations by International Participants

- What types of outreach mechanisms have been utilized?
- Why specific outreach mechanisms have worked?
- What mechanisms have not worked and why?

9:50 am Open Discussion on Community Outreach

Questions for Consideration:

- What are some examples of difficult situations with the community?
- In what ways have the people in the community not been cooperative?
- How did you deal with this situation?
- Why did the people react the way they did?
- What are other possible ways that the situation could have been dealt with?
- What approach could be taken for the next time?

Themes:

COMMUNICATION  
ACCOUNTABILITY  
TRANSPARENCY  
REGULAR CONTACT WITH THE COMMUNITY

10:30 am Case Scenarios

12:00 pm Lunch

1:30 pm Open Discussion on Mechanisms for Community Participation

Questions for Consideration:

- What methods have been used to involve the community in local



- government?
- How does the community participate through these methods?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each method?
- How do you overcome the challenges of a specific method and maximize the positive aspects?
- What other methods exist?

Themes:

COMMUNITY VISITS  
CONSULTATION MEETINGS  
PUBLIC MEETINGS  
OPEN COUNCIL MEETINGS  
PUBLIC HEARINGS

2:30 pm

Case Scenarios

4:00 pm

Closing Meeting with the Council and Community Leaders

**El Salvador - Community Organizing**  
December 1994

**OBJECTIVES:**

The community leaders will be able to:

- identify community organizational structures
- identify ways to motivate community members
- identify community problems (other than only infrastructural needs)
- prioritize community needs
- outline a strategy for organizing the community

9:00 I. Presentations (1 1/2 hours)

- each community leader will introduce him/herself and then short (20 minute) presentations by each of the internationals to include
- 1) community org. structures - boards, regular meetings, bylaws
  - 2) networks of community organizations

This should include 30-40 minutes to ask questions and describe the organization of their communities

**BREAK**

10:45 Problem Identification and Prioritization (1 hour) - Large Group Activity

This may start with the two people from each directiva listing all the problems in their community/drawing a map of their community and showing where the problems are. Community leaders would be encouraged to think outside of narrow infrastructural needs to larger community problems. After listing the problems they would prioritize the problems. At the end of this exercise the community leaders would be asked to share their #1 problem verbally. One emphasis should be on that organizing will get results.

12:30 LUNCH - Pollo en una Bolsa

1:30 Strategies for problem solving (1 1/2 hours) - plenary

Internationals would take one problem/issue identified by the community leaders and use it to illustrate with audience participation each of the following points.

1. choose an issue
2. develop a strategy
3. target decision makers
4. work with others (e.g. local government, other community groups)
5. tactics (e.g. invite the council to your community for a meeting, go to meetings in San Salvador, go to meetings with departmental representatives)

**BREAK**

**3:00 Strategizing (1 1/2 hours) - workshops**

The community leaders would select an issue and develop a strategy for their community or communities.

**4:30 Oral Evaluation - experts would conduct a short oral evaluation of the program by asking the participants questions.**

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** NDI Staff  
**From:** Marissa Brown  
**Date:** January 10, 1995  
**Subject:** El Salvador Local Governance Program

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In the context of the cessation of civil war in El Salvador, local governance assumes an important role in fostering confidence in the democratic system. Since its the face of government that most of the largely rural population sees and interacts with, the responsiveness and accountability of this level of government plays a large role in promoting confidence in peaceful democratic politics

Unfortunately, the local elections law in El Salvador does not give access to all. The party slate which wins a simple plurality, including a plurality of less than 50%, assumes all the seats of the council. This lack of opposition representation necessitates the development of other mechanisms for participation in the system. NDI's program proceeds from this premise. To that end, NDI designed a three-pronged program in the target municipalities. Based on criteria including size, party affiliation of local government, dynamism and geography, the three towns chosen to participate in the program were Santa Elena, Tecoluca and Textistepeque. The first phase of the program seeks to engage local officials in a dialogue regarding mechanisms of participation. The second phase seeks to empower local community leaders to act for themselves and hold government accountable. The final phases will bring local officials and community leaders from the three municipalities together to formulate a set of recommendations for local government.

The first phase of NDI's program focused on providing various options regarding citizen participation to local government officials. In late September, NDI brought Cecilia Gil, a mayor of a small town in Colombia and Roger Perez, a city council person from San Antonio, Texas to participate in the program. The international participants brought their diverse experiences in including citizens in planning and decision making. Discussions focused on district/ward representation versus at-large representation, open council meetings, reformatting *cabildos abiertos* (a mechanism for citizen participation that currently exists) and financial issues.

## The December Program

In December, NDI implemented the second phase of the program, to heighten citizen expectations of themselves as community leaders, to increase their expectations for participation in local decision making and introduce ideas for holding government accountable. This aspect of the program focused on the role and development of community organizations in the democratic process. From the shared experiences of the international participants, NDI's objective was to assist community leaders to better organize their community, to enhance communication with local government and increase citizen participation in decision making.

NDI brought two international participants with experience in community organizing, **Elias Santana** a community leader in his neighborhood in Caracas and the executive director of an association of community groups, the *Escuela de Vecinos* in Venezuela. This organization works to provide training and information to community groups in Venezuela. **Lauren Coletta** is a community organizer in Chicago with several years experience in organizing. She currently works for the Citizen's Information Network which provides information and assistance to community groups.

The international participants arrived in San Salvador on Sunday, December 11. On Monday, NDI arranged briefings with intellectuals, local government organizations, community organizers and experts on local government. These briefings provided the international participants with an overview of the situation in El Salvador and understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing community organizations and local governments.

During the week of the program, the NDI group spent two days in each municipality. The first day in each municipality was spent with local officials and the second was a day-long seminar with community leaders. Meeting with local officials first was important to NDI's credibility. It also provided an opportunity for the internationals to assess the situation in each municipality. At the end of the week, the internationals were able to address policy issues affecting community development, such as decentralization, in conversations with key legislators and AID officials.

Representatives from COMURES, the Salvadoran mayor's association also accompanied NDI during the week. Individuals from the Extension Department were able to take part in the seminar and occasionally offer advice to NDI. COMURES involvement could have been more coherent with the delegation of one individual to participate in NDI's program throughout the week.

### Meetings with Local Officials

NDI staff and the international participants spent two days in each municipality. On the first day, a meeting was held with the town council and mayor to introduce the participants and discuss community organizing. Each international participant described the structure of community organizations in their respective countries, as well as mechanisms for community

participation.

The format for each of the towns was slightly different. In Tecoluca, the mayor and some council members were absent, so discussion focused on the interest of the councilors present. Coletta and Santana described specific activities community groups had undertaken to alleviate the burden of women such as communal nursery schools. In Santa Elena all of the council members including alternates participated in a structured discussion of local government and community organizing issues. In Texistepeque a short discussion with ten council members was followed by a conversation with a legislator from the region. Later, the NDI group was able to visit various projects and sites with the council and mayor.

Local officials displayed keen interest in enhancing community involvement in local government and increasing citizen participation. In meetings with local officials, Santana and Coletta focused on describing concrete instances of cooperation between the community and local government. In Chicago, police, local officials and community groups together have developed anti-loitering laws and community service sentencing to combat gangs. Particularly interesting were examples of methods local governments used to communicate. One example that found resonance was a Venezuelan mayor who used a daily morning radio show to communicate the activities of the municipal government. Other places assign a council member to be in charge of community relations. Other examples described how local government, working with citizens, was able to persuade other governmental agencies to resolve issues.

Santana described the structure of local government and mechanisms of participation in Venezuela. In Venezuela, *cabildos abiertos* which were, like those of El Salvador, sessions in which community leaders brought forward their needs to local government were replaced with open council meetings. The *cabildos* were deemed useless exercises by both community leaders and local government officials because money did not exist to resolve all of the problems of the communities. In Venezuela local government is financed by central government transfers.

In Chicago, the 50 city councilors are elected in non partisan elections by district. Funding comes from property taxes on residences and businesses.

In Texistepeque, NDI facilitated a forum in which local officials spoke with one of the elected representatives from their region in the National Assembly. Juan Duch Martinez, the head of the ARENA fraction in the legislature attended NDI's seminar to observe the proceedings. The local officials then had an opportunity to question Duch. The discussion revolved around the property tax law. Broad issues of the need for an independent financing mechanism for local government and narrower issues such as rural vs. urban valuation of property were discussed. Both Duch and the local officials felt it was a productive exchange. In informal settings following the meeting, Santana and Coletta encouraged local officials to follow up with Duch and other deputies.

## Seminars with Community Leaders

On the second day in each municipality, the program with the community leaders was held. This day-long program entailed presentations, a discussion period, and a small group activity. The program began with an introduction of NDI and the program. Then the international participants and the community leaders introduced themselves. The international participants each explained community organizing and the relationship between community groups and local government in their respective countries. A discussion period followed. Finally, using examples that could be applied to conditions in El Salvador, Santana presented techniques on different aspects of problem solving and Coletta described methods of holding local government accountable. The NDI program also included small group activities in two of the three sites. Each discussion involved an interactive dialogue between the presenters and community leaders. NDI expected that these discussions would produce concrete means for the community to better participate in local government. At the end of the session NDI conducted an oral evaluation of the program.

### *Presentations*

Santana's initial presentation emphasized the importance of communication, responsibility and activism in community organizing. His role in the program was largely motivational. His presentations and comments were motivational.

While discussing communication, Santana told the community leaders that there was nothing in their town to tell him there were organized community groups. He suggested erecting a sign on the side of a building to broadcast to others that this town is organized. The sign could serve a dual purpose in that it could communicate to people when and where meetings took place. He emphasized that even in a small municipality, there is no reason for community groups not to communicate. While recognizing the value of one-on-one communication, he stressed the role more systematic communication, such as signs, could play.

Santana suggested that community leaders use the media as a resource. When encountering a recalcitrant official or a political impasse, community leaders could contact the press. Santana, who had researched the relevant press contacts in El Salvador, gave the community leaders actual names and numbers of a television program in San Salvador and the community page of *La Prensa Grafica*, El Salvador's most important daily. In addition, Santana noted that media was another avenue for the community to communicate their activities. He added that good public relations is important. When an organized community which has publicized its successes asks for funding, funders will remember the community and feel obligated to respond.

However, he stressed that community problems are just that -- problems of the community. The community is responsible for its own problems. Santana cited the example of trash in front of his house. To him, it makes no sense to wait months while blaming the mayor, it makes more sense to pick it up. Santana indicated that asking for assistance from

the mayor was not enough. Community leaders have to work along with the mayor to resolve the problem.

Santana's presentation later in the day focused on ways to identify and solve community problems. First, the community must decide which problem it wants to address. From the myriad of problems the community faces, leaders should select a pressing problem but one that is soluble. Then, the community needs to identify which resources are necessary to accomplish the goal. Then, the community has to identify how to access those resources. For example, to pave a road, the community needs to determine that sand, gravel, labor and a bulldozer are necessary and then determine which person can give or loan those items to the community. In the final planning step, the community should outline what needs to be done and assign responsibility for accomplishing these tasks.

Coletta's initial presentation described the rationale for community organizing. Highlighting her experience in Chicago, she explained the power community organizations can wield if they are well organized. Community groups in Chicago are particularly powerful because they have demonstrated to politicians their ability to mobilize votes.

Coletta has worked extensively with community groups to rid communities of gang activity. Her description of community activities to fight gangs was a case study in community organizing. First of all, the community groups worked to get everyone in the community involved. Community leaders went door-to-door and ask people to get involved. Community leaders motivated others by pointing out the reality that nothing will change unless people do something. Then community groups mobilized people to fight gang activities in small ways. Community leaders asked people to sit outside their homes and watch the gang members. Community groups sponsored outdoor events such as block parties or barbeques. These activities worked as gang members, the sons and daughters of the community, were shamed and scared into moving their activities. Another important angle community activists used to fight gangs was partnerships with the local government. Community members would call the police and the police would step up patrols in the area. At the behest of community leaders, council members enacted special ordinances to stop gang activity. Coletta used the work community groups did around gangs as an example of activities communities could undertake.

In her later presentation, Coletta described accountability sessions, or meetings community groups hold with public officials. First, the community group chooses a problem to discuss at the meeting, determines who can resolve the issue at hand and invites that person to the meeting. Examples she gave were council members or police officers. At the meeting, community leaders and the invitee sit at a head table with community members in the audience. Selected community members watching should have specific questions to ask ahead of time. Other members of the community give anecdotal experiences of how the problem at hand has affected them. After this, other members of the community tell the invitee what the community hopes he could help them with to solve this problem. Then have the invitee respond. To make the official accountable, a community leader has a large sheet of paper on the wall with the proposal written out. The community leader in charge of the paper has to



decide if the official has said yes, no or maybe. Forcing the invitee to commit to one of these boxes makes the invitee feel accountable to the community. After the community has secured the agreement of the official to do something, the community leaders should summarize what has been agreed to and end the meeting quickly.

The community leaders were very interested in this portion of Coletta's presentation and asked numerous questions. These questions led to a discussion with the community leaders about holding town council officials accountable to the community. Coletta stressed to the community leaders that as elected officials, local government has to be accountable to the community. She concluded that an organized community pressures local government to respond to community needs.

### *Small Group Activities*

In each of the communities, except Tecoluca due to time constraints, there was a small group activity to let all community leaders be involved. These small group discussions were particularly valuable in motivating community leaders. Because of the size of the event, their participation had been more muted until that point. It was particularly important for female leaders. NDI had invited a male and female leader from each community group in the municipality; however, in every municipality more men than women were present at the session. The smaller groups allowed the women present, who were generally more reluctant to speak, to participate.

In Santa Elena, the community leaders were divided into groups to draw maps of their *canton* or *caserio*, which are smaller sectors within the community and outline where the problems are. After this exercise a representative of each *canton* described their map to everyone and what problems their *canton* has. This exercise, although lengthy, was effective in giving the opportunity for everyone to participate and for the community leaders to see that they all have similar problems. The maps were a source of great pride to many community leaders.

In Texistepeque, the community leaders divided into three different groups. Each group was responsible for choosing from among the successes of the community leaders in each group, an exemplary community project. Community leaders shared the projects they had done and voted on the best project in each group. The groups then chose a man and a woman to present the project and the reasons for its selection. General discussion followed that highlighted the steps community leaders could take to emulate these ideas.

### *Evaluation*

At the end of each program, NDI conducted an oral evaluation of the seminar. Due to literacy levels, written evaluations were impossible. Generally positive about the seminar, community leaders found information about communities organizing in other countries helpful. They particularly enjoyed the concrete examples given. Overwhelmingly, community leaders found it valuable to meet with other community leaders from their municipality. Hearing the

problems of other *cantones* and the resolutions employed, gave the community leaders new ideas and encouragement. Other community leaders said they had no idea that everyone in their municipality was confronting similar challenges. Community leaders suggested more frequent municipality-wide meetings with local government and community leaders.

Negative comments focused on program logistics. In one location the invitation was unclear as to the location and time of the seminar.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of the week, NDI requested and received from Santana and Coletta their recommendations for community development in El Salvador. Their recommendations are attached.

FROM :

PHONE NO. :

P01

Recomendaciones para el Instituto Nacional Democrata

*Mr. 112*

*Let's talk*

PARA: Santiago Cantón. NDI

DE: Elias Santana.

FECHA: Miércoles 14 de Diciembre de 1994

Apreciado Santiago:

Te estoy remitiendo un conjunto de reflexiones al culminar la visita a El Salvador. Espero que sean de utilidad e interés para el Instituto. Te ruego hacerlas llegar a Marissa y Darren.

Estoy interesado en conversarte sobre la evolución del Encuentro Internacional a celebrarse en Caracas en septiembre del 95. Me gustaría que pudiésemos formar parte del comité preparatorio y que podamos pensar juntos sobre el impacto y continuidad del evento.

Pronto te escribiré sobre esto.

Por ahora te envío estas reflexiones apuradas que espero les sean de utilidad.

Recibe un saludo y mi agradecimiento por la experiencia.

Elias

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RECOMENDACIONES PARA EL NDI  
PROCESO DE PARTICIPACION CIUDADANA  
Y GOBIERNO MUNICIPAL

EL SALVADOR DICIEMBRE 1994

Por solicitud del NDI en el documento inicial y por intermedio de Marissa Brown y Darren Nance, basados en las experiencias vividas, elaboramos un conjunto de recomendaciones. Las recomendaciones son simples reflexiones, un poco apuradas y poco evaluadas, debido al ritmo de las actividades realizadas en El Salvador. Pero pueden servir de papel de trabajo para plantearse la elaboración de propuestas para el programa del NDI y para posibles sugerencias a otras instituciones estadounidenses.

**Recomendaciones para el Instituto Nacional Demócrata**

El aporte del NDI podría estar concentrado en realizar aquellas tareas o promover aquellas iniciativas que ningún otro organismo internacional o nacional esté en disposición o capacidad de desarrollar. Debe escoger su nicho de aporte, su especial centro de atención, que tenga impacto positivo y se correlacione con un sinnúmero de otras iniciativas en marcha. A continuación algunas de las opciones posibles para el NDI.

- 1) Sería conveniente que existiese una especie de **directorío explicativo de las diferentes iniciativas de cooperación**, su alcance, los institutos contraparte en El Salvador (gubernamentales o no) y las fechas de culminación. Un "mapa" de las instituciones y programas, enlaces gubernamentales, áreas temáticas y geográficas de actuación, interlocutores, lapsos y recursos.
- 2) Si esas diferentes iniciativas se conociesen entre sí y de alguna manera se articulen o interrelacionen se ganaría mucho. Al menos el NDI podría orientarse mejor y apuntalar procesos en marcha tratando de generar sinergia. Por ello considero interesante que, por ejemplo, AID convoque a una suerte de **encuentro informativo y de intercambio de las instituciones internacionales con programas en El Salvador**, para elaborar el mapa y el directorío. Y quizás para discutir algunos asuntos.
- 3) Podría promoverse, realizar talleres multisectoriales y gestiones de divulgación, para **generar una reforma del Código Municipal y de la propia Constitución**. Buscando crear el marco regulatorio apropiado para el proceso de descentralización y municipalización. Se trataría de facilitar los cambios en la legislación necesarios para el fortalecimiento de las experiencias locales, sin generar rechazo de la élite política ni de la Asamblea o el Gobierno.
- 4) Elaborar un **directorío de apoyo municipal en el país**, presentando completa información sobre las instituciones nacionales e internacionales presentes en El Salvador. E incluso las no presentes que pueden constituirse en recursos para las autoridades, la sociedad civil o las mismas instituciones internacionales. Este directorío permitiría organizar un Encuentro, concebido

**Recomendaciones para el Instituto Nacional Demócrata**

como reunión de intercambio hacia la articulación y conformación de una red de intercambio regular. Es necesario articular a todas las iniciativas en marcha para no derrochar recursos, multiplicar esfuerzos innecesariamente o crear confusión local.

5) **En El Salvador hace falta un nuevo actor, la sociedad civil no partidizada y modernizadora.** Especialmente una clase media que con propiedad contribuya facilitando y promoviendo los procesos de reforma necesarios y que involucre a la población en procesos de participación comunitaria.

6) Podría resultar de enorme utilidad comenzar el 1995 presentando **las conclusiones del IX Congreso de Alcaldes** a la opinión pública, al conjunto de la sociedad y especialmente a los actores actuales, promoviendo el consenso alrededor de decisiones necesarias a la brevedad en materia de reformas de normas y de procedimientos.

Especial atención debería prestarse a la información clara a un grupo de comunicadores sociales que puedan convertirse en divulgadores de la nueva realidad municipal y de la agenda de cambios.

7) Puede promoverse, por la vía de los hechos, un cambio en la práctica casi secreta de la vida de los concejos municipales, facilitando que comiencen a realizarse **reuniones públicas de los concejos** que acepten la idea, llevando un registro de los resultados de la experiencia con el fin de divulgarlas a través de Comures y de los medios de comunicación. Las sesiones abiertas podrían ir acompañadas de convocatorias con agenda previas y de divulgación sistemática de los resultados de las reuniones.

8) **Creo necesario dedicar algunos recursos a estudiar la realidad del municipio y de la participación comunitaria en el área metropolitana de El Salvador.** Concentrarse en exceso en los municipios rurales empobrecidos puede resultar excesivamente lento. Pero apropiadamente combinado con experiencias exitosas para ese 42% de la población que se concentra en la capital, puede dinamizar procesos generales y contribuir a influenciar la agenda pública en el país.

## Recomendaciones para el Instituto Nacional Demócrata

9) Pensar en formar a los líderes comunitarios, en ofrecerles un apoyo especial para que puedan ser sociedad civil actuante frente a los gobiernos municipales puede resultar conveniente. Podría formarse a cerca de cinco líderes por cada uno de los municipios seleccionados, para ofrecerles capacitación y entrenamiento durante una o dos semanas, en interacción entre ellos, para luego hacerles seguimiento y brindarles asesoría en su desempeño. Además de los quince líderes dejar un cupo de diez para personas detectadas con potencialidad para ser formadores de formadores.

El temario puede ser el marco jurídico y la organización del sistema político en El Salvador, la organización municipal, los organismos de cooperación, especialmente los municipales. Entrenarlos en procesos grupales y de organización, en elaboración y ejecución de proyectos, en expresión oral y conducción de reuniones. En procesos de recaudación y administración de fondos y de comunicación y articulación comunitaria.

De ese grupo de líderes seleccionar a los mejores para que luego sean facilitadores de nuevos grupos. Se puede diseñar un plan posterior para ellos.

10) Realizar un conjunto de programas de video que puedan ser transmitidos por la televisión salvadoreña y que puedan ser usados por promotores comunitarios, dotados de un televisor y un VHS.

11) Buena parte de las propuestas anteriores podrían ser adelantadas por una asociación similar a la Escuela de Vecinos de Venezuela, pero adaptada a la realidad salvadoreña. Podría pensarse en un plan a dos años que permita dar los pasos necesarios para dejar a esa sociedad dotada de un centro de servicios no partidista destinado a los ciudadanos, con influencia en los medios y la opinión pública y con servicios para los municipios en el área de participación ciudadana. Que canalice el aporte de la clase media, que actúe frente a los partidos y grupos de poder y que sirva de facilitadora del encuentro y articulación entre las instituciones de cooperación internacional.

**Impressions and Recommendations to the National Democratic Institute**

El Salvador, December 1994

Lauren Coletta

of

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The program design, briefing materials and NDI staff members provided a wide range of opportunities to develop an understanding of the present political situation in El Salvador. The following are my impressions and suggestions from a community based perspective.

- It didn't take long to understand why El Salvador has suffered from considerable civil unrest. The government structure and constitution go a long way to frustrate community input and citizen participation. Almost every individual we had the opportunity to meet with talked about the importance of the decentralization of power and resources. In order to accomplish this goal there would have to be dramatic changes in the party focus and structure of government. I don't believe that such changes are going to come easily from the top down.
- It is clear that citizen groups and organizations like COMURES are going to have to play a critical role in developing a more open system. The task is made even more difficult because the country is still very much in a healing mode and drastic change is threatening. The community leaders we met were understandably focusing their attention on working with municipal governments and outside organizations to meet their immediate needs. Perhaps in the short run the leaders are on the right track but ultimately they will need to be in a position to have influence with the central government to ensure that the municipal governments are given the resources they need to do their job. One of the key components in organizing is learning who has the power to change the situation and what steps would be most effective in leveraging that power. Their challenge is to come up with peaceful democratic methods that work. NDI could be most helpful in this capacity.

- The issues and problems raised by the community leadership dealt with "bread and butter" issues such as water, electricity, new bridges etc. These are great issues to organize around because it hits people where they live. You are likely to have a lot of participation when there is a perception that resources are possible through organizing. However, as previously mentioned there was a lack of discussion about broader political issues that have a direct effect on the availability of resources. I met a number of people during our workshops that I felt had excellent potential as leaders. A possible project would be to invite leaders from a number of municipal governments perhaps 25-30, for week long workshops that enable them to share experiences and address larger issues. Perhaps we could take a lesson from the "Escuela de Vecinos" and publicize the results of a "Community Congress" with a nation-wide newsletter, press releases etc. Right now these leaders do not have a voice in re-shaping the government in El Salvador and to get any where they have to create one.
- Many of the community organizations and municipal governments look to outside agencies for support. To my knowledge there was no coordination of the outside agencies by the community organizations or municipal governments. A fruitful project would be for NDI to invite individuals who are experts in long range planning to assist local leadership in piecing together resources in a constructive way. I am not certain that this is a project that falls within the mission of NDI. However, it would go a long way in strengthening the control local leaders have over their communal institutions and begin to clear the way for leaders to think about larger issues.
- The highly debated property tax provides an interesting opportunity for community input. We learned that one of the reasons that the property tax is so controversial is that it is outside the experience of most Salvadoreños and elected officials fear they will reject it. Obviously if municipal governments are to be in a position to serve their citizens they will need resources. If community leaders are allowed real input into the development of such a tax it will add to the perceived legitimacy of these organizations and to their ability to leverage resources from municipal governments. One of the causal effects of taxing constituents is they feel they have a right to hold government accountable, after all they are paying for it. Perhaps NDI could support "Leadership Panels" who could develop recommendations.



- Developing leadership panels brings up the question of how familiar local leadership is with the municipal code, constitution and governmental powers. Another interesting project would be to train a group of community leaders to provide technical assistance in "civics" so they have a strong grasp of the present situation and can better see where they want to go with it.
  
- Lastly, the community based organizations in El Salvador have a huge task. They are faced with rebuilding an infrastructure and influencing a government structure that is by design difficult to penetrate. My experience tells me they are going to take care of the "bread and butter" issues first. They will need a tremendous amount of support and technical assistance to tackle the larger questions. My advice to NDI is to start small. Work with local leaders and municipal councils to hold open meetings, create community plans, organize accountability sessions with government agencies on policy issues (they can't plead no resources on policy issues). Perhaps in the course of working together with their municipal governments they will begin to create a model for citizen participation at a higher level.



# NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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## El Salvador: Enhancing Citizen Participation

NDI is entering the third phase of a program to strengthen local governance in El Salvador. In March 1995, NDI will sponsor a conference bringing together community leaders and local elected officials from the three towns in which NDI has focused its work, to develop a set of recommendations for enhancing citizen participation in local government.

From February 5 through 10, **Javier Varani**, general secretary of a municipal association in Argentina, will travel to El Salvador with NDI Program Officer for Governance, **Marissa Brown** and NDI Program Assistant **Darren Nance** to solicit ideas and suggestions for the next phase of the program from people concerned with local government -- including members and staff of **COMURES**, the mayor's association. NDI will also travel to the municipalities of **Texistepeque**, **Tecoluca** and **Santa Elena** to consult with local officials and community leaders

NDI's local governance program in these towns endeavors to inform and encourage citizen participation in local decisionmaking. With the cessation of civil war in El Salvador, local governance assumes an important role in fostering confidence in the democratic system. It is the only face of government that most of the largely rural population sees and interacts with. The responsiveness and accountability of this level of government plays a large role in promoting confidence in peaceful democratic politics. Unfortunately, El Salvador's winner-take-all electoral system gives a party that wins a plurality, every seat of the council. In many of El Salvador's municipalities, more than half of the voters cast ballots for parties that did not win any council seats. The total absence of opposition representation necessitates the development of other mechanisms for participation in the system.

The first phase of NDI's program focused on providing options regarding citizen participation to local government officials. In September, NDI brought **Cecilia Gil**, a mayor from San Juan de Betulia, Colombia and **Roger Perez**, a city councilor from San Antonio, Texas to relate their experiences to elected officials in the three towns. In December, NDI worked with community leaders to heighten their expectations of involvement in municipal decisionmaking. NDI brought community organizers -- **Elias Santana** of Venezuela and **Lauren Coletta** from Chicago -- to share their ideas on communication and accountability.

NDI hopes that community leaders and elected local government officials at the conference may reach a consensus on ways to enhance citizen participation in local government. That consensus would take the form of a set of recommendations which local officials would agree to implement in the three municipalities. These recommendations could also be disseminated to other towns in El Salvador.

The final component of the program will work to bolster citizen participation by strengthening community organizations in the three municipalities. NDI will identify and train five dynamic community leaders from each of the three communities. The week-long training program would orient the selected leaders to relevant laws and provide instruction to enable them to train others.



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** NDI Staff

**FROM:** Marissa Brown, Darren Nance and Amanda Garzon

**DATE:** April 10, 1995

**SUBJECT:** El Salvador Preparation Trip

NDI staff Darren Nance and Amanda Garzón traveled to El Salvador from March 29 to April 7 to prepare for a program (April 27 -30) to enable community leaders to train other community leaders in basic organizing. Nance and Garzón traveled to the three localities to explain the program, solicit suggestions and recruit volunteers.

Program Officer Marissa Brown joined them from April 1 to 7, 1995 to meet and solicit ideas from organizations engaged in community organization development. As a result of these meetings, the NDI team developed an agenda reflecting a variety of opinions, selected a site and set a date for the program. This report summarizes the various meetings and recommends actions to be taken by NDI.

### **Developing an Agenda**

NDI drafted an agenda and solicited advice from local officials and community leaders in the municipalities and NGOs in San Salvador. Advice received by NDI included:

- utilize Salvadoran trainers
- add the theme of proposal development
- include discussion of the role of a community leader
- place more emphasis on legal mechanisms
- discuss the role of formal vs. informal organizations
- shorten the number of days for the workshop
- use interactive techniques
- incorporate the municipal code more fully

Overwhelmingly, all consulted liked the idea of promoting cooperation between community groups. NDI incorporated several of the suggestions and the attached agenda reflects that advice.

### **Input from the Municipalities**

Nance and Garzon spent one day in each municipality meeting with community leaders in preparation for the program. The objective of the meetings with the community leaders was two-fold: 1) to discuss the agenda for the April conference; and 2) to select the most capable of these leaders to participate in the conference.

In each municipality, the meetings began with a brief overview of NDI and the local governance program. Following the overview, Nance gave a general description of the envisioned training program. At this point, Nance interviewed each of the community leaders separately while Garzón conducted a general discussion of the conference agenda.

In the one-on-one conversations, the leaders shared information about themselves and their communities. Based on these conversations, NDI selected leaders who could benefit most from the conference. Later, NDI suggested those names to the mayor and they were formally invited.

The group discussions concerning the agenda were both lively and informative. The community leaders found the objective -- training leaders to train other leaders -- useful. They were interested and willing to train others. In addition, they were generally supportive of the agenda. All the leaders in each of the municipalities felt that many leaders and citizens did not have a working knowledge of the municipal code. Community leaders expressed the need to increase understanding of local government and their role within it. One theme raised in both Santa Elena and Texistepeque was a discussion of the role of a community leader.

In all three communities, leaders identified a lack of funding and a lack of motivation as chronic problems. While in Texistepeque leaders pointed to examples of community projects conducted jointly by two communities, leaders in both Santa Elena and Tecoluca stated this type of cooperation did not exist unless instigated by the mayor or an outside organization. All thought a strategy to promote cooperation between communities valuable.

Another theme mentioned by community leaders in the three localities was project development. According to the community leaders, this theme should include information on how to prioritize the needs of the community and/or municipality, how to formulate a plan of action for the project, and how to write and present this proposal with a cost sheet to an international or national organization. All of the leaders stressed that they would like to develop the capacity to solicit funds on their own.

## Consulting with Other Organizations

In soliciting advice NDI met with PROCAP, ASPAD, FORTAS, FUNDAUNGO, COMURES, CELCADEL and FUNDECOMUNA. The following is a summary of the activities of various organizations working in areas related to citizen participation in local government in El Salvador.

NDI talked for the first time to Guillermo Galván of **Programa de Capacitacion y Apoyo (PROCAP)**. PROCAP is working in the smallest municipalities that were affected by the conflict. They have worked specifically with community leaders and local officials to promote tolerance. They are particularly active in places which have been resettled since the war.

Galván indicated concern with the length of the program and thought it might be conveyed in two weekend sessions. Brown explained that the program was designed to promote informal exchange between community leaders. He also felt it was too soon to address some of the topics in the original agenda such as media or lobbying. He offered to show the agenda to trainers who worked with community groups when NDI had fleshed out its agenda. He suggested NDI speak to ASPAD and DIDECO.

NDI met with Marco Antonio Cativo and Rafael Caballero of the **Asociacion para la Paz y Democracia (ASPAD)**. ASPAD is linked to the FMLN and their municipal programs assist FMLN mayors. To date their municipal program has undertaken planning exercises incorporating local actors (town hall, community leaders, business leaders) into the planning process. This planning produces a list of priority needs, elaborated in an impressive three volume set, which guides local officials in asking lending agencies for assistance. They generally found NDI's program useful and were hopeful that they could participate as observers. They will look for materials and send them to NDI.

At the suggestion of AID, Brown met with Mercedes Melendez de Mena, Manager of the **Programa de Fortalcimiento Social (FORTAS)** a department within the **Fundacion Salvadorena para el Desarrollo Economico y Social (FUSADES)**. Melendez explained FORTAS as an attempt to incorporate social development into the well developed role FUSADES plays in economic development. FORTAS brings together local actors -- business people, community leaders, and activists -- into a foundation for local development. These local foundations then channels money into community development projects as determined by the foundation council. In other conversations, people noted that often these local foundations include former residents of the municipality who currently reside in San Salvador or elsewhere.

FORTAS serves, in part, as an association of these local development foundations. They have three regional representatives that provide services to the development foundations. In addition, they have three regional representatives that do programmatic work. They have

played a role in EDUCO (which is a program to decentralize schools) and through the FIS they have programs in literacy and micro-enterprise development. Melendez suggested adding a section on proposal development and a discussion of the true role of a community leader to the agenda. She gave Brown, materials developed by CIPE translated into Spanish which may be useful to the program.

Brown also met with the **Fundacion para el Desarrollo de las Comunidades (FUNDECOMUNA)**. Founded in 1992, this 15-person nonprofit survives on a government contract (through FONAVIPO, the Housing Ministry) to help communities achieve legal title to their land. To date, they have secured title to 4,500 lots in 50 communities. Their board of directors recently changed and they are now working to develop a larger portfolio and hope to install a computer network for the office. They describe themselves as apolitical which leaves them with no natural funders, in their view. In mentioning the organization to other groups, no one had heard of them which supports their claim of nonpartisanship. FUNDECOMUNA offered to gather more materials to assist NDI's program.

Brown met with Ricardo Cordova of **FUNDAUNGO**. FUNDAUNGO received funding from the European Community to disseminate information about the Municipal Code and understanding about municipal government. FUNDAUNGO will sponsor (1) a public information campaign about the elements of the municipal code related to the rights and responsibilities of citizens and the jurisdiction of the local government; (2) a competition for secondary school students; (3) multiplication of this information by high school students who will transfer this knowledge to their communities; and (4) training for local leaders and municipal employees in citizen participation.

FUNDAUNGO is still seeking funding for an annotated municipal code and a civic education version of the municipal code. Cordova offered to provide NDI with someone to talk about the municipal code during the conference. FUNDAUNGO has retained the services of Antonio Orellana to direct their municipal program. (Orellana used to be the executive director of ISAM - the Christian Democratic Party institute for local government.) NDI offered to provide copies of materials about civic education for local government.

**CELCADEL** is involved with municipal planning programs in El Salvador and has worked on programs with FORTAS and ASPAD. They also work with local government throughout Central America. Mauricio Silva met with Brown and offered several suggestions. First, he felt NDI should utilize Salvadoran expertise rather than importing people from other countries. Secondly, he saw the program as one that is somewhat repetitive of what others are doing. Although when pressed he could only identify PROGES as working in this area. He urged NDI to talk to PROGES.

Don Bryan of **COMURES** expressed several ideas relating to this program and the larger NDI program. The definition of community leader needs to be expanded beyond the idea of a poor, rural community leader. It should include the private sector and middle class

leaders within the municipality. He thinks NDI should work to incorporate that group in the April training. Brown told him that we could do outreach to the middle class element for the April training but more likely would incorporate them in the June/July conference. He also described the direction that AID and COMURES is working toward. He sees the need, and AID is thinking about, an organization that would have to be self-supporting rather quickly, to promote the interests of communities and participation on a national and a local level. NDI advised Bryan that NDI would sponsor the participation of a COMURES representative who would also address the municipal code during the seminar. NDI also indicated its preferences for people. NDI should follow this up with a written invitation.

The AID debriefing was characterized by amicable conversation. Tom Hawk, Carrie Thompson, Salvador Novellino and new Director of the Office of Democratic Initiatives Kris Loken attended and Don Bryan sat in. NDI described its program. AID suggested someone to participate as a keynote speaker from FUSAI and indicated that they found the plan useful. Loken was interested to know how NDI's program fit into AID's program in Sonsonate and Usulután. Brown explained that this was a separate initiative but that collaboration and cross fertilization took place. Hawk mentioned that the NDI municipalities were all among the 114 listed as priorities under the Reconstruction Plan. Loken thought NDI should perhaps keep their program separate and document it as a different experience. NDI elaborated its plans for documentation to AID. No mention was made of the extension request submitted by NDI, if no extension is received NDI should raise the issue in the next meeting.

## Conclusions

### NDI's April Program

*One clear area for follow up is to incorporate Salvadoran trainers in this program.* This was originally the idea, but much more work needs to be done in this regard in the next week. To this end, NDI should fax an agenda and letter to Irene de Hasboom, Director of PROGES (274-0105) to solicit comments and suggestions for trainers. NDI should also contact Alfredo Gonzales to participate as a trainer in this program (274-1409). NDI should also follow up with Hector Maldonado (222-5310) to secure his participation in a seminar about proposal preparation. NDI should also contact COMURES to secure contact information for Luis Gutierrez of FUSAI and NDI should speak with DIDECO (289-0360).

*Another area to explore for this program is materials.* NDI should contact civic groups in Latin America to see what written information is available. NDI should also dig deeply into the files for information. NDI should plan to expend energy developing materials for this program.

*NDI should also consider expanding the number of individuals to participate in the program.* In conversations with people in El Salvador some thought that the program should

include more people. In consultations here at NDI Washington there was a similar sentiment. NDI should either recruit more community leaders perhaps by asking for nominations from NGOs. Or NDI should ask representatives from NGOs involved in programs with community leaders to participate in the program.

### **NDI's Overall Program**

*NDI should seek to incorporate the middle class of the localities into our programs.* Initial contact should be made during the next visit including invitations to the training. This initial contact should be followed up by visits while going to the *municipios* and an invitation to the conference in late June/early July.

*NDI should explore opportunities for future programming.* Following these meetings, particularly in conversations with Don Bryan it seems likely that AID would entertain a proposal to work to establish an NGO with the goal of promoting citizen participation. NDI should discuss program possibilities in DC, approach AID about this idea and potentially plan to write a proposal in May for this type of activity.



MEMORANDUM

TO: NDI Staff

FROM: Marissa Brown, Program Officer

DATE: May 15, 1995

SUBJECT: El Salvador Local Governance Program

**Summary**

NDI recently completed a program to enable community leaders from three municipalities to train other community leaders. The program was designed to disseminate information and skills related to community organizing. The more than twenty participants were drawn from the communities with which NDI has worked to enhance communication between the local government and the community. The program was successful in that the participants shared experiences and enhanced some skills measurably. In addition, representatives of nongovernmental organizations were able to make linkages with community leaders.

**Background**

In March 1994, NDI conducted a survey mission to El Salvador to design a local governance program. The objectives of the survey mission were to gather information on the structure and needs of local government and determine the municipalities with which to work. Based on information gleaned during the survey mission, NDI staff designed a multi-phase local governance program to improve communication and interaction between local government officials and community leaders as well as support the development of mechanisms for citizen participation within the three chosen municipalities.

The three municipalities, Santa Elena, Tecoluca and Texistepeque are situated in areas affected by the twelve-year civil war and each is governed by representatives of one of the three major political parties: the National Republican Alliance (ARENA), the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) respectively. NDI chose these municipalities on the basis of several criteria including, size, economic viability, reputation for dynamic leadership, interest in the program and location. Ultimately, each municipal council signed a legal certification of their agreement to participate in NDI's program.

NDI staff returned to El Salvador in July 1994 to conduct discussion groups to further refine NDI's program by giving NDI a qualitative understanding of the level of citizen participation in the three municipalities. A total of six discussion groups were held. Two

discussion groups were conducted with council members and four with community leaders. As an additional source of information, two extra group interviews were held; one with council members and one with community leaders. Following this program, NDI prepared a report detailing its findings entitled *El Salvador: A Look at Local Government*.

In September 1994 NDI brought two local government officials to El Salvador. Cecilia Gil Bravo, a mayor from San Juan de Betulia, Colombia and Roger Perez, a city council member from San Antonio, Texas shared their perspectives and experiences in an effort to broaden Salvadoran local government officials understanding of the range of processes and mechanisms available to create a continuing dialogue with the public. Gil Barvo was able to describe her experience incorporating input into a community development plan and Perez detailed the process of holding open council meetings. The objective of the program was to support new and improve existing mechanisms for citizen participation in local government.

In December 1994 NDI returned with two community organizers, Elias Santana from the School of Neighbors in Venezuela and Lauren Coletta from Citizen's Information Service in Chicago, Illinois. By sharing their experiences from their respective countries, Santana and Coletta helped community leaders understand issues involved in better organizing their community, enhancing communication with local government officials, and increasing participation in decision making. Coletta described successful techniques used by community organizations in combating gangs. Santana articulated the steps for effectively organizing to solve an immediate problem: namely, identifying the problem, identifying the resources to resolve the problem, identifying which people can help and assigning responsibility for each step in the process. The presentations on community organizing, planning, the scope and powers of local government and strategies for initiating and maintaining relationships with local officials, fostered a discussion of ideas for new approaches to expand citizen participation in local government.

### **Program Preparations**

Based on information and recommendations gathered from the previous program activities, NDI staff returned to El Salvador on March 29, 1995 to prepare a four-day seminar on basic organizing principles for community leaders. Preparation in El Salvador included developing an agenda for the conference, choosing the participants, and selecting a site. Upon returning to Washington, NDI recruited appropriate international participants and prepared materials to use during the conference.

In developing an agenda, NDI staff met with various organizations in San Salvador working in community development. These groups included the Programa de Capacitación y Apoyo (PROCAP), Asociación para la Paz y Democracia (ASPAD) which is now known as CECADE, Programa de Fortalacimiento Social (FORTAS), a division of the Fundacion Salvadorena para el Desarrollo Economico y Social (FUSADES), Fundacion para el Desarrollo de las Comunidades (FUNDECOMUNA), Fundacion Para la Gestión Social

(PROGES), Fundación Salvadoreña de Apoyo Integral (FUSAI), Centro Latinoamericano de Capacitación y Desarrollo de los Gobiernos Locales (CELCADEL), Fundación Dr. Guillermo Manuel Ungo (FUNDAUNGO) and the Corporación de los Municipios de la Republica de El Salvador (COMURES). NDI staff also solicited the input of community leaders within each of the municipalities. Suggestions for additional workshop themes included the role of a community leader, the role of formal versus informal community organizations, proposal development and the municipal code. Other suggestions included the utilization of Salvadoran trainers and a shorter time frame for the conference. Overwhelmingly, however, NDI received positive feedback regarding the preliminary agenda and the idea of training leaders in basic organizing skills.

In each municipality, NDI staff met with community leaders to discuss the agenda and choose the leaders to participate in the April conference. Each meeting began with a brief overview of NDI's local governance program, in which many of the leaders had participated previously, followed by a general description of the April training program and preliminary agenda. While the community leaders discussed the agenda with one NDI staff member and its relevance to problems within their communities, another NDI staff person conducted individual interviews. In one-on-one conversations, the leaders shared information about themselves and their communities. NDI staff selected those leaders with innovative ideas and professed interest to participate in the conference.

Finally, NDI returned to Washington to develop a manual for this program. The manual consisted of four units each of which provided a how to approach to topics covered in the seminar including how to train others, how to hold a successful meeting, how to recruit and organize and finally how to work with other organizations. NDI staff synthesized information from various sources including other NDI handouts and translated those ideas into Spanish. Finally NDI put the text into a user-friendly format. Throughout the process NDI attempted to translate ideas into easily understandable Spanish. The Institute also included graphic cues for the various points to underscore the message. In the final manual given to the community leaders, NDI supplemented the expository units with a copy of the Salvadoran Municipal Code and model by-laws for an ADESCO, which were formulated by the Instituto Salvadoreño de Administración Publico.

## **The Seminar**

*Community and Municipality: The Role of the Community Leader* was held from April 27 through April 30, 1995 for a select group of community leaders from each of the three municipalities in which NDI works. The main objective of the conference was to impart fundamental skills to these community leaders of organizing including communicating information effectively, presenting and discussing the skills of an effective community leader, and creating a broader understanding of both their individual and community's placement within the overall municipal structure. The expectation was that the participants could share their experiences with other community leaders from their local area. Themes addressed in the

conference were the legal structure of organization and participation, self-sufficiency of community associations and the relationship between community leaders and the local government.

NDI envisioned that the participants would return with an enhanced understanding of their role within their community and municipality. The participants included seventeen community leaders; six from Texistepeque, four from Tecoluca, five from Santa Elena, and one from Suchitoto. Invitations to participate, and nominate community leaders to participate were extended to COMURES, FORTAS de FUSADES, FUSAI, CECADE, and FUNDECOMUNA. FUSAI facilitated the participation of one community leader and one outreach person, FUNDECOMUNA sent one representative for the entire seminar and observers for various sessions and CECADE sent one representative for the seminar.

Two internationals with expertise in community organizing and training joined NDI staff in facilitating the conference. Franklin Cisneros is a community leader in his own community; he is also Director of Regional Offices for the School of Neighbors (*Escuela de Vecinos*) a national association of community groups in Venezuela. Omar Dieppa serves as a legal advisor to the Commission on Justice and Peace (*Comisión de Justicia y Paz*), a human rights organization of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Panama. He has trained people with limited reading and writing skills to train others on issues related to human rights abuses and voting. Both international participants supplemented their workshops with materials provided by NDI.

### *Conference Activities*

The seminar consisted of a series of workshops covering a range of topics on organizing. The seminar opened with a general welcome, introductions and a description of NDI's local governance program in El Salvador. NDI explained the agenda and asked for comments. The internationals introduced themselves and each took approximately 15 minutes to describe their respective organizations. NDI staff asked the participants to introduce themselves and state their community, municipality and expectations for the program. In the evening community leaders met and talked informally during an extended dinner.

The first workshop, *The Role of a Community Leader*, was led by Cisneros. Initially Cisneros focused on defining a Community Development Association, (Asociacion de Desarrollo Comunal - ADESCO). The group began by brainstorming the reasons community groups exist. Each participant was then asked to define an ADESCO for him or herself. Cisneros then facilitated the crafting of a group definition. After discussion, the participants defined an ADESCO as an association of people united from the same community, voluntarily organized in agreement with the Municipal Code and the by-laws of the community association.

Cisneros then asked the groups to define a community leader. Some stated that leaders

were elected while others maintained that an individual can be a natural leader. All agreed that leaders must have legitimacy within a community in order to fulfill their responsibilities. Ultimately, the group decided that a community leader plays various roles. A community leader (1) liaises with local government, (2) advocates for community development, (3) helps others, (4) detects problems and needs within the community (5) seeks viable solutions to those problems. Some of the problems cited by the participants were a lack of communication, potable water, health, education, electricity, security, nutrition and employment. To begin to address these problems, community leaders cited the need for organization, communication, institutional relations, and self-sufficiency.

Following this discussion, participants divided into smaller groups and using a book entitled *Liderazgo (Leadership)* analyzed one of five chapters: *Defining the Reality, Sharing a Vision, Preparing a Team, Guiding the Team, and Celebrating Accomplishments*. In a twenty-minute session, each group read the one-page chapter and discussed its meaning. A spokesperson, chosen by the group, presented a summary of the group's analysis of the chapter to the larger group. After the presentations, Cisneros summarized the information on the board. An effective leader must define the problem and then, working in the reality of the community, share the vision of the resolution with the team, act as a leader and guide the team through attitude, actions, and humility, and not be afraid to take realistic risks to reach the vision.

Originally, NDI expected that a representative of COMURES would be present to discuss the municipal code. Unfortunately, the COMURES representative could not attend and NDI developed a workshop to cover the topic. Dieppa, a lawyer, introduced the discussion of *The Legal Structure: the Municipal Code*. The workshop began with Dieppa's explanation of a hierarchy of laws. He explained that constitutions are the highest level of law and supersede other laws. Codes are groupings of law that apply to a particular topic, for example the Municipal Code. In addition there are other national laws and there are municipal ordinances which are the rules of an individual municipality.

The participant from CECADE, Marco Antonio Cativo, led the next portion of the workshop with NDI Program Officer Marissa Brown by explaining the different provisions of the municipal code. The presentation covered the various mechanisms of participation defined in the Municipal Code: *cabildos abiertos*, open town assemblies that must be held every three months; *consultas populares* a meeting held by the council to consult with the public on a given issue and *asociaciones comunales*, community organizations to represent community interests.

The participants then broke into groups of five to analyze separate articles from the portion of the Municipal Code dealing with community participation. Each group was asked to rephrase the ideas in the article and contrast it with the reality that they knew. Each group then came back to report to the larger group what the articles said and their analysis of its use. It was evident in the discussion following the presentations that the many participants did not

know the law existed. Secondly, even if they knew the law existed, few if any were familiar with the contents of the law. One participant remarked that he did not know the law required the mayor to hold *cabildos abiertos*, he thought it was only an initiative of the mayor to hear what the people had to say. Perhaps most importantly, after reading the law many expressed surprise that they were capable of reading and interpreting the law themselves. The group unanimously agreed that they should know the law better.

During the discussion many frustrations community leaders had regarding legal issues surfaced. Participants recounted serious delays in publishing the by-laws of community associations in the *Diario Oficial*. Most stated that they had been granted legal status by the local government over a year ago but since their by-laws had not been printed in the *Diario Oficial* they still did not have official legal status. One participant noted that her ADESCO was told by officials at the *Diario Oficial* that they had to change their by-laws because they did not mirror exactly the approved version the *Diario* had. The other community leaders found this credible based on their experiences. The issue of the cost of printing the by-laws was also raised.

Cisneros led the workshop on *Recruitment and Organization*. Following on the previous discussion around the role of a community leader and the ADESCO, Cisneros continued the discussion focusing on motivating and recruiting community members and organizing the Executive Board of the ADESCO. Cisneros began a discussion on the reality community leaders face in organizing within their communities and the implications this has on the actual structure of the ADESCOs. The participants brain stormed a list of obstacles to participation in community associations which included ineffective communication with the community, overwhelming control of one party in the community, paternalism, populism, a monopoly on information, vertical organizational structures and perceived illegitimacy of the leader and the ADESCO.

The initial discussion established a relationship between legitimacy and communication. The question posed was "How is it that a leader legitimizes him/herself?" The ultimate answer was that first a leader has to understand the needs of his or her community. Next, the leader has to develop a vision of how to address those needs. Finally, a leader has to communicate that vision to others.

Focusing on communication as the main obstacle to participation, participants discussed how one communicates effectively. Cisneros stressed that this can be done through a strong and highly organized association. Cisneros advocated a horizontal organization of ADESCOs. He outlined a structure that included an assembly as a functional body which acted to approve initiatives, a coordination team in place of an executive committee to organize activities and a control commission to oversee funds and performance. Rather than a traditional top-down organization, this structure would allow more people to play a role in decision making and allows more people to participate in the flow of information. Thus, Cisneros explained, this structure involves more community members in the ADESCO and concurrently increases

communication, member responsibility, and organization.

One aspect of the discussion deserves note. Throughout the seminar there was an awareness of the intersection of political life and community life. The CECADE participant is an active member of a political party as are many of the community leaders. At the same time many participants expressed a very negative view of political activity. Cisneros insisted that this become a topic of conversation. After some discussion, the group consensus was that politics is necessary and community organizing should reflect apolitical organizing rather than anti-political organizing. An observation was also made that community organization follows political organization; the undemocratic structures of community organizations are borrowed from undemocratic structures in political parties.

In line with NDI's objective to have these participants train others, NDI asked Griselda Carranza Platero, to facilitate a workshop. Carranza is an outreach coordinator for FUSAI from a town near Tecoluca. She led the session on *How to Organize and Facilitate a Successful Meeting*. Using the outline set-forth in the NDI training manual, Carranza presented a dynamic and interactive session on basic organizational and moderating skills needed in order to hold a successful meeting. Participants brain stormed ways to advertise a meeting. Ideas included radio, posters and megaphones. Places to hold meetings included homes, schools, communal houses, cooperatives and the town hall. Perhaps the most important issue covered was the difference between a general assembly of the community and the goals for that type of meeting and the goals for a meeting of a committee. Not only was much information given during the session on how to facilitate a meeting but a conversation about self-sufficiency ensued.

The workshop on *Cooperation, Collaboration, and Communication with Other Community Leaders and Organizations*, led by Cisneros, focused on the importance of working with other organizations including both the advantages and disadvantages. All participants agreed that there was little cooperation with other communities or outside organizations unless it was organized by the local government. In many cases, the lack of resources in these communities to successfully complete a project can begin to be overcome through increased cooperation and communication. Cisneros presented a plan to identify organizations with similar interests and the steps to implement a cooperative agreement. In order to work together, both communities or a community and an organization need to have a common service, a project, or a sociopolitical initiative that unites the groups. Once there is an established agreement the plan of action for the two groups should include a preliminary meeting with the leaders to get to know one another, exchange ideas, and find common interests in which to work. In this way, once there is an objective set forth to present to the ADESCO members, there will be legitimacy between the two parties. A general meeting between the members of the groups needs to focus on communication and a presentation of a plan of action to begin a project. The manual was used extensively to supplement this workshop.

*How to Train Others* using the manual, Cisneros went over the basic logistical questions to be kept in mind when planning a workshop to train others. In an animated discourse, Cisneros then went through various examples of effective and ineffective communication skills used by moderators. On the board, Cisneros emphasized the key skills to keep in mind in order to effectively moderate a workshop. These included physical communication such as gestures, knowledge of the theme of the workshop, supporting materials, if needed, the use of visual aids during the presentation, and the tone of voice of the moderator. It was an uplifting session where Cisneros mixed humor with fact in a manner that engaged the participants. At the end of this session, participants were told that they should prepare a presentation on any topic to present on the final day of the seminar. They were asked to include techniques described in the workshop but could choose any topic.

NDI left the Saturday evening workshop open. On their own initiative, a group of six participants rehearsed two dramatizations to present to the group. It was left to the audience to decide what the dramatizations meant to convey. The first might be described as responsible community leaders upon returning to their municipality. It depicted community leaders dutifully speaking with the mayor and a council member discussing how to begin disseminating the information from the conference. In this dramatization, the community leaders went to the town hall and both sides were open and enthusiastic to work together to facilitate a municipality-wide workshop. The community leaders met formally with the mayor and a town council member to debrief them on the conference as well as solicit support to disseminate the information. The first role play effectively displayed how the participants felt good community leaders would act when they returned to their municipalities.

In the second role play the actors demonstrated irresponsible behavior on the part of the community leaders. In this scenario, the community leaders were smoking, playing a radio loudly, and drinking when the mayor who walked by. In this scenario the mayor kept insisting that they do something with the information they had received at the seminar sponsored by NDI. They continued with their actions even as the mayor offered assistance in helping them to disseminate the information. The second role play was met with laughter and a belief that the role play was unrealistic.

A discussion concerning how community leaders could take the information from the NDI seminar back to their municipalities ensued. Cisneros questioned the central role of the mayor in both scenarios. He said "I did not realize how dependent community associations here are on the mayors." One of the dramatization's organizers said immediately "You are right! Why did we send a delegation to the mayor? It is because that is the way we have done things. The purpose of this seminar is to do it for ourselves, to look to ourselves to do things, not the mayor." Several community leaders agreed that community association have to determine their own course.

Others were concerned that acting alone was not so simple. "Almost all of the institutions that have come to our town, have gone first to the town hall.. the local government



is the source of information about outside institutions." Another participants said "I am not going to be an enemy of the mayor." Another participant noted that this was true but it was the mayor who wanted community groups to be manage themselves. "For that he gave us *personería jurídica*."

After some debate, the participants agreed that being self-sufficient does not mean excluding the mayor. It does mean, however, beginning to take preliminary steps to facilitate workshops and meetings on one's own. Community groups should take actions even if the resources or assistance are not available. As one participant stated, "We must cut the umbilical cord in order to walk on our own." The session was well received and it the participants debated themselves the issues which is at the core of relations between community groups and the local government.

In the final workshop on Sunday morning, *How to Communicate Information Effectively* each participant was asked previously to prepare a three-minute presentation on an open subject. The objective was to practice the public speaking skills and specific information covered earlier. Each participant spoke in front of the group. Some used visual aids. Others used body and hand gestures as well as inflection as a means to capture the audience's attention. After each speech the other participants critiqued the speaker and offered suggestions for ways in which to improve the presentation. As an introduction and NDI staffer offered a demonstration on how to meringue. After a brief explanation of the basic steps, he asked a volunteer to dance with him. It was an effective way to begin the session. Some presentations dealt with how to work in their community, how to elaborate an agenda, an explanation of one facet of the municipal code, an explanation of mother's day, how to call a general meeting, and how to petition the mayor for electricity, among others. The presentations were seen as useful by the participants, though many felt stressed by the three minute time limit. The discussion following the presentation was helpful for the participants and very constructive.

As a means of final evaluation and motivation for the conference, the participants broke into groups by municipality and designed a plan of action for themselves upon the return to their municipalities.

The group from Tecoluca decided to work on the integration of ADESCOs on a municipal level. They hoped to accomplish this by gaining autonomy and self-sufficiency as associations, utilize all the resources of the individual members, and outline the problems in their community and develop a plan of action to resolve them. These objectives would be met through identifying the ADESCOs in the municipality and coordinating a meeting between them, evaluating the problems of the municipality during the meeting and implementing a plan of action to resolve these problems at a municipal level.

The leader from Suchitoto and the FUNDECOMUNA and CECADE observers formed the second group. They formulated a plan of action for the leader from Suchitoto. Acting as a

leader of his cooperative within the community, integrate the members of the cooperative so that they can begin to work for the necessities of the cooperative. These include health and employment issues.

The group from Santa Elena developed a dual-objective plan of action: 1) to educate all of the ADESCOs on the municipal code and the autonomy needed to work on development issues within their communities; and 2) to modify some of the articles within their ADESCO statutes. They plan to do this by holding workshops on the municipal code and the statutes of the ADESCOs for the community members in an effort to actively incorporate them into the ADESCO. They will also call a meeting of the Executive Board of the ADESCO to organize and elect a community coordinator who will then become a permanent member of the board and hold a meeting for each sector of the ADESCO to begin the coordination process.

After the presentations of the groups, the participants were awarded their diplomas. They were also asked to fill out an evaluation of the conference. Transportation back to the municipalities was coordinated from the hotel.

## V. Conclusions

Participants were asked to evaluate the conference. Their recommendations concerning the overall conference were positive. Participants indicated that the information and objectives of the conference were useful for them in their capacity as community leaders. Some of the comments included that the seminar was based on specific points that affect their communities and the possible solution to the problems, rich in positive learning, made the participants conscious of the responsibilities they have as leaders and the commitment to be examples within their communities. One participant wrote, "I'm leaving the conference totally confident with what I'm going to do." Another wrote, "The seminar is very important for our municipalities and country because it is helping with the continued development towards democratization." The participants found the materials useful and relevant to the problems that exist within their communities. The site was also commended. One suggestion that arose was that many of the workshops went over their time limits and that there wasn't sufficient time to develop each theme. As indicated in the suggestions section, many participants stated that the conference should be longer.

When asked which workshop was the most helpful or useful, the participants overwhelmingly stated that all of the workshops had their own merit. Many stated that they were based on the realities they faced in their communities and, therefore, enriched their experience. One participant said they were also important because they offered practical responses to many of the community problems. Many cited the high level of participation and exchange as very positive as well with one participant stating that listening to others helped them to solidify their own ideas. A couple of participants cited the municipal code as the most useful workshop for them because it showed them how to exercise their rights. Another participant enjoyed the role of a community leader because it showed what a leader can do to

function better, including knowledge of the right to organize ADESCOs and how they function within the communities. Many praised the work of Franklin Cisneros.

Many suggestions were offered by the participants. Overwhelmingly the participants stated that the conference was too short and that it needed to be longer. Others wanted to be able to include more individuals from the municipalities. Support in terms of contact and materials were also asked of NDI while the leaders began to work with the information gained at the conference within their municipalities. Suggestions were also given for future NDI conferences with other national and international institutions to support and continue the democratization process in the country, as well as workshops specifically for youth. In terms of the content of the conference, one participant suggested that the incorporation and participation of the participants by the facilitators should be maintained because at times a workshop would have heavy participation and at others none. Another participant suggested that the roles of the lecturers should be better defined to curtail problems with improvising or not meeting the objective of the workshop when others assist.

Overall, NDI and the internationals were pleased with the conference. Cisneros gave specific evaluations. The majority of the workshops were coherent and practical. The participants were open to receiving new information and to sharing their experiences with the group. NDI maintained a positive attitude throughout the unexpected schedule changes during the conference. The NDI manual was excellent in orientating the participants step-by-step to the themes of the conference. The workshop on the Municipal Code should be longer and the workshop on Training Others should be moved to the final day, when all of the information has been given to the participants. A longer preparation time with the internationals should be allotted before the conference, as well.

One of the problems with program design was to have an intensive four-day program. While this design allowed the participants to participate in informal exchange of ideas and experiences which was invaluable for these participants, it precluded the participation of certain women. Only three Salvadoran women took part in the program. One woman community leader participated, another woman who works as an outreach coordinator and a representative of a nongovernmental organization. Ultimately, it is important to recognize that in order to reach women community leaders the program would have to take place on successive weekends in a location more easily accessible to people's homes. Women community leaders have difficulty in leaving their families and responsibilities to attend conferences. NDI should also have spent more energy recruiting women as presenters for this workshop.

There was a great deal of debate within the NDI delegation about inviting NGO representatives. It was felt that their presence might inhibit some of the community leaders who are often not cosmopolitan and can be inhibited by the presence of urban Salvadorans. At the same time, NDI felt that the universe of community leaders may have been too circumscribed. Finally, NDI felt that few NGOs were dealing with community leaders in that

context. NDI was told initially that many NGOs were doing leadership training for community leaders. So NDI attempted to contact all of these NGOs involved in training community leaders. Several were engaged in various activities; however, outside of the organizations affiliated with political parties there was not any emphasis on community leaders as leaders.

There was overwhelming agreement that the most successful component of the program was the workshop on the municipal code. It allowed the participants to read the municipal code for themselves. As a result, the workshop gave the participants a better knowledge of the law. More importantly it reinforced that the actions of local government have their precedence embedded in the law, not in personal action. Moreover, reading the law itself proved an empowering experience for the participants.

Finally, the interactive nature of the program led to increased creativity and exchange. The comfort level established between the international presenters and the participants was the result of a small group in a retreat atmosphere and the emphasis placed on each participant's involvement. Every participant at the seminar spoke in front of the entire group and in smaller groups. This comfort allowed the participants to develop their own drama which highlighted their experiences communicating with local government. In so doing, they allowed the international presenters to gain new insights into that relationship.

## **VI. Recommendations**

Recommendations from Cisneros to further NDI's program in El Salvador included the dissemination of all of the information given to the participants during the conference to the mayors and town council members, the support of the dissemination of the Municipal Code to community leaders throughout El Salvador, and possible support to FUNDECOMUNA. Recommendations from the staff included reorientating the program to include more women by returning to the one day in each municipality format which was used earlier in the program. In addition, NDI should attempt to replicate the success of the municipal code workshop.

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**Instituto  
Nacional  
Demócrata  
para Asuntos  
Internacionales**

15



# NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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## Comunidad y Municipio: el Rol del Líder Comunitario

### Agenda

27 de abril - 30 de abril  
Cerro Verde, El Salvador

**Objetivo General:** Proporcionar a los participantes en la formación necesaria para que se conviertan en capacitadores comunitarios dentro de su propio municipio.

- Desarrollar en los participantes la capacidad para transmitir información adecuada a las personas de su municipio.
- Capacitar a los participantes en las habilidades de un líder comunitario positivo.
- Proporcionar a los participantes una concepción más amplia de organización y desarrollo local.

**Objetivos:** Proporcionar a los participantes en los siguientes temas:

- El rol de un líder comunitario;
- La estructura legal: el Código Municipal;
- El reclutamiento y la organización;
- Cómo planificar y facilitar una reunión exitosa;
- Cooperación, colaboración y comunicación;
- Cómo capacitar a otros; y
- Cómo comunicar información efectivamente.



## Jueves, 27 de abril

- 7:00 a.m. a 3:30 p.m.      Transportación
- 4:00 a 6:00 p.m.      Bienvenida  
Introducciones
- NDI
  - Franklin Cisneros, Escuela de Vecinos de Venezuela
  - Omar Dieppa, Comisión de Justicia y Paz de Panamá
  - participantes y observadores
- 6:00 p.m.      Cena

## Viernes, 28 de abril

- 7:00 a 8:00 a.m.      Desayuno
- 8:00 a 10:00 a.m.      ***DISCUSION DEL ROL DE UN LIDER COMUNITARIO***  
Los participantes discutirá y identificará las características positivas y negativas de un líder comunitario; las metas de un líder comunitario; y la diferencia entre tipos de organizaciones.
- 10:00 a 10:30 a.m.      Refrigerio
- 10:30 a 12:00 a.m.      *continuación del taller*  
Los participantes se dividirán en grupos de cuatro para discutir temas de liderazgo.
- 12:00 a 1:30 p.m.      Almuerzo
- 1:30 a 3:30 p.m.      ***LA ESTRUCTURA LEGAL: EL CODIGO MUNICIPAL***  
Los participantes serán capaces de:
- identificar y explicar el rol del alcalde, el Consejo Municipal, los funcionarios del gobierno local;
  - explicar los funciones y límites del gobierno local;
  - identificar y explicar el rol de las organizaciones comunitarias;
  - identificar y explicar los mecanismos de participación: cabildos abiertos,

consultas populares, asociaciones comunales, y las reuniones del Consejo Municipal.

3:30 a 4:00 p.m.                      Refrigerio

4:00 a 6:00 p.m.                      *continuación del taller*  
Los participantes se dividirán en grupos de cuatro o cinco para leer y analizar secciones del Código Municipal.

6:00 p.m.                                Cena

### Sábado, 29 de abril

7:00 a 8:00 a.m.                      Desayuno

8:00 a 10:15 a.m.                      ***EL RECLUTAMIENTO Y LA ORGANIZACION***

Los participantes podrán:

- identificar y poner en práctica las medidas para motivar en la participación comunitaria miembros de sus comunidades;
- organizar la junta ejecutiva de la Asociación de Desarrollo Comunal de sus propios comunidades.

10:15 a 10:45 a.m.                      Refrigerio

10:45 a 12:30 p.m.                      ***COMO PLANIFICAR Y FACILITAR UNA REUNION EXITOSA***

Los participantes podrán:

- hacer una lista de elementos claves para organizar;
- desarrollar un objetivo para la reunión, hacer una agenda y facilitar una reunión;
- desarrollar un plan de acción e identificar las responsabilidades para realizar un proyecto.

12:30 a 1:45 p.m.                      Almuerzo



1:45 a 3:30 p.m.

**COOPERACION Y COMUNICACION CON OTROS LIDERES  
COMUNITARIOS Y ORGANIZACIONES**

Los participantes podrán:

- analizar la importancia del trabajar conjunto con las organizaciones comunitarios, sus ventajas y desventajas,
- identificar organizaciones con intereses semejantes y los pasos para implementar a la cooperacion, por ejemplo: desarrollar un plan de accion y organizar el proceso de tomar decisiones entre los grupos.

3:30 a 4:00 p.m.

Refrigerio

4:00 a 5:45 p.m.

**COMO CAPACITAR A OTROS**

Los participantes serán capaces de identificar las medidas necesarias para organizar un taller de capacitación y una metodología apropiada para transferir información a otros.

5:45 a 7:00 p.m.

Cena

7:00 a 9:00 p.m.

**TALLER LIBRE PARA LOS PARTICIPANTES**

Los participantes organizarán un taller del tema libre.

*{los participantes hicieron un sociodrama tratando los cuestiones sobre comunicación con el alcalde, incluyendo las medidas efectivas e inefectivas. Después hubo una discusión sobre las medidas apropiadas de comunicación efectivas, la relación entre los líderes y el alcalde, y los recursos independientes de la alcaldía que todos los líderes tienen a mano.}*

**Domingo, 30 de abril**

6:00 a 7:00 a.m.

Desayuno

7:00 a 10:00 a.m.

**COMO COMUNICAR INFORMACION EFECTIVAMENTE**

Participantes harán un presentación individual de tema libre.

10:00 a 10:30 a.m.

Refrigerio

10:30 a 12:00 p.m.

***COMO FUNCIONAR EN SU MUNICIPIO***

Los participantes podrán decir lo que van a hacer en sus propias comunidades y municipios cuando regresan, tomando en cuenta la información del taller. Se dividen en grupos según los municipios para discutir.

12:00 a 1:45 p.m.

Almuerzo  
Reflexiones finales  
Entrega de diplomas

# CÓMO CAPACITAR A OTROS

## I. PLANEA TU TALLER DE CAPACITACIÓN

### ☛ Establece las metas:

- ¿Cuáles son los objetivos que quieres tratar y lograr? Define el objetivo.
- ¿Qué quieres que los participantes sientan, piensen, sepan, o hagan al final del taller?

### ☛ Escoge los participantes:

- Quiénes son los participantes?
- Debes saber lo más posible sobre las personas invitadas como:
  - ? ¿Cuánto saben del tema?
  - ? ¿Han recibido alguna capacitación antes?
  - ? ¿Son inalfabéticos?
  - ? ¿Han organizado un proyecto comunitario exitoso?

### ☛ Dáale estructura al taller:

- Define una agenda
- Presta atención a los límites del tiempo y el contenido de cada tema del taller.
- Decide en qué orden presentarás la información.
  - ? ¿Qué harás primero? ? ¿Y después?
- Incluye una introducción, un cuerpo de información y una conclusión para cada tema.

### ☛ Decide qué técnicas usarás para transmitir la información.

#### Técnicas para transmitir información:

- ✓ Un discurso es efectivo para dar datos a los participantes.
- ✓ Una discusión debe ser enfocada en un tema particular y facilitada por el líder del taller. Prepara las preguntas claves en las que quieras poner énfasis durante la discusión y proyecta preguntas que provocarán respuestas según los temas.
- ✓ Una dramatización es una manera de recrear una realidad cotidiana durante el taller. También sirve para dar confianza a los participantes y ampliar sus experiencias en temas que todavía no han tocado.
- ✓ Un estudio de caso debe ser enfocado alrededor de un tema específico. El objetivo es permitir a los participantes llegar a una solución viable del problema.
- ✓ El Dividirse en grupos permite más participación, especialmente cuando se usa para hacer las actividades ya dichas. Además, permite una discusión más detallada y a la vez permite que los participantes más tímidos se sientan cómodos participando.

## II. ORGANIZA TU REUNIÓN

### ☛ El Sitio

- ¿Dónde llevarás a cabo la reunión? ¿En una escuela? ¿En la casa comunal? ¿En la cooperativa? ¿En la iglesia? ¿En la casa de un vecino? ¿En un restaurante?
- ¿Es cómodo el lugar? ¿Hay buena ventilación? ¿Luz? ¿Acústica?

### ☛ El Refrigerio

- Si puedes, sirve refrescos, café o agua durante los descansos.

### ☛ El Transporte

- Has escogido un lugar central en dónde todos puedan llegar?
- Necesitas hacer arreglos para que puedan llegar los participantes de comunidades lejos?

### ☛ El equipo y los materiales

- Necesitas gráficas, diagramas, o un pizarrón?

La gente aprende más participando en una actividad o viendo y oyendo un discurso. Incluye actividades recíprocos en el taller y usa medios visuales.

- Has pedido que los participantes traigan plumas y papel? ¿Has traído materiales extra?

### ☛ Quién te puede ayudar a organizar la junta?

## III. EL TALLER

- ☛ **Prepara el salón** antes de que llegen los participantes. Acomode las sillas y mesas en un círculo para que todos los participantes pueden verse uno al otro y a los medios visuales.

- ☛ Al principio del taller, toma unos minutos para **las introducciones**, especialmente si el grupo es pequeño. Pregunta a los participantes sobre ellos mismos para que tú puedas conocerlos mejor y que ellos se sientan mas cómodos en el grupo.



## ☞ ¿Cómo presentarás la información?

### **Un facilitador efectivo...**

- ☞ habla claramente y lentamente...
- ☞ prepara su presentación antes de llegar al taller
- ☞ usa notas para guiarse durante la presentación...
- ☞ usa medios visuales y otras actividades recíprocas...
- ☞ siempre tiene en cuenta el límite del tiempo...
- ☞ mezcla el humor, entusiasmo y optimismo durante su presentación.

## ☞ Consigue información y reacciones durante el taller

- ¿Entienden la información los participantes? ¿Es útil la información? ¿Quieren un tema clarificado?

## ☞ La Evaluación

- ¿Qué habilidades obtendrán los participantes al fin del taller? Pídeles a los participantes que repasen los temas principales del taller como una actividad final.

## **CONSEJOS**

- ✓ Conoce a todos los participantes. Puedes conocerlos por conversaciones informales cuando los invites al taller.
- ✓ Escribe un contorno antes del taller que incluye lo que vas a decir y lo que harán los grupos. ¡¡No hagas el taller sin preparación!!
- ✓ Sé neutral y objetivo: quieres que todos expresen sus ideas y opiniones respecto al tema.
- ✓ Si usas discusiones, logras que todos, hasta los más tímidos, participen. Has preguntas de una manera que logras respuestas más que "sí" o "no", usa un rotafolio o un pizarrón para escribir los comentarios, y negocia cuando hay un conflicto.
- ✓ Antes de empezar una dramatización, dales bastante información sobre la situación y el rol de cada participante.
- ✓ En los estudios de casos, presenta un problema verdadero y sencillo. Trata de no dar situaciones donde uno de los participantes ya tiene experiencia porque entonces no pasarán por todo el proceso para solucionarlo. Los participantes deben usar un



grupo de preguntas para darles dirección. El facilitador debe quíarlos dandoles un límite de tiempo, un resumen escrito, y definiciones claves.

**Preguntas que se usan en los estudios de caso:**

- ? ¿A quién le afecta el problema?
- ? ¿Qué son las causas principales del problema?
- ? ¿Qué soluciones pueden ser ofrecidas?
- ? ¿Qué son las consecuencias de las soluciones?

- ✓ No use el discurso demasiado porque los participantes perderán la atención.
- ✓ Mezcla los tamaños de los grupos durante el taller. Algunos participantes prefieren trabajar en pareja y otros en un grupo.



**...ANTICIPA LO SIGUIENTE Y PREPARATE!!!**

**Anticipa:**

- que te ignoren...
- que te ridiculen...
- que alguien no quiera participar en un actividad...
- que algunos temas tomarán más tiempo que otros.

**Preparate...**

- sé animado y entusiastico...
- piensa en maneras de incluir a todos y estate listo a cambiar la estructura de una actividad para que todos quieran participar...
- deja tiempo en cada taller en caso de que un tema que dure más tiempo.

# TALLER

**Objetivo general:** Establece las metas del taller.

☛ Presentar información a los participantes para que ellos puedan realizar una reunión exitosa en sus comunidades.

**Objetivos del taller:** ¿Qué serán capaces de hacer los participantes al finalizar el taller?

☛ Los participantes podrán hacer una lista de elementos claves para organizar una reunión, desarrollar un objetivo y una agenda para la reunión, facilitar una reunión, y desarrollar un plan de acción e identificar las responsabilidades para ir a la próxima reunión.

**El Sitio:** Dónde realizarás el taller? ¿Cómo preparas el salón?

☛ Realizará el taller en la escuela. Pondrá las sillas y mesas en un medio círculo y los medios visuales al frente donde todos pueden verlos.

**La Hora:** ¿A qué hora empezará el taller? ¿Cuánto tiempo durará el taller? ¿Cuánto tiempo tomará la introducción y la evaluación?

☛ Sábado - 10:00am hasta 12:00am. Reservo 10 ó 15 minutos para introducciones y 20 minutos para la evaluación. El cuerpo de taller usará el resto del tiempo y lo divide en actividades y discusión.

**Los Materiales:** ¿Usarás medios visuales?

☛ Necesito: 1. pizarrón, 2. taza, 3. plumas, y 4. papel.

(continua)

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## Estructura del taller

### Introducción (10 a 15 minutos)

☛ Empieza con introducciones del grupo. Después, introduzco el objetivo general y los temas principales del taller.

### Cuerpo de Información ¿Cómo presentarás la información? ¿Cuáles técnicas usarás como una dramatización o un estudio de caso?

☛ Presento la lista de elementos claves para organizar una reunión (10 minutos).  
Dividimos en grupos de tres y les permito a los grupos desarrollar un objetivo y una agenda para una reunión (15 minutos). Hablamos de las características de un facilitador efectivo (10 minutos). Hacemos dramatizaciones de una reunión con un representante de cada de los grupos pequeños (30 minutos). Tiempo para discusión (25 minutos).

### Resumen y evaluación Repasa los temas principales del taller. Presenta una relación entre los temas y el objetivo general del taller.

☛ Repaso los temas del taller. Discutimos si fueron útil y si reflejó la realidad cotidiana. ¿Cómo usarán los participantes esta información en su vida?



# TALLER

**Objetivo general:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Objetivos del taller:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_


**El Sitio:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**La Hora:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Los Materiales:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## Estructura del taller

**Introducción (10 a 15 minutos)** 

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**Cuerpo de Información** 

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**Resumen y evaluación** 

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# CÓMO LLEVAR A CABO UNA REUNIÓN EXITOSA

Lo más importante para llevar a cabo una reunión exitosa es la **PREPARACIÓN y ORGANIZACIÓN**

## I. PLANEA TU REUNIÓN

### ☛ Establece las metas:

- ¿Cuáles son los objetivos que quieres tratar y lograr?
- ¿Qué quieres que piensen, sientan o hagan los miembros de tu reunión al final de la sesión?
- ¿Cual es el plan de acción?

### ☛ Quién es tu público?

- ¿Qué se sabe sobre el tema que vas a tratar/introducir?
- ¿A qué organizaciones/partidos/asociaciones pertenecen?

### ☛ Dáale estructura a la agenda:

- ¿Qué información y/o experiencias necesitan los participantes para llevar a cabo el plan de acción?
- Decide en qué orden presentarás la información. Vé los consejos que te damos al final.
- Incluye una introducción, un cuerpo de información y una conclusión a cada tema.
- Desarrolla la agenda antes de invitar a las personas. Así sabrás a quién querrás invitar.

## II. ORGANIZA TU REUNIÓN

### ☛ El Sitio

- ¿Dónde llevarás a cabo la reunión? ¿Una escuela? ¿La delegación? ¿Un restaurante? ¿En la casa de un vecino? ¿En la iglesia?
- ¿Es cómodo el lugar? ¿Buena ventilación? ¿Luz? ¿Acústica?

### ☛ La comida

- A nadie le gusta tener hambre. Sirve refrescos, café o agua para que nadie se duerma!

### ☞ El transporte

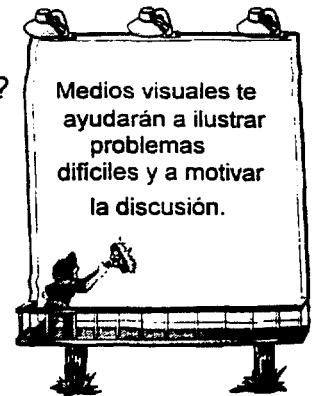
- Necesitas hacer arreglos para que puedan llegar los miembros de tu comité de otros pueblos o municipios?

### ☞ El equipo y los materiales

- ¿Necesitas gráficas, diagramas, mapas, o un pizarrón?

- ☞ ¿Tienes suficientes plumas? ¿Registros para saber quién asistió a tu reunión?

### ☞ Quién te puede ayudar a organizar la junta?



## III. La Reunión

Una vez que ya esté organizada la reunión, y que hayas invitado a todos, tienes que pensar en como presidirás la reunión.

Acuérdate de lo siguiente:

- ✓ PRESENTA
- ✓ ESCLARECE
- ✓ ESTIMULA
- ✓ SIGUE DE CERCA
- ✓ RESUME

### Responsabilidades de los Miembros del Comité

- ☞ Controlar los prejuicios propios y respetar las opiniones de los demás miembros.
- ☞ Resistir a la tentación de "pronunciar discursos." Todos se aburrirán!
- ☞ Evitar polémicas y discusiones sobre asuntos ajenos al tema.

### Responsabilidades de la Persona quien Presida la Reunión

- ☞ Planear y organizar las reuniones como lo mencionamos anteriormente.
- ☞ Iniciar las reuniones puntualmente. ☹
- ☞ Asegurar que todos se conozcan- Presenta a las personas nuevas o desconocidas y mantén un registro de las personas que asistieron.

- ☞ Comenzar BIEN la sesión. Da información clara y concisa sobre los objetivos de la reunión: Te rendirá mejores resultados si los miembros saben de antemano lo que se espera de ellos.
- ☞ Lograr que todos, hasta los más tímidos, participen. Controla a las personas groseras, intolerantes o bavardas. Muestra interés en la participación de todos. Todos deben participar!
- ☞ Mantener activa la sesión, si no, la gente se aburre y la sesión se convertirá en improductiva. Las personas no querrán regresar la próxima vez.
- ☞ Asignar tareas a los miembros. A la gente le gusta la responsabilidad; para el éxito de tu comité es esencial contar con miembros interesados y entusiastas. También harán el esfuerzo para ir a la próxima reunión porque alguien está contando con él.
- ☞ Enfatizar ACCIÓN: Pide resultados. Comienza cada sesión relatando lo que se logró en la sesión anterior y declara las metas a las que quieres llegar al final de la sesión.

## **CONSEJOS...**

### **LA AGENDA:**

- ✓ Al desarrollar la agenda, presenta los temas "normales" primero, los difíciles (con los que anticipas desacuerdo) a continuación, y los temas fáciles al final. Así la gente estará más cansada y menos dispuesta a discutir, y se concluye la reunión con ánimo.
- ✓ También empieza con temas generales y sigue con los temas más específicos.

### **LA REUNIÓN**

- ✓ Conoce a todos los participantes
- ✓ Mantén la discusión enfocada y dentro de los límites del tiempo.
- ✓ Si se presentara un conflicto, contarías con el apoyo de quién? Con quién forjarías una alianza? Identificalos!
- ✓ Limitate a los temas en la agenda - así no se desviará la reunión.
- ✓ Sé neutral y objetivo: quieres que todos expresen sus ideas y opiniones respecto al tema.
- ✓ No promuevas tus propias ideas: deja que tus aliados lo hagan por tí!

## EL VOTO

- ✓ Resume y clarifica las ideas discutidas.
- ✓ Si hay más de una sugerencia, resolución u opción, siempre presenta la más extrema primero. Así, casi siempre se eliminará!
- ✓ Al terminar, resume los argumentos de los lados opuestos, y enfatiza la razón por la cual la solución elegida es la mejor.



**...ANTICIPA LO SIGUIENTE Y PREPÁRATE!!!**

### Anticipa:

que te ignoren...

que te ridiculen...

que te caractericen como demasiado serio/a, antipático/a, o, por el lado opuesto, como un payaso...

# EL RECLUTAMIENTO Y LA ORGANIZACIÓN

Lo más importante para reclutar y organizar efectivamente es:

**IDENTIFICAR  
EDUCAR  
MOTIVAR**

**PERO EL PRINCIPIO ELEMENTAL DE FORMAR UNA GRAN ORGANIZACIÓN CON MUCHÍSIMA GENTE ES EL SIGUIENTE:**


**HAZ LA MATEMÁTICA TU MISMO!**

10 personas concocen...  
a 10 personas quienes concocen...  
a 10 personas más.  
Resultado?

**10 → 100 → 1000**

**1,000 PERSONAS!!!!**

## ¡IDENTIFICA!

- ☛ Antes que nada, identifica y define la cuestión que quieras tratar.
- ☛ Busca e identifica a personas quienes pienses que tengan algo en común contigo o con tu organización. Por ejemplo, tu y tu vecino quieren que las vacunas sean gratis. Reclútalo para que los dos puedan trabajar juntos. Es mucho más difícil romper dos lápices  con las manos que uno. Inténtalo!
- ☛ Pregunta! Si no preguntas, no recibirás y no sabrán lo que haces. Tampoco sabrás con quién prodrás trabajar. La única pregunta tonta es la no hecha.
- ☛ Sigue de cerca a las personas que siempre llegan a las reuniones, fiestas, etc. Los más visibles tendrán más contactos y amigos quienes podrás incorporar más tarde.
- ☛ Pregúntale a tu familia, tus amigos, colegas, profesores si les interesa ayudarte? No seas tímido. Lo peor que te pueden decir es que no.

## ¡EDUCA!

- ☞ Explicales como el tema que trabajas les afecta. Piensa como les afecta en lo personal, lo profesional, lo moral o como, si se unen a tí, podrían adquirir el poder.

### El Tema les afecta:

- ✓ **En lo personal:** habrá ganancia para ellos mismos. Por ejemplo, se construiría una carretera y al mismo tiempo harían varias amistades.
- ✓ **En lo profesional:** al construir la carretera se emplearía a 50 personas de tu pueblo. Eso te conviene a tí y a ellos!
- ✓ **En lo moral:** todo ciudadano tiene la obligación de mejorar la situación de su comunidad. Esta es la obligación cívica.

- ☞ Explicales lo que puede pasar si no se unen a tí pero no seas alarmista!
- ☞ Haz una campaña de publicidad. Organiza una fiesta, una rifa o algo para que puedas reunir a la gente e informarla sobre tu organización o tema. Sé ingenioso!

## ¡MOBILIZA!

- ☞ Tu imagen es importante. Siempre se alegre, entusiasta. Vístete como los demás; escúchala los comentarios o las preguntas e incluye a todos!
- ☞ Prepárate. Desarrolla una estrategia basada en cómo lograste reunir a las personas interesadas e implementala. ¿Qué es lo que puedes decir o hacer que motive la gente a actuar?
- ☞ Alborota! Agita a la gente! Cuando alborotes, intentas solamente agitar a la gente suficientemente para que se produzcan cambios. No ofendas ni seas grosero, pero no tampoco aceptes excusas pasivamente. Cuestiónalos!
- ☞ Asigna tareas. A la gente le gusta la responsabilidad; para el éxito de tu ADESCO es esencial contar con miembros interesados y entusiastas. Así, también es más seguro que regresarán a la próxima junta.
- ☞ Sigue de cerca las actividades de tus miembros. Felicítalos cuando completen un trabajo e inmediatamente asígales otro proyecto. Alábalos!
- ☞ Nunca dejes que se aburran. Te gusta estar aburrido a tí?



# REGLAS DE ORGANIZACIÓN

1. **SER VOLUNTARIO ES UN HONOR.** Participar te enriquecerá en los personal y contribuirás a tu país. Ser voluntario no es hacerle un favor a alguien - voluntarios participan por razones de interés propio. Te conviene!!
2. **NO LES HAGAS ESCUSAS A OTRAS PERSONAS.** Deja que sean las propias personas que decidan si participarán como voluntarios. No les hagas pretextos.
3. **LOS NÚMEROS SON TUS AMIGOS.** Es importante saber con cuántos voluntarios cuentas, cuántos necesitas y dónde los puedes encontrar. Mantén un registro con todos los nombres de ellos. También, cuantifica todo. Así darás la impresión que no sólo estás organizado, pero también tendrás algo cuantificable y sólido para reportarle a quien sea.
4. **LA COMUNICACIÓN ES LO MÁS IMPORTANTE.** Establece los mecanismos o sistemas de comunicación para que el grupo se comunique entre sí. Ten una reunión a la semana; pega un pedazo de cartón con la convocatoria en la plaza anunciando la próxima reunión, los acontecimientos... Comunica todo lo que tú pienses que sea importante.
5. **AYUDA A QUE TUS VOLUNTARIOS SEAN UN ÉXITO.**
  - ⇒ ¿Qué se necesita hacer? Identifica las labores que deben llevarse a cabo y el número de voluntarios que necesitas para hacerlas.
  - ⇒ Clarifícales a los voluntarios sus responsabilidades y el tiempo que le deben dedicar a la causa. Házles sentir invaluable - Pero ten cuidado de no reclutar a personas quienes puedan hacer las tareas que ya puedes hacer tú! No vale la pena repetir. Repetir es gastar.
  - ⇒ Establece metas realistas. Si no las puedes alcanzar, cámbialas. Asegura que puedas llegar a ellas para que tus voluntarios puedan celebrar contigo.
  - ⇒ Entrénalos. Dáles instrucciones escritas y orales. Explícales lo que se espera de ellos y la importancia de sus labores dentro del proyecto en el cual participan. Enseña por ejemplo. Demuestra tu energía y tendrás voluntarios entusiastas.
  - ⇒ Distribuye las tareas según la disponibilidad del tiempo y la capacidad de cada uno. Comienza por asignarles tareas pequeñas e incrementa la responsabilidad poco a poco.
  - ⇒ Échales porras! Felicítalos cuando terminen con éxito su labor.

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6. **SÉ ORGANIZADO.** Si eres organizado, vas a usar tu tiempo más eficientemente. No le hagas perder el tiempo a las otras personas. Proyecta una imagen organizada y atraerás a voluntarios.
7. **DIVIÉRTETE!** Organizar y reclutar toma muchísimo tiempo y esfuerzo. Piensa en la experiencia que gozas y en todo lo que aprendes. Asegura que te estes divirtiendo!

## **IDEAS... .**

- ❖ Organiza reuniones en la noche para las personas que no puedan asistir al día por el trabajo. Un voluntario capacitado puede conducir estas reuniones.
- ❖ Organiza una reunión en la casa de un vecino. El anfitrión podría invitar a su casa 10 o 20 gente (generalmente parientes, amigos y colegas) para discutir el tema decidido. Asegura que haya café y galletas para ofrecerles a los invitados y un registro para saber quién asiste a las reuniones.
- ❖ Coloca rótulos en lugares públicos para anunciar las reuniones. Qué te parece un pizarrón humano?
- ❖ Para agrandar a un grupo, haz referencia a nuestra fórmula:

**Nuestra Formula:**

$$10 \times 10 \times 10 = 1,000 \text{ personas!!!}$$

Si no conoces a 10, piensa en 5...  
Funciona bien también!!

$$5 \times 5 \times 5 = 125 \text{ personas!}$$

- ❖ Pide que cada voluntario traiga una persona nueva a cada reunión.

**IDENTIFICÁ, EDUCA Y MOBILIZA!**

# COLABORACIÓN, COOPERACIÓN Y COALICIÓN

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## Por qué colaborar?

### LAS VENTAJAS

- ☺ Cumplir con lo que no se puede hacer solo.
- ☺ Crear relaciones para el futuro.
- ☺ Aumentar sus recursos - más pisto, más gente, más poder.
- ☺ Ampliar su alcance y su organización a un nivel más alto.

### LAS DESVENTAJAS

- ☹ Hacer demasiadas concesiones a sus ideas
- ☹ Desigualdad de recursos y poder
- ☹ No se reconocerá como el trabajo de su grupo

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### ☞ Una vez que haya hecho la decisión de colaborar con una asociación debería determinar cual grupo le sería beneficioso...

- Identifique todas las organizaciones que tienen su misma meta.
- Recluta a las organizaciones que le interesen.
- Ten una buena idea sobre el trabajo que estas organizaciones pueden hacer y lo que quieren hacer.




### ☞ Una vez que deciden que ambos grupos van a colaborar, tienen que proceder cuidadosamente...

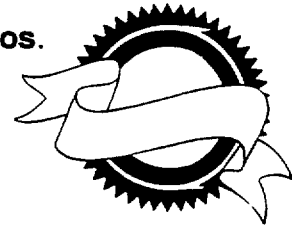
- Define el problema y el asunto que quieren tratar.
- Enfoquese en el asunto - discute y determina que todo está de acuerdo.
- Determina una estrategia.

- Desarrolla un plan de acción claro y específico.
  - ? ¿Qué va a hacer cada grupo?
  - ? ¿Cuándo?
- Identifica la persona en cada organización que se encargará de comunicarse con la otra organización
- Evalúa los recursos de ambas organizaciones - gente, dinero, tiempo.
- Organiza. Distribuye las tareas. Asegúrese que todos conocen bien su papel.
- Mantenga a todos informados e involucrados.
- Cumpla con su plan e informe a todos sobre sus logros.

## CONCEJOS...

- ✓ **Escoge un asunto en el cual todos están de acuerdo.** Por ejemplo, no escogas el asunto de promover la salud femenina por medio de contracepción si hay muchas personas que no creen en eso.
- ✓ **Entiende y respete cada asociación.** Comprende que cada comunidad y asociación tiene su propio interés. Cada comunidad y asociación traen su propia historia, agenda, cultura, liderazgo y relaciones a una colaboración.
- 
 ✓ **Están de acuerdo que pueden no estar de acuerdo.** Es normal que estar de acuerdo en un asunto y no estar de acuerdo en otro.
- ✓ **Reconoce que las contribuciones serán variadas.** Una comunidad, por ejemplo, que tiene veinte familias puede dar algún apoyo, pero no tanto como una comunidad con cien familias.
- ✓ **Estructura el proceso decisorio cuidadosamente.** En la misma manera que una comunidad chiquita no puede dar un apoyo tan grande, quizás no debe tener el mismo peso en las decisiones del grupo.
- ✓ **Apoya a las asociaciones para que logren sus propios intereses.** Para tener éxito en una colaboración se necesita lograr los intereses de cada asociación.
- ✓ **Lograr triunfos significativos.** Grupos no van a contribuir a una colaboración al menos que pueden ver resultados concretos.

- ✓ **Clarificar el proceso decisorio.** Todos necesitan saber quien es el responsable por cada cosa.
- ✓ **Asegura que todos reciben mérito por sus cumplimientos.**



**INSTITUTO SALVADOREÑO DE  
ADMINISTRACION MUNICIPAL**



***"FORMATO DE DOCUMENTACION  
PARA OBTENER LA  
PERSONERIA JURIDICA  
DE LAS ASOCIACIONES COMUNALES"***

**DEPARTAMENTO DE ORGANIZACION  
Y DESARROLLO DE LA COMUNIDAD**

**San Salvador 1993**

Nº	Nombre completo	Nº de Cédula	Firma
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101

\_\_\_\_\_ , de \_\_\_\_\_ de 19 \_\_\_\_\_

Señor Alcalde  
Municipal de

-----  
Presente.

Saludándole y deseándole triunfos en su labor Municipal, me dirijo a usted en nombre de los habitantes de \_\_\_\_\_ quienes desean organizarse como Asociación Comunal y obtener personería jurídica. En vista de lo anterior me permito invitarle a la reunión de Asamblea General de Constitución la cual se desarrollará a las \_\_\_\_\_ , el día \_\_\_\_\_ en \_\_\_\_\_

Lo anterior lo hacemos sabiendo que usted es un funcionario que impulsa el progreso de las Comunidades y su Organización y en cumplimiento de lo establecido en el artículo 120 del Código Municipal.

Esperando su asistencia o la de su delegado para cumplir con nuestro objetivo, me suscribo de usted respetuosamente.

F. \_\_\_\_\_



# SOLICITUD PARA OBTENER LA PERSONERIA JURIDICA

Yo, \_\_\_\_\_, mayor de edad, con Cédula de Identidad Personal número \_\_\_\_\_

(oficio)

en mi calidad de Presidente de la Asociación Comunal de \_\_\_\_\_

SOLICITO: Se otorgue personería jurídica y se aprueben los Estatutos de la Asociación la cual se constituyó el día \_\_\_\_\_ cumpliendo con los requisitos legales.

Anexamos a la presente:

- 1.- Certificación del acta de constitución.
- 2.- Estatutos que normarán la Asociación.
- 3.- Nómina de miembros asociados con su número de Cédula de Identidad Personal.

Señalo para oír notificaciones \_\_\_\_\_

de

de mil novecientos noventa y \_\_\_\_\_

F. \_\_\_\_\_

Presidente

## CERTIFICACION DEL ACTA DE CONSTITUCION

El Infrascrito Secretario de la Asociación Comunal \_\_\_\_\_

CERTIFICA: Que en el Libro de Actas que lleva la Asociación, se encuentra asentada el Acta número uno, que literalmente, dice: "Acta número uno: En el (Cantón, Caserío, Colonia, Barrio), \_\_\_\_\_

Municipio de \_\_\_\_\_

Departamento de \_\_\_\_\_ ; a las \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ horas, del día \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ de \_\_\_\_\_

de mil novecientos \_\_\_\_\_ , reunidos \_\_\_\_\_ (nombre)

\_\_\_\_\_ (edad) , \_\_\_\_\_ (oficio) ; \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (nombre) ; \_\_\_\_\_ (edad) ; \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (oficio) ; \_\_\_\_\_ (nombre) ; \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (nombre) ; \_\_\_\_\_ (edad) ; \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (oficio) (todos los asistentes); además con la presencia

de \_\_\_\_\_ (alcalde o su representante) \_\_\_\_\_ ;

para llevar a cabo la Asamblea General de Constitución de la Asociación Comunal

Se procedió a ella con base en la siguiente Agenda, que fue aprobada por unanimidad: PUNTO UNO: Constitución de la Asociación. PUNTO DOS: Aprobación de los Estatutos. PUNTO TRES: Elección de los miembros de Junta Directiva. Luego de haberse aprobado la anterior Agenda se conocieron de los puntos de las mismas habiéndose obtenido el resultado siguiente: PUNTO UNO: El señor \_\_\_\_\_

Explicó a los Asambleístas la necesidad de organizarse en Asociación Comunal a fin de coadyuvar a la solución de los diversos problemas que enfrentan las comunidades, luego se escucharon otras intervenciones de los asistentes y se acordó por unanimidad constituir la Asociación Comunal \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ como una Asociación de interés particular, sin ánimo de lucro y apolítica, con domicilio en este lugar. PUNTO DOS: en seguida se dió

lectura a los Estatutos que regirán la asociación, y después de haberse escuchado diversas opiniones se acordó aprobarlos de la siguiente manera: \_\_\_\_\_

(se copian los Estatutos a renglón seguido)

PUNTO TRES: En base a los Estatutos aprobados se procedió a elegir a la Primera Junta Directiva de la Asociación la cual luego de haberse hecho las propuestas correspondientes y sometido a votación por unanimidad quedó formada de la siguiente manera: Presidente \_\_\_\_\_

Vicepresidente \_\_\_\_\_, Tesorero \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Secretario \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Síndico \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Primer Vocal \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Segundo Vocal \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Tercer Vocal \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Cuarto Vocal \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Quinto Vocal \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Suplentes \_\_\_\_\_

No habiendo nada más que hacer constar se da por terminada la presente acta, la cual ratificamos y firmamos. (Se pone como se leen las firmas). \_\_\_\_\_

Rubricadas.

Es conforme con su original, con el cual se confrontó en \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, a los \_\_\_\_\_ días, del mes de \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, de mil novecientos \_\_\_\_\_

F. \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretario

# ESTATUTOS DE LA ASOCIACION

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## CAPITULO I

### NATURALEZA, DENOMINACION Y DOMICILIO

Art. 1.- La Asociación que se constituye la cual en el curso de estos Estatutos será llamada "La Asociación" estará regulada por el Código Municipal, la Ordenanza Reguladora de las Asociaciones Comunales si la hay en el Municipio, por estos Estatutos y demás disposiciones aplicables.

La Asociación se denominará "Asociación Comunal del \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ por lo que tendrá como domicilio ,  
\_\_\_\_\_, Departamento de \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Art. 2.- Esta Asociación es de naturaleza apolítica, no lucrativa, de carácter democrático y no religiosa.

## CAPITULO II

### FINES

Art. 3 - La Asociación tendrá como fines:

- a) Promover el progreso de la respectiva localidad conjuntamente con los organismos públicos y privados, nacionales e internacionales que participen en los correspondientes programas de desarrollo comunal.
- b) Fomentar el espíritu de comunidad, solidaridad y cooperación mutua entre los vecinos, sus grupos y entidades representativas.
- c) Coordinar y cooperar con otros grupos comunitarios organizados en la misma jurisdicción en la mayor integración de sus miembros y la mejor organización de sus actividades.
- d) Impulsar y participar en los programas de capacitación promocional de los dirigentes y de los grupos comunales, con el fin de contribuir al mejoramiento de la organización de la comunidad, la adminis-

tración de proyectos sociales y económicos y la elevación de los niveles educativos de cada uno de sus asociados.

- e) Trabajar en el establecimiento y mejora de los servicios de la comunidad, con el equipamiento de los medios indispensables para solucionar los distintos problemas que existieren en la comunidad.
- f) Promover las Organizaciones Juveniles y de mejoras para hacerlos partícipes de la responsabilidad de los programas de desarrollo local.
- g) Incrementar las actividades comunitarias a fin de obtener recursos propios que sirvan para impulsar el mejoramiento .
- h) Participar organizadamente en el estudio y análisis de la realidad social y de los problemas y necesidades de la comunidad así como en cualquier actividad en el campo, social, económico, cultural, religioso, cívico, educativo u otros que fueren legales y provechosos a la Comunidad.

### CAPITULO III

#### DE LOS ASOCIADOS

#### DERECHOS Y DEBERES

Art. 4.- Los Asociados podrán ser:

- a) Fundadores
- b) Activos
- c) Honorarios (es opcional).

Son asociados Fundadores, todas las personas que firmaron el Acta de Constitución de la Asociación; son socios Activos, todas las personas que obtendrán su ingreso a la misma conforme lo establecido en estos Estatutos. (Son Asociados Honorarios, aquellas personas naturales o jurídicas que realizan una destacada labor dentro de la comunidad o dando ayuda significativa a la Asociación y que la Asamblea General les conceda tal calidad a propuesta de la Junta Directiva).

Para ser asociado son requisitos: ser mayor de dieciocho años, con residencia en esa localidad, ser de buena conducta y admitido por acuerdo de la Junta Directiva previa solicitud del interesado.

Art. 5.- Son derechos de los Asociados:

- a) Participar con voz y voto en las Asambleas Generales.
- b) Presentar mociones y sugerencias a la Asamblea General.
- c) Retirarse voluntariamente de la Asociación.
- d) Elegir y ser electo para su cargo de la Junta Directiva.
- e) Gozar de los servicios y privilegios que realice u otorgue la Asociación.

Art. 6.- Son deberes de los Asociados:

- a) Cooperar con todos los medios promocionales posibles al incremento del número de miembros de la Asociación.
- b) Asistir con puntualidad a las sesiones de Asamblea General previa convocatoria en legal forma.
- c) Desempeñar a cabalidad todas las comisiones y cargos que se le encomienden.
- d) Cumplir estos Estatutos y obedecer las disposiciones de la Asamblea General y Junta Directiva, siempre que estén relacionados con los fines de la Asociación.

#### CAPITULO IV

#### DEL GOBIERNO DE LA ASOCIACION

Art. 7.- El gobierno de la Asociación será ejercido por una Asamblea General y una Junta Directiva.

#### CAPITULO V

#### DE LA ASAMBLEA GENERAL

Art. 8.- La Asamblea General será la máxima autoridad de la Asociación y estará integrada por la totalidad de los asociados.

Art. 9.- La Asamblea General se reunirá Ordinariamente una vez al año en el mes de Junio y Extraordinariamente cuando se considere necesario. Será

convocada por Junta Directiva. La Convocatoria podrá ser verbal, escrita o por medios públicos o colectivos.

Art. 10.- La convocatoria a Asamblea General Ordinaria se hará con ocho días de anticipación a la fecha de su realización.

Art. 11.- La convocatoria a Asamblea General Extraordinaria se hará por lo menos con tres días de anticipación a la fecha de su realización.

Art. 12.- Habrá quórum con la asistencia de la mitad más uno de los miembros de la Asociación y las decisiones se tomarán por el voto de la mayoría de los asistentes. Si no hubiere quórum se hará una nueva convocatoria y la instalará la Asamblea General con el número de asistentes, siempre que no sea inferior a un tercio de los integrantes de la misma.

Art. 13.- Son atribuciones de la Asamblea General:

- a) Aprobar, reformar o derogar los Estatutos y Reglamentos de la Asociación.
- b) Elegir a los miembros de la Junta Directiva y destituirlos por causas justificadas.
- c) Aprobar el Presupuesto Anual de la Asociación.
- d) Aprobar la Memoria de Labores de la Asociación, los informes del Tesorero y los demás que le presente la Junta Directiva.
- e) Fijar la cuantía de las cuotas ordinarias y extraordinarias de los asociados según las necesidades de la Asociación.
- f) Acordar la disolución de la asociación.
- g) Resolver todo lo no previsto en los presentes Estatutos, Reglamentos y otras disposiciones que emita la asociación.

## CAPITULO VI

### DE LA JUNTA DIRECTIVA

Art. 14.- La Junta Directiva de la Asociación estará formada por:

Un Presidente

Un Vice-Presidente

Un Secretario, un Prosecretario

Un Tesorero, un Protesorero

Un Síndico y

Cinco Vocales.

Art. 15.- Los miembros de la Junta Directiva serán electos en la sesión ordinaria de Asamblea General del mes de Junio del año correspondiente para un periodo de \_\_\_\_ años a contar de la fecha de su nombramiento, pudiendo ser reelectos en sus cargos.

Art. 16.- La Junta Directiva sesionará ordinariamente una vez cada quince días y extraordinariamente cuando se considere conveniente la convocatoria a las sesiones ordinarias de la Junta Directiva se harán con tres días de anticipación y para las sesiones extraordinarias con dos días por lo menos.

Art. 17.- El quórum para celebrar sesión de Junta Directiva será la asistencia de por lo menos \_\_\_\_ de sus miembros y para tomar resoluciones el voto favorable de la mayoría de los miembros directivos presentes. En caso de empate el Presidente tendrá doble voto.

Art. 18.- La Junta Directiva tendrá las siguientes atribuciones:

- a) Administrar el Patrimonio de la Asociación.
- b) Velar por el cumplimiento de los Estatutos, Resoluciones de la Asamblea General y los Reglamentos de la Asociación.
- c) Elaborar la Memoria Anual de Labores y someterla a consideración de la Asamblea General.
- d) Elaborar el Presupuesto Anual de la Asociación y someterlo a consideración de la Asamblea General.
- e) Velar porque todos los socios cumplan con sus obligaciones para con la Asociación.
- f) Señalar las fechas de celebración de las sesiones ordinarias y extraordinarias de la Asamblea General, convocar a los socios y elaborar la agenda de las mismas.



- g) Conocer las solicitudes de ingreso de los asociados y presentarlas a consideración de la Asamblea General.
- h) Conocer de las solicitudes y reclamos de los asociados de acuerdo a las disposiciones de los Estatutos y Reglamentos de la Asociación.
- i) Autorizar al Presidente para que celebre toda clase de contratos y proyectos de la Asociación, especialmente los aprobados por la Asamblea General.
- j) Elaborar proyectos de reglamentos de la Asociación así como los proyectos de reforma a los Estatutos y Reglamentos.
- k) Aprobar los programas de trabajo a desarrollar por la Asociación.
- l) Organizar seminarios, cursillos y otros eventos relacionados con los fines de la Asociación.
- ll) Resolver todos los asuntos que no sean de la competencia de la Asamblea General.

**Art. 19.-** Para ser miembro de la Junta Directiva de la asociación se requiere:

- a) Ser mayor de edad.
- b) Competencia notoria para el desempeño del cargo.
- c) Observar buena conducta.
- d) Estar solvente con la Asociación.

**Art. 20.-** Los miembros de la Junta Directiva podrán ser destituidos de sus cargos por las causas siguientes:

- a) Inmoralidad comprobada.
- b) Incumplimiento de los Estatutos, Reglamentos y otras disposiciones importantes de la asociación.
- c) Por apartarse de los fines de la Asociación.
- d) Cuando a juicio de la Asamblea General sea necesario.

Art. 21.- Cualquier miembro de la Junta Directiva de la Asociación podrá reelegirse por un período más.

## CAPITULO VII

### DE LAS ATRIBUCIONES DE LOS MIEMBROS DE LA JUNTA DIRECTIVA

Art. 22.- Son atribuciones del Presidente:

- a) Presidir las sesiones de la Junta Directiva y de la Asamblea General
- b) Convocar a los asociados a sesiones de la Asamblea General y a los miembros de la Junta Directiva.
- c) Representar Judicial y Extrajudicialmente a la Asociación.
- d) Velar por el cumplimiento de los acuerdos de la Junta Directiva, de la Asamblea General de los Estatutos de la Asociación.
- e) Firmar con el Tesorero los cheques y documentos de gastos de la Asociación debidamente aprobados.
- f) Los demás que le encomiende la Junta Directiva.

Art. 23.- Son atribuciones del Vice-Presidente:

- a) Colaborar con el Presidente en el desempeño de sus funciones.
- b) Sustituir al Presidente en caso de ausencia o impedimento de éste.
- c) Debe desempeñar las comisiones que el Presidente le designe.
- d) Las demás que le asignen estos Estatutos y otras disposiciones que invita la Asociación.

Art. 24.- Son atribuciones del Secretario:

- a) Llevar el Libro de Actas de las sesiones de la Asamblea General y de la Junta Directiva.
- b) Extender las Credenciales y Certificaciones de la Asociación que sean necesarias.

- c) Llevar el archivo de la Asociación.
- d) Enviar a los asociados las convocatorias a sesiones de Asamblea General y Junta Directiva.
- e) Llevar los registros de los asociados
- f) Recibir y despachar la correspondencia de la Asociación.
- g) Las demás que por razones de su cargo le competen.

**Art. 25.-Son atribuciones del Pro-Secretario:**

- a) Colaborar con el Secretario en el desempeño de sus funciones.
- b) Sustituir al Secretario en caso de ausencia o impedimento de éste.
- c) Las demás que le asignen estos Estatutos y otras disposiciones que emita la Asociación.

**Art. 26.- Son atribuciones del Tesorero:**

- a) Recibir y guardar los fondos de la Asociación en la Institución Bancaria que la Junta Directiva señale.
- b) Firmar con el Presidente los cheques y documentos de gastos de la Asociación debidamente aprobados.
- c) Elaborar el anteproyecto de presupuesto anual de la Asociación y presentarlo a la Junta Directiva.
- d) Llevar los libros de contabilidad que fueren necesarios.
- e) Presentar mensualmente a la Junta Directiva un informe de los ingresos y egresos de la Asociación.
- f) Presentar balance de la situación de la Asociación.
- g) Recopilar los comprobantes de gastos efectuados por la Asociación y presentarlos a la Junta Directiva las veces que ésta lo requiera.
- h) Las demás que por razones de su cargo le correspondan.

**Art. 27. – Son atribuciones del Pro-Tesorero:**

- a) Sustituir al Tesorero en caso de ausencia o impedimento de éste.
- b) Colaborar con el Tesorero en el desempeño de sus funciones.
- c) Desempeñar las comisiones que se le asignaren.
- d) Las demás que por razones de su cargo le corresponden.

**Art. 28. – Son atribuciones del Síndico:**

- a) Velar especialmente por el cumplimiento de las resoluciones de la Junta Directiva y de la Asamblea General de los Estatutos y Reglamentos de la Asociación.
- b) Colaborar en la elaboración de reformas a los Estatutos y Reglamentos de la Asociación.
- c) Las demás que le señale la Asamblea General y la Junta Directiva.

**Art. 29. – Son atribuciones de los Vocales:**

- a) Sustituir y colaborar con los demás miembros de la Junta Directiva.
- b) Desempeñar las comisiones que les asignen la Asamblea General y la Junta Directiva.
- c) Las demás que le señalen los Estatutos y los Reglamentos de la Asociación.

**Art. 30. – Los miembros de Junta Directiva serán electos por un período de \_\_\_\_\_ año, y sólo podrán ser reelectos por \_\_\_\_\_ periodos más.**

## **CAPITULO VIII**

### **DEL PATRIMONIO DE LA ASOCIACION**

**Art. 31. – El Patrimonio de la Asociación estará constituido por:**

- a) Las contribuciones que aporten los asociados, la cual será de \_\_\_\_\_ colones mensuales.
- b) Las subvenciones y los aportes extraordinarios que provengan de diversas fuentes.
- c) Los ingresos provenientes de cualquier actividad realizada por la Asociación.
- d) Bienes muebles e inmuebles que se adquieran.

e) Donaciones o financiamientos que se obtengan.

f) Cualquiera otros ingresos que perciba la Asociación de las actividades que realice.

Art. 32.- Los fondos de la Asociación serán depositados en una Institución Financiera, para los cual se abrirá cuentas a nombre de la Asociación que serán manejadas con las firmas del Tesorero y el Presidente de la Asociación o quienes la Junta Directiva designe.

## CAPITULO IX

### DURACION Y DISOLUCION DE LA ASOCIACION

Art. 33.- El tiempo de duración de la Asociación es ilimitado. La Asociación se disolverá por disposición de la ley, cuando los socios no lleguen por lo menos a veinticinco y por no poder cumplir con los objetivos para que ha sido creada y finalmente cuando así lo acuerde en sesión extraordinaria. La Asamblea General convocada al efecto por lo menos con el voto favorable de las tres cuartas partes de los asociados.

Art. 34.- Acordada la disolución de la Asociación y verificada la liquidación por la Junta Directiva el remanente de los bienes si lo hubiere se donarán a una entidad legalmente constituida en el país, que tenga fines similares y que deberá designarse por la Asamblea General que acordare la disolución.

## CAPITULO X

### DISPOSICIONES GENERALES

Art. 35.- La Asociación llevará sus libros de registro de afiliados, de actas, financieros, todos foliados y sellados con una razón de apertura que contenga el objeto del libro, y al terminar la razón de cierre la cual deberá estar firmada y sellada por el Presidente y Secretario.

Art. 36.- La Junta Directiva tiene la obligación de enviar al Concejo Municipal, en los primeros quince días posteriores a la elección de Junta Directiva, la nómina de quienes la integran. También informará en la forma expresada anteriormente de las sustituciones de miembros de Junta Directiva y de nuevos miembros de la Asociación.

Art. 37.- Los casos que no estén contemplados en estos Estatutos serán resueltos en Asamblea General y Junta Directiva en su caso.

Art. 38.- Los presentes Estatutos entrarán en vigencia desde el día de su publicación en el Diario Oficial.

Nº	Nombre completo	Nº de Cédula	Firma
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# MEDIANTE LA PARTICIPACION:

- SOMOS MAS SUJETOS QUE OBJETO, TENIENDO MAYOR CONTROL SOBRE NUESTRAS VIDAS.
- TIENES UN MAYOR Y MEJOR ACCESO A BIENES Y SERVICIOS SOCIALES.
- NOS INTEGRAMOS A PROCESOS COLECTIVOS SOCIALES.
- REFORZAMOS LA AUTOESTIMA.

# DE LA PARTICIPACION.

## FACTORES:

- **ESPACIOS E INSTANCIAS:**
  - \* FAMILIA.
  - \* GRUPO COMUNITARIO.
  - \* ASOVECINOS.
  - \* COMUNIDAD.
  - \* MUNICIPIO.
  
- **CANALES:**
  - \* AUTOGESTADOS.
  - \* NORMATIVA LEGAL
  
- **HERRAMIENTAS:**
  - \* CONCEPTUALES.
  - \* METODOLOGICAS.
  - \* ORGANIZATIVAS.
  
- **NIVELES:**
  - \* RECIBIR INFORMACION.
  - \* DAR OPINIONES.
  - \* TOMAR DECISIONES.
  - \* COMPARTIR BENEFICIOS.



# **OBSTACULOS PARA LA PARTICIPACION**

- PENETRACION Y CONTROL PARTIDISTA.
- CLIENTELISMO - POPULISMO.
- PATERNALISMO ( PESCADO Vs. CAÑA).
- PRESIDENCIALISMO.
- MODELOS VERTICALES DE ORGANIZACION.
- ESCASA O NINGUNA FORMACION PARA PARTICIPAR.

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## **MECANISMOS PARA IMPULSAR LA PARTICIPACION:**

- **POTENCIAR LA COMUNICACION:**

- \* COMUNITARIA.
- \* DESDE LOS MEDIOS.
- \* REDES.

- **FORMAR LA PARTICIPACION:**

- \* ESPACIOS.
- \* CANALES.
- \* METODOS Y TECNICAS.

- **LUCHAR POR LA AUTONOMIA:**

- \* FRENTE AL ESTADO, LOS PARTIDOS Y OTRAS ORGANIZACIONES.
- \* MANTENER LA CUALIDAD DE LOS ESPACIOS.

# **COMUNICACION COMUNITARIA**

## **OBJETIVOS GENERALES:**

- **INFORMAR Y MOVILIZAR A LA COMUNIDAD**
- **PROMOVER Y POTENCIAR INSTANCIAS DE: ORGANIZACION COMUNITARIA**
- **CREAR UNA OPINION PUBLICA FAVORABLE AL LOGRO DE LOS OBJETIVOS DE LA COMUNIDAD**

## **FACTORES**

- PARTIR DE LOS INTERESES DE LA COMUNIDAD
- FACILITAR LA COMUNICACION LA ACTITUD DE COMUNICAR
- PARTIR DEL NIVEL Y DE LAS EXPERIENCIAS COMUNES
- EVITAR LA OBSESION DE LA DENUNCIA
- RECORDAR QUE LA VERDADERA COMUNICACION NO COMIENZA HABLANDO SINO ESCUCHANDO

## **MEDIOS COMUNITARIOS**

- LA PANCARTA O CARTELON
- EL VOLANTE
- EL AFICHE
- LA CALCOMANIA, FRANELAS, CHAPAS
- EL MURAL
- LA CARTELERIA

## **RELACION CON LOS GRANDES MEDIOS**

- EL PERIODICO VECINAL
- RADIO BEMBA

**CODIGO  
MUNICIPAL  
DE  
1986**

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**DECRETO N° 274**

**LA ASAMBLEA LEGISLATIVA DE LA  
REPUBLICA DE EL SALVADOR**

en uso de sus facultades constitucionales y a iniciativa del  
Presidente de la República por medio del Ministerio del  
Interior.

**DECRETA** el siguiente **CODIGO MUNICIPAL**

**TITULO I  
OBJETO Y CAMPO DE APLICACION  
CAPITULO UNICO**

**Art. 1.-** El presente Código tiene por objeto desarrollar los principios constitucionales referentes a la organización, funcionamiento y ejercicio de las facultades autónomas de los Municipios.

**TITULO II  
CONCEPTOS GENERALES  
CAPITULO UNICO**

**Art. 2.-** El municipio constituye la Unidad Política Administrativa primaria dentro de la organización estatal, establecida en un territorio determinado que le es propio organizado bajo un ordenamiento jurídico que garantiza la participación popular en la formación y conducción de la sociedad local, con autonomía para darse su propio gobierno, el cual como parte instrumental del Municipio está encargado de la rectoría y gerencia del bien común local, en coordinación con las políticas y actuaciones nacionales orientadas al bien común general, gozando para cumplir con dichas funciones del poder, autoridad y autonomía suficiente.

El Municipio tiene personalidad jurídica con jurisdicción territorial determinada y su representación la ejercerán los órganos determinados en esta ley. El núcleo urbano principal del Municipio será la sede del Gobierno Municipal.

**Art. 3.-** La autonomía del Municipio se extiende a:

1. La creación, modificación y supresión de tasas por servicios y contribuciones públicas, para la realización de obras determinadas dentro de los límites que una ley general establezca.
2. El Decreto de su presupuesto de ingresos y egresos.

3. La libre gestión en las materias de su competencia;
4. El nombramiento y remoción de los funcionarios y empleados de sus dependencias, de conformidad al Título VII de este Código;
5. El decreto de ordenanzas y reglamentos locales;
6. La elaboración de sus tarifas de impuestos y reformas a las mismas para proponerlas como ley a la Asamblea Legislativa.

**TITULO III  
DE LA COMPETENCIA MUNICIPAL  
CAPITULO UNICO**

**Art. 4.-** Compete a los Municipios:

1. La elaboración, aprobación y ejecución de planes de desarrollo urbanos y rurales de la localidad;
2. Supervisión de precios, pesas, medidas y calidades;
3. El desarrollo y control de la nomenclatura y ornato público;

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4. **La promoción de la educación, la cultura, el deporte, la recreación, las ciencias y las artes;**
5. **La promoción y desarrollo de programas de salud, como saneamiento ambiental, prevención y combate de enfermedades;**
6. **La regulación y supervisión de los espectáculos públicos y publicidad comercial, en cuanto conciernen a los intereses y fines específicos municipales;**
7. **El impulso del turismo interno y externo y la regulación del uso y explotación turística y deportiva de lagos, ríos, islas, bahías, playas y demás sitios propios del Municipio;**
8. **La promoción de la participación ciudadana, responsable en la solución de los problemas locales en el fortalecimiento de la conciencia cívica y democrática de la población;**
9. **La promoción del desarrollo industrial, comercial y agrícola, artesanal y de los servicios;**
10. **El incremento y protección de los recursos renovables y no renovables;**
11. **La regulación del transporte local y del funcionamiento de terminales de transporte de pasajeros y de carga;**

12. **La regulación de la actividad de los establecimientos comerciales, industriales, de servicio y otros similares;**
13. **La regulación del funcionamiento extraordinario obligatorio en beneficio de la comunidad de las farmacias y otros negocios similares;**
14. **La regulación del funcionamiento de restaurantes, bares, clubes nocturnos y otros establecimientos similares;**
15. **La formación del Registro Civil de las personas y de cualquier otro registro público que se le encomendare por ley;**
16. **La formación de Registro de Ciudadanos de acuerdo a la ley;**
17. **La creación, impulso y regulación de servicios que faciliten el mercadeo y abastecimiento de productos de consumo de primera necesidad como mercados, tiangues y matederos;**
18. **La promoción y organización de ferias y festividades populares;**
19. **La prestación del servicio de aseo, barrido de calles, recolección y disposición final de basuras;**

20. La prestación del servicio de cementerios y servicios funerarios y control de los cementerios y servicios funerarios prestados por particulares;
21. La prestación del servicio de Policía Municipal;
22. La autorización y regulación de tenencia de animales domésticos y salvajes;
23. La regulación del uso de calles, aceras, parques y otros sitios públicos, municipales y locales;
24. La autorización y regulación del funcionamiento de casas de juegos, como loterías, rifas y otros similares;
25. Planificación, ejecución y mantenimiento de todo género de obras públicas necesarias al Municipio;
26. La promoción y financiamiento de programas de vivienda o renovación urbana.
- Para la realización de estos programas, la Municipalidad podrá conceder préstamos a los particulares en forma directa o por medio de entidades descentralizadas, dentro de los programas de viviendas o renovación urbana.
27. Autorización y fiscalización de las obras particulares;

- 28 Los demás que sean propios de la vida local y las que le atribuyan otras leyes.

Art. 5.- La competencia municipal, definida en el artículo anterior, no afecta las atribuciones conferidas a otras entidades de la Administración Pública.

Art. 6.- La administración del Estado únicamente podrá ejecutar obras o prestar servicios de carácter local o mejorarlos cuando el Municipio al cual competan, no las construya o preste, o la haga deficientemente. En todo caso el Estado deberá actuar con el consentimiento de las Autoridades municipales y en concordancia y coordinación con sus planes y programas.

Art. 7.- Los servicios públicos municipales podrán prestarse por :

1. El Municipio en forma directa;
2. Organismos, empresas o fundaciones de carácter municipal mediante delegaciones o contrato;
3. Concesión otorgada en licitación pública.

Art. 8.- A los Municipios no se les podrá obligar a pagar total o parcialmente obras de servicios que no hayan sido contraídas o prestados mediante contrato o convenio pactado por ellos.

Art. 9.- Los Municipios tienen el derecho de intervenir temporalmente aquellos servicios públicos municipales que se prestaren deficientemente o se suspendieren sin autorización, sin importar si fuere por delegación, contrato o concesión.

**Art. 10.-** Los Municipios tienen el derecho a revocar la concesión, previo pago de indemnización correspondiente, la cual no incluirá el monto de las inversiones ya amortizadas.

**Art. 11.-** Los Municipios podrán asociarse para mejorar, defender y proyectar sus intereses o concretar entre ellos convenios cooperativos a fin de colaborar en la realización de obras o prestación de servicios que sean de interés común para dos o más Municipios.

**Art. 12.-** Todas las instituciones del Estado y entes autónomos están obligados a colaborar con el Municipio en la gestión de las materias y servicios de su competencia.

**Art. 13.-** El Municipio regulará las materias de su competencia y la prestación de los servicios por medio de ordenanzas y reglamentos.

**Art. 14.-** Los Municipios solos o en unión con otros, podrán acordar la creación de entidades descentralizadas con o sin autonomía, para la realización de determinados fines municipales.

**Art. 15.-** Los estatutos de los entes descentralizados deberán contener:

- a) El nombre, objeto y domicilio de la entidad que se constituye;
- b) Los fines para los cuales se crea;
- c) El tiempo de su vigencia;
- d) Los aportes a que se obligan los Municipios que la constituyan;
- e) La composición de su organismo directivo, la

forma de designarlo, sus facultades y responsabilidades;

- f) El procedimiento para reformar o disolver la entidad y la manera de resolver las divergencias que puedan surgir, en relación a su gestión y a sus bienes;
- g) La determinación del control fiscal de la entidad por parte de los Municipios creadores y de la Corte de Cuentas de la Republica.

**Art. 16.-** Las entidades descentralizadas tendrán personería jurídica propia y comprometerán a los Municipios que los hayan constituido, en la medida y aportes señalados en los estatutos respectivos.

**Art. 17.-** Los Municipios, individual o colectivamente, podrán acordar la creación de fundaciones, asociaciones y empresas de servicios municipales o de aprovechamiento o industrialización de recursos naturales. Podrán constituir centros para el intercambio de ideas, informaciones y experiencias y en general para cualquier otro fin de interés local o intermunicipal.

**Art. 18.-** Los Municipios podrán contratar y concurrir a constituir sociedades para la prestación de servicios públicos locales o intermunicipales, o para cualquier otro fin lícito.

**TITULO IV  
DE LA CREACION, ORGANIZACION Y  
GOBIERNO DE LOS MUNICIPIOS**

**CAPITULO I  
DE LA CREACION DEL MUNICIPIO**

**Art. 19.-** La creación, fusión o incorporación de Municipios corresponde al Organó Legislativo.

**Art. 20.-** Para la creación de un Municipio deben concurrir:

1. Una población no menor de diez mil habitantes constituidos en comunidades inadecuadamente asistidas por los órganos de gobierno del Municipio a que pertenezca;
2. Un territorio determinado;
3. Un centro de población no menor de dos mil habitantes que sirva de asiento a sus autoridades;
4. Posibilidad de recursos suficientes para atender los gastos de gobierno, administración y prestación de los servicios públicos esenciales;
5. Conformidad con los planes de desarrollo nacional.

**Art. 21.-** La creación, fusión o incorporación de Municipios entrarán en vigencia a partir del año fiscal siguiente.

Creado el Municipio, el Ministerio del Interior nombrará una Junta de Vecinos que se encargará de administrar el Municipio desde la fecha de su creación y hasta la fecha en que tome posesion el Concejo Municipal debidamente electo.

**Art. 22.-** En los casos de creación de un Municipio por separación de una parte de otro existente, o de extinción de un Municipio por incorporación a otro u otros, la Asamblea Legislativa determinará todo lo referente a los bienes, derechos y obligaciones de los Municipios afectados.

**Art. 23.-** Se reconoce como límites de los Municipios los actualmente establecidos. La definición de los límites de los Municipios por cualquier causa que fuere corresponderá a la Asamblea Legislativa.

**CAPITULO II  
DE LA ORGANIZACION Y GOBIERNO  
DE LOS MUNICIPIOS**

**Art. 24.-** El Gobierno Municipal estará ejercido por un Concejo que tiene carácter deliberante y normativo y lo integrará un Alcalde, un Síndico y el número de Regidores o Concejales que se establecen en la siguiente forma:

Dos Concejales o Regidores en los Municipios que tengan hasta diez mil habitantes.

Cuatro Concejales o Regidores en los Municipios que tengan más de diez mil hasta veinte mil habitantes.

Seis Concejales o Regidores en los Municipios que tengan más de veinte mil hasta cincuenta mil habitantes.

Ocho Concejales o Regidores en los Municipios que tengan más de cincuenta mil hasta cien mil habitantes.

Diez Concejales o Regidores en los Municipios que tengan más de cien mil habitantes.

En todo caso habrá cuatro Concejales o Regidores Suplentes para llenar las vacantes temporales o definitivas.

El Consejo es la autoridad máxima del Municipio y será presidido por el Alcalde.

Art. 25.- Los Concejales o Regidores Suplentes podrán asistir a las sesiones con voz pero sin voto.

Art. 26.- Para ser miembro de un Concejo se requieren como únicos requisitos los siguientes:

- a) Ser salvadoreño por nacimiento o naturalización;
- b) Ser del estado seglar;
- c) Ser originario o tener por lo menos un año de ser vecino del Municipio respectivo a la fecha de la inscripción como candidato para la elección correspondiente;
- d) Haber cumplido veintiún años de edad;
- e) Ser de moralidad notoria;
- f) Saber leer y escribir;

- g) Estar en el ejercicio de los derechos de ciudadano.

Art. 27.- No podrán ser miembros del Concejo:

- a) Los que tengan suspendido o hayan perdido sus derechos de ciudadanos;
- b) Los que directa o indirectamente tengan parte o estén interesados en servicios públicos, contratos, concesiones o suministros con o por cuenta del Municipio;
- c) Los que tengan pendiente juicio contencioso administrativo o controversia judicial con el Municipio o con establecimiento que de él dependa o administre;
- d) Los parientes dentro del cuarto grado de consanguinidad o segundo de afinidad. En este caso, si el parentesco fuere entre el alcalde y uno de los Concejales se tendrá por electo al Alcalde, debiendo llenar la vacante el Concejal Suplente que el Concejo designare;
- e) Los destiladores y patentados para el expendio de aguardiente y sus administradores y dependientes;
- f) Los ciegos, mudos y los sordos;
- g) Los militares en servicio activo.

Las causales contempladas en este artículo que sobrevengan durante el ejercicio del cargo, pondrán fin a éste.

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**Art. 28.-** El cargo de Regidor o Concejal es obligatorio y únicamente podrá exonerarse del desempeño de sus funciones por justa causa calificada por el Consejo Central de Elecciones.

Los miembros de los Concejos Municipales podrán ser suspendidos temporalmente o destituidos de sus cargos por delito o falta grave tipificados en el Código Penal y por rebelarse a los acuerdos del Concejo Municipal en materias de competencia de éste.

En caso de comisión de delito o falta tipificada en el Código Penal la suspensión durará por el tiempo de privación de libertad ordenada por el Juez de la causa. En este caso el Juez librará oficio al Concejo Municipal respectivo, informado de la orden de detención y el Concejo con vista de dicho oficio acordará la suspensión y designará de su seno un sustituto.

En caso de rebelarse a los acuerdos del Concejo, éste lo consignará en acta y lo transcribirá al Tribunal Especial para conocer sobre denuncias a Miembros de Concejos, quien oír al denunciado e investigará el caso y recogerá la prueba del mismo, todo dentro del plazo de veinte días, después de lo cual resolverá lo conveniente, dentro de los ocho días hábiles siguientes. La resolución de dicho Tribunal sólo admitirá Recurso de Revisión. Ningún miembro de un Concejo podrá ser suspendido o destituido de su cargo, si no es de conformidad a este artículo.

El Tribunal a que se refiere el inciso anterior estará integrado por tres miembros nombrados, uno por la Asamblea Legislativa, otro por elección de los Alcaldes en funciones, de una terna presentada por la Corporación de Municipi-

palidades de la República de El Salvador, elección que será supervisada por dicha Corporación, y otro electo por el Consejo de Ministros de una terna presentada por el Ministro del Interior, quienes deberán ser Abogados de la República; será Presidente del Tribunal el miembro nombrado por la Asamblea Legislativa y durarán en sus funciones cinco años. No podrá nombrarse como miembro de este Tribunal a personas que forman parte de Concejos Municipales. Habrá igual número de suplentes nombrados en la misma forma. Los miembros del Tribunal devengarán dietas por cada sesión a que asistan, con un máximo de cuatro sesiones remuneradas por mes. El Tribunal tendrá jurisdicción en todo el territorio nacional y su sede será la capital de la República.

La suspensión cesará sin más trámites ni diligencias al decretarse por el Juez de la causa el sobreseimiento, revocarse el auto de detención, dictarse la sentencia absolutoria en su caso, o al concluir el lapso impuesto por la autoridad correspondiente.

*Se adicionaron los incisos 2, 3, 4, 5, y 6 por Decreto N° 791 del 9 de Octubre de 1987.*

*Diario Oficial N° 201 Tomo 297 del 30 de Octubre de 1987.*

*El mismo Decreto N° 791 estableció nuevas regulaciones, así:*

*Art. 3.- Las disposiciones de este Decreto son de orden público. Las suspensiones acordadas con anterioridad a la vigencia del mismo se consideran válidas, pero los miembros de los Concejos Municipales que hubiesen sido suspendidos podrán pedir la revisión de su caso al Tribunal Especial quien deberá investigar el caso y fallar dentro del plazo de 15 días de presentado el recurso, revocando o ratificando la suspensión.*



**Art. 4.-** *En lo que no estuviere previsto en el presente Decreto, se aplicarán las disposiciones del Código de Procedimientos Civiles.*

**Art. 29.- Derogado.**

*Derogado por el Art. 318 del Código Electoral.*

*Decreto N° 863 del 8 de Enero de 1988, Diario Oficial N° 12 Tomo N° 298 del 19 de Enero de 1988.*

**Art. 30.-** Son facultades del Concejo:

1. Nombrar de fuera de su seno al Secretario Municipal;
2. Nombrar al Tesorero, Gerentes, Directores o Jefes de las distintas dependencias de la Administración Municipal, de una tema propuesta por el Alcalde en cada caso;
3. Nombrar las comisiones que fueren necesarias y convenientes para el mejor cumplimiento de sus facultades y obligaciones que podrán integrarse con miembros de su seno o particulares;
4. Emitir ordenanzas, reglamentos y acuerdos para normar el Gobierno y la Administración municipal;
5. Aprobar los planes de desarrollo urbano y rural;

6. Aprobar el plan y los programas de trabajo de la gestión municipal;
7. Elaborar y aprobar el presupuesto de Ingreso y Egresos del Municipio;
8. Aprobar los contratos administrativos y de interés local cuya celebración convenga al Municipio;
9. Adjudicar la contratación de obras o adquisición de bienes muebles sometidos a licitación;
10. Emitir los acuerdos de creación de entidades municipales descentralizadas;
11. Emitir los acuerdos de cooperación con otros Municipios o instituciones;
12. Emitir los acuerdos de constitución y participación en las sociedades a que se refiere el artículo 18 de este Código;
13. Emitir los acuerdos de creación de fundaciones, asociaciones, empresas municipales y otras entidades encargadas de realizar actuaciones de carácter local;
14. Velar por la buena marcha del gobierno, administración y servicios municipales;
15. Conocer en apelación de las resoluciones pronunciadas por el Alcalde y en revisión de los acuerdos propios;
16. Designar apoderados judiciales o extrajudiciales que asuman la representación del municipio en determinados asuntos de su competencia, facultando al Alcalde o Síndico para que en su nombre otorguen los poderes o mandatos respectivos;
17. Autorizar las demandas que deban interponerse, el desistimiento de acciones y recursos

- en materias laborales y de tránsito, la renuncia de plazos, la celebración de transacciones y la designación de árbitros de hecho o de derecho;
18. Acordar la compra, venta, donación, arrendamiento y en general cualquier tipo de enajenación o gravamen de los bienes muebles e inmuebles del Municipio y cualquier otro tipo de contrato;
  19. Fijar para el año fiscal siguiente la remuneraciones y dietas que deban recibir el Alcalde, Síndico y Regidores.
  20. Conceder permiso o licencias temporales a los miembros del Concejo para ausentarse del ejercicio de sus cargos;
  21. Emitir los acuerdos de creación, modificación y supresión de tasas por servicio y contribuciones públicas para la realización de obras determinadas de interés local;
  22. Acordar la contratación de préstamos para obras y proyectos de interés local;
  23. Conceder la personalidad jurídica a las asociaciones comunales;
  24. Derogado.

*Derogado por Decreto N° 791 del 9 de Octubre de 1987.*

*Diario Oficial N° 201 Tomo 297 del 30 de Octubre de 1987.*

25. Designar de su seno al miembro que deba sustituir al Alcalde, Síndico o Regidor en caso de ausencia temporal o definitiva;

26. Designar al miembro del Concejo que deba desempeñar el cargo de Tesorero, en caso que dicho funcionario no estuviere nombrado;

**Art. 31.- Son obligaciones del Concejo:**

1. Llevar al día, mediante registros adecuados, el inventario de los bienes del Municipio;
2. Proteger y conservar los bienes del Municipio y establecer los casos de responsabilidad administrativa para quienes los tengan a su cargo, cuidado y custodia;
3. Elaborar y controlar la ejecución del plan y programas de desarrollo local;
4. Realizar la administración municipal en forma correcta, económica y eficaz;
5. Construir las obras necesarias para el mejoramiento y progreso de la comunidad y la prestación de servicios públicos locales en forma eficiente y económica;
6. Contribuir a la preservación de la salud y de los recursos naturales, fomento de la educación y la cultura, al mejoramiento económico-social y a la recreación de la comunidad;
7. Contribuir a la preservación de la moral, del civismo y de los derechos e intereses de los ciudadanos;
8. Llevar buenas relaciones con las instituciones públicas nacionales, regionales y departamentales, así como con otros Municipios y cooperar con ellos para el mejor cumplimiento de los fines de los mismos;

9. Mantener informada a la comunidad de la marcha de las actividades municipales e interesarla en la solución de sus problemas;
10. Sesionar ordinariamente por lo menos una vez cada quince días y extraordinariamente cuantas veces sea necesario y previa convocatoria del señor Alcalde, por sí o a solicitud del Síndico o de dos o más Regidores;
11. Cumplir y hacer cumplir las demás atribuciones que le señalan las leyes, ordenanzas y reglamentos.

### CAPITULO III DE LOS INSTRUMENTOS JURIDICOS

**Art. 32.-** Las ordenanzas son normas de aplicación general dentro del Municipio sobre asuntos de interés local. Entrarán en vigencia ocho días después de su publicación en el Diario Oficial.

**Art. 33.-** Los reglamentos constituyen normas, disposiciones y mandatos sobre el régimen interno municipal y de prestación de servicios. Entrarán en vigencia ocho días después de ser decretados.

**Art. 34.-** Los acuerdos son disposiciones específicas que expresan las decisiones del Concejo Municipal sobre asuntos de gobierno, administrativos o de procedimientos con interés particular. Surtirán efectos inmediatamente.

**Art. 35.-** Las ordenanzas, reglamentos y acuerdos son de obligatorio cumplimiento por parte de los particulares y de las autoridades nacionales, departamentales y municipales.

Las autoridades nacionales están obligadas a colaborar para que las decisiones municipales tengan el debido cumplimiento.

### TITULO V DEL CONCEJO Y DE LOS FUNCIONARIOS Y EMPLEADOS

#### CAPITULO I DEL CONCEJO

**Art. 36.-** Las sesiones del Concejo serán presididas por el Alcalde. En defecto de éste, por el Concejal que se designare para tal efecto.

**Art. 37.-** Las sesiones pueden ser ordinarias y extraordinarias y serán celebradas en el edificio de la Municipalidad, salvo que el Concejo acordare reunirse en otro lugar dentro de su jurisdicción.

**Art. 38.-** El Concejo celebrará sesión ordinaria en los primeros cinco días de cada quincena, previa convocatoria con dos días de anticipación por lo menos y extraordinaria, de conformidad al numeral diez del artículo 31 de este Código. Pudiendo declararse en sesión permanente si la importancia y urgencia del asunto lo amerita.

**Art. 39.-** Las sesiones del Concejo serán privadas, salvo que éste acordare hacerlas públicas, y en ellas podrá tener participación cualquier miembro de la comunidad de su comprensión, con voz pero sin voto, previamente autorizado por el Concejo.

**Art. 40.-** No podrá celebrarse sesión extraordinaria sin que preceda la citación personal de los miembros del Concejo, hecha en forma personal y escrita por lo menos a veinticuatro horas de anticipación debiendo mencionarse el asunto a tratar.

**Art. 41.-** Para celebrar sesión se necesita que concurra por lo menos la mitad más uno de los miembros propietarios del Concejo.

La ausencia de un propietario se suplirá por cualquiera de los suplentes a efecto de formar el quórum.

**Art. 42.-** El Alcalde someterá al conocimiento del Concejo los asuntos que le competan, adjuntando el informe de la Comisión respectiva, o el dictamen del Síndico cuando lo hubiere.

**Art. 43.-** Para que haya resoluciones se requiere el voto favorable de la mitad más uno de los miembros que integran el Concejo, salvo los casos en que la ley exija una mayoría especial. En caso de empate el Alcalde tendrá voto calificado.

**Art. 44.-** Todos los miembros del Concejo están obligados a asistir puntualmente a las sesiones, con voz y voto y no podrán retirarse de las mismas una vez dispuesta la votación pero si algún miembro; su cónyuge o pariente

dentro del tercer grado de consanguinidad o segundo de afinidad tuviere interés personal en el negocio de que se trata, deberá abstenerse de emitir su voto, retirándose de la sesión mientras se resuelve el asunto, incorporándose posteriormente a la misma.

**Art. 45.-** Cuando algún miembro del Concejo salve su voto, estará exento de responsabilidad, debiéndose hacer constar en el acta respectiva dicha salvedad.

**Art. 46.-** Los Regidores, propietarios y suplentes, podrán devengar por cada sesión a la que asistan previa convocatoria, una dieta que fijará el Concejo, de acuerdo a la capacidad económica del Municipio; estas no excederán de cuatro en el mes.

## **CAPITULO II DEL ALCALDE**

**Art. 47.-** El Alcalde representa legal y administrativamente al Municipio. Es el titular del gobierno y de la administración municipal.

**Art. 48.-** Corresponde al Alcalde:

1. Presidir las sesiones del Concejo y representarlo legalmente;
2. Llevar las relaciones entre la municipalidad que representa y los organismos públicos y privados, así como con los ciudadanos en general;

3. Convocar por sí, o a petición del Síndico, o de dos Concejales por lo menos a sesión extraordinaria del Concejo;
4. Cumplir y hacer cumplir las ordenanzas, reglamentos y acuerdos emitidos por el Concejo;
5. Ejercer las funciones de gobierno y administración municipales expidiendo al efecto, los acuerdos, órdenes e instrucciones necesarias y dictando las medidas que fueren convenientes a la buena marcha del Municipio y a las políticas emanadas del Concejo;
6. Resolver los casos y asuntos particulares de gobierno y administración;
7. Nombrar y remover a los funcionarios y empleados cuyo nombramiento no estuviere reservado al Concejo;
8. Organizar y dirigir la Policía Municipal;
9. Lo demás que la ley, ordenanzas y reglamentos le señalen.

**Art. 49.-** El Alcalde debe ser equitativamente remunerado atendiendo las posibilidades económicas del Municipio. la remuneración se fijará en el presupuesto respectivo. El Alcalde que se ausentare en cumplimiento de misión oficial gozará de la remuneración que le corresponde y el Concejales que lo sustituya gozará igualmente de remuneración calculada en igual cuantía por todo el tiempo que dure la sustitución.

**Art. 50.-** El Alcalde puede delegar previo acuerdo del Concejo, la dirección de determinadas funciones con facultades para que firmen a su nombre a funcionarios municipales que responderán por el desempeño de las mismas ante él y

el Concejo y serán además, directa y exclusivamente responsables por cualquier faltante, malversación o defectuosa rendición de cuentas ante la Corte de Cuentas de la República.

### CAPITULO III DEL SINDICO

**Art. 51.-** Además de sus atribuciones y deberes como miembros del Concejo, corresponde al Síndico:

- a) Representar y defender judicial y extrajudicialmente los intereses del Municipio en todo lo relacionado con los bienes, derechos y obligaciones municipales conforme a la ley y a las instrucciones del Concejo. No obstante lo anterior, el Concejo podrá nombrar apoderados generales y especiales;
- b) Velar por que los contratos que celebre la municipalidad se ajuste a las prescripciones legales;
- c) Emitir dictamen en forma razonada y oportuna en los asuntos que el Concejo o Alcalde le soliciten;
- d) Examinar y fiscalizar las cuentas municipales, proponiendo al Concejo las medidas que tiendan a evitar inversiones ilegales, indebidas o abusos en el manejo de los recursos del Municipio;
- e) Asesorar al Concejo y al Alcalde;

- f) Velar por el estricto cumplimiento de este Código, ordenanzas, reglamentos y acuerdos municipales;
- g) Transar en asuntos legales previa autorización del Concejo.

**Art. 52.-** El Síndico de preferencia deberá ser Abogado y podrá ser remunerado con sueldo o dietas a criterio del Concejo.

#### **CAPITULO IV DE LOS REGIDORES O CONCEJALES**

**Art. 53.-** Corresponde a los Regidores o Concejales:

1. Concurrir con voz y voto a las sesiones del Concejo;
2. Integrar y desempeñar las comisiones para las que fueron designadas, actuando en las mismas con la mayor eficiencia y prontitud y dando cuenta de su cometido en cada sesión o cuando para ello fueren requeridos;
3. Las demás que les correspondan por la ley, ordenanzas o reglamentos.

#### **CAPITULO V DEL SECRETARIO DEL CONCEJO**

**Art. 54.-** El Concejo funcionará asistido de un Secretario nombrado por el mismo de fuera de su seno. Podrá ser removido en cualquier tiempo sin expresión de causa.

**Art. 55.-** Son deberes del Secretario:

1. Asistir a las sesiones del Concejo y elaborar las correspondientes actas;
2. Autorizar las ordenanzas y demás instrumentos jurídicos que emita el Concejo;
3. Comunicar a los Concejales las convocatorias para que concurran a las sesiones;
4. Llevar los libros, expedientes y documentos del Concejo, custodiar su archivo y conservarlo organizado, de acuerdo con las técnicas más adecuadas;
5. Despachar las comunicaciones que emanen del Concejo y llevar con exactitud un registro de todos los expedientes o documentos que se entreguen;
6. Expedir de conformidad con la ley, certificaciones de las actas del Concejo o de cualquier otro documento que repose en los archivos, previa autorización del Alcalde o quien haga sus veces;
7. Dar cuenta en las sesiones de todos los asuntos que le ordene el Alcalde o quien presida el Concejo;
8. Dirigir el personal y los trabajos de la Secretaría del Concejo.
9. Auxiliar a las comisiones designadas por el Concejo y facilitar el trabajo que se les encomiende;
10. Los demás que les señalen las leyes, ordenanzas y reglamentos.

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**Art. 56.-** En caso de ausencia o falta del Secretario, el Concejo podrá designar interinamente a cualquiera de los Concejales para que desempeñe el cargo temporalmente.

## **CAPITULO VI DISPOSICIONES COMUNES**

**Art. 57.-** Los miembros del Concejo y su Secretario en el ejercicio de sus funciones responderán individualmente por abuso de poder por omisión en la aplicación de la Ley o por violación de la misma.

*Sustituido por Decreto N° 542 del 11 de Diciembre de 1986.*

*Diario Oficial N° 241 Tomo 293 del 24 de Diciembre de 1986.*

**Art. 58.-** Los miembros del Concejo cuando desempeñen algún cargo o empleo público o privado compatible, no podrán ser trasladados sin su consentimiento a otro lugar que les impida el ejercicio de su función edilicia, y su jefe o patrono estará en la obligación de concederle permiso con goce de sueldo para que concurra a la sesión.

**Art. 59.-** Se prohíbe a los miembros del Concejo:

- a) Intervenir en la resolución de asuntos municipales en que ellos estén interesados personalmente, su cónyuge o parientes hasta el tercer grado de consanguinidad o segundo

de afinidad, o empresas en las cuales sean accionistas o ejecutivos;

- b) Celebrar contratos por sí o por interpósita persona sobre bienes o rentas del Municipio cuyo Concejo integra, de entidades descentralizadas o de cualquiera otra naturaleza en que el Municipio tengan interés. Se exceptúa de esta prohibición los contratos que celebren con usuarios de los servicios públicos locales.

Será nulo lo efectuado en contravención de este artículo y responderá al Municipio por los daños causados a éste.

## **TITULO VI DE LA HACIENDA PUBLICA MUNICIPAL**

### **CAPITULO I DE LOS BIENES, INGRESOS Y OBLIGACIONES**

**Art. 60.-** La Hacienda Pública Municipal comprende los bienes, ingresos y obligaciones del Municipio. Gozarán de las mismas exoneraciones, garantías y privilegios que los bienes del Estado.

**Art. 61.-** Son bienes del Municipio:

1. Los de uso público, tales como plazas, áreas verdes y otros análogos;
2. Los bienes muebles o inmuebles, derechos o

acciones que por cualquier título ingresen al patrimonio municipal o haya adquirido o adquiriera el Municipio o se hayan destinado o se destinen a algún establecimiento público municipal.

**Art. 62.-** Los bienes de uso público del Municipio son inalienables e imprescriptibles, salvo que el Concejo con el voto de las tres cuartas partes de sus miembros acordare desafectarlos.

**Art. 63.-** Son ingresos del Municipio:

1. El producto de los impuestos, tasas y contribuciones municipales;
2. El producto de las penas o sanciones pecuniarias de toda índole impuestas por la autoridad municipal competente, así como el de aquellas penas o sanciones que se liquiden con destino al Municipio de conformidad a otras leyes. Igualmente los recargos e intereses que perciban conforme a esas leyes, ordenanzas o reglamentos;
3. Los intereses producidos por cualquier clase de crédito municipal y recargos que se impongan;
4. El producto de la administración de los servicios públicos municipales;
5. Las rentas de todo género que el Municipio obtenga de las instituciones municipales autónoma y de las empresas mercantiles en que participe o que sean de su propiedad;
6. Los dividendos o utilidades que le correspondan por las acciones o aportes que tengan

7. en sociedad de cualquier género;
7. Las subvenciones, donaciones y legados que reciba;
8. El producto de los contratos que celebre;
9. Los frutos civiles de los bienes municipales o que se obtengan con ocasión de otros ingresos municipales, así como los intereses y premios devengados por las cantidades de dinero consignados en calidad de depósitos en cualquier banco o asociación de ahorro y préstamo;
10. El aporte proveniente del fondo para el desarrollo económico y social de los Municipios establecido en el inciso tercero del artículo 207, de la Constitución en la forma y cuantía que fije la ley;
11. Las contribuciones y derechos especiales previstos en otras leyes;
12. El producto de los empréstitos, préstamos y demás operaciones de crédito que obtenga;
13. El precio de la venta de los bienes muebles e inmuebles municipales que efectuare;
14. Los aportes especiales o extraordinarios que le acuerdan organismos estatales o autónomos;
15. Cualquiera otra que determinen las leyes, reglamentos u ordenanzas.

**Art. 64.-** El pago de impuestos, tasas y contribuciones y demás recargos provenientes de esos rubros es imprescriptible.

**Art. 65.-** En ningún caso de transacción habrá responsabilidad pecuniaria para los miembros del Concejo.



**Art. 66.-** Son obligaciones a cargo del Municipio:

1. Las legalmente contraídas por el Municipio derivadas de la ejecución del Presupuesto de Gastos;
2. Las deudas provenientes de la ejecución de presupuestos fenecidos, reconocidos conforme al ordenamiento legal vigente;
3. Las provenientes de la deuda pública municipal contraídas de conformidad con la ley;
4. Las deudas, derechos y prestaciones, reconocidos o transados por el Municipio, de acuerdo con las leyes o a cuyo pago hubiese sido condenado por sentencia ejecutoriada de los tribunales;
5. Los valores legalmente consignados por terceros y que el Municipio esté obligado a devolver de acuerdo a la ley;
6. El valor de las colectas voluntarias para obras de interés común o servicios públicos aportados por terceros que no llegaren a realizarse o a prestarse.

**Art. 67.-** La contratación de empréstitos o préstamos con instituciones financieras extranjeras con aval del Estado, requerirán la autorización y aprobación de la Asamblea Legislativa.

**Art. 68.-** Se prohíbe a los Municipios ceder o donar a particulares a título gratuito cualquier parte de sus bienes de cualquier naturaleza que fueren, o dispensar el pago de impuestos, tasa o contribución alguna establecidos por ley en beneficio de sus ingresos; salvo el caso de materiales o

bienes para vivienda, alimentación y otros análogos, en casos de calamidad pública o de grave necesidad.

**Art. 69.-** La ordenanza que establezca o modifique tasas o contribuciones municipales deberá determinar la materia o acto gravado, la cuantía del tributo, el modo, el término y la oportunidad en que éstas se causen o la hagan exigibles, las demás obligaciones a cargo de los contribuyentes, los recursos administrativos en favor de éstos y las penas o sanciones pertinentes.

**Art. 70.-** Los Municipios podrán celebrar acuerdos entre sí para la unificación y cobro de las tarifas de determinadas tasas y contribuciones. En estos acuerdos se deberán señalar los derechos y obligaciones recíprocos de los Municipios participantes, así como las demás modalidades y cláusulas que se estime convenientes.

**Art. 71.-** Los impuestos, tasas y contribuciones que no fueren pagados en el plazo establecido, causarán un interés moratorio equivalente al interés máximo vigente al primero de enero de cada año que fije la Junta Monetaria para las deudas contraídas por el sector comercial hasta la fecha de su cancelación.

## CAPITULO II DEL PRESUPUESTO

**Art. 72.-** Los Municipios están obligados a desarrollar su actuación administrativa y de gobierno, por un Presupuesto de Ingresos y Egresos aprobado con iguales formali-

dades que las ordenanzas y con el voto de los dos tercios de los Concejales.

El presupuesto se inicia el primero de enero y termina el treinta y uno de diciembre de cada año.

**Art. 73.-** El presupuesto comprenderá las disposiciones generales; el Presupuesto de Ingresos y el Presupuesto de Egresos. El Concejo podrá incorporar los anexos que considere necesario.

En cuanto a lo dispuesto en el inciso anterior, solamente las cabeceras departamentales tendrán la obligación de publicar en el Diario Oficial o en uno de mayor circulación del país, un extracto de su contenido el cual contendrá el encabezamiento del acuerdo respectivo, los sumarios de Ingresos y Egresos, los artículos pertinentes de las disposiciones generales, los anexos relativos a los gastos fijos, el lugar y fecha de su aprobación, los nombres y cargos de los miembros del Concejo que autoricen dicho acuerdo.

La publicación a que se refiere el inciso que antecede y que se efectúe en un diario de mayor circulación nacional, se contará su vigencia a partir del día siguiente de esta publicación.

*Sustituido por Decreto N° 542 del 11 de Diciembre de 1986.*

*Diario Oficial N° 241 Tomo 293 del 24 de Diciembre de 1986.*

**Art. 74.-** Las disposiciones generales estarán constituidas por todas aquellas normas que se consideren complementarias, reglamentarias, explicativas o necesarias para la ejecución de los presupuestos de ingresos y egresos y de los anexos que contenga.

El Concejo podrá aprobar tales disposiciones con el carácter de permanentes, en forma separada del Presupuesto de Ingresos y del Presupuesto de Egresos, no siendo necesario en este caso incorporarlas en cada presupuesto anual de Ingresos y de Egresos. También queda facultado el Concejo para autorizar modificaciones o adiciones a las mismas Disposiciones Generales cuando lo estime conveniente.

*Se adicionó el 2° inciso por Decreto N° 542 del 11 de Diciembre de 1986.*

*Diario Oficial N° 241 Tomo 293 del 24 de Diciembre de 1986.*

**Art. 75.-** El Presupuesto de Ingresos contendrá la numeración de los diversos ingresos municipales cuya recaudación se autorice, con la estimación prudencial de las cantidades que se presupone habrán de ingresar por cada año en el año económico que deba regir, así como cualesquiera otros recursos financieros permitidos por la ley.

Se prohíbe la estimación de ingresos que no tengan base legal para su percepción cierta y efectiva.

**Art. 76.-** El Presupuesto de Egresos contendrá las partidas correspondientes para la atención de las funciones, actividades y servicios municipales, así como las que correspondan a inversiones y a aportes para fundaciones,

**empresas, sociedades, instituciones municipales autónomas y demás organismos de carácter municipal o intermunicipal.**

**Art. 77.-** El monto del Presupuesto de Egresos no podrá exceder del total de Presupuesto de Ingresos, cuando fuere indispensable para cumplir con esta disposición se podrá incluir las existencias de caja provenientes de economía o superávit estimados al treinta y uno de diciembre del año de presentación del proyecto.

El presupuesto de Egresos podrá ser ampliado en el curso del ejercicio, con motivo de ingresos extraordinarios de cualquier naturaleza o cuando se establezca el superávit real.

**Art. 78.-** El Concejo, no podrá acordar ningún gasto para el cual no exista previsión presupuestaria. Asimismo no podrá autorizar egresos de fondos que no estén consignados expresamente en el presupuesto.

**Art. 79.-** Las empresas municipales y las instituciones municipales autónomas tendrán su propio presupuesto, aprobado por el Concejo.

**Art. 80.-** El Alcalde elaborará el proyecto de presupuesto correspondiente al año inmediato siguiente oyendo la opinión de los Concejales y jefes de las distintas dependencias, procurando conciliar sus observaciones y aspiraciones con los objetivos y metas propuestas.

**Art. 81.-** El proyecto del Presupuesto de Ingresos y Egresos deberá someterse a consideración del Concejo antes del quince de noviembre de cada año. El Concejo podrá

modificar el presupuesto pero no podrá autorizar gastos que excedan del monto de las estimaciones del respectivo proyecto.

*Reformado por Decreto N° 542 del 11 de Diciembre de 1986.*

*Diario Oficial N° 241 Tomo 293 del 24 de Diciembre de 1986.*

**Art. 82.-** Si al primero de enero no estuviese en vigencia el presupuesto de ese año, se aplicará el del año anterior hasta que entre en vigencia el nuevo presupuesto.

**Art. 83.-** Para cada ejercicio presupuestario el Concejo aprobará la programación de la ejecución física y financiera del presupuesto especificando, entre otros aspectos, los compromisos y desembolsos máximos que podrán contraer o efectuar para cada trimestre del ejercicio presupuestario.

**Art. 84.-** El Alcalde informará al Concejo mensualmente sobre los resultados de la ejecución del Presupuesto.

**Art. 85.-** Inmediatamente después de aprobado el presupuesto, el Concejo enviará un ejemplar a la Corte de Cuentas de la República.

**CAPITULO III  
DE LA RECAUDACION, CUSTODIA Y  
EROGACION DE FONDOS**

**Art. 86.-** El Municipio tendrá un Tesorero, a cuyo cargo estará la recaudación y custodia de los fondos municipales y la ejecución de los pagos respectivos.

Para que sean de legítimo abono los pagos hechos por los Tesoreros o por los que hagan sus veces, deberán estar los recibos firmados por los recipientes u otras personas a su ruego si no supieren o no pudieren firmar, y contendrán el "VISTO BUENO" del Síndico Municipal y el "DESE" del Alcalde, con el sello correspondiente, en su caso.

Corresponde la refrenda de cheques a dos miembros del Concejo electos por acuerdo del mismo.

**Art. 87.-** Los ingresos municipales de toda naturaleza se centralizarán en el fondo general del Municipio.

**Art. 88.-** De todo ingreso que perciba el Municipio se extenderá comprobante en los formularios que para tal objeto tenga autorizados por la Corte de Cuentas de la República.

**Art. 89.-** Los Municipios podrán contratar o convenir la recaudación de sus ingresos con otros Municipios, con el Organó Ejecutivo del Estado, instituciones autónomas, bancos, instituciones oficiales de ahorro y préstamo y empresas nacionales, mixtas y privadas de reconocida solvencia, siempre y cuando ello asegure la recaudación más eficaz y a menor costo. En estos acuerdos se señalarán los sistemas de recaudación, porcentajes de comisión, forma y

oportunidad en que los Municipios reciban el monto de lo recaudado y todo lo demás que fuere necesario.

**Art. 90.-** Los ingresos municipales se depositarán a más tardar el día siguiente hábil en cualquier banco del sistema, salvo que no hubiere banco, sucursal o agencia en la localidad, quedando en estos casos, a opción del Concejo la decisión de depositar sus fondos en cualquier banco, sucursal o agencia inmediata.

**Art. 91.-** Las erogaciones de fondos deberán ser acordadas previamente por el Concejo, las que serán comunicadas al Tesorero para efectos de pago, salvo los gastos fijos debidamente consignados en el presupuesto municipal aprobado, que no necesitarán la autorización del Concejo.

**Art. 92.-** En los casos en que los Municipios tengan sus fondos depositados en instituciones financieras, están obligados a efectuar sus pagos por medio de cheques.

**Art. 93.-** Para atender gastos de menor cuantía o de carácter urgente se podrán crear fondos circulantes cuyo monto y procedimientos se establecerán en el presupuesto municipal.

La liquidación del fondo circulante se hará al final de cada ejercicio y los reintegros al fondo por pagos y gastos efectuados se harán cuando menos cada mes.

El encargado del fondo circulante responderá solidariamente con el ordenador de pagos que designare el Concejo.

**Art. 94.-** Las erogaciones para ejecución de obras, prestación de servicios por medio de terceros y adquisición de suministros superiores a quinientos mil colones se deberán realizar previa licitación pública.

Las erogaciones para iguales objetos mayores de cien mil colones y menores de quinientos mil colones se harán previa licitación privada.

Los gastos menores de cien mil colones, no necesitarán licitación alguna.

No obstante lo dispuesto en los incisos anteriores, cualquier Corporación Municipal podrá encargar la realización de las obras, trabajos o la prestación de servicios municipales, a que se refiere el presente artículo, a cualquiera de los Organismos del Estado, ya sea del Gobierno Central o de Instituciones Oficiales Autónomas, a las cuales proporcionarán los planos, presupuestos y especificaciones correspondientes. Si los expresados Organismos aceptaren la ejecución de la obra o prestación del servicio de que se trate, queda facultada la Municipalidad interesada para celebrar sin más trámite y por medio del Alcalde o el funcionario que ésta autorice, el respectivo contrato con el representante autorizado del correspondiente Organismo. En este caso no será necesaria la rendición de fianzas, ni de ninguna otra clase de garantías.

También podrá el Concejo, si lo juzga conveniente, autorizar para que se realicen las obras y trabajos o se presten los servicios por el sistema de administración a cargo del mismo Concejo, pero sólo en el caso de que no se presenten ofertas en la tercera licitación o cuando, los estudios de factibilidad, planos y presupuestos hayan sido

elaborados por la Dirección General de Urbanismo y Arquitectura, y la ejecución de tales obras o trabajos, o prestación de servicios sea dirigida y supervisada por esa Dirección General, con la vigilancia del Ministerio del Interior.

*Se adicionaron los incisos 4° y 5° por Decreto N° 793 del 9 de Octubre de 1987.*

*Diario Oficial N° 191 Tomo 297 del 16 de Octubre de 1987.*

**Art. 95.-** Los sueldos de los funcionarios y empleados del Municipio podrán pagarse hasta con diez días hábiles de anticipación a su vencimiento.

**Art. 96.-** Podrá pagarse anticipos para dar inicio a la construcción de obras, prestación de servicios y compra de suministro contratados, sin que los mismos puedan exceder del 25% del valor total de la obra, servicio o suministro.

**Art. 97.-** El Tesorero, funcionarios y empleados que tengan a su cargo la recaudación o custodia de fondos, deberán rendir fianza a satisfacción del Concejo, excepto cuando el cargo fuere desempeñado por algún miembro del mismo.

**Art. 98.-** Las empresas municipales, las instituciones municipales autónomas, fundaciones y demás entidades dependientes del Municipio que guarden autonomía administrativa, patrimonial o presupuestaria se arreglarán en lo referente a la recaudación, custodia y erogación de fondos a lo dispuesto en este capítulo y a las normas que dictare el Concejo.

**Art. 99.-** Los sistemas y normas que regulen la recaudación, custodia y erogación de fondos serán acordados por el Concejo.

**Art. 100.-** Tendrá fuerza ejecutiva el informe del Tesorero Municipal, quien haga sus veces o el funcionario encargado al efecto, en el que conste lo que una persona natural o jurídica adeude al Municipio, debidamente certificado por el Alcalde.

En los registros de la Propiedad Raíz e Hipotecas de la República no se inscribirá ningún instrumento o documento en el que aparezca transferencia o gravamen sobre inmueble o inmuebles, a cualquier título que fuere, si no se presenta al Registrador solvencia de impuestos municipales sobre el bien o bienes raíces objeto del traspaso o gravamen.

Tampoco se inscribirán en los Registros de Comercio las escrituras en que se constituya sociedad mercantil, o en que se modifiquen dichas escrituras o en que se disuelva la sociedad, sin que se les presente a los Registradores de Comercio, solvencia de impuestos municipales de los socios o de la sociedad, según el caso.

*Quedó sin efecto el inciso último del artículo 100 por haberse declarado inconstitucional por sentencia de la Corte Suprema de Justicia, el 18 de Junio de 1987. Por tal motivo no aparece aquí.  
Diario Oficial N° 120 Tomo 296 del uno de Julio de 1987.*

**Art. 101.-** Las solvencias se expedirán en papel simple, libres de todo impuesto o contribución e irán firmadas y selladas por el Tesorero Municipal y por el funcionario encargado al efecto.

**Art. 102.-** Podrá extenderse solvencia, no obstante que estuviere pendiente de resolución cualquier recurso o impugnación, mediante caución otorgada por el interesado igual al monto adeudado más una tercera parte del mismo.

Se admitirá como caución:

- a) Depósito de dinero en efectivo;
- b) Depósito de letras o bonos, cédulas hipotecarias u otros títulos garantizados por el Estado o Instituciones Oficiales Autónomas;
- c) Fianza Hipotecaria;
- d) Fianza Bancaria.

#### **CAPITULO IV DE LA CONTABILIDAD Y AUDITORIA**

**Art. 103.-** El Municipio está obligado a llevar contabilidad debidamente organizada de acuerdo con alguno de los sistemas generalmente aceptados, autorizados por la Corte de Cuentas de la República. Asimismo estará obligado a conservar en buen orden la correspondencia y demás documentos probatorios.

El Municipio debe llevar obligatoriamente los registros contables Diario y Mayor y los demás que fueren necesarios por exigencias contables o por ley.

Por excepción, los Municipios con ingresos anuales inferiores a quinientos mil colones, no estarán obligados a llevar registros contables Diario y Mayor si no que bastará que lleven libros de ingresos por cada ramo, haciendo constar el día, mes y año a que corresponde el ingreso y el

nombre del enterante. En el segundo libro se llevará una cuenta detallada de las inversiones que se hagan en cada mes en los diferentes objetos de la administración, con separación de ramo y con expresión de fecha y causa de la erogación.

**Art. 104.-** Los registros obligatorios deben llevarse en libros foliados, autorizados y sellados por la Corte de Cuentas de la República.

Estos libros también podrán formarse con hojas separadas, las que deberán ser previamente presentadas a la Corte de Cuentas de la República quien las sellará, numerará y autorizará mediante razón puesta en la primera hoja.

**Art. 105.-** En los libros a que se refiere el artículo anterior, los Municipios deben asentar sus operaciones diariamente y llevar su contabilidad con claridad, en orden cronológico, sin espacios en blanco, interpolaciones, raspaduras ni tachaduras y sin presentar señales de alteración.

Se salvarán a continuación, inmediatamente de advertidos, los errores y omisiones en que se incurriere al escribir en los registros, explicando claramente en que consiste y asentando el concepto tal como debió haberse escrito.

Si con posterioridad al asiento de la operación se advirtiere error u omisión en el mismo, inmediatamente se hará el oportuno asiento de rectificación.

**Art. 106.-** Los Municipios con ingresos anuales superiores a dos millones de colones, deberán tener auditoría interna, con autoridad e independencia orgánica y funcional para ejercer el control, la vigilancia y la fiscalización

de los ingresos, gastos y bienes municipales. Estará sometida a las leyes y ordenanzas del Municipio.

La auditoría estará bajo la responsabilidad y dirección de un auditor que nombrará el Concejo por todo el periodo de sus funciones, pudiendo ser nombrado para otros periodos.

**Art. 107.-** Los Municipios con ingresos anuales superiores a cuatro millones de colones, deberán contratar un auditor externo para efectos de control, vigilancia y fiscalización de los ingresos, gastos y bienes municipales.

El auditor externo será nombrado por el Concejo para el periodo de un año calendario, pudiendo ser nombrado para otros periodos.

Los emolumentos del auditor externo e interno serán fijados por el Concejo.

## CAPITULO V DEL CONTROL ADMINISTRATIVO

**Art. 108.-** Además de lo previsto en este Código, la Corte de Cuentas de la República ejercerá la vigilancia, fiscalización y control a posteriori sobre la ejecución del presupuesto de las municipalidades, para lo cual aplicará las normas sobre la materia, establecida en la Ley.

**Art. 109.-** El resultado de las investigaciones que practique la Corte de Cuentas de la República en la administración de las municipalidades y organismos que de ellas

dependan, le será informado al Concejo con indicación de las omisiones, negligencias, violaciones a la ley, faltas o delitos que puedan haberse cometido, señalando el procedimiento adecuado para corregir las deficiencias.

## TITULO VII DEL REGIMEN DEL PERSONAL CAPITULO UNICO

**Art. 110.-** Los Municipios deberán establecer en su jurisdicción la carrera administrativa de conformidad a la ley de la materia y podrán asociarse con otros para el mismo fin.

**Art. 111.-** No podrá ser empleado municipal el cónyuge o pariente hasta el tercer grado de consanguinidad y segundo de afinidad de alguno de los miembros del Concejo.

La condición señalada en el inciso anterior no se hará efectiva si al elegirse a un miembro del Concejo, su pariente ya figurare como empleado.

## TITULO VIII DE LAS EXENCIONES Y BENEFICIOS CAPITULO UNICO

**Art. 112.-** Los Municipios gozarán de :

- a) Exención de toda clase de impuestos, tasas, derechos y demás contribuciones fiscales

- b) establecidos o que se establezcan;  
Franquicia para la importación de maquinaria, equipo, materiales de construcción, útiles y demás elementos necesarios para la instalación y mantenimiento de sus oficinas, planteles, dependencias y servicios. La importación de los efectos amparados por esta franquicia se llevará a cabo con sujeción a las leyes vigentes en la materia y comprende la liberación de derechos y gastos que cause la visación de los documentos exigibles para el registro aduanal.

**Art. 113.-** Los Municipios podrán usar sin pagar remuneración, impuestos, tasas, derechos o contribuciones de cualquier índole, los bienes nacionales de uso público actuando en cumplimiento a sus fines y con arreglo a las leyes.

**Art. 114.-** Todos los servicios públicos prestados por los Municipios al Gobierno Central e instituciones oficiales autónomas deberán serles pagados por la institución que los recibe.

En el caso de que la institución del Gobierno Central u oficial autónoma, prestaren a su vez algún servicio al Municipio, podrán hacerse la compensación del caso y pagará la diferencia si la hubiere, la parte a quien corresponda.



**TITULO IX  
DE LA PARTICIPACION  
DE LA COMUNIDAD**

**CAPITULO I  
DE LOS CABILDOS ABIERTOS**

**Art. 115.-** Los Concejos deberán celebrar Cabildos Abiertos por lo menos cada tres meses para informar públicamente de la gestión municipal, tratar las materias que los vecinos hubieren solicitado y los que el mismo Concejo considerare conveniente.

A los Cabildos Abiertos podrá asistir todo vecino del Municipio y participar en la discusión de los puntos que se traten, asimismo podrá formular sugerencias y hacer preguntas sobre las materias inscritas en la agenda del día.

A los Cabildos Abiertos deberá invitarse a los vecinos del Municipio y a las organizaciones gremiales, sociales, culturales, de la comunidad.

**Art. 116.-** Cuando el Concejo considere conveniente o desee conocer la voluntad ciudadana respecto a un determinado proyecto o política a desarrollar, podrá convocar a los ciudadanos de su comprensión para que por medio de la consulta popular, puedan expresar su opinión.

El Concejo no podrá actuar en contra de la opinión de la mayoría expresada en la consulta.

En estas consultas se tomará en cuenta únicamente a los ciudadanos domiciliados en el respectivo Municipio y

bastará mostrar la Cédula de Identidad Personal para ejercer este derecho.

**Art. 117.-** En los casos de Cabildo Abierto o consulta popular, el Secretario del Concejo, levantará acta de todo lo actuado.

**CAPITULO II  
DE LAS ASOCIACIONES COMUNALES**

**Art. 118.-** Los habitantes de las comunidades en los barrios, colonias, cantones y caseríos, podrán constituir asociaciones comunales para participar organizadamente en el estudio, análisis de la realidad social y de los problemas y necesidades de la comunidad, así como en la elaboración e impulso de soluciones y proyectos de beneficio para la misma. Las asociaciones podrán participar en el campo social, económico, cultural, religioso, cívico, educativo y en cualquiera otra que fuere legal y provechoso a la comunidad.

**Art. 119.-** Las asociaciones comunales, tendrán personalidad jurídica otorgada por el Concejo respectivo.

**Art. 120.-** Las asociaciones comunales se constituirán con no menos de veinticinco miembros de la comunidad, mediante acto constituido celebrado ante el Alcalde o funcionarios y empleados delegados para tal efecto, el cual se asentará en un acta. Además deberán elaborar sus propios estatutos que contendrán disposiciones relativas al nombre de la asociación, su carácter democrático, domicilio, territorio, objeto, administración, órganos directivos y sus atribu-

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ciones, quórum reglamentario, derechos y obligaciones de la asociación, normas de control, fiscalización interna, modificación de estatutos y todas las demás disposiciones necesarias para su funcionamiento.

La constitución y aprobación de estatutos se hará en Asamblea General Extraordinaria especialmente convocada al efecto.

**Art. 121.-** Las Asociaciones constituidas de conformidad al artículo anterior presentarán solicitud de inscripción y otorgamiento de personalidad jurídica al Concejo, adjuntando los estatutos y éste deberá resolver a más tardar dentro de los quince días siguientes.

En el acuerdo de aprobación y sus estatutos deberán ser publicados en el Diario Oficial.

**Art. 122.-** Las asociaciones comunales actualmente existentes con cualquier nombre que se les conozca y cualquier otro tipo de asociación similar existente con personalidad otorgada por el Ministerio del Interior, serán reconocidas en los términos de esta ley, debiendo dicho Ministerio trasladar a los respectivos Municipios los expedientes correspondientes a la constitución y actuaciones de las asociaciones.

**Art. 123.-** Los Municipios deberán propiciar la incorporación de los ciudadanos en las asociaciones comunales y su participación organizada a través de las mismas.

De igual manera a través de las asociaciones deberán propiciar el apoyo y participación en los programas estatales y municipales de beneficio general o comunal.

**Art. 124.-** El Concejo deberá reunirse periódicamente con las asociaciones comunales para analizar y resolver los problemas, elaborar y ejecutar obras de toda naturaleza de beneficio comunal.

**Art. 125.-** El Concejo podrá requerir la cooperación comunal mediante la incorporación de personas o de representantes de la comunidad en :

- a) Comisiones asesoras permanentes o especiales del propio Concejo;
- b) Comisiones o Juntas de carácter administrativo a las cuales se les encomienden gestiones específicas de orden material, cultural, cívico, moral y otras;
- c) Cualesquiera otra forma de organización o colaboración comunal.

## TITULO IX DE LAS SANCIONES, PROCEDIMIENTOS Y RECURSOS CAPITULO UNICO

**Art. 126.-** En las ordenanzas municipales pueden establecerse sanciones de arresto, multa, comiso y clausura por infracción a sus disposiciones sin perjuicio de las demás responsabilidades a que hubiere lugar conforme a la ley.

Las sanciones pueden aplicarse simultánea o alternativamente.

**Art. 127.-** El arresto se guardará en las celdas del Municipio o del más inmediato en caso de no tener celdas propias y no podrá exceder de quince días. No se podrá imponer arresto si no estuviere expresamente consignado como sanción a una falta igualmente establecida en una ordenanza.

**Art. 128.-** Las faltas expresamente consignadas en una ordenanza podrán sancionarse con multa igualmente establecida que el Alcalde o Concejo fijará de conformidad a la gravedad de la infracción y a la capacidad económica del infractor sin que el monto de la multa pueda exceder de diez mil colones.

Las demás infracciones a las ordenanzas, se sancionarán con multa desde diez colones hasta un mil colones que el Alcalde o Concejo impondrá de acuerdo a la gravedad de la infracción.

**Art. 129.-** Las multas podrán permutarse por arresto que no excederá de quince días.

**Art. 130.-** La imposición de la multa no exime de las demás responsabilidades que correspondan de acuerdo a la ley.

**Art. 131.-** Cuando el Alcalde o funcionario delegado tuviere conocimiento por cualquier medio que una persona a cometido infracción a las ordenanzas municipales, iniciará el procedimiento y buscará las pruebas que considere necesarias.

De la prueba obtenida notificará en legal forma al infractor para que comparezca dentro de la cuarenta y ocho

horas siguientes a la notificación. Si compareciere o en su rebeldía abrirá a pueba por tres días y pasado el término resolverá dentro de los dos días siguientes.

Para dictar sentencia, la autoridad adquirirá su convencimiento por cualquiera de los medios establecidos en la ley.

La certificación de la resolución que imponga una multa tendrá fuerza ejecutiva.

**Art. 132.-** Cuando los representantes de la autoridad detuviere a una persona infragante, por infracción a las ordenanzas municipales será consignado a la orden del Alcalde o funcionario delegado y éste dará audiencia por veinticuatro horas al infractor y con lo que manifieste o en su rebeldía y las pruebas que recoja en ese término resolverá dentro de las veinticuatro horas siguientes.

**Art. 133.-** Las multas deberán ser pagadas dentro de los tres días siguientes a la notificación de la resolución en que se imponga, salvo el caso de interposición de un recurso en que la obligación de pago será dentro de los tres días siguientes a la resolución definitiva del consejo sobre el recurso planteado.

Transcurrido el plazo sin haberse pagado la multa, se causará el interés del dos por ciento mensual sobre el valor de la misma hasta su cancelación.

**Art. 134.-** Siempre que el obligado se negare a cumplir con el mandato consignado en una ordenanza, reglamento o acuerdo municipal el Concejo podrá, sin perjuicio de la sanción correspondiente, ejecutar o realizar la ejecución del omiso, cargando a la cuenta de éste los gastos. El Concejo

fijará plazos generales o específicos para el cumplimiento de las obligaciones y vencidos que fueren tendrá la potestad de acción directa establecida en el inciso anterior.

Art. 135.- De los acuerdos del Concejo se admitirá recursos de revisión que podrá interponerse dentro de las veinticuatro horas siguientes a la notificación respectiva, para ante el mismo Concejo.

Interpuesto el recurso, el Concejo resolverá dentro de los tres días siguientes sin más trámites ni diligencias.

Art. 136.- De los acuerdos del Concejo se admitirá recursos de revocatoria ante el mismo Concejo.

El recurso de revocatoria se impondrá dentro de los tres días siguientes a su notificación de que se trate o de la notificación de la denegatoria de la revisión.

Admitido el recurso abrirá a pruebas por cuatro días y transcurrido el término probatorio se dictará sentencia dentro de los tres días siguientes.

Art. 137.- De las resoluciones del Alcalde o del funcionario delegado se admitirá recurso de apelación para ante el Concejo, dentro de los tres días siguientes de la notificación.

Interpuesto el recurso de apelación, el Alcalde dará cuenta al Concejo en su próxima sesión, quien designará a uno de sus miembros o algún funcionario para que lleve la sustanciación del recurso y lo devuelva oportunamente para resolver.

Admitido el recurso por el Concejo se notificará al apelante y se abrirá a prueba por el término de cuatro días.

Transcurrido el término de pruebas el encargado de la sustanciación devolverá el expediente al Concejo para que resuelva.

## TITULO XI DE LA EXPROPIACION CAPITULO UNICO

Art. 138.- Cuando un Concejo requiera la adquisición de un inmueble o parte de el para la consecución de una obra destinada a un servicio de utilidad pública o de interés social, local, podrá decidir adquirirlo voluntaria o forzosamente conforme a las reglas de este título, siempre que no pudiere ser adquirido voluntariamente.

La adquisición forzosa se decidirá con el voto de los dos tercios de sus miembros.

Los inmuebles una vez adquiridos, solamente podrán ser destinados para el fin por el cual fue declarado de utilidad pública o de interés social local.

Art. 139.- El Concejo publicará por una sola vez por el Diario Oficial y por dos veces consecutivas en dos de los periódicos de mas circulación, avisos que señalen y describan con claridad y precisión el o los inmuebles que se desean adquirir expresando el nombre de los propietarios o poseedores, así como su inscripción en el Registro de la Propiedad Raíz, si estuvieren inscritos los propietarios o poseedores de inmuebles que en todo o en parte esten comprendidos

dentro de los lugares señalados, tienen la obligación de presentarse a la Municipalidad dentro de los quince días siguientes a la publicación del último aviso, manifestando por escrito si están dispuestos a venderlos voluntariamente, conforme a las condiciones y por el precio que convengan con la Municipalidad.

Para determinar el precio de los inmuebles a que se refiere este artículo, deberá practicarse valúo de los mismos por analistas de la Dirección General del Presupuesto. El precio no podrá exceder en un 5% al determinado por éstos. Para los efectos de este inciso el aumento del precio sólo podrá ser acordado por el Concejo.

La Municipalidad efectuará el pago al otorgarse la escritura correspondiente, o dentro de un plazo no mayor de siete años, reconociendo el 12% de interés anual sobre saldos deudores.

**Art. 140.-** La Municipalidad podrá seguir el procedimiento especial de expropiación establecido en la presente ley, contra los propietarios o poseedores con quienes no llegare a concertar voluntariamente la compraventa de sus inmuebles respectivos o que dejaren transcurrir el término establecido en el artículo anterior, sin hacer la manifestación que dicho artículo indica.

**Art. 141.-** Será competente para conocer de los juicios de expropiación a que se refiere este título, uno de los Jueces de lo Civil o en su defecto el Juez de Primera Instancia a cuya jurisdicción correspondiere el Municipio interesado.

Cuando hubieren dos o más Jueces competentes conocerán a prevención.

**Art. 142.-** En la demanda, la Municipalidad por medio del Sindico o de apoderado suficientemente autorizado hará relación de la obra o servicio que llevará a cabo, con descripción del o de los inmuebles que se necesitará expropiar, así como la forma y condiciones de pago.

Si entre los demandados hubiere personas ausentes o incapaces, deberá mencionarse el nombre y domicilio de sus representantes si fueren conocidos.

Con la demanda deberá presentarse:

- 1) Certificación del acuerdo del Concejo en el que requiera la adquisición del o de los inmuebles;
- 2) Los avisos publicados en el Diario Oficial y en los periódicos de mayor circulación;
- 3) El valúo a que se refiere el Art. 139 inciso 3°;
- 4) Que el proyecto a realizarse en el inmueble o los inmuebles o expropiar, tenga planos elaborados y autorizados legalmente;
- 5) Que el servicio u obra que se pretende realizar no lo esté prestando el Municipio, o lo haga en forma insuficiente;
- 6) Que no haya otro inmueble que pertenezca al Municipio cerca del lugar del que se pretende expropiar y que sirva para el mismo fin;
- 7) Que se tenga asegurado el financiamiento para efectuar la obra o prestar el servicio, o los servicios en efectivo y en una partida especial, cuando se realice con fondos propios;
- 8) Que el plazo para iniciar la obra a partir de la expropiación no exceda de un año;

- 9) Que en los casos en que haya propietario conocido, se agregará certificación de dos actas como mínimo, en las que conste haber intentado la negociación directa para la adquisición del inmueble por parte del Consejo.

En la misma demanda podrán acumularse distintas acciones contra diversos propietarios.

**Art. 143.-** Admitida la demanda, el Juez mandará oír dentro del tercer día a los propietarios o poseedores o a sus legítimos representantes, emplazándolos por medio de un edicto que se publicará por una sola vez en el Diario Oficial y en dos de los periódicos de mayor circulación en la República y los tres días se contarán a partir del siguiente al de la fecha de la última publicación del edicto. No habrá término de la distancia.

Además se emplazará mediante una copia de la demanda y del auto por el que se admitió y se tuvo por parte; para entregar esta copia se buscará al demandado en el inmueble que se trata de expropiar o en su casa de habitación o lugar de su trabajo, si no habitare en éste y no estando presente se le dejará copia con su cónyuge o compañera de vida, hijos, socio, dependientes, domésticos o cualquiera otra persona que allí residieren, siempre que fueren mayores de edad.

Si la persona mencionada se negare a recibirla, el notificador, fijará la copia en la puerta, cumpliendo así con la notificación.

El Procurador General de la República, representará por Ministerio de ley a las personas ausentes o incapaces que deben ser oídas y carecieren de representante o éste fuere desconocido o estuviere ausente. El emplazamiento se hará personalmente al Procurador quien podrá intervenir en persona o por medio de sus agentes auxiliares específicos.

Para los efectos de este capítulo, los demandados que dentro del término del emplazamiento no comparecieren a estar a derecho, serán considerados como ausentes y estarán representados asimismo por el Procurador General de la República. En caso de que los bienes hubiesen pertenecido a personas ya fallecidas y no se hubiere aceptado o declarado yacente su herencia, el Juez nombrará curador de los bienes al Procurador General de la República, inmediatamente y sin ningún otro trámite, para que represente la sucesión y lo emplazará de conformidad al inciso segundo de este artículo.

**Art. 144.-** Vencido el término del emplazamiento se abrirá el juicio a pruebas por 8 días improrrogables, dentro de los cuales el Juez de oficio, ordenará inspección pericial sobre la localización del inmueble o inmuebles que se trata de expropiar o el justiprecio de los mismos si cualquiera de estos puntos fuera objetado. Para los efectos del justiprecio el Juez nombrará dos peritos que deberán ser analistas de la Dirección General del Presupuesto.

**Art. 145.-** Si durante el curso del procedimiento compareciere alguien alegando derecho en el inmueble que se trata de expropiar o en el monto de la indemnización, no se interrumpirá el procedimiento, pero el Juez en la sentencia ordenará que el importe de la indemnización correspondiente se deposite en las instituciones que la ley establece

hasta que por sentencia ejecutoriada se determine a quien debe pagarse dicha indemnización. El tercero conservará en todo caso su derecho a salvo, para ejercer contra el expropiado la acción que establece el Art. 900 C.

**Art. 146.-** Dentro de los tres días siguientes a la conclusión del término probatorio se dictará sentencia definitiva declarando la utilidad pública o el interés social; y decretando la expropiación o declarándola sin lugar; en el primer caso, determinará el valor de la indemnización con base en los valúos con respecto a cada inmueble y la forma y condiciones de pago.

**Art. 147.-** La sentencia podrá comprender uno o varios inmuebles pertenecientes a un sólo o a diversos propietarios o poseedores y no admitirá mas recursos que el de responsabilidad.

**Art. 148.-** Los derechos inscritos a favor de terceros quedarán extinguidos por efecto de la expropiación en lo que se refiere a los inmuebles, conservando aquellos sus respectivos derechos contra los expropiados a fin de hacerse pagar del monto de la indemnización o por separado, en la cuantía, prelación y con los privilegios que hubieren tenido legalmente.

**Art. 149.-** Todas las actuaciones se practicarán en papel simple y las notificaciones y citaciones serán hechas por edictos que se fijarán en el tablero del Juzgado.

**Art. 150.-** Notificada la sentencia definitiva que decreta la expropiación, quedará transferida la propiedad de los bienes, libres de todo gravamen a favor de la municipalidad y se inscribirá, como título de dominio, la ejecutoria de dicha sentencia.

**Art. 151.-** Dentro de los tres días siguientes a la notificación de la sentencia los propietarios, poseedores o tenedores a cualquier título que fueren, deberán hacer entrega material de los inmuebles a la Municipalidad o desocuparlos en su caso.

Si transcurrido dicho término alguno de los expropiados o cualquier otro tenedor no hubiere cumplido con lo dispuesto en el inciso anterior, el Juez con solo el pedimento del demandante le dará posesión material del inmueble, lanzando a los ocupantes que encontrare, aún cuando no se hubieren verificado las inscripciones correspondientes.

**Art. 152.-** Los inmuebles que adquiriera la Municipalidad, sea en forma contractual o forzosa, podrán inscribirse a su favor en los correspondientes Registros de la Propiedad, no obstante que los propietarios o poseedores carezcan de títulos inscritos o los tengan defectuosos.

**Art. 153.-** Tanto en la escrituras de la adquisición voluntaria como en las sentencias de expropiación, deberán consignarse las descripciones y áreas de los inmuebles que adquiriera la Municipalidad, de acuerdo con las declaraciones de las partes contratantes o con la prueba rendida, en su caso. Tales descripciones deberán consignarse con las inscripciones que se hagan en el Registro de los respectivos inmuebles aunque no coincidan con las expresadas en los antecedentes respectivos.

**Art. 154.-** No será necesaria la solvencia de renta, vialidad y pavimentación e impuestos fiscales y municipales para la inscripción de inmuebles a favor de la Municipalidad.

Los propietarios o poseedores que vendieren voluntariamente o forzosamente sus inmuebles a favor de la Municipalidad estarán exentos del pago de alcabala.

**Art. 155.-** Al efectuar la compra venta de inmuebles, si sus propietarios fueren deudores del fisco o del Municipio, la municipalidad no hará efectivo el pago del valor correspondiente mientras el vendedor no cancele su deuda con el fisco o el Municipio, salvo que se llegue a un arreglo convencional en la forma de pago de la deuda. En todo caso deberán presentarse las constancias respectivas.

Pero si transcurrido treinta días después de firmada la escritura de compraventa, no se hubiere efectuado la cancelación de la deuda, la Municipalidad podrá descontar del valor del terreno de que se trate, el monto de lo adeudado y entregará al vendedor el saldo correspondiente.

Para los efectos de los incisos anteriores, la Municipalidad solicitará informe a la Dirección General de Contribuciones Directas, a fin de establecer si los propietarios o poseedores son deudores del fisco, así como la cuantía de sus deudas.

Cuando se haya seguido juicio de expropiación, el Fisco y la Municipalidad presentará al Juez correspondiente, el monto de lo que adeuda la persona de que se trata y el Juez retendrá en la forma establecida en el Art. 145 de este Código, el valor de la indemnización, hasta que el deudor

cancele la deuda o llegue a un arreglo convencional en la forma de pago; si transcurrido treinta días no se hubiese cancelado la deuda o llegare a un arreglo, el Juez hará las deducciones correspondientes del monto de la indemnización, entregando al expropiado el saldo y remitiendo a quien corresponda el arresto.

## TITULO XII DISPOSICIONES GENERALES CAPITULO UNICO

**Art. 156.-** Las autoridades nacionales, regionales y departamentales, deberán comunicar a los Municipios respectivos los planes que se propongan ejecutar a corto, mediano y largo plazo, a efecto de evitar la creación de servicios paralelos, duplicidad de servicios o contradicción de la actividad realizada en forma concurrente por varios entes de la Administración.

**Art. 157.-** Deróganse la Ley del Ramo Municipal promulgada el 28 de abril de 1908, publicada en el Diario Oficial numero 295, Tomo 65, del 16 de diciembre del mismo año, así como sus reformas posteriores y todas las leyes, decretos y disposiciones sobre la materia, en todo aquello que contraríen el texto y los principales contenidos en este Código.

**Art. 158.-** El presente Código se aplicará con preferencia a cualquier otra ley que tenga relación con la materia.

**Art. 159.-** El presente Código entrará en vigencia el primero de marzo de mil novecientos ochenta y seis.



DADO EN EL SALON AZUL DEL PALACIO  
LEGISLATIVO: San Salvador, a los treinta y un días del mes  
de enero de mil novecientos ochenta y seis.

GUILLERMO ANTONIO GUEVARA LACAYO  
PRESIDENTE

ALFONSO ARISTIDES ALVARENGA  
VICEPRESIDENTE

MACLA JUDITH ROMERO DE TORRES  
SECRETARIO

PEDRO ALBERTO HERNANDEZ PORTILLO  
SECRETARIO

JOSE HUMBERTO POSADA SANCHEZ  
SECRETARIO

*Decreto N°274 de la Asamblea Legislativa.  
Publicado en el Diario Oficial N°23 Tomo N° 290  
de Miércoles 5 de Febrero de 1986.*

## A N E X O

### MARCO LEGAL DEL CODIGO MUNICIPAL (CONSTITUCION DE LA REPUBLICA 1983)

#### CAPITULO VI GOBIERNO LOCAL SECCION SEGUNDA

#### "LAS MUNICIPALIDADES"

Art. 202.- Para el Gobierno local, los departamentos se dividen en Municipios, que estarán regidos por Concejos formados de un Alcalde, un Síndico y dos o más Regidores cuyo número será proporcional a la población.

Los miembros de los Concejos Municipales deberán ser mayores de veintiún años y originarios o vecinos del Municipio; serán elegidos para un periodo de tres años, podrán ser reelegidos y sus demás requisitos serán determinados por la ley.

Art. 203.- Los Municipios serán autónomos en lo económico, en lo técnico y en lo administrativo, y se regirán por un Código Municipal, que sentará los principios generales para su organización, funcionamiento y ejercicio de sus facultades autónomas.

Los Municipios estarán obligados a colaborar con otras instituciones públicas en los planes de desarrollo nacional o regional.

**Art. 204.-** La autonomía del Municipio comprende:

- 1º Crear, modificar y suprimir tasas y contribuciones públicas para la realización de obras determinadas dentro de los límites que una ley general establezca.

Aprobadas las tasas o contribuciones por el Concejo Municipal se mandará publicar el acuerdo respectivo en el Diario Oficial, y transcurridos que sean ocho días después de su publicación, será obligatorio su cumplimiento;

- 2º Decretar su Presupuesto de Ingresos y Egresos.
- 3º Gestionar libremente en las materias de su competencia;
- 4º Nombrar y remover a los funcionarios y empleados de sus dependencias;
- 5º Decretar las ordenanzas y reglamentos locales;
- 6º Elaborar sus tarifas de impuestos y las reformas a las mismas, para proponerlas como ley a la Asamblea Legislativa.

**Art. 205.-** Ninguna ley ni autoridad podrá eximir ni dispensar el pago de las tasas, y contribuciones municipales.

**Art. 206.-** Los planes de desarrollo local deberán ser aprobados por el Concejo Municipal respectivo; y las Instituciones del Estado deberán colaborar con la Municipalidad en el desarrollo de los mismos.

**Art. 207.-** Los fondos municipales no se podrán centralizar en el Fondo General del Estado, ni emplearse sino en servicios y para provecho de los Municipios.

Las Municipalidades podrán asociarse o concertar entre ellas convenios cooperativos a fin de colaborar en la realización de obras o servicios que sean de interés común para dos o más Municipios.

Para garantizar el desarrollo y la autonomía económica de los Municipios, se creará un fondo para el desarrollo económico y social de los mismos. Una ley establecerá el monto de ese fondo y los mecanismos para su uso.

Los Concejos Municipales administrarán el patrimonio de sus Municipios y rendirán cuenta circunstanciada y documentada de su administración a la Corte de Cuentas de la República.

La ejecución del Presupuesto será fiscalizada a posteriori por la Corte de Cuentas de la República, de acuerdo a la ley.

#### **OTROS ARTICULOS DE LA CONSTITUCION DE LA REPUBLICA QUE SE REFIEREN AL MUNICIPIO**

**Art. 80.-** Inciso 1º: El Presidente y Vicepresidente de la República, los Diputados a la Asamblea Legislativa y los miembros de los Concejos Municipales, son funcionarios de elección popular.

**Art. 110.-** Inciso 1º: No podrá autorizarse ningún monopolio sino a favor del Estado o de los Municipios, cuando el interés social lo haga imprescindible. Se podrán establecer estancos a favor del Estado.

**Art. 133.-** Tienen exclusivamente iniciativa de ley:

4º Los Concejos Municipales en materia de impuestos municipales.

**Art. 195.-** La fiscalización de la Hacienda Pública en general y de la ejecución del Presupuesto en particular, estará a cargo de un organismo independiente del Organismo Ejecutivo, que se denominará Corte de Cuentas de la República, y que tendrá las siguientes atribuciones:...

8º Velar porque se hagan efectivas las deudas a favor del Estado y Municipios.

**Art. 220.-** Una ley especial regulará lo pertinente al retiro de los funcionarios y empleados públicos y municipales, la cual fijará los porcentajes de jubilación a que éstos tendrán derecho de acuerdo a los años de prestación de servicio y a los salarios devengados.

El monto de la jubilación que se perciba estará exento de todo impuesto o tasa fiscal y municipal.

La misma ley deberá establecer las demás prestaciones a que tendrán derecho los servidores públicos y municipales.

**Art. 221.-** Inciso 1º: Se prohíbe la huelga de los trabajadores públicos y municipales, lo mismo que el abandono colectivo de sus cargos.

**Art. 232.-** Ni el Organismo Legislativo ni el Ejecutivo podrán disponer del pago de las cantidades reparadas a los funcionarios y empleados que manejen fondos fiscales o municipales, ni de las deudas a favor del Fisco o de los Municipios.

**Art. 234.-** Cuando el Estado tenga que celebrar contratos para realizar obras o adquirir bienes muebles en que hayan de comprometerse fondos o bienes públicos, deberán someterse dichas obras o suministros a licitación pública, excepto en los casos determinados por la ley.

No se celebrarán contratos en que la decisión, en caso de controversia, corresponda a tribunales de un Estado extranjero.

Lo dispuesto en los incisos anteriores se aplicará a las Municipalidades.

**Art. 239.-** Inciso 2º: Por los delitos oficiales o comunes que cometan los miembros de los Concejos Municipales, responderán ante los Jueces de Primera Instancia correspondientes.

**Art. 240.-** Inciso.- 1º: Los funcionarios y empleados públicos que se enriquecieron sin justa causa a costa de la Hacienda Pública o Municipal, estarán obligados a restituir al Estado o al Municipio lo que hubieren adquirido ilegítimamente, sin perjuicio de la responsabilidad en que hubieren incurrido conforme a las leyes.

**CORTE DE CUENTAS DE LA REPUBLICA  
MAXIMO ORGANISMO FISCALIZADOR  
DE LA HACIENDA PUBLICA**

**DEPARTAMENTO DE CONTROL MUNICIPAL  
INSTRUCTIVO N° 1-86,  
del 28 de Febrero de 1986**

**PARA: MUNICIPALIDADES DE LA REPUBLICA**

**ASUNTO:** Instrucciones generales a los señores Miembros y Empleados de las Municipalidades de la República, relacionadas con la rendición, el examen y glosa de las cuentas municipales con motivo de la derogatoria de la LEY DE RAMO MUNICIPAL y la vigencia del CODIGO MUNICIPAL.

**MODIFICA:** El instructivo N° 1, de 1° de Febrero de 1973 y las Circulares posteriores reformando dicho Instructivo.

**VIGENTE:** A partir del 1° de Marzo de 1986.

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Alejandro Frigerio  
**FROM:** Marissa Brown, Program Officer  
**DATE:** July 10, 1995  
**SUBJECT:** The Program and Your Role

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in the one-day seminars sponsored by the National Democratic Institute. This seminar, part of a larger program to support the development of mechanisms for citizen participation in local government, is designed as a follow-on training to complement a program NDI conducted in April called "Community and Municipality: the Role of a Community Leader". The purpose of this seminar and the earlier training is to assist dynamic community leaders so that they can train other community leaders. The participants are selected from the three *municipios* participating in NDI's year-long program -- Tecoluca, Texistepeque and Santa Elena.

The four-day April seminar brought 20 community leaders from the three localities together to discuss and develop skills related to basic concepts of community organizing. The agenda touched on topics such as the role of a community leader, the legal structure outlined in the municipal code, recruitment and organization, holding successful meetings, communication and coalitions, how to train others and how all of these ideas would work in practice. On the last day of the seminar, the participants (in groups from each town) decided what they would do when they returned to their towns. All indicated that they would talk to others about the experience and particularly issues related to self-sufficiency of community groups. NDI's draft report of the April seminar (tab 3) describes more completely the plans developed by the participants from each locality.

The one-day seminars which you are being asked to help facilitate will have two objectives. The first is informational -- educating community leaders about public participation laws in the municipal code. The second is skill based -- providing a structured environment in which April's program participants can train others. In the morning we will meet with the April participants to discuss their activities and explain what we hope to have them do in the afternoon. In the afternoon we will have them facilitate the reading of a

section of the municipal code by other community leaders. There is a tentative agenda included in this section.

We have chosen the municipal code (tab 6) as a topic for the one-day seminar. April's participants felt the discussion of the code was important. By covering familiar topics, NDI hopes participants from April's program will feel more comfortable with a new role as facilitators of the small groups reading and analyzing the Municipal Code.

Your role will be as a facilitator of this process. Upon arriving on Thursday, July 20, NDI will arrange informational briefings to give you an understanding of El Salvador and the issues it confronts; local government and its limitations; and community organizations and their state of development. On Friday, the briefings will continue and the NDI group will likely travel to San Miguel. The seminars will occur on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. On Tuesday, we will debrief AID on the seminars before returning home.

At the end of the trip, NDI asks that the international participant write a brief memo (1 to 3 pages) describing their insights into community organizations in El Salvador and summarizing their recommendations for future NDI activities in El Salvador.

## OVERVIEW

The signing of the 1992 Chapultepec Accords brought an end to the 12-year civil war that had ravaged El Salvador. The cessation of violence and the subsequent progress toward participatory democracy has moved El Salvador into a democratic transition process. The March 1994 elections marked the inclusion of the former guerillas, the FMLN, as a political party at all levels of the political process.

Six parties and one coalition participated in the presidential and vice presidential race. Nine political parties participated in the Legislative Assembly race. The major parties in the presidential race were the right-wing Republican Nationalist Alliance (ARENA), the historically strong Christian Democratic Party (PDC) and the leftist coalition known as the Democratic Convergence (MNR-FMLN-CD), some of whose elements had previously participated in a revolutionary struggle against successive Salvadoran governments.

In the presidential elections, the ARENA candidate Armando Calderon Sol received approximately 49% of the vote, shy of the 50% necessary to prevent a runoff election. Ruben Zamora, the Convergencia Democratica candidate was second with about 25% of the vote. In the subsequent second round on April 24, 1994, Calderon Sol defeated Zamora with 68% of the vote.

In the municipal elections, the ARENA party won 206 of 262 municipalities. The FMLN won 16, and PDC 29. In addition, the National Conciliation Party (PCN) won 10 and the Authentic Christian Movement won one.

More recently, the political parties have experienced internal division. The FMLN has divided into two parties. As a guerilla fighting force the FMLN was composed of five tendencies. The current FMLN groups the three leftist tendencies together: the Communist Party (PC), the Workers Party (PRTC) and the Popular Forces of Liberation (FPL). The two more centrist tendencies of the FMLN, the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) and the National Resistance (RN), joined members of the National Renovation Movement (MNR) to form the Partido Demócrata (PD). The PD claims the ideological ground of Social Democracy. Some argue that the division is less ideological than personality-driven. Others indicate that they are a product of ideology. The Christian Democrats also have divided since the elections. Last fall, several PDC deputies formed the Social Christian Unity Movement (MRSC). The MRSC describes itself as the progressive wing of the PDC, dedicated to the party's original social and ethical ideals. ARENA has also shown divisions, although as yet these have not led to open party splits. For more information, please read the report entitled *Salvadoran Peace Accords and Democratization* under tab 3.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government officials (mayor and council) in El Salvador are elected from a party list on a winner-take-all plurality basis. So, there is currently no opposition representation in local councils. Local government is personified by the mayor, to whom the public raises issues and problems. The council members are seen as advisers to the mayor.

According to the Municipal Code (1986), the town Council is comprised of 2 to 10 members. In the towns visited, Council positions are paid a small stipend for each council meeting attended. Generally, each Council Member assumes responsibility for a particular aspect of local government (e.g. sanitation or health services). Often the council is comprised only of people from the urban area of the municipio.

More information on local government, community organizations, mechanisms of participation and public perceptions are contained in the NDI report *El Salvador: A Look at Local Government* in the front pocket of your briefing book.

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

There are several communities, defined by the geographical area (*caserío* or *cantón*) in each *municipio*. A community comprises ten to over one hundred families. There have

traditionally been community leaders who advised and represented the community. However, only recently have formal organizational structures been encouraged.

Community groups are formed for a variety of reasons. Originally, they were organized around a single issue, such as a bad street or building a school and after that problem was resolved they disappeared. More recently, permanent *directivas* or community associations have been created. The community groups represent the community to other institutions most commonly the local government but also NGOs and central government institutions such as the Ministry of Education.

Traditional community groups differ from community associations, known in El Salvador as *Asociaciones de Desarrollo Comunal* (ADESCOs), in that ADESCOs have achieved *personería jurídica* which is a legal status that entitles them to ask for funds directly from central government institutions and NGOs.

The process of obtaining legal status is complex. The group -- of at least 25 members - first must write a constitution and by-laws, approve them and elect a board of directors. They must then officially hold a general meeting which the mayor must attend. Finally, the group must submit the request for *personería jurídica*, certification of the organization's constitution, the by-laws, and a signed list of the members of the organization as official documents to the Council. Finally, the by-laws must appear in the official record. Representatives from NGO's working with community groups indicated that this process is unwieldy, particularly for people with limited written language skills.

## MECHANISMS OF PARTICIPATION

The Municipal Code (1986) provides for three types of meetings for citizen participation: *cabildos abiertos*, which are open town meetings; *consultas populares*, which are single-issue meetings; and bi-monthly town Council meetings which are generally not open to the public.

*Cabildos abiertos* are forums for citizens to come forward with the problems of their community or neighborhood, i.e., there is a road to be fixed, a school to be built or another community need. The Municipal Code requires at least four *cabildos abiertos* each year. The mayor and the council sit together in front of the crowd. The mayor opens the meeting and makes a formal presentation regarding the progress of projects underway, which includes an accounting of each project. Then the mayor asks leaders of the community to present their needs and problems. Community leaders proceed one-by-one to the microphone to voice the needs of his or her community. The community leaders also present their requests in written form. No discussion or decision making actually takes place in the *cabildo*.

*Consultas populares* are held with a particular community regarding a specific project or problem. These meetings are held rarely and must be called by the council. Public votes



taken in a *consulta popular* are binding and the council must act according to the wishes of the citizens. In the discussion groups people equated a *consulta popular* with a *cabildo abierto* indicating the infrequent use of these meetings.

Council meetings are held twice a month. Council meetings are not generally open to the public. In the council meeting following a *cabildo abierto*, the mayor and the council assess the needs of the community, prioritize them and decide which will be funded.

### **NDI's Program**

Based on the conclusions of the March 14 to 22 assessment mission, NDI developed a workplan and selected towns for its local governance program. NDI chose to work in three *municipios* in El Salvador: Texistepeque, Tecoluca and Santa Elena. All of these are governed by representatives of the three major political parties: the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), the National Republican Alliance (ARENA) and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). The municipalities chosen are located in different geographical areas and reflect a variety of war-time experiences.

NDI initiated the program in July 1994 by gathering information through discussion groups in the three selected municipalities. In September NDI brought two local government officials to El Salvador. Cecilia Gil Barvo, a mayor from San Juan de Betulia, Colombia and Roger Perez, a city council member from San Antonio, Texas shared their experiences with local government officials. The objective of the program was to support the development of new and the improvement of existing mechanisms for citizen participation in local government. By sharing perspectives and experiences of international participants, NDI hoped to broaden Salvadoran local government officials understanding of the range of processes and mechanisms available to create a continuing dialogue with the public. Furthermore, international participants were able to discuss methods of participation utilized in their communities as well as enumerate their benefits.

In December NDI brought two community organizers, Elias Santana and Lauren Coletta, to El Salvador to share their experiences from their respective countries. This aspect of the program focused on the role and development of community organizations in the democratic process. From the shared experiences of the international participants, NDI's objective was to assist community leaders to better organize their community, to enhance communication with local government and increase participation in decision making. Presentations and discussions of community organizing, planning, the scope and powers of local government fostered new approaches to expand citizen participation in local government.

In April NDI returned to El Salvador with community organizer Franklin Cisneros of the Escuela de Vecinos and community trainer Omar Dieppa of the Comision de Justicia y Paz of Panama. The four-day program as explained above, trained a select group of community

leaders in the skills necessary to help organize their communities and the skills necessary to help train others.

## WORKSHOP OUTLINE: LEGAL RIGHTS OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

NOTE: I have written this workshop to be done in two hours, I recognize the times given add up to an hour and a half. It will take more time. To save time and enhance clarity write the objectives and an outline of the workshop on flip chart paper so that all the participants feel that they know what they will be doing. Secondly, figure out how many groups there will be beforehand and write up Group 1 articles 115-120 etc. so that is clearly spelled out in writing and then repeated verbally. The same should be done for the questions. Maybe even write out the questions in Spanish on a sheet of paper and give each group the sheet of paper with the questions.

### OBJECTIVES:

Participants will be able to:

- identify and explain the sections of the municipal code which deal with public participation
- contrast the written law with the application of the law
- identify aspects of the law that apply to community leaders
- analyze the impact of the law on their lives

### INTRODUCTION (20 minutes)

The facilitator should help the participants brainstorm the following:

Why do laws exist?

have people give answers/brainstorm

(if possible write on black board or butcher paper)

Secondly the facilitator should outline the following hierarchy of laws and indicate how those laws affect people's lives, e.g. a municipal ordinance may say there is no loud music after 11 pm etc.

legal structure

constitution

codes

laws

ordinances

Municipal Code

(Hand out municipal codes tell people to turn to Title IX De La Participacion de la Comunidad) Tell people that together they will read section of the municipal code that relates to participation. This is where the people we have worked with in April come in. They should be dispersed among the small groups and can act as small group

facilitators.

- cabildos abiertos, consultas populares (chap 1., arts 115 - 117)
- community associations (chap 2., arts 118-125)

*optional*

- *may draw people's attention to art. 30/31 faculties/obligations of the council*
- *may draw people's attention to art. 39 dealing with open sessions of the council*

### **SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY (20 minutes)**

Divide the group into smaller groups (best group size is 4-6) In terms of content, I think the groups boil down best, as Group 1 - article 115, Group 2 - arts. 116 & 117, Group 3 - arts 118 & 119, Group 4 - 120 & 121, Group 5 - arts. 122 & 123, Group 6 - arts 124 & 125. Explain that each group will answer the following questions for each article

Each group then answers the following questions in relation to the articles that they are looking at.

1. Restate the article in plain Spanish (as if you were explaining it to your child, neighbor or parent)
2. Contrast the action described in the law with reality? Does this happen?
3. If it does occur, what impact does it have on your life? If not, what obstacles are there to prevent it from happening?
4. How does this law apply to your everyday life?

Each group should then choose one spokesperson to come back to the larger group and explain the groups answers to those questions.

### **GROUP SUMMARY (30 minutes) (6 groups => each gets 5 minutes)**

Each group reports on their articles and opinions. The facilitator should ask pertinent questions of each group if possible (be careful to watch the time, people will have a hard time remaining interested if it takes too long)

**CONCLUSION (20 minutes) (MOST IMPORTANT DON'T SHAVE TIME HERE)**

Facilitator asks groups how they felt about reading the law? Have you read any laws before? Was it hard? (If so, how were they able to do it? ) Was it easy? Did they know what was in the law before? Have you participated in any of these type of meetings? Why do you think the law was written this way? How can you find this information (about what is in the law) out for yourself? What can you do with this information?

Try to draw specific examples of things people said to supplement your questions. This is an illustrative list only, think about how to get at issues of the law affecting their lives.



# NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Fifth Floor, 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 328-3136 ■ FAX (202) 939-3166

## *Tentative Agenda* *Seminars for Community Leaders* *July 20 - July 26*

### **8:00 - 10:00 Program Preparation**

Spend two hours with people who participated in April program for community leaders. Ask them what they got out of it. Find out what they have done. How we can help them further. Explain what their role will be in the afternoon. Help them to figure out how to facilitate the afternoon session.

### **10:00-10:30 Coffee Break**

### **10:30 - 12:00 Large Group Introductions**

NDI, explanation of the Institute and the program  
International expert introduces him/herself  
Question and Answer period

### **12:00-1:00 Lunch**

### **1:00-3:00 The Municipal Code**

Discussion of law what it is and how it works.

Small group sessions where April program participants facilitate small groups, reading the municipal code. Each group has a list of questions to answer.

Small groups return to group. Discussion of Municipal Code.

### **3:00-3:30 Debriefing**



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To DARREN NANCE	From A. FRIGERIO	
Co.	Co.	
Dept.	Phone #	
Fax #	Fax #	

M E M O R A N D U M

**TO:** Marissa Brown, Program Officer  
Darren Nance, Program Assistant

**FROM:** Alejandro Frigerio

**DATE:** July 26, 1995

**SUBJECT:** Summary report on the July Seminars for Community Leaders

I would like to begin this report by thanking NDI for giving me the opportunity of participating in the El Salvador Program. It certainly was an informing and enriching experience and one that has expanded my understanding of the realities that confront the lives of so many Salvadoreans in the Washington D.C. area. As you know, my involvement in local community development and empowerment has had a special focus on its Latino segment which has a very large Salvadorean component.

I will also take this opportunity to commend you both for the excellent quality of your work. With several years spent in the field of community organizing and a broad exposure to the work of social service agencies, think tanks and for profit and non-for profit community based organizations I believe that your work is up to par with the best I have encountered in this area. I was particularly impressed by the combination of your broad and deep understanding of the needs and socio-political framework of the country, coupled with a meticulous attention to every detail involved in carrying out the sessions. All of it was done with a high degree of professionalism, which did not deterred you from giving a very "human face" to the work. Every aspect of the field interactions that I had opportunity to witness, was conducted with great cultural-language sensitivity and genuine care for the individuals involved. This, is as important a component for a mission of this nature as it was the thoroughness of the research and the background work that preceded it.

The Seminars

The first measure of success (or lack of it) that I would use in evaluating the sessions is turn-out. I believe the overall showing in this area was very good by any standards. I do not mean this in purely quantitative terms but also qualitatively. The intense level of participatory interest, the degree of appreciation for the program and the gratitude towards its sponsors were clear demonstration of a true success under this heading.

A second way of assessing the program could be to measure the levels of proficiency acquired by the leaders that participated in April as well as that of those involved in July. In judging the active and informed role played by the former, I would also call this a definite success. It would be a little harder to evaluate the latter group. However, if their feedback at the end of the day-sessions was an indication of how much information and confidence in handling it they had acquired, I would also rank this as a very probable success. In some cases (that is for some of the new participants) this became apparent, when they were asked to facilitate groups after the morning session, showing a good understanding of the law within the context given to them earlier in the day.

A third way of gauging the workshops would be to go beyond the educational and skilled-based aspects involved, and to weigh the importance of giving the participants an opportunity to meet with their municipal peers; to discuss and compare notes; to plan future activities; to map out a common strategy; and to become aware of the similarity of their problems, as well as of the power that springs from collective action and organization. If we add to this the opportunity of interacting with the Mayor and some Counsel members, and becoming aware of the budget constraints that they face, I believe that based on this alone the seminars should be considered worth their while. This view was also expressed unambiguously by everybody, even by those who considered their Mayor or Counsel either not very responsive or ineffectual.

#### The seminars and the big picture

In evaluating the overall effectiveness of the program for attaining lasting change in El Salvador, I can not help but to bring in my own assessment based on some years of research and experience in social and economic development. In this regard, and acknowledging that NDI is not and can not be "all things for all people", I would like to point out that what NDI does, by itself, can not have a structural transformational effect unless it becomes part of a global development strategy. However, as a component in such a strategy, it can certainly help as a catalytic force in the civic and political empowerment of individuals and groups in the three selected communities.

If, as many critics have pointed out, the goals of US foreign aid programs --particularly those sponsored by AID-- are geared mostly towards political stabilization and based on geopolitical and foreign policy considerations alone, the moneys and energies spent could be both, being wasted and just delaying an inevitable outcome. They would be acting as a retardant and a smoke screen to the deeper issues of economic development and empowerment that are the ultimate source of selfreliance and sustainability, while only postponing future social and political disarray.



Participation in the electoral process and in the activities of the governing institutions is today open to every citizen in El Salvador. The same has been the case for the last 15 years in Zimbabwe, for instance, where the black majority (that represents 99 % of Zimbabwe's population) has had total control of the political and administrative structure of the government. However, the economic and business activities of the country have remained basically unchanged, with the remaining 1 % of the population controlling 97 % of the country's wealth.

Something similar could be said about most major cities in America: growing number of families living in poverty; declining rates of economic growth and business expansion; continuing high rates of growth in public expenditures for Medicare, Medicaid, criminal justice, public safety, unemployment, and other social services. All of this is happening under ethnic minorities controlling the City Councils and black or latino Mayors. The crisis confronting most of these cities is a classic dilemma of Western democracies: while the political system is controlled by a majority made up of an underclass of ethnic groups, the economic levers are still controlled by a minority of the electorate and remain unaffected by that political "empowerment".

The economic dependence of the majority of the electorate on the government and the government dependence on the minority increase dramatically. This growth in economic dependence is ultimately reflected in the growth of poverty, joblessness and unemployment, crime and violence, family and neighborhood destabilization, and the breakdown of social systems and institutions. The renewal and development of a country like EL Salvador, or any other, can only be realistically achieved when its citizens are less dependent on the government and the government is more dependent on its citizens for the production of jobs, business, industries, and social services that improve and sustain the quality of life.

None of this can be achieved without the mobilization and deployment of a critical mass of capital and financial resources, expertise, management, technology, technical know-how, and innovations to launch and sustain a comprehensive and synchronized development program that will isolate and eliminate the root causes of poverty, economic dependence and economic distress. And without this there will be no true democratic institutions or ones that work effectively.

The challenges that I just outlined are formidable, but they are not insurmountable. I will not go here into a further description of the alternative policies that, I believe, should be implemented due to the limited nature of this report. However, the first step of an effective response must be the development of a vision of change that understands what lies at the roots of antidemocratic practices and civic primitivism. If that view treats the formal and instrumental aspects of the democratic process (ie, electoralism; parliamentarism; armonious interaction between participants at the local, regional and national levels, etc.) as the center piece of its programs, that would be tantamount to "puting the boomer before the horses".

If instead, the core of a program aimed at real change becomes the attainment of true economic development, one that implies fundamental change in the decisionmaking and powersharing arrangements in society; one whose strategies and programs are equity loaded in favor of those that have been excluded from participation and that can be sustained by them; and, finally, one whose system processes, technical know-how, capital formation, management, and other capacities and capabilities are integrated and institutionalized into the culture of those communities seeking development, the chances of succeeding increase manyfold.

#### Conclusion

In any event, all attempts at improving the social conditions of countries such as El Salvador are at least lofty in their intentions and those carrying out the tasks, deserving of praise. Both of you have my admiration and highest respect for what you do. I will be available for any further discussions regarding the program and please advise if this report satisfies the requirements. Should you need any further comments, do not hesitate in letting me know.

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# NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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## Participación en Acción: Mejorando el Proceso el 20 y 21 de noviembre de 1995 Hotel Siesta, San Salvador

*lunes, el 20 de noviembre*

- 10:00 - 11:45 a.m. registro
- 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. almuerzo
- 1:15 - 2:30 p.m. presentaciones

Marissa Brown, Instituto Nacional Demócrata  
Luis Henriquez, Alcalde de Texistepeque  
Marina Dias, Alcaldesa en Funcione de Tecoluca  
Nelson Funes, Alcalde de Santa Elena  
Santiago Canton, Instituto Nacional Demócrata

- 2:30 - 3:00 p.m. refrigerio
- 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. Participación: de ayer a hoy

*Grupos pequeños trabajarán para definir lo que es la participación. Analizarán la manera en la que han participado en el proceso de decisiones. Desarrollarán ejemplos concretos de como los grupos han afectado las decisiones.*

- 5:15 - 6:30 p.m. cena
- 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Actividad y Reflexión

*Los grupos trabajarán para lograr varios cosas y entonces reflexionar sobre la actividad y su relación a la vida real.*



*martes, el 21 de noviembre*

7:00 - 8:00 a.m.                    desayuno

8:00 - 9:30 a.m.                    Mejorando el proceso: sugerencias para  
el mañana

*Grupos pequeños realizará una lista de recomendaciones concretas para mejorar la  
participación.*

9:30 - 10:00 a.m.                    refrigerio

10:00 - 12:00 p.m.                    Consenso de acción

*Grupos compuestos por municipio llegarán a un consenso sobre cuales de las  
recomendaciones concretas implementarán.*

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.                    Presentaciones al grupo entero

*Un representante de cada municipio presentará el plan de su municipio.*

1:00 - 2:00 p.m.                    almuerzo

## **Participación en Acción: Mejorando el Proceso**

*el 20 y 21 de noviembre de 1995*

*Hotel Siesta, San Salvador*

**\*\*\*\*\***

### **De ayer a hoy**

#### **EL PASADO Y EL PRESENTE**

**LOS OBJETIVOS:** (Lo que los participantes podrán hacer al fin de la sesión)

1. Haga una lista de los aspectos de la participación ciudadana que existían previamente.
2. Haga una lista de los mecanismos de la participación ciudadana que son usados ahora.
3. Ponga los aspectos de la participación en categorías.
4. Analice los aspectos cuantitativos de la participación.

#### **LOS MATERIALES:**

rotfolio  
marcador  
cinta adhesiva

#### **LA INTRODUCCION (15 minutos)**

¿Qué es participación?

Deje que el grupo defina el termino.

Escriba la definición del grupo y muéstreselo a todo la gente.

¿De acuerdo al código municipal, cuales son los mecanismos para participar en el gobierno local?  
(Cabildo abierto, consulta popular, grupos de la comunidad, consultaciones con los grupos de la comunidad, los concejales, asistencia de la reunión del consejo municipal...)

Escriba estas respuestas.

¿Hay más tipos de participación?

(Los comites, hablando al alcalde, reportaje de las noticias locales)

¿Participa la gente más ahora que antes?

#### **ACTIVIDAD (60 minutos)**

Divida los participantes en 4 grupos de 5 personas. Dé a cada grupo una hoja del rotfolio con "El Pasado" escrito como título. Los grupos deben escribir ejemplos de participación que

pertenecen a esa categoría. Por ejemplo, "pidiendo un favor del alcalde." Cada grupo debe mostrar su lista a todos.

Pida a los grupos que comparen las listas. ¿Alguien quiere añadir algo? ¿Fue difícil pensar ejemplos? ¿Por qué sí? ¿Por qué no? ¿Hay similitud entre las listas? (marque las similitudes con marcadores de colores diferentes) Haga una lista comprensiva de todo de los ejemplos de los grupos con las ayuda de los participantes. Combine cosas que están en todas las hojas e incluya los ejemplos que la gente piensa que deberían estar en la lista.

Divida los participantes en 4 grupos de 5 personas. Dé cada grupo una hoja del rotfolio con "El Presente" escrito como título. Los grupos deben escribir ejemplos de participación que pertenecen a esa categoría. Por ejemplo, "asistiendo la reunión del consejo municipal." Cada grupo deben mostrar su lista a todos.

Pida a los grupos que comparen las listas. ¿Alguien quiere añadir algo? ¿Fue difícil pensar en ejemplos? ¿Por qué sí? ¿Por qué no? ¿Hay similitud entre las versiones de la participación de los grupos en el presente? (marque las similitud con marcadores de colores diferentes)

Haga una lista comprensiva de los ejemplos del presente como hizo para el pasado.

#### CONCLUSION (30 minutos)

Pida a los grupos que comparen las listas. ¿Cual lista fue más difícil de escribir? ¿Por qué? ¿Ven Uds. algo interesante en las listas? ¿Participa la gente más o menos ahora que antes? ¿Cómo participa la gente? ¿De los ejemplos en las listas, que es lo que la gente más hace? ¿Participa la gente mejor? ¿Cómo creen Uds. que ha mejorado la participación? ¿Cómo ha empeorado la situación?

Pida a los participantes dividir las listas en categorías. Pregúntales como describirían diferentes tipos de la participación. ¿Existen tipos de participación que requieren mayor consulta? ¿Existen otros tipos donde, aparte de los concejales, la gente sugiere decisiones? Por ejemplo, actividades en los cuales incluyen el gobierno local escucha a los ciudadanos, habla con los ciudadanos, y actividades en los cuales los ciudadanos participan en la toma de decisiones. Marque un asterisco del mismo color a lado de las actividades similares.

## **Participación en Acción: Mejorando el Proceso**

*el 20 y 21 de noviembre de 1995*

*Hotel Siesta, San Salvador*

**\*\*\*\*\***

### **Actividad y reflexión**

#### **OBJETIVOS:**

1. Definir lo que es el liderazgo y la comunicación
2. Analizar la relación que tiene el liderazgo y la comunicación con su vida diaria
3. Hacer una lista de las maneras en las que se puede mejorar el liderazgo y la comunicación

#### **MATERIALES:**

pañuelos/vendas/ pedazos de tela  
mesas  
sillas  
cuerda/cordel  
rotofolio  
marcadores

#### **INTRODUCCION**

Esta actividad considerará la relación entre el liderazgo y la comunicación. Sin embargo, antes de comenzar debemos asegurarnos de que todos estemos de acuerdo con el significado de estas palabras.

¿Qué es el liderazgo? Haga una lluvia de ideas sobre el liderazgo.

¿Qué es la comunicación?

Esta actividad pondrá a prueba su habilidad de dirigir y de comunicarse.

#### **ACTIVIDAD**

Esta actividad es en parejas, así que cada persona debe escoger un compañero de trabajo. Una de las personas debe cubrirse los ojos con un pañuelo de manera que no pueda ver nada. La otra persona, sin los ojos cubiertos, será muda, es decir que no podrá hablar. Cada pareja tendrá que pasar por todos los obstáculos de principio a fin. Tendrán 15 minutos para atravesar todos los obstáculos. ¿Tienen alguna pregunta antes de empezar?

## CONCLUSION

Ahora vamos a reflexionar sobre la actividad que acaban de completar. (Tener listas cuatro hojas de papel. En cada una de las hojas debe escribir experiencia, realidad, conceptualización y aplicación en forma de título).

¿Cómo fue la experiencia? (Sólo necesita las reacciones de la gente, por ejemplo, si les pareció difícil o emocionante, si les dio miedo o si se lastimaron) ¿Tuvieron éxito? ¿Por qué o por qué no?

Luego, los participantes deben comparar esta experiencia con la realidad de su trabajo. ¿Se sienten ciegos algunas veces? ¿Mudos? ¿Por qué? ¿Qué diferencia hay entre esta experiencia y la realidad? (Al hacer estas preguntas usted quiere que los participantes empiecen a pensar en como esta experiencia se relaciona a sus vidas).

Después se debe tratar la conceptualización. ¿Qué aspecto de esta experiencia les ha impresionado más? ¿Hubo algún malentendido? ¿Pueden dar un ejemplo de liderazgo?

En términos de aplicar esta experiencia a la vida real, ¿qué lecciones ha aprendido de este ejercicio y cómo puede aplicar las mismas a su trabajo de oficial local o líder comunitario? (Este es el momento propicio para que los participantes expresen sus preocupaciones, necesidades y sugerencias).

Estos son los objetivos que los participantes usarán el segundo día de trabajo para crear una agenda para el próximo año.



## **Participación en Acción: Mejorando el Proceso**

*el 20 y 21 de noviembre de 1995*

*Hotel Siesta, San Salvador*

**\*\*\*\*\***

### **Sugerencias para el mañana**

**OBJETIVOS:** (Después de esta sesión, los participantes podrán....)

1. Hacer una lista de las opciones posibles para mejorar la participación
2. Ordenar estas opciones de acuerdo con prioridades.

**MATERIALES:**

rotfolio  
papel de cuaderno  
bolígrafos  
marcadores

**INTRODUCCION:** (10 minutos)

Ayer nos concentramos en lo que la participación ciudadana ha significado hasta hoy incluyendo esfuerzos para analizar la comunicación, participación y liderazgo. Hoy día vamos a desarrollar un plan para el futuro. Recuerden como definimos la participación ayer. Lo primero que hay que hacer es examinar lo que dijimos ayer sobre el pasado y el presente de la participación (muestre las hojas del rotfolio de la sesión de ayer; sería ideal organizar estas hojas en categorías de participación, por ejemplo: líneas de comunicación creadas por el gobierno local, consultas con las comunidades, actividades relacionadas con la toma de decisiones). ¿Cuál es la diferencia entre la participación y la comunicación? A principios de este mes se redactó una lista en borrador de actividades nuevas y posibles para mejorar la participación. La meta del ejercicio de hoy es llegar a un consenso en cada municipio sobre planes concretos que se pueden realizar.

**ACTIVIDAD:** (1 hora)

Hacer una lluvia de ideas sobre posibles mecanismos de participación que pueden ser incorporados. (Vea la lista adjunta).

El alcalde y los líderes comunitarios se reúnen periódicamente, etc.

Divida el grupo en tres grupos más o menos iguales de aproximadamente 20 personas cada uno. Cada grupo debe examinar la lista y ordenar los temas del 1 al 10 de acuerdo con prioridades. Luego una persona de cada grupo debe escribir los temas en el orden establecido. Otra persona debe presentar las conclusiones de su grupo a los demás grupos.

**CONCLUSION (10 minutos)**

Al llegar a este punto deben haber tres listas, un poco diferentes o tal vez muy diferentes. Este es el punto de partida para iniciar una discusión interna más a fondo entre los representantes de cada municipio. Pida al grupo que examine las tres listas. ¿Tienen algo en común? ¿Qué diferencias existen? Indique al grupo que en la próxima sesión el objetivo será llegar a un acuerdo sobre las cinco prioridades que serán llevadas a cabo.

## INFORME DE RESULTADOS DE LOS GRUPOS DE DISCUSIÓN

### PROGRAMA DE GOBIERNO LOCAL EN EL SALVADOR

#### INTRODUCCIÓN.

Este informe recoge las opiniones que se vertieron en los grupos de discusión sobre el Programa de Gobierno Local en El Salvador, promovido por el Instituto Nacional Demócrata (NDI), en los municipios de Santa Elena, Texistepeque y Tecoluca, entre el 9 y el 22 de diciembre de 1995.

Fueron realizados un total de tres grupos focales, uno por municipalidad. Los participantes eran líderes comunitarios, concejales municipales y alcaldes, con excepción de Tecoluca en donde el alcalde no participó. Casi todos los participantes de los grupos de discusión habían participado en el programa promovido por NDI. Cada grupo de discusión se efectuó en fechas distintas. En el primero, llevado a cabo en el municipio de Santa Elena en Uaulután el 9 de diciembre, participaron nueve personas, todas del sexo masculino: el alcalde del municipio, cuatro miembros del concejo municipal y cuatro representantes de comunidades de Santa Elena, esto es, líderes de las mismas. El segundo grupo focal se realizó el domingo 10 de diciembre, en Texistepeque al occidente del país, con un total de ocho participantes incluyendo al alcalde, dos concejales y cinco representantes de las comunidades de Texistepeque, entre ellos una mujer. Finalmente, y con más de una semana de diferencia, el 22 de diciembre, se realizó el grupo de discusión correspondiente a la municipalidad de Tecoluca, en el departamento de San Vicente. Este grupo fue el único que no registró la presencia del alcalde local y en el que, por otro lado, se dio el mayor número de mujeres participantes: tres. El grupo estuvo constituido por cuatro líderes comunitarios y dos concejales.

Las discusiones grupales duraron entre dos horas con quince minutos y dos horas con cuarenta y cinco minutos. En cada reunión hubo una moderadora, Carolina Rodríguez Loza, y un registrador, José Miguel Cruz, ambos de nacionalidad salvadoreña. La primera orientaba el intercambio hacia elementos que generaran opinión acerca de lo que pensaban sobre los aspectos del programa NDI y lo expresaran en sus propias palabras. El segundo tomaba nota de las opiniones y al final de las discusiones hacía un resumen con el cual los participantes avalaban el registro de sus criterios y actitudes. Las discusiones giraron en torno a elementos que fueron trabajados a lo largo del programa de NDI: participación en el gobierno local, organización y desarrollo de las comunidades, comunicación entre comunidades y gobierno local, etc.

#### 1. Gobierno local.

En términos generales, todos los grupos definieron al gobierno local como el gobierno del municipio. Este apareció concebido como la constitución del alcalde y su concejo. El alcalde es visto

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como la máxima autoridad del gobierno local y, en algunos casos, como la personificación del mismo. Este apareció concebido como la constitución del alcalde y su concejo. El alcalde es visto como el representante del mismo, esto es, el municipio, en el

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En términos generales, todos los grupos definieron al gobierno local como el gobierno del municipio. Este apareció concebido como la constitución del alcalde y su concejo. El alcalde es visto

como la máxima autoridad del gobierno local y, en algunos casos, como la personificación del mismo. Mientras que en Santa Elena se enfatizó el área de jurisdicción del mismo, esto es, el municipio, en el grupo de Texistepeque se hizo mención al carácter legal de la dirección del municipio, legalidad dada por las elecciones y por el apego al código municipal. En los grupos de Tecoluca y de Texistepeque se habló además del carácter colegiado del gobierno local.

Las responsabilidades del gobierno local fueron definidas de manera diversa en los distintos grupos focales. En el municipio de Santa Elena el grupo se refirió de manera abstracta a la función de atender "el llamado de la comunidad" y de "velar por su pueblo"; en cambio, el grupo de Texis - nombre coloquial que los habitantes de Texistepeque dan a su municipio - ofreció la mayor cantidad de opiniones sobre las responsabilidades del gobierno local. Entre otras, se mencionó que la administración municipal tiene a cargo a los trabajadores que deben estar atentos a las necesidades de las comunidades y servir a las mismas; dentro de éstas se mencionó además el carácter resolutorio de problemas comunitarios que tiene el gobierno local. Un líder del municipio de Tecoluca definió las responsabilidades del gobierno local como el establecimiento de prioridades de trabajo en las comunidades y en base a ello resolver los problemas de las mismas. En el grupo de Texistepeque se presentó una manera más realista de ver los problemas del gobierno local; entre otros, se puso de manifiesto el hecho de que las dificultades de administrar un municipio son tantas que sería difícil

solucionar los problemas sin la ayuda de la comunidad o sin el apoyo de los pueblos. Este aspecto fue evaluado como una manera de "extender los brazos de la administración municipal"; en el fondo de esta afirmación se halla la idea de que el gobierno local no se limita ya simplemente al alcalde y a su concejo municipal, el gobierno estaría constituido por las comunidades que forman el municipio en la medida en que éstas se encuentran organizadas y participan de su desarrollo a través de la participación de sus representantes. Desde esa perspectiva, cuando se les preguntó a los participantes de los grupos focales sobre los encargados de planificar el desarrollo municipal, hubo un consenso en señalar que los responsables son el concejo municipal con la participación de las comunidades. En Santa Elena, por ejemplo, se mencionó la utilidad de lo que llamaron el Concejo Abierto, esto es, la realización de las reuniones del concejo municipal con las puertas abiertas para permitir a la población opinar sobre los asuntos de la comunidad, y para ayudar a la toma de decisiones sobre el desarrollo del municipio. En Tecoluca se mencionaron inclusive a las cooperativas de las comunidades como participantes del desarrollo municipal, en la medida en que a través de ellas las directivas comunitarias pueden establecer prioridades de desarrollo y proponerlas al gobierno local.

Las discusiones originadas en los tres grupos focales realizados sugieren una idea común de que el gobierno local ha cambiado en comparación a las antiguas formas de gobernar municipalmente. Esta idea estaría basada esencialmente en los esfuerzos de los gobiernos en la actualidad por lograr la participación de las comunidades en el proceso de toma de decisiones. Tanto en Texistepeque como en Tecoluca y en Santa Elena, se externó la idea de que el gobierno municipal ha cambiado en comparación con el modelo antiguo. Por ejemplo, en Texistepeque se dijo que "antes" el gobierno municipal era el alcalde y su función era simplemente cumplir con las tareas administrativas: firmar cheques y los registros civiles, lo que no le consumía más de dos horas diarias para luego dedicarse a sus labores particulares fuera de la alcaldía; en la actualidad dentro de las funciones del alcalde y de su concejo municipal se incluye la visita a las comunidades - aunque ésta represente el doble de esfuerzo -, la atención a los requerimientos de la población, la realización de las consultas populares ya sea a través de los cabildos abiertos o por medio de las reuniones con los líderes comunitarios. En Santa Elena se mencionó como uno de los cambios más importantes, el

esfuerzo del gobierno municipal por estimular la formación de las Asociaciones de Desarrollo Comunitario (ADESCO) para que las comunidades puedan participar en la administración de sus recursos; algunos líderes opinaron que el gobierno municipal ha cambiado porque 'antes había que pedir audiencia y hoy el alcalde es con todos'. En Tecoluca, donde los participantes externaron que no tenían punto de referencia porque era primera vez que participaban en un esfuerzo de esa naturaleza, se dijo que la participación de las comunidades era fundamental para asegurar el desarrollo del municipio. De hecho, en este municipio las directivas comunitarias son vistas como la expresión concreta del gobierno local porque son ellas las que deben dar una respuesta inmediata - aunque sea de carácter verbal - a las demandas y sugerencias planteadas por los miembros de la comunidad.

En esencia, no hubieron observaciones para cambiar el gobierno local o la forma en que éste debe ejercer sus facultades tal como está estructurado legalmente en la actualidad. Todas las sugerencias sobre el gobierno local se mantuvieron sobre la temática y la línea de incrementar la interacción entre el concejo municipal y la población. En Santa Elena, las sugerencias se centraron sobre las personas de los líderes, señalando que éstos deberían capacitarse más sobre sus funciones y sobre la forma de relacionarse con los representantes de la alcaldía; se dijo también que debería promoverse el contacto entre los líderes de diversas municipalidades de tal forma que los representantes comunitarios así como los gobiernos locales a los que pertenecen tales líderes puedan tomar experiencias de otras municipalidades. En Texistepeque, las sugerencias giraron en torno a acercar al alcalde y concejales con las comunidades del municipio. Para ello, se sugirió que 'el gobierno se desplace a las comunidades' de tal forma que 'la gente conozca a los concejales' para que haya más participación de la comunidad misma. Algo parecido sugirieron los participantes del municipio de Tecoluca en San Vicente, según éstos las comunidades deben convocar y discutir proyecciones con el alcalde y sus líderes comunales.

El énfasis en la participación de las comunidades en el gobierno local se da a la par de una creciente convicción de que 'las alcaldías' no pueden hacer mucho sin recurrir al apoyo de la población frente a las precarias condiciones de funcionamiento que aquejan a las municipalidades. Los grupos focales revelaron que tales condiciones han obligado a funcionarios de las alcaldías de Texistepeque y de Tecoluca a apreciar el valor de la autonomía en el gobierno municipal y a sugerir ésta como una de las metas del mismo: lograr cierta independencia en la conducción del gobierno local frente a organismos externos, frente a acreedores, frente al gobierno central o, inclusive, frente a las líneas partidistas. ✓

Sin embargo, ante la pregunta de lo que piensan sobre la integración de representantes de otros partidos en el concejo municipal, las respuestas fueron diversas. En Santa Elena, se dijo que esto 'sería negativo para el pueblo' porque '.. (el) pueblo no está preparado, el nivel de cultura no está listo', 'algún día sí, eso sería lo ideal'. En cambio en la municipalidad de Texistepeque, las opiniones fueron menos homogéneas; algunas opiniones rechazaban la idea de una representación proporcional en el concejo, mientras que una persona dijo 'por respeto a los votantes, sí; porque hay gente que gana por tres o cinco votos y no está representado (el que tiene menos votos)'. Finalmente, en Tecoluca se presentó la opinión más favorable a aceptar otros partidos en el concejo municipal; se dijo que con la representación proporcional 'se abren espacios y se democratiza'.

A pesar de encontrar diversas opiniones sobre el tema de integrar distintos partidos en la dirección del gobierno municipal, todos los grupos coincidieron, que a nivel comunitario, la

pertenencia a un partido político no es importante pues las directivas y los representantes comunitarios trabajan en función de las necesidades de la comunidad y no en función de banderas políticas. Una concejal mencionó que si trabajaran con criterios partidistas en las comunidades no serían gobierno local porque no gobernarían para todos.

## 2. Participación.

Teniendo en cuenta el discurso y las actitudes expresadas en cada uno de los grupos pueden distinguirse concepciones similares de lo que significa la participación ciudadana, la diferencia quizás estriba en los mecanismos de participación en la vida del gobierno local.

Se identifica que la concepción de participación es aquella que la define como acción compartida por los miembros de toda la comunidad para el mejoramiento de ésta y puede estar dirigida por un líder comunitario o por un alcalde. En el municipio de Texistepeque, una líder dijo que es 'algo que nos motiva a compartir y mejorar nuestra comunidad'; mientras que en Santa Elena, se dijo que la participación debe de ser de toda la ciudadanía. En Tecoluca se definió la participación como 'un acto democrático (...) Hasta el último grupito tiene participación'.

Cuando se preguntó por los mecanismos de participación en el gobierno local, se mencionaron mecanismos que ya están reportados en el informe del 19 de septiembre de 1994, en donde se mencionan: los cabildos abiertos, consultas populares, reuniones abiertas del concejo municipal, reuniones con el alcalde -visitas de líderes no programadas-, visitas del alcalde y/o el concejo municipal a las comunidades. De las nuevas formas de participación en el gobierno local existen dos modalidades: unas son las formas de participación que nunca se han hecho localmente pero que se hacen en otros municipios y que han sido conocidas en el intercambio de experiencias dentro del programa de NDI. Por ejemplo, en Santa Elena se plantea como una nueva forma de participación las reuniones abiertas del concejo municipal con líderes de las comunidades, situación que ya había sido experimentada en Texistepeque y que generó la opinión de que se podían hacer con la seguridad de que darían resultado. Otras formas de participación que ellos consideran nuevas modalidades son modificaciones a las formas antiguas de participación local. Por ejemplo, en Santa Elena se está pensando en trasladar la 'sede' del cabildo abierto desde el centro urbano hasta las comunidades rurales con el objeto de hacer éste más accesible a los pobladores rurales.

Parte importante de esta visión es la certeza de que cualquier forma de organización, por buscar solución a las problemáticas de las comunidades, es reconocida y avalada por la comunidad como una forma de participación: por ejemplo, comités de jóvenes, de arreglo de calles, de agua; nombrar dos o más delegados para ir a buscar al alcalde e ir a hablar con él; invitar a las autoridades municipales a las reuniones de la directiva de la comunidad.

En el discurso de los grupos está constantemente la idea que sólo el gobierno local no puede gobernar sin la organización de las comunidades; y las comunidades aún organizadas sin el interlocutor del gobierno local que las aglutina bajo un planteamiento de desarrollo tampoco pueden alcanzar un mayor progreso. La diferencia en la idea de la organización radica, de nuevo, en la forma misma de la organización. En Santa Elena consideran que sólo las ADIESCO son la única forma válida de representación y participación de las comunidades, porque es la forma legal ante el gobierno

central que legitima la interacción con organizaciones con fines económicos. Sin embargo, en Texistepeque reconocen a las ADESCO como una figura legal y tienen comunidades organizadas bajo esta concepción, no obstante, éstas no son la mayoría. Esto se da así porque la formación de líderes y directivas históricamente ha permitido tener una buena participación y comunicación entre las comunidades y el gobierno local. En el municipio de Tecoluca no cuentan con ninguna ADESCO y no consideran necesaria la organización de la comunidad bajo esta forma; por el otro lado, consideran que la legalidad de la representación comunitaria es que sea una directiva elegida por su comunidad y que esté juramentada por el alcalde y su concejo.

Todo esto hace pensar que para los participantes de los grupos de discusión la legitimidad de la organización de las comunidades en la vida del gobierno local viene dada por la eficiencia lograda en el trabajo municipal. Esto se puede confirmar también, cuando se conocen las opiniones sobre los cabildos abiertos; en los tres grupos, tanto líderes como concejales y alcaldes, conocen la legalidad del cabildo pero tienen opiniones diferentes en cuanto a la efectividad como forma de participación y comunicación entre el gobierno local y las comunidades. Así, las quejas principales van desde que la gente no asiste porque las realizan en el centro urbano del municipio y porque delegan en los directivos la responsabilidad de gestión de las necesidades de la comunidad, con lo cual no es una reunión con toda la ciudadanía del municipio, hasta que los cabildos son una forma de cumplir con un requisito legal y que no resuelven nada porque todo 'se trae ya cocinado'.

Lo positivo que ven en los cabildos es que han permitido el 'ejercicio democrático', esto es, la ciudadanía puede conocer los informes del concejo, donde los personeros municipales rinden cuentas de su quehacer como gobierno local; al tiempo que los líderes comunitarios llevan a cabo todo un proceso de consultas con la gente de sus localidades para priorizar sobre las necesidades y que puedan ser presentadas públicamente en el cabildo abierto.

Las opiniones fueron que ahora la gente participa más que antes en el gobierno local; por ejemplo, en Santa Elena se dijo que 'antes se daban cosas que no se necesitaban y tal vez las necesidades más sentidas se quedaban atrás, y ahora como nos preguntan, elaboramos el proyecto, nos ponemos de acuerdo y para todo eso nosotros tenemos que consultar a la gente, de esa forma la población participa. Esto se dijo de manera similar en los otros municipios consultados. Otro ejemplo del aumento en la participación ciudadana es la integración de líderes de otras comunidades al gobierno local.

En resumen se puede decir que la participación en el gobierno local se ajusta a la opinión de que es para buscar el bien común y que la formas que se utilizan tienen su validez en la medida en que éstas resultan eficaces y no tanto porque apeguen a la legalidad.

### **3. Gobiernos comunitarios.**

En términos generales se puede decir que los gobiernos comunitarios son muy bien vistos por las autoridades municipales en las tres localidades estudiadas. Esto por tres razones que pueden ser extraídas de las discusiones de los grupos focales: en primer lugar, los gobiernos comunitarios

legalmente constituidos contribuyen al desarrollo del municipio porque ayudan a establecer las prioridades del mismo y a diseñar los proyectos en función de las necesidades propias de las comunidades; en segundo lugar y relacionado con lo anterior, contribuyen a aumentar la capacidad de gestión del gobierno local; y finalmente, formalizan una relación de participación comunitaria en las decisiones del gobierno local. En tal sentido, en las municipalidades de Texistepeque y de Santa Elena se puso de manifiesto el interés del gobierno municipal por estimular la creación de las asociaciones de desarrollo comunitario; en cambio, en el municipio de Tecoluca, si bien los concejales declararon que no existe un esfuerzo por estimular las ADESCO oficiales, sí se mostraron empeñados en crear organizaciones y gobiernos de comunidad para canalizar la gestión municipal. En todo caso, las tres municipalidades de mostraron empeñadas en la dinámica de promover la organización de gobiernos comunitarios con el objetivo de apuntalar el trabajo en el municipio. En este sentido, los participantes de los grupos focales señalaron la importancia de la descentralización. Aunque no todas las personas participantes de los grupos de discusión mostraron un conocimiento muy claro acerca de lo que es la descentralización, existe la certeza de que es posible e inclusive necesario delegar cierta autoridad en las directivas y en los representantes de las comunidades dentro de la municipalidad. De hecho, las discusiones con los líderes y los concejales de las localidades de Texistepeque, Tecoluca y Santa Elena revelaron que las personas reconocen en la directiva o en la ADESCO a la autoridad y a la representación de la comunidad a la que pertenecen y con la cual se deben relacionar.

El cambio notable respecto a los grupos comunitarios es la constitución de las ADESCO, que introduce el componente legal en las relaciones entre la alcaldía y la comunidad. Tal legalidad ha permitido, en opinión de los participantes, cierto grado de autonomía para buscar mecanismos de desarrollo en su comunidad. Lo aparentemente novedoso es que tales mecanismos no sólo son buscados a través de las autoridades municipales sino también a través de otros canales: las organizaciones no gubernamentales, las oficinas del gobierno y otras entidades. Con ello, las representaciones y las directivas comunitarias han pasado de ser grupos encargados de organizar algún evento circunstancial una o dos veces al año, a organizaciones con poder para decidir sobre los mecanismos de desarrollo de su comunidad. Así por ejemplo, según declaraciones de los participantes de Santa Elena, las directivas comunitarias ya no se forman sólo para la ejecución de un proyecto específico para luego disolverse, sino que la organización directiva de la comunidad queda permanentemente para canalizar las necesidades, para buscar oportunidades de ayuda y para organizar el trabajo de desarrollo. De una visión de directiva transitoria se ha pasado a una idea de directiva permanente con deberes y legalmente constituida. En Tecoluca, por otro lado, esa permanencia ha permitido que las directivas puedan estimular a las cooperativas o asociaciones de carácter lucrativo dentro de la comunidad para establecer planes de trabajo en conjunto con los proyectos de la comunidad.

Ahora bien, las opiniones vertidas en los grupos de discusión de las tres municipalidades sugieren que además que haberse registrado cambios reales en los grupos comunitarios, también se ha dado un lógico y positivo cambio a nivel perceptivo. Luego de ser víctimas de una actitud de indiferencia, aparentemente los grupos de representación comunitaria han pasado a ser uno de los puntos principales en la agenda de los gobiernos locales y en la vida comunitaria. No es sólo que los grupos han cambiado, sino que también ahora se les ve distinto, se les ve útiles para el desarrollo.

#### 4. El Programa de NDI.



Las discusiones grupales dejaron como resultado las opiniones consensuadas de que el Programa del Instituto Nacional Democrata fue muy provechoso. El discurso giró tanto en elogiar el contenido programático, que algunos de los participantes llamaron estudio, y, sobre todo, en destacar la facilitación de las personas que dirigieron el programa (Marissa Brown, Daren Nance, etc.).

Una de las opiniones que más se destacaron entre los grupos fue que se creó un espacio de intercambio y conocimiento de las experiencias de otros municipios salvadoreños; mencionaban que estando en un país pequeño no se conocen otras vivencias ni de líderes comunitarios ni de gobiernos locales; a su vez mencionaban que estaban 'sorprendidos' de haber encontrado las mismas necesidades y problemáticas. Todo esto contribuye a capitalizar el valor de las experiencias de cada municipio. Los participantes del Programa de NDI se dieron cuenta de que las diferencias estaban más bien en los recursos propios de cada municipio y en el acceso a más o menos recursos de otras fuentes.

Implícitamente, las intervenciones señalaron que es más importante conocer las experiencias nacionales que las correspondientes a otros países. Esto por dos razones: en primer lugar, por la factibilidad de aplicación, se trata de contextos muy similares; y en segundo lugar, por las posibilidades prácticas de intercambio, es decir, los participantes del programa se dieron cuenta de que pueden ir, por sus propios medios, a otros municipios para intercambiar sus experiencias.

El intercambio con las experiencias de otros países les sirvió para comparar y evaluar su situación a otros niveles. Por ejemplo se dijo que 'si en grandes potencias hay problemas en las comunidades y no le pueden dar solución, cómo no van a haber (problemas) en las nuestras y con doce años de guerra'.

El Programa fue tan bien evaluado en los grupos de discusión que en la municipalidad de Texistepeque se sugirió que si el programa se prorrogaba se debería de incluir nuevos municipios que pudieran beneficiarse de 'este aprendizaje', inclusive aunque esto representara que su municipio no seguiría estando dentro del Programa. Es más, los participantes de Texistepeque opinaron que este programa les dejó un mayor fortalecimiento del gobierno local que, si bien es cierto no es algo tangible como 'un puente o una calle', es algo que también contribuye al desarrollo municipal.

Una de las opiniones de los líderes comunitarios fue, entre otras: '...conocemos ahora cuáles son las atribuciones del alcalde y su concejo. Lo que nos toca hacer a las personas, o sea, cada uno tiene una ramita de trabajo'. Con esto se resaltó la importancia del conocimiento de las reglas que rigen la gobernabilidad municipal. Otra de las opiniones interesantes fue la de las mujeres que estuvieron en los grupos de discusión, su opinión acerca del programa fue tanto como líder comunitario como desde su condición de género, lo manifestaron como una forma de aprender, de dar a conocer lo que piensan y lo que sienten.

Para terminar, los participantes sienten que el compromiso adquirido por haber participado en el programa es, por un lado, dar cumplimiento al plan que se elaboró con metas a largo, mediano y corto plazo; y, por otro lado, transmitir verbalmente los conocimientos adquiridos en el programa.

### 5. Las sugerencias para mejorar la comunicación y participación en el gobierno local.

En Texistepeque se sugirieron esencialmente dos cosas: en primer lugar, que el gobierno local se desplace a las comunidades, ya sea algún miembro del concejo municipal o el mismo alcalde; en segundo lugar, se mencionó la necesidad de que los líderes se capaciten en las formas de participación y de organización, así como en las formas de gobierno. Por otro lado, el grupo de Texistepeque mencionó que la manera de mejorar el desarrollo económico de su municipio es mediante la implementación del impuesto predial; ésto haría que la municipalidad tuviera más recursos económicos lo cual redundaría en una mayor autonomía.

En Tecoluca, también se sugirió la importancia de que el gobierno local llegue a las comunidades, aunque acá se añadió que debe ser bajo invitación de las directivas comunitarias. En este municipio, se cuestionó el valor de los cabildos abiertos para lograr una verdadera participación y, por el contrario, se enfatizó la utilidad de que las autoridades municipales visiten a las comunidades para que 'puedan palpar la realidad'. En el orden económico, se habló de que para el mejoramiento y el desarrollo del municipio, es importante que la 'banca nacional otorgue créditos blandos' a los pobladores del municipio.

En Santa Elena se propuso contar con mecanismos más ágiles de convocatoria popular. Estos mecanismos implicarían, por ejemplo, la adquisición de dispositivos como altoparlantes, fotocopiadoras, etc. El desarrollo económico en Santa Elena es visto más en función de la captación de proyectos económicos de organizaciones internacionales.

**Evaluation Report**

**EL SALVADOR: LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
Civic Participation in Municipal Government**

**December 11 to 16, 1995**

**Submitted by**

**Christine Ryland**

Evaluation Report

EL SALVADOR: LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
Civic Participation in Municipal Government

December 11 to 16, 1995

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ATTACHMENTS

Ryland Notes  
Questionnaire  
Santa Elena Statistics  
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## Evaluation Report

### EL SALVADOR: LOCAL GOVERNMENT Civic Participation in Municipal Government

December 11 to 16, 1995

#### I. SUMMARY

At the conclusion of its 15-month program to promote greater civic participation in municipal government in El Salvador, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) conducted an evaluation of the program. Executive Director Elias Santana of the Escuela de Vecinos (EV) of Venezuela and NDI Deputy Director for Program Coordination Christine Ryland conducted the week-long evaluation, interviewing persons familiar with the program -- participants, observers and representatives of counterpart development organizations also working in El Salvador -- to elicit their comments/assessments of the program.

The evaluation sought to measure the impact of the program on the three participating municipalities and to elicit comment on: (1) NDI's manner/method of promoting dialogue between local officials and community leaders; and (2) suggestions for future NDI program activities in El Salvador.

Comments overall complimented NDI on the program -- in method, materials and capabilities of personnel -- and encouraged NDI to conduct further work. General consensus of opinion was that, should NDI decide to conduct further programming, the Institute should work much more intensively in-country, placing a field representative in El Salvador to assure ongoing, closer communication and technical assistance to a broader number of municipalities.

This evaluator (Ryland) recommends that NDI weigh carefully its other priorities in the region, in light of the fact that a major contractor, Research Triangle Institute (RTI), has been awarded a long-term contract to conduct municipal development work throughout El Salvador and the country is teeming with other donor assisted agencies conducting programs which could be considered quite similar to NDI's efforts. NDI might consider, however, enlisting the human resources of the Escuela de Vecinos based in Caracas, an NDI partner organization in the region with which NDI is working to strengthen/develop EV's capabilities, to conduct actual program work while NDI would provide technical assistance and a subgrant to support the initiative.

## **II. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **NDI Program Overview/Objectives**

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) entered into a cooperative agreement with the USAID Mission to El Salvador effective October 1, 1993, to conduct a 15-month democratic development project in El Salvador focusing on local government. NDI provided technical and practical training to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of Salvadoran municipal governments. The agreement was extended in October 1994 for an additional five months and again in May 1995 for an additional seven months, terminating in December 1995.

NDI's program objectives were to:

- . Improve community leaders' understanding of the scope and role of local government;
- . Improve local officials' understanding of the benefits of including community organizations in decision making and problem solving;
- . Enhance the abilities of municipal council members;
- . Foster communication between local government officials and community groups; and
- . Facilitate citizen participation in the decision making process at the local level.

Specific NDI program activities in El Salvador included:

March 1994 - NDI conducted an initial assessment and program design mission in March 1994 which guided its workplan and selection of three municipalities for the program: Santa Elena, Texistepeque and Tecoluca. All three municipalities are governed by representatives of the three major political parties -- the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), the National Republican Alliance (ARENA) and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). The municipalities are located in different geographical areas, have populations between 25,000 and 30,000, and reflect a variety of war-time experiences.

July 1994 - In July 1994, with the assistance of consultant Carolina Rodriguez Loza, a Salvadoran psychologist, NDI conducted focus group discussions in each location to determine particular needs and concerns in each locality and to further refine program design.

September 1994 - In September NDI invited two local government officials -- Cecilia Gil Barvo, mayor of San Juan de Betulia, Colombia, and Roger Perez, city council member from San Antonio, Texas, to share their experience and expertise with officials of the three municipalities. The visiting "experts" discussed various methods they used to broaden citizen participation in their communities.

December 1994 - In December NDI brought two community organizers, Lauren Colleta from Chicago and Elias Santa from Venezuela to El Salvador to share their expertise with the Salvadorans, focusing on the role and development of community organizations in the democratic process.

April 1995 - In April, NDI convened a seminar in Cerro Verde, El Salvador, on "Community and Municipality: the Role of the Community Leader." Discussions were led by two international participants - Franklin Cisneros of the Escuela de Vecinos of Venezuela, and Oma Dieppa of the Comision de Justicia y Paz of Panama. Following plenary discussions, the participants broke into small groups to read and discuss various articles of the Municipal Code relating to community participation.

For the program, NDI produced a training manual in Spanish covering such topics as: how to direct a seminar, how to train others, how to recruit and motivate, how to prepare internal rules, and how to cooperate with other groups. This manual was used extensively during the April 1995 program by the international presenters.

July 1995 - In July, NDI conducted three one-day seminars for community leaders in each municipality, with leaders who participated in the April program serving as moderators. Alejandro Frigerio, a community activist from Washington, D.C., served as overall moderator. Participants further read and analyzed the law defining local government and community associations.

November 1995 - NDI's program culminated with a November seminar on "Participation: Improving the Process." During this seminar, some 60 participants from seven municipalities (including the three NDI pilot municipalities) various methods of developing concrete plans for improving citizen participation in the community. The local councils of the three pilot municipalities each developed a plan. Three Salvadoran NGO representatives served as moderators for this program.

### **Evaluation Methodology**

From December 11 to 16, 1995, NDI evaluators Elias Santana, executive director of the Escuela de Vecinos of Caracas, Venezuela; and Christine Ryland, deputy director of program coordination at NDI/Washington, traveled to El Salvador and conducted a series of meetings with individuals who had participated in or were otherwise familiar with NDI's civic participation program. Interviews were conducted with USAID officials and representatives of nongovernmental organizations in the capital of San Salvador. Site visits were made to, and interviews conducted with mayors and community representatives in the three municipalities where NDI worked -- Santa Elena, Texistepeque, and Tecoluca.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

The evaluators attempted to obtain information so as to gauge whether program objectives were achieved, namely:

- . Is there improved understanding of the scope and role of community government?
- . Is there better understanding by local leaders of the benefits of community involvement in decision-making?
- . Are municipal council members more capable than before they participated in NDI's program? How so? In what ways?
- . Is there better communication between local government officials and community groups?
- . Is there more/better citizen participation at the local level?

The evaluators asked interviewees to comment on:

- . Overall impact of NDI's program,
- . NDI's methodology,
- . NDI's materials,
- . Program personnel (both NDI staff and non-NDI presenters),
- . How participants have or have not implemented lessons learned from the NDI program, and
- . Program strengths and weaknesses.

## **Chronology of Meetings and Site Visits**

The interview and site visit schedule was as follows:

**Monday, December 11**

Ryland and Santana arrived in San Salvador and met to review evaluation criteria, the schedule of confirmed meetings, and additional meetings to be confirmed. Ryland confirmed interview appointments by telephone. Ryland was unable to confirm or meet with Tom Hawk of USAID or with Mario Antonio Cativo, who had also been suggested by program staff for interviews.

**Tuesday, December 12**

Meetings were conducted with:

- . Oscar Mena of GTZ at COMURES



- . Donald Bryan of COMURES
- . Carrie Thompson, Program and Projects Development Office, USAID
- . Salvador Novellino, Office of Democratic Initiatives, USAID
- . Ruth Candray, FUNDECOMUNA
- . Carolina Rodriguez Loza, a psychologist and consultant for NDI who conducted the focus groups; and Jose Miguel Cruz, Public Works Resource Center, University of Central America

Wednesday, December 13

The evaluation team drove to the municipality of Santa Elena and met with:

- . Mayor Nelson Funes and other community leaders including Councilor Manual Funes, Cesar Augusto Castellon, Rafael Ramirez Lozano, Andres de Jesus Castillo, Miguel Angel Solano, Raul Ayala, Jose Dolores Parada and Silvio Diaz Chavez

Thursday, December 14

The team drove to the municipality of Texistepeque and met with:

- . Mayor Luis Antonio Henriquez and other community leaders including Corina Magana, Jose Antonio Lewis, Candido Martinez, Hilario Hernandez, Francisco Rodriguez

The team also met that afternoon in San Salvador with:

- . Ann Farrar, Director for Sonsonante, Municipal Development Project, Research Triangle Institute (RTI)
- . Oscar Vigil, RTI

Friday, December 15

The evaluators drove to the municipality of Tecoluca to meet with:

- . Mayor Miguel Nicolas Garcia and other community leaders including Marina Diaz, Concepcion Gonzales, "Don Alejandro," "Don Nelson"

Upon return to San Salvador, the team met with:

- . Griselda Carranza, social worker with FUSAI

Marta Padilla, Reporter, La Prensa Grafica

Saturday, December 16

Ryland and Santana reviewed meetings and interview notes, and compared impressions. Ryland departed for Washington. Santana departed the following day.

Ryland's transcribed notes from each interview are attached.

### III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

#### Results/Impact on Municipalities

##### *NDI as Catalyst/Inspiration*

The community representatives in the three municipalities and the NGO representatives in San Salvador expressed the view that NDI's efforts "planted a seed" and awakened community residents to the notion of citizen participation in municipal government. "NDI woke us up, gave us a push, gave us confidence, gave us a model, and made us realize that we are capable..." (of taking control, developing our own plans, implementing our own programs, not waiting for central government)...

The community representatives of Texistepeque pointed out to the evaluators that one clear product of NDI's program is the 68 or 72 (total number uncertain) new leaders who have emerged after participating in the program.

##### *Implementation of Community Plans*

In both Santa Elena and Texistepeque, the councils (mayors and key community representatives) reported that following their participation in NDI's program, they had either developed or refined annual community development plans and had completed a specific project: a water delivery system in Santa Elena (photographs of the recent dedication ceremony were shown to the evaluators); a new covered central market in Texistepeque (which the evaluators visited).

In Tecoluca, this evaluator's initial impression was that there was much less evidence of organized planning or project implementation. The mayor and community leaders seemed disorganized and were late in assembling; but it later was explained to the evaluators that they were preoccupied with a larger meeting of the town council of some 60 persons and a forthcoming meeting of the entire municipal or community director (some 500 persons) to revise the year's annual action plan, review finances, an outline an action plan for next year.

Mayor Garcia commented that since NDI's program, there is more participation in municipal decisionmaking; some people are more active, some more vocal. Three of the community leaders (Marina Diaz, Concepcion Gonzales, and Don Nelson) acknowledged that Tecolucans have not used the model municipal plan they developed during the November 20/21 NDI workshop, but they plan to do so.

By contrast, Griselda Carranza, a social worker with the organization FUSAI, told the evaluators that Tecoluca "is working," but a sequel [program] is needed so as not to lose the momentum initiated.

### *Evidence of Increased Community Participation*

The evaluators were unable to witness public meetings or discussions, but were told by the mayors and community leaders in the three municipalities they visited that public participation had improved, or, at least, awareness of its importance had grown and intentions were good.

The atmosphere was quiet in Santa Elena, but Mayor Funes and the members of the group interviewed were enthusiastic. They reported that more citizens do indeed know the local government plan, that citizens are participating more, that everyone was more tolerant and making the effort to be inclusive, regardless of an individual's party membership. They also reported that community concerns were dealt with on a 24-hour basis now, that the *cabildos* are being held in the cantones now rather than in the department center, that efforts are being made to provide more services for youth and women. They reported the completion of a new municipal water well and delivery system as the tangible product resulting from the community action plan.

The Santa Elenans reported that they are paying more attention to the importance of communication within the municipality, using radio, a sound system (two for 15 local associations), door-to-door delivery of invitations to meetings, and written notes to the "director" about citizen concerns. They also provided the evaluators copies of their Local Information System presenting Community Statistics on population characteristics, agricultural production, households, schools, health and other public services, numbers of NGOs and other profile information which is used for planning purposes (copies attached).

At the municipal hall in Texistepeque, the evaluators encountered a mildly bustling atmosphere with citizens coming and going from the hall and many waiting to see the mayor or a council member. Santana advised Ryland that the physical condition of the city hall was much improved over his previous visit there with the NDI program; the building was very clean and freshly painted, and desks and seating were available for citizens seeking services. They also visited a newly constructed central market, a modern covered structure with individual booth or display areas for vendors. At mid-morning, activity was significant, and this evaluator's impression was that the community was very proud of the new facility, completed as part of the community action plan.

In Tecoluca, there was little activity at the city hall when the evaluators arrived, but there may have been more real evidence of community participation actually "happening." The mayor arrived late and appeared to be flustered, and community leaders had to be summoned for what was to have been a scheduled discussion with the evaluators. The seeming disorder was explained in part because the community leaders were more focused a higher priority -- namely, making arrangements for a town council meeting (60 persons) and a subsequent meeting of the entire "directive" (500 persons) for the purpose of revising the annual action plan. Also, it had never been clearly confirmed that NDI's evaluation visit would be convenient on that day. It was in Tecoluca that one community leader reported that he had to travel five hours by foot and by bus to come to the city for meeting such as these. This could be interpreted as a testament to the dedication, at least, of one member of the community to his responsibilities as a leader and decision-maker.

Mayor Garcia told the evaluators that people are more vocal, more active, and more involved in the community, although he did not offer concrete examples. He and the other leaders said reported that the community had not yet used their action plan specifically, but are revising the plan.

Marina Diaz pointed out that the community was making a better effort at communication overall, and provided copies of a promotional brochure in English entitled *Tecoluca opens its doors to National and International Investment* (copy attached).

## **NDI Methodology and Materials**

### ***Choice of Municipalities***

General opinion was that NDI's choice of the three municipalities was good and provided sound contrasts for comparison. General criticism was that (had funding resources permitted) NDI should not have limited the program to the three municipalities, should have maintained an in-country presence, and should have had a wider reach so as to include many more municipalities. (Oscar Mena of COMURES, Griselda Carranza of FUSAI).

### ***Seminar Methods/Techniques***

Most of the persons interviewed expressed the view that NDI's interactive discussions and training methods/techniques were effective. The community leaders of Santa Elena, Texistepeque and Tecoluca who actually participated in the interactive sessions expressed more positive enthusiasm about NDI methodology than did USAID or NGO representatives in San Salvador, who commented that they had some initial doubts about NDI's approach and about participants' ability to assimilate the information presented. (Ruth Candray of FUNDECOMUNA). They commented that participation was excellent within each specific seminar. Some of the community leaders of Texistepeque felt that it was especially effective that NDI seminars required participants to actually

practice what was being demonstrated. Tecolucans commented that NDI's methods were "universal" and cited NDI's "blind man exercise" [explanatory note needed] as being particularly effective in demonstrating a lesson.

Many felt that more seminars in each local municipality and even in smaller towns and villages would have been more beneficial than a few programs in the capital (Santa Elenans, Tecolucans, Candray, Carranza, Farrar).

### **Program Personnel**

Nearly everyone interviewed had the same comment -- that "although young," NDI's staff members were very effective presenters. Concern about "NDI's youth" was nearly always offset by the observation that NDI staff possessed energy, confidence, and knowledge and did a good job (Thompson of USAID, Candray of FUNDECOMUNA, Carranza of FUSAI, Farrar of RTI). NDI staff members were viewed as very humble/*humilde* (respectful) but dynamic and able to express themselves well (Candray). They have confidence and "gave it to us." They projected "brutal confidence" and good will (comments of Santa Elenans). NDI's youth was "good" (comments of Texistepequens). Youth is not a problem; they were dynamic and they know how to respond (comments of Tecolucans).

Opinions were mixed about the capabilities of NDI's international trainers or presenters. Universal praise was expressed for Franklin Cisneros of Escuela de Vecinos who was cited as an especially effective motivator. By contrast, a number of the individuals interviewed felt that Laura Colleta of Chicago was less effective as a presenter because she was less able to relate to the participants. Spanish language proficiency and size of home municipality were cited as factors (Thompson, Candray, Carranza).

### **Strengths/Weaknesses**

Comments on NDI's role as a catalyst were offered as both positive effects of NDI's program and to introduce the NDI program shortcoming -- i.e., that there was no follow-on. NDI planted the seed, but then, what? (Carrie Thompson and Salvador Novellino of USAID, Ruth Candray of FUNDECOMUNA and Ann Farrar of RTI)

Oscar Mens of COMURES observed that NDI's efforts, while positive, were not publicized or reported through local press or media. Don Bryant, also of COMURES, also said that his impressions of NDI's program were good, but the program was not known outside of the three selected municipalities.

General observation was that NDI was effective but would have been much more effective had the Institute placed a permanent field representative in country to maintain daily contact with the municipalities and with other NGOs.

NDI could also have been more effective, many commented, had it sought to coordinate its program with efforts of other NGOs and agencies. USAID, not unexpectedly, urged NDI to coordinate any future effort it might pursue closely with RTI (which was awarded a multiyear USAID contract to implement a broad municipal development program with a heavy focus on finance, and with citizen participation and public communications/relations components). Dr. Mena of COMURES urged NDI to coordinate any future efforts with COMURES.

Community leaders in Santa Elena told the evaluators that the seminars were too short, that two or three days should be the minimum, not one and one-half days.

Santa Elenans commented favorably on the opportunity for their representatives to visit a town in New Mexico in the United States, to see first hand that some people in the U.S. have exactly the same problems that they have in Santa Elena (i.e., poor water systems, etc.). Seeing the successful endeavor of the Americans in building their own community center inspired the Santa Elenans, they said. They praised the international exchange component of NDI's program urging that it be retained and expanded in the future. They also praised the canton-to-canton exchange opportunities within El Salvador.

Community leaders in Tecoluca generally felt that as individuals, they benefitted from NDI's program, but not enough people could learn. They expressed the need for more workshops closer to the people, as travel is difficult. They pointed out that for many of their community representatives who live on the coast, it is a five-hour trip by foot and bus just to get to Tecoluca; and a five-hour trip for one meeting is too much.

### **Recommendations**

Recurring recommendations made by those interviewed were that, if NDI undertakes follow-on programming, the Institute should:

- (1) Place a field representative in-country on a long term basis for more intensive follow-up and reinforcement;
- (2) Coordinate efforts with other organizations (such as COMURES, FUNDECOMUNA, RTI);
- (3) Replicate the program in more communities;
- (4) Publicize the program, and disseminate more information;
- (5) Continue the exchange component of the program, within El Salvador and internationally;

- (6) Use more non-U.S. "experts";
- (7) Tailor future program design more closely to individual community needs -- decentralize the program;
- (8) Emphasize youth programs and involvement.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

Generally, NDI was complimented on the program and recognized as a catalyst, motivating mayors and community leaders in the three selected municipalities to understand, embrace and promote the concept of citizen participation in local government and decisionmaking.

There is broad agreement that NDI's positive initial effort would have been more effective had the Institute maintained an in-country staff to provide sustained technical assistance and to respond to specific local needs and priorities.

This evaluator concluded that NDI should weigh carefully its other program priorities in the region, especially in light of the facts that USAID has awarded a long-term contract to Research Triangle Institute (RTI) to conduct municipal development work throughout El Salvador, and the country has a surplus of donor agencies conducting similar or related programs.

NDI might consider a future effort which would create a Salvadoran version of the Venezuelan Escuela de Vecinos. NDI would enlist the human resources of the Escuela de Vecinos of Venezuela to conduct actual program work while NDI would provide oversight technical assistance and a subgrant to support the initiative.

Ryland Notes



## RYLAND NOTES

12/12/95 - Dr. Oscar Mena, COMURES

NDI is very cooperative, flexible, and open to suggestion  
NDI enjoyed a good relationship with AID  
difficulty in replicating program within ... network  
NDI was "afuera a otras"  
there should have been more participation by COMURES or coordination with COMURES

### General Faults/Weaknesses:

Projects

Publications

Publicity - publicize your work, discuss results in local press, through other agencies, analyze results

Use the municipal network in the country, put work on paper and circulate. NDI's work was "sin prensa" --- it was good work but not covered, not reported.

Use COMURES

Publicize

Multiply/replicate

More personal presence (more people in the field on continuing basis)

Use the alcaldias to share experiences, disseminate information.

Coordination is important for the future.

NDI should emphasize multiparty cooperation.

Empowerment is a new concept... reinforce this.

### Choice of Locations:

Santa Elena was a good choice. RTI was there, too, but you did not work together; NDI did not take advantage of their presence.

Tecoluca - there is no one working there. Sustainability is needed, to continue... COMURES is going to work there, in San Vicente and Cabanas.

Texistepeque

Mena recommended NDI use RTI's program to latch on to for future work, and that NDI obtain RTI's impressions about NDI's program.

He also encouraged NDI to use COMURES, and to put someone in Tecoluca. NDI would be more effective having a field representative working with COMURES.

Ownership of the program must be created (COMURES/NDI/municipality).

Distribution of resources of the Departamento de Alcaldes will be COMURES' focus in San Vicente and Cabanas next year. Changes in municipal law and taxes - there is no discussion about this. Municipal revenues increased from 0.2% GPN to 3.54% or from 25m colones to 450m colones... The focus will be on establishing resources of (their) own, separate from the central government.

FODES - "superministry" for local development

Decentralization - of interest to NDI - let "sectors" have their own lines --

- education
- health
- public works
- water

By February 1996, COMURES will have a person dedicated to "participation" - with responsibility and funds. Decentralizing responsibility... give power to the departamental governor, personal representative of the president (to control the mayors...???)

There is interest within the departamentos (for NDI's type of program); take advantage of youth who want to volunteer (i.e., Cabanas "beauty" queen)

[Use Dr. Mena is future NDI programs elsewhere. - Ryland note for Marissa Brown]

12/12/95 - Don Bryant, COMURES

NDI's program was unique but the experience was not in print...  
A big contrast with IRI. Freedom House was good coordination.  
COMURES was dissatisfied with IRI.

#### **Faults**

NDI's program was not known outside of the three municipalities.  
A good impression, but the program was not known.  
COMURES is redistributing its personnel; 3/4 persons, extension program.  
DB feels there is good interest in maintaining the program, COMURES is very receptive.

#### **Next Steps**

Meet with COMURES to determine what is needed/wanted. DB encouraged NDI to consider co-designing the next program with COMURES. Involve the mayors of the "pilot program" as directors (6). "Participation" is the incipient theme: "Poder ciudadano/conciencia" = "citizen power/conscience".

Counterpart organizations could develop a unique nonpartisan organization.

12/12/95 - Carrie Thompson, USAID

Three pluses:

Good relations, open, good information on what NDI was planning to do.  
Great interest shown in bettering communication in the municipalities.  
Good start on strengthening the role of elected leaders.

The process began with NDI's project. "NDI planted the seed."

It was a mistake to put in NDI/IRI/Freedom House...???

IRD - Tom Hawk (municipal development project).

RTI could also do this. RTI's project in El Salvador runs to/through 1999.

Don't lose the lessons learned.

CT has doubts about NDI at the beginning about NDI's youth "juventud" and about "expert standing" - do not offend the people in the communities.

No common ground - Choose experts from more similar municipalities, more like the small villages (Tecoluca).

Municipalities' problems = no economic resources.

Studies program - take mayors to model communities in other countries.

Elias - example: San Antonio neighborhood watch program exchange

### Lessons Learned

Similar municipalities

Use non-U.S. experts - use Latin American experts from similar municipalities.

More similarity (CT stressed)

RTI "has the bases covered."

ICMA?

"RTI won; talk with them."

CT noted that COMURES failed on logistics. AID wants to forma committee of all donors working on/in municipal development --

USAID/RTI program:      Justice  
                                 Electoral Law  
                                 Municipal Development  
                                 Elections  
                                 Civic Education

(USAID not doing anything until the government moves on election law reform.)

Good opportunity for NDI to work with city councils across departments...

12/12/95 - Salvador Novellino

**Fault:**

NDI program was "fuera del contexto" - out of context - unsolicited proposal with little understanding of what to do...

**Benefits/Strengths:**

Good selection of participants

They now have a more open mentality, conviction.

SN's impression is that the people who participated have been touched by the program.

Tecoluca - questionable choice.

**Recommendations:**

Adapt to strategy USAID is designing; don't work alone (NDI).

Do a better job of identifying needs within the communities. What do THEY need?

Form alliances with other organizations.

Mix youth with mature representatives (NDI personnel)

SN stated that "Tecoluca no recibieron a NDI" - Tecoluca did not receive NDI at all. CR notes that this is not true.

General problem - civil society - social organizations - links to the parties.

Overall comment: positive enough.

Design: NDI's design left a bit to be desired in SN's mind.

12/12/95 - Ruth Candray, FUNDECOMUNA

April 1995 meeting - at first she did not know what NDI wanted to do. She went to NDI's program as an observer, but she became a supportive participant. She expressed high praise for Franklin Cisneros of Escuela de Vecinos (EV).

She initially had doubts about the ability of participants to assimilate information/partake of NDI offerings and about NDI's ability to respond to questions.

"El corazon de Franklin" - Franklin Cisneros of EV got people to participate - he can reach people in spite of, regardless of, their level of preparation. He was a magnificent facilitator.

**Concerns:**

Can people put what they took from NDI's program into practice?  
NDI sowed the seed of what they can do in the future, but a single event is very little. You cannot turn them loose with just one event.

Political model - alcaldes (party) vs. communities

**Strengths:**

Participation was excellent.  
NDI staff members were very humble but very dynamic. They expressed themselves well.

Three youths who represented three adults who were invited to participate are those who stay in touch with her. (Ruth was a former youth director.) The adults have not let them work. They call Ruth disconsolate...

We need this activity on a national level, with all municipalities. This is an opportune time to build, expand the model.

FUNDECOMUNA has worked for four years specializing in family resources - Instituto de Libertad y Progreso

Rights of ownership.

FUNDECOMUNA has worked in Texistepeque.

NDI's workshop theme is not meaningful unless NDI is working for six to nine months on a topic with the same people.

800 women - property rights.

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## Recommendations:

Continue the program, but change:

Site/Location - Hotel de Montanas - reduce costs, find other sites cheaper and more accessible for participants. Don't bring people to San Salvador; take the program closer to the people. She cited an example NDI's failure to plan for the cold weather effects on people coming from warm areas.

NDI needs more local experience, more common sense in making arrangements, planning details, etc.

She noted that the ages of participants varied while NDI representatives were so young -- something she thought was good. She commented that NDI's Marissa Brown is "muy centrada," very centered and inspires respect without authority. She also commented that NDI's Darren Nance was excellent.

Organization of the event - very good.

Materials - also good, very concise.

Location - good???

Food - good

Corina of Texistepeque - one of the participants who at least began to work with NDI's materials.

It was a good effort - a new concept - there are many people with the capacity.

Working through directives -

NDI should have a permanent representative at least one or two years.

Liaison after the event (youth).

NDI should take advantage of other NGOs to develop a program. Develop a model. Implement it. Basic aspect: Ministry of Interior - judicial personnel - mayors - there must be reform of laws; NDI could work on several levels - ministry, xxx, xxx, communities. All have to know/learn the same model.

### Santa Elena

RC has the feeling that the cabildos abiertos are theirs, they have taken ownership, have discovered themselves. There is more tolerance of the various parties. The people there have conviction and commitment and they work more, even though it brings them more "headaches."

### Texistepeque

RC - We have to wait and see. We have to go to the cabildos abiertos, to see what is happening.

**12/13/95 - Site Visit to SANTA ELENA  
(Mayor Nelson Funes and community leaders)**

**Summary -**

NDI woke us up, gave us the push, the confidence, a model. The young staff could have had more mature members, but that wasn't a problem because of their commitment, confidence, and will; they know.

**Next steps -**

Send more people abroad to learn (U.S. village example). Make contact with other organizations, with other resources.

**Benefits/impact -**

Discovery

Awakening

Capacity

Will

New experiences

Delegate - send representatives

More people know the plan of the government.

Communication methods they are using: radio, notes to the director, sound system (two for 15 associations), door to door invitations, etc.

The best politics is deeds. Twenty-four hour service concept. Inclusive, it does not matter what party one belongs to.

Cabildos - in the cantones, not in the center...  
for/with youth  
limited, but trying to do more with women

**Strengths/Weaknesses:**

Keep - the international exchange component.

Change - seminars too short. Two or three days, at least, not 11/2 days.

Needed - seminar on communication for municipal employees (the administrative part); communication is central. We are few now, we need to expand our activity to more. From 30 to 60 to more. We need contact with other institutions to give us funding and other types of support.

NDI personnel - were good in spite of their age. They give us confidence (and they have it). They know how to give the project "confianza brutal," brutal confidence. Good will.

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Keep and expand the foreign exchange opportunities. Canton to canton exchange and exchange outside the country - keep, do more. Santa Elenans commented favorably on the opportunity for representatives to visit a town in New Mexico in the U.S. and to see firsthand that people there have exactly the same problems they have in Santa Elena: no water, etc. The citizens there built their own community center.

Idea: election education in the schools.

**12/14/95 - Site Visit to TEXISTEPEQUE  
(Mayor Luis Antonio Henriquez and other community leaders)**

CR questions:

1. General impressions of NDI program.
2. Specific benefits.
3. NDI methodology.
4. NDI personnel.
5. What would you change?
6. Suggestions for the future.

Srta. Corina and Jose Antonio offered most comment...

Professor... in the seminars it was very "pretty" nice that participants were actually practicing what was being demonstrated.

Program product: 68-72 leaders.

Drop or change from the program: NDI must go to the communities to see what they are doing.

Corina: Obtain a method for motivating interchange, opportunities to compare.  
Keep and expand the exchange opportunities, the enthusiasm, see HOW to do things.  
Have meetings in each, every alcaldia. Comparison is valuable.

Mayor Henriquez suggested that there should be collaboration among the communities that had access to NDI's program. Use these three communities to help others.

NDI's youth - good, "carino" affectionate, they know well.

Do more youth programs. They are looking for mechanisms for involving young people - we orient them, then what?

12/14/95 - Ann Farrar, RESEARCH TRIANGLE INSTITUTE (RTI)

Ann "met" NDI in Santa Elena in December 1994.

Comments:

Program quality - good.

Program strategy - lacking, disjointed.

What is NDI's intent? Use fewer Americans, fewer trips, more participants. Use Elias Santana more. Choose very carefully when you bring Americans as trainers/facilitators. Use people with good facility in Spanish, and something special to offer. "Bonito" but what? Empower for what purpose?

- RTI -
1. Municipal Development Program - with a focus on Finance
  2. Citizen Participation Program - administrative mechanisms/systems (drop the cabildos)
  3. Public Communications/Relations

**12/15/95 - Site Visit to TECOLUCA**

**(Mayor Miguel Nicolas Garcia and community leaders)**

This municipality seemed to have benefited least from NDI's program, largely because of the style and capabilities of the mayor; the atmosphere of the town hall office where we met evoked more of the sense of the recent civil war and guerilla style of operation than did the two other communities.

The mayor and leaders were late assembling, having on their minds a meeting of the town council (some 60 persons) and a forthcoming meeting of the entire directive (500 persons) to revise the last year's annual action plan, finances, plan for next year, comment, change, and define the plan.

Mayor's comments: More participation, some people are more vocal, some people more active, more "input" in the community as a result of the program. (However, CR felt he was paying lip service to NDI.)

Tecoluca is trying but is much farther behind than other localities.

November 20/21 Workshop - Marina, Concepcion and Nelson participated. Model municipal plan - they have not used theirs specifically, but plan to do so.

Benefits: The individuals benefitted, but not enough people could learn. Need more workshops closer to the people. Travel is difficult. It is a 5-hour trip from the coast to Tecoluca, a 5-hour trip for one meeting is much.

NDI Presenters: Marissa Brown - dynamic, youth not a problem.  
Darren Nance - also dynamic. They know how to respond.

Methods: Universal methods used. Good. Example: the blind man exercise.

12/15/95 - Griselda Carranza, FUSAI

NDI sowed the seed for the mayors for more direct interchange.

How are they going to direct...?

How to allocate resources?

Participation was good at the November workshop, it began to take into account the opinion of the public.

Do the program in more municipalities - smaller municipalities (San Lorenzo, for example) and others.

Elaborate a plan and improve on what you have.

Do a preparatory program for mayors. How to direct a "cabildo" in the community, for example.

In Tecoluca, a sequel is needed, so as not to lose momentum. Tecoluca is working.

Drop things? No. Put things in:

- Other, more municipalities.
- Pre program - induction for mayors  
before the communities
- After - commentary
- Relate/Exchange among distinct organizations working in  
development
- More direct contact with the municipalities
- Coordinate and direct contact to know the plan, the  
community
- Make felt the importance of what the community has

FUSAI - they are asking for a project...

NDI Personnel: Good organization, charisma, they know what to do, Franklin Cisneros had an impact, use of outside presenters helps to open up more.

FAULTS: Preparation - Search out more alcaldes  
Better choice of foreign presenters  
Quality not quantity  
Continuity needed - to avoid "always beginning"

12/15/95 - Marta Padilla, LA PRENSA GRAFICA

MP will soon run a story on fraud among NGOs - many of which were formed to collect money which went directly to the FMLN.

She is interested in the Escuela de Vecinos "Agencia de Buenas Noticias" (Good News Agency), in replicating that in El Salvador. (Good news about communities and what is happening in them.)

12/16/95 - Wrap Up w/ELIAS SANTANA

Next steps -

ES proposal - NDI/EV work together to help form EV in El Salvador that will be self-sustaining in two years or so. (Seek Endowment support, not AID, as RTI has AID sown up and does not understand NDI methods/philosophy. IADB support to EV - mention their contribution in proposal. We need a Salvadoran "Oscar Mena.")

QUESTION	SANTA ELENA	TEXISTEPEQUE	TECOLUCA
Did NDI provide enough information on methods of citizen participation for local officials to use?	Yes, and the community wants more, especially more contacts with other organizations and more foreign exchange.	Yes.	Unclear.
Did local officials adopt new mechanisms for citizen participation?	Yes. They are communicating more, via radio, public address system, door-to-door notifications.	Yes.	They intend to.
Did local officials conduct open meetings? What ones?	Yes. Annual planning meeting, and others as needed.	Yes, all the time, on an ongoing basis.	Yes. Immediate meetings on the agenda were scheduled for December 15 and December 29 (annual planning meeting).
Do community leaders more clearly understand their legal rights and are they using that knowledge?	Yes. They feel empowered; they can do, control, decide.	(Not clearly answered.)	Yes.
If these things have not happened, how can NDI design or implement a program to meet the needs of participants?	More frequent interaction.	More frequent interaction.	More frequent interaction.
According to local officials, was there improvement in relations between local officials and community group leaders?	Yes.	Yes. We communicate with each other 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.	Yes. There is more openness.



Is dialogue formal or informal between local officials and community leaders?	Both.	Both.	
According to community activists, is there improvement in relations between local officials and community groups?	Yes.	Yes. They are inspired.	Little.
Did representatives from all sectors participate in the program (women, youth, all political parties)?	Yes. All parties participate. In Santa Elena, even children go to the cabildos and know the community plan--why a road is built before a park... Women participated in the program, too. (The women were all away from Santa Elena picking coffee on the day the evaluators made their site visit.)	Yes. They have begun a youth program but still want more suggestions on what to do with young people, how to engage them in productive activity. They also want to get children's perspective on their needs.	Yes, women participated and are important community leaders.
Was an action plan developed during the "Democratic Practice Seminar"?	Yes. For a water supply system.	Yes. They used unfinished parts of their old plan for a central market and water supply.	Yes, but they are still revising their plan.
Was the plan realistic?	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.
Did the plan engage both local officials and community leaders?	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.

<p>Was the plan for resolution of a problem implemented, at least, in part?</p>	<p>Yes. They completed their water supply system.</p>	<p>In part. The old plan was completed and they have a new central market. But the most important part is not material -- it is the empowerment, the will, the enthusiasm and the energy they now have.</p>	<p>They are revising their plan in meetings later this month.</p>
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**Santa Elena Statistics**

Tecoluca Brochure

TRANSLATION

ELIAS SANTANA EVALUATION REPORT ON NDI PROGRAM IN EL SALVADOR:  
CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Evaluation Report**  
**Civic Participation. Municipal Government.**  
**El Salvador.**  
**11 to 16 December 1995**

1) PRESENTATION

This visit to El Salvador was undertaken with the mission of interviewing different actors and participants of the NDI program conducted in this country on the themes of citizen participation and municipal governments. With the ultimate goal to produce an evaluation with recommendations for orienting future NDI action in El Salvador.

Following is a presentation of the partial report of Elias Santana, Venezuelan consultant, who participated in one of the visits conducted in the course of the NDI program and who has visited El Salvador for professional reasons on other occasions/opportunities.

This report consists of a chronology of the interviews conducted (attached are notes taken in each meeting), a general evaluation based on the comments and opinions of those interviewed, and the analysis and conclusions of the author. The report ends with a concrete proposal for continuation for NDI. Also included are corresponding attachments.

In the attachments are found the transcription of notes from interviews. A copy the recommendations of Elias Santana to NDI in December 1994. A copy of a document produced by Elias Santana for RTI, a Guide for Citizen Participation, which could be a good example of the materials that could be produced in adapted form for the Salvadorean reality and which could be very useful. A document, of similar origin, in which Elias Santana proposed the creation of a Network of Municipal Support for El Salvador, with a clear guide for application.

2) CHRONOLOGY OF ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED

Monday, December 11:

- \* Arrival in San Salvador
- \* First contact of team responsible for evaluation mission.

Tuesday, December 12:

- \* Meeting with Oscar Mena of GTZ of Comures.
- Meeting with Donald Bryan of Comures.

- Meeting with Ruth Candray of FundeComuna.
- Meeting with Carrie Thompson of AID.
- Meeting with Salvador Novellino of AID.
- \* Meeting with Carolina Rodriguez and Jose Miguel Cruz, consultants.

Wednesday, December 13:

- \* Meeting with Nelson Funes, Mayor of Santa Elena, with the syndicate, various councillors and community leaders.

Thursday, December 14:

- \* Meeting with Luis Henriquez, Mayor of Texistepeque, and various community leaders and officers of the mayor's office.
- \* Meeting with Ann Farrar and Oscar Vigil of RTI.

Friday, December 15:

- \* Meeting with Miguel Garcia, Mayor of Tecoluca, and especially with councillors and community leaders.
- \* Meeting with Griselda Carranza de Fusai.

Sunday, December 17:

- \* Depart San Salvador.

Notes taken in each of these interviews are included as attachments, for consultation and background.

### 3) GENERAL EVALUATION OF NDI PROGRAM

#### 3.1 RESULTS, IMPACT, BENEFITS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The first impact of the program was to introduce the subject of citizen participation in municipal governments. To have marked out a road, demonstrating the interest and receptivity of municipal authorities (contrary to what some might have thought) and of community leaders.

Persons interviewed recognized the human and professional quality of the NDI representatives and the level and utility of the international presenters/trainers. The program methodology and materials used were recognized as positive.

Comments especially positive were made on the initiative to promote exchange between representatives of diverse municipalities. Also praised was NDI's coordination with Freedom House.

The program "gave footing to" gave a push to small participation initiatives in each municipality and helped to elevate the level of relations between municipal government and organized communities, according to the opinion of the persons interviewed.

### 3.2 WEAKNESSES AND OBSTACLES

The most frequent comment on the part of participants was the lack of continuity. Continuation and direct support to the processes of participation in the municipalities. The impossibility of measuring the development based on the selected pilot experiences.

Also reflected was the need for better coordination or delineation in the plans and actions of other organizations. Especially with AID and RTI. Especially noted was the absence of an interlocutor to continue the experiences of those who benefitted directly from the program, beyond the pilot municipalities. Better linkage with Comures was definitely recommended.

Various persons interviewed requested a better incorporation of municipalities and participants. Better utilization of international presenters/trainers. Put more emphasis on and continue the exchange between municipalities.

One AID spokesperson noted that one of the faults of the program was the absence of a Salvadorean initiative, from civil society, independent of the parties, to take on the issue of citizen participation.

Program participants pointed out the need to count on a new/next stage/phase (of the program), and noted as potentially negative that the program might conclude now.

### 3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of those interviewed in the communities and municipal governments that took part in the program showed interest in making recommendations, all positive. Related to more continuity and sequence, the need for a second phase, to continue the exchange, to expand the program, to better utilize the international presenters, and a stable presence for NDI and its initiative (were recommended).

For representatives of institutions like AID and RTI, NDI's presence would have been more meaningful had it been more coordinated with them; more related to Comures or local actors; NDI should not compete with other efforts.

In the case of GTZ, special emphasis was put on recommending articulation with Comures, support for initiatives on the part of Salvadorean civil society, a new selection of pilot experiences and with participatory planning. NDI was credited for selecting [the program] theme.

### 4) ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that the program was positive because it introduced on the agenda of the municipalities and the community leaders of the pilot program the subject of citizen participation. But especially it demonstrated a road (way) and contributed to the reflection (deliberations/plans)

of AID and RTI and of Comures and GTZ over this issue. The program did this apart from [or contributing to...] the process of the country, and this is pertinent.

Those responsible for the program conducted themselves in an open and communicative manner setting an example for the style which c/would be most suitable for all institutions present in El Salvador. The youth, openness, professionalism and seriousness of the coordinators permitted the development of a successful program and were valued by nearly everyone interviewed.

Selection of the municipalities was appropriate (with the aforementioned disappointment in Tecoluca, fundamentally due to the personality of the mayor). Perhaps the idea of having a pilot program in such a small country is not convenient/suitable. Since with a relatively greater effort a considerably greater number of municipalities could have been served augmenting the impact and national presence. The media and interchange with other institutions could also have been used to massively promote the program.

The lack of local interlocutors, beyond municipal authorities and community leaders, really interested in the program was evident. For a next phase, it would be useful to develop a strategy with AID and its contractor RTI, with Comures, ISDEM and GTZ, with existing NGOs and with the media. It is necessary to "endow" the program with local owners, because it is evident that the incipient state of Salvadorean civil society, the exaggerated partisan presence in NGOs and other guilds, the scarce development of the community and municipal theme in the media, and the great discoordination, inefficiency in the use of resources, duplication of functions and even insular "competition" among many of the cooperating public and international agencies. Any next phase of the program must take into consideration this situation.

The invitation of international experts was noteworthy and useful, the exchange between municipalities was greatly appreciated, and the tools and skills for initiating or improving participatory processes are a seed well sown and accepted by the participants.

It is noteworthy that those who participated in the program never suggested "dropping" any aspect of the program. They all answered that continuity and sequence should be added to the program, as well as better coverage and more emphasis on national and international exchange. They seemed to be pleased with program methodology and positively affected by the materials used. However, continuity of process should not lead to committing the errors of other agencies, such as opening offices for turning around ... dollars... without having real impact on Salvadorean society and with little possibility of achieving sustainability or local interlocutors after they have gone.

NDI has a trajectory, a network of relationships and potential allies and some processes in place that permit it to propose a next/new phase. A new phase in which NDI could make an opening, a niche, a specialty, something novel and needed, useful to the Salvadorean process; a possible continuation of the phase just completed.



## 5) PROPOSAL RECOMMENDATION

For the author, based on personal experience and on knowledge of the reality of Salvadorean civil society and municipalities, it is clear that the need exists for a Service Center. This could be defined as "an Escuela de Vecinos for El Salvador" ("a School of Neighbors for El Salvador").

A private initiative, not a partisan one, not governmental, with a large sense of mission, of Salvadoreans, with a voluntary force and professional personnel, with an international access and (each time) with better local tax collection... or support from local resources... NOTE: something is definitely lost in this translation...

I will repeat here point number 11 from the report with recommendations presented to NDI in December 1994:

" 11) A good part of the previous proposals could be advanced by an association similar to the Escuela de Vecinos of Venezuela, but adapted to the Salvadorean reality. One could envision a two-year plan that would permit the necessary steps to leave that society endowed with a nonpartisan service center destined for citizens, with influence on/through the media and on public opinion and with services for municipalities in promoting citizen participation. That channels the access off/to the middle class, that interacts with parties and power groups and that serves to facilitate contact and articulation among institutions of international cooperation."

The objective is to create an initiative from civil society that will last, that assumes international cooperation as a point of departure in following its own path...

We believe that a favorable atmosphere exists for this in Salvadorean society. We have the expertise of the Escuela de Vecinos of Venezuela and of the contacts and relationships of this program guaranteed by the international experience of NDI.

We think that NDI, associated with the Escuela de Vecinos of Venezuela, is capable of making this important and transcending contribution to the Salvadorean society and process.

## 6) ATTACHMENTS

- 6.1 Notes transcribed from interviews and meetings.
- 6.2 Recommendations from the first visit, December 1994, of Elias Santana to El Salvador with NDI.
- 6.3 Guide to Citizen Participation. Special for Sonsonate.  
Document produced by Elias Santana for RTI, during his contract in July 1995.
- 6.4 Proposal for a Municipal Support Network. Document produced by Elias Santana for RTI, during his contract in July 1995.

Reporte de Evaluacion.  
Participacion Ciudadana. Gobierno Municipal.  
El Salvador.  
11 al 16 de Diciembre de 1995

## 1) PRESENTACION

Esta visita a El Salvador se produce con la mision de entrevistar a diferentes actores y participantes del Programa del NDI realizado en ese pais en los temas de participaciùn ciudadana y gobiernos municipales. Con la finalidad de producir una evaluaciùn con recomendaciones que orienten la acciùn futura del NDI en El Salvador.

A continuaciùn se presenta el informe parcial de Elias Santana, consultor venezolano, que participò en una de las visitas realizadas en el marco del Programa del NDI y ha visitado El Salvador por motivos profesionales en otras oportunidades.

Este informe consta de una cronologíA de las entrevistas realizadas (se anexan las notas tomadas en cada reuniùn), de una evaluaciùn general a partir de los comentarios y opiniones de los entrevistados y del analisis y conclusiones del consultor. Finaliza con una propuesta concreta de continuidad para el NDI. Ademçs de contar con los correspondientes anexos.

En los anexos encontraremos la transcripciùn de las notas de las entrevistas. Un ejemplar de las recomendaciones de Elias Santana al NDI en diciembre de 1994 (pues quizas sea util consultarlas en este momento). Un ejemplar de un documento producido por Elias Santana para RTI, una GuíA de Participaciùn Ciudadana, que puede ser un buen ejemplo de los materiales que podríAn producirse adaptados a la realidad salvadoreña y que seríAn de mucha utilidad. Un documento, de similar procedencia, en el que Elias Santana propone la creaciùn de una Red de Apoyo Muncipal para El Salvador, con una clara guíA para su aplicaciùn.

## 2) CRONOLOGIA DE ACTIVIDADES REALIZADAS

Lunes 11:

- \* Llegada a San Salvador.
- \* Primer contacto del equipo responsable de la misiùn.

Martes 12:

- \* Reuniùn con Oscar Mena de GTZ en Comures.
- \* Reuniùn con Donald Bryan en Comures.
- \* Reuniùn con Ruth Candray en FundeComuna.
- \* Reuniùn con Carrie Thompson de AID.
- \* Reuniùn con Salvador Novellino de AID.
- \* Reuniùn con Carolina RodríEguez y JosÁ Miguel Cruz, consultores.

MiÁrcoles 13:

- \* Reuniùn con Nelson Funes, alcalde de Santa Elena, con el sÆndico,                   varios

concejales y LÉderes comunitarios.

Jueves 14:

- Reuniòn con Luis Henríquez, alcalde de Texistepeque, y varios LÉderes comunitarios y funcionarios de la alcaldÉa.

- \* Reuniòn con Ann Farrar y Oscar Vigil de RTI.

Viernes 15:

- \* Reuniòn con Miguel GarcÉa, alcalde de Tecoluca. Muy especialmente con algunos concejales y LÉderes comunitarios.

- \* Reuniòn con Griselda Carranza de Fusai.

Domingo 17:

- \* Salida de San Salvador.

Las notas tomadas en cada una de las entrevistas se incluyen en los anexos, para consultas y profundizaciòn.

### 3) EVALUACION GENERAL DEL PROGRAMA DEL NDI

#### 3.1 RESULTADOS. IMPACTO. BENEFICIOS. ACIERTOS.

El primer impacto del Programa es introducir el asunto de la participacion ciudadana en los gobiernos municipales. Haber marcado un camino, demostrando el interÉS y receptividad de autoridades municipales (contrariamente a lo que pudiesen haber pensado algunos) y en los LÉderes comunitarios.

Los entrevistados reconocieron la calidad humana y profesional de los representantes del NDI y el nivel y utilidad de los invitados internacionales. Se reconociò como positiva la metodologÉa y los materiales utilizados.

Comentarios especialmente elogiosos recibì la iniciativa de propiciar el encuentro entre representantes de diversos municipios. Y la coordinaciòn con el Freedom House.

El Programa diò pie a pequeûas iniciativas de participaciòn en cada municipio y ayudò a elevar el nivel de las relaciones entre gobierno mncipal y comunidades organizadas, segùn la opiniòn de los entrevistados.

#### 3.2 FALLAS Y OBSTACULOS

El reclamo mas frecuente por parte de los participantes es la falta de continuidad. El seguimiento y apoyo directo a los procesos de participaciòn en los municipios. La imposibilidad de medir el desarrollo de las experiencias piloto seleccionadas.

Tambien se reflejo la necesidad de de myor coordinacion o enmarcamiento en los planes y acciones de otros organismos. Especialmente con AID y RTI.

Especialmente se nos señaló la ausencia de un interlocutor que continuase la experiencia o se beneficiase directamente del Programa, más allá de los municipios piloto. Concretamente se nos reclamó mayor vínculo con Comures.

Varios entrevistados solicitaron una mayor incorporación de municipios y participantes. Mayor utilización de los invitados internacionales. Poner más énfasis y seguimiento el intercambio entre municipios.

Un vocero de AID señaló que una de las trabas del Programa era la inexistencia de una iniciativa salvadoreña, desde su sociedad civil, independiente de partidos, que tomase el tema de la participación ciudadana.

Los participantes del Programa señalaron la necesidad de contar con una nueva etapa, y señalaban como potencialmente negativo que se concluyese en este momento.

### 3.3 RECOMENDACIONES

Muchos de los entrevistados de las comunidades y gobiernos municipales se mostraron interesados en hacer recomendaciones, todas en positivo. Relacionadas con mayor continuidad y seguimiento, la necesidad de una segunda etapa, continuar el intercambio, masificar el Programa, utilizar mejor a los invitados internacionales y una presencia estable del NDI y su iniciativa.

Para los representantes de instituciones como AID y RTI la presencia del NDI tendría sentido si estuviese más coordinada con ellos, más en relación con Comures o actores locales. Que no compitiese con ellos.

En el caso de GTZ se hizo especial énfasis en recomendar articulación con Comures, apoyo a iniciativas de la sociedad civil salvadoreña, nueva selección de experiencias piloto y con planificación participativa. Destacando el mérito del NDI al seleccionar el área temática.

### 4) ANALISIS Y CONCLUSIONES

Queda claro que el Programa fue positivo porque introdujo en la agenda de los municipios y de los líderes comunitarios de las experiencias piloto el asunto de la participación ciudadana. Pero muy especialmente mostró un camino y contribuyó en la reflexión en AID y RTI, en Comures y en GTZ sobre ese tema. El Programa hizo ese aporte al proceso del país, y ello ya lo hace pertinente.

Los responsables del Programa actuaron en forma horizontal y comunicativa dando un ejemplo del estilo que más convendría a todas las instituciones presentes en El Salvador. La juventud y apertura humana y el profesionalismo y la seriedad de los coordinadores permitió desarrollar un exitoso Programa y fueron valoradas por casi todos los entrevistados.

La selección de los municipios fue apropiada (con los consabidos contratiempos en Tecoluca, fundamentalmente por la personalidad del alcalde). Quizás la idea de hacer experiencias piloto en un país tan pequeño no sea conveniente. Ya que con un relativo mayor esfuerzo pueden servirse a un considerable mayor número de municipios y aumentar el impacto y la presencia nacional. Además pueden utilizarse los medios de comunicación y los intercambios con otras instituciones para proyectar masivamente el Programa.

La falta de interlocutores locales, más allá de las autoridades municipales y líderes comunitarios de los municipios, realmente interesados en el programa fue evidente. Para una etapa posterior es conveniente trazar una estrategia hacia AID y su contratista RTI, hacia Comures, ISDEM y GTZ, hacia ONGs existentes y hacia los medios de comunicación. Es necesario dotar al Programa de "propietarios", de "dolientes" locales. Pues es evidente el estado incipiente de la sociedad civil salvadoreña, la exagerada presencia partidista en las ONGs y gremios, el escaso desarrollo del tema comunitario y municipal en los medios y la gran descoordinación, ineficiencia en el uso de recursos, solapamiento de funciones y hasta insólita "competencia" entre muchos de los organismos públicos e internacionales de cooperación. Una nueva etapa del Programa debe tomar muy en cuenta esta situación.

La invitación a expertos internacionales (quizás sería mejor de uno en uno y con mayor presencia más allá de los municipios piloto) fue llamativa y útil, el intercambio entre municipios fue muy apreciado y las herramientas y conocimientos para iniciar o mejorar procesos participativos son una semilla bien sembrada y aceptada por los participantes.

Es llamativo que los participantes nunca plantearon "quitarle" algo al Programa. Todos respondían que debía agregarse continuidad y seguimiento, mayor cobertura y énfasis en el intercambio nacional e internacional. Se mostraron complacidos con las metodologías e impactados por los materiales. Pero la continuidad del proceso no debe llevar a cometer los errores de otros organismos, instalar oficinas para volverse un extraño más invirtiendo dólares con poco anclaje en la sociedad salvadoreña y con mínimas posibilidades de lograr continuidad o interlocutores luego de su ausencia.

El NDI cuenta ya con una trayectoria, una red de relaciones y potenciales aliados y algunos procesos en marcha que permiten proponerse una nueva etapa. Una nueva etapa seleccionando cuál es el área en la que el NDI puede hacer un aporte, una especialidad, algo novedoso y necesario, útil al proceso salvadoreño. Posible continuación de la etapa culminada.

##### 5) RECOMENDACION PROPUESTA

Para nosotros, marcados por nuestra experiencia personal y por el conocimiento de la realidad de la sociedad civil y los municipios salvadoreños es claro que existe la necesidad de un Centro de Servicios. Si se me permite definirlo como "una Escuela de Vecinos para El Salvador".

Una iniciativa privada, no partidista, no gubernamental, con sentido de misiùn de largo plazo, de salvadoreños, con esfuerzo voluntario y personal profesional, con aporte internacional y cada vez con mayor recaudaciùn local.

Nos permitimos transcribir a continuaciùn el punto once del informe con recomendaciones presentado al NDI en diciembre de 1994:

"11) Buena parte de las propuestas anteriores podrÆan ser adelantadas por una asociaciùn similar a la Escuela de Vecinos de Venezuela, pero adaptada a la realidad salvadoreña. PodrÆa pensarse en un plan a dos años que permita dar los pasos necesarios para dejar a esa sociedad dotada de un centro de servicios no partidista destinado a los ciudadanos, con influencia en los medios y la opiniùn pùblica y con servicios para los municipios en el çrea de participaciùn ciudadana. Que canalice el aporte de la clase media, que actÙe frente a los partidos y grupos de poder y que sirva de facilitadora del encuentro y articulaciùn entre las instituciones de cooperaciùn internacional."

Deseamos insistir. El aporte original y necesario es la creaciùn de una iniciativa desde la sociedad civil, que perdure, que asuma la cooperaciùn internacional como punto de partida para un camino propio.

Creemos que existe un ambiente favorable incipiente en la sociedad salvadoreña para ello. Tenemos la experticia de la Escuela de Vecinos de Venezuela y los contactos y relaciones de este Programa avalados por la experiencia internacional del NDI.

Pensamos que el NDI, asociado para la ejecuciùn con a Escuela de Vecinos de Venezuela, estç en capacidad de hacer este importante y trascendente aporte a la sociedad y el proceso salvadoreño.

## 6) ANEXOS

6.1 Notas transcritas de las entrevistas y reuniones realizadas.

6.2 Recomendaciones de la primera visita, diciembre 1994, de Elias Santana a

El Salvador con el NDI.

6.3 GuÆa de Participaciùn Ciudadana. Especial para Sonsonate.

Documento producido por Elias Santana para RTI, durante su contrato en julio de 1995.

6.4 Propuesta para una Red de Apoyo Municipal. Documento producido por Elias

Santana para RTI, durante su contrato en julio de 1995.