

Passion & Politics
Integrating Transport
Environment and Health
Decisions



The role of institutions

Carlos Dora

WHO

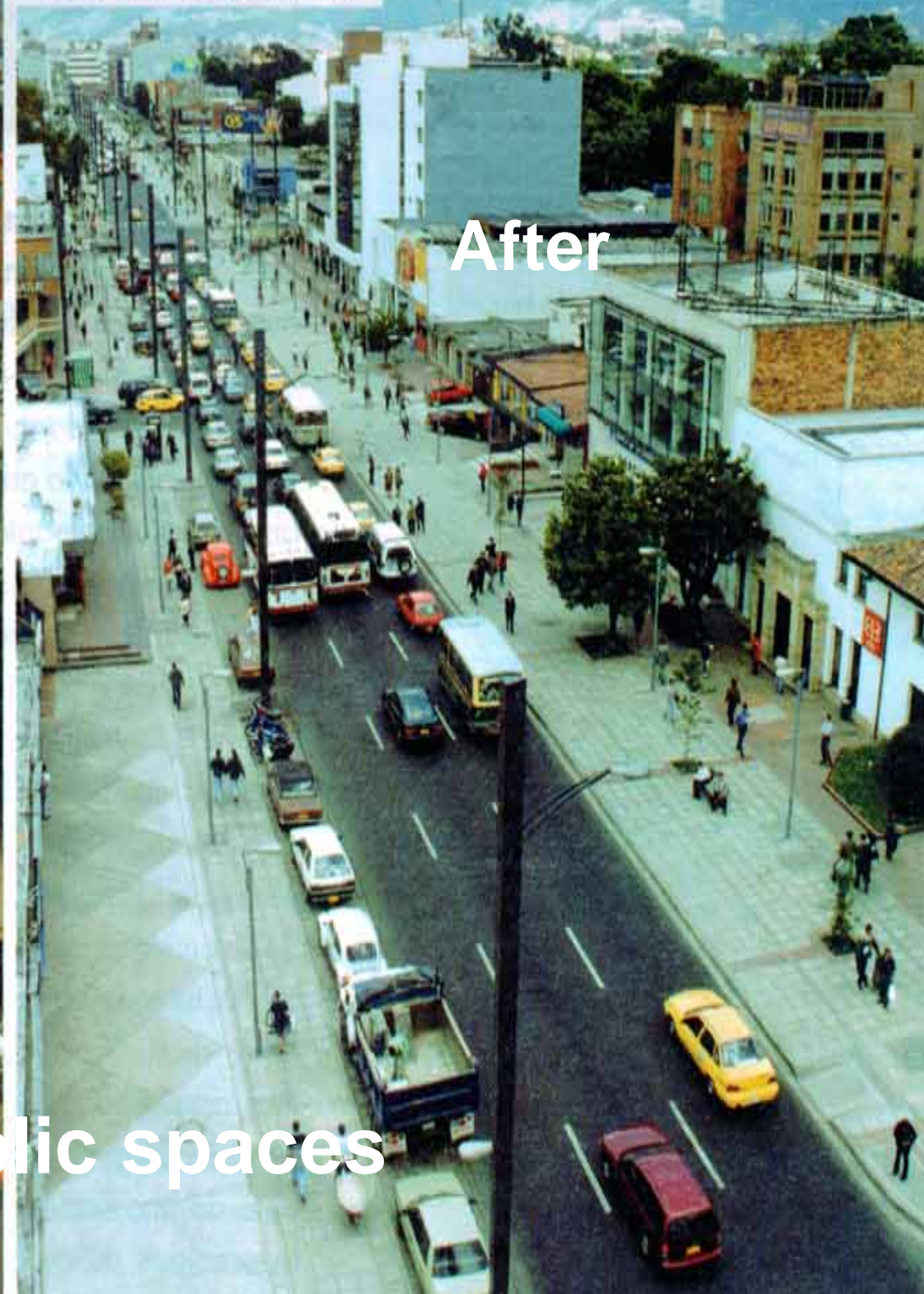
Primer semestre 1998



Before

Restoration of public spaces

Noviembre de 2000



After

There is a good rationale for why governments should intervene in THE in an integrated manner?



Competing points of view

Car and Road lobby:
“Benefits outweigh the Costs, the health burden is a price societies pay for mobility and convenience they enjoy.”

Health & Environment:
“Healthy transport can improve public health, safeguard the environment, enhance access and the economic vitality of cities”

1. To ensure sound economic decisions



On one hand: Society is unlikely to want to make sacrifices to eliminate all risks from transport

However: The Market for transport fails to deliver socially optimal patterns as

Transport Costs are not all paid for the user, and the costs borne by others (external costs) are substantial.

The overall use of transport, particularly more polluting modes, is then higher than socially optimal

The right investments and prices (for pollution, accidents etc.) would correct these distortions

1. To ensure sound economic decisions cont...



The benefits from transport would be further increased if certain journeys were made by different modes, or in the need to travel long distances to meet basic needs was reduced.

2. To ensure policy making draws on existing knowledge and best practice



- Difficulty in accessing information on the health impacts of transport interventions
- Myths about what is good practice are repeated and reinforced
- Scientific evidence is often not translated regarding its implications for policy
- A trusted and balanced information broker is needed

3. To protect the health of vulnerable groups



- Children are vulnerable to injuries, air pollution and noise, their cognitive and physical development require exploration of the neighbourhood and outdoor activity.
- Children and other vulnerable groups are exposed to risks from traffic but enjoy few benefits from it.
- These groups often do not have a voice to influence decisions. Governments need to be that voice.

4. To promote health equity



**Exposure to health risks depends on mode of transport used
Need to ensure safety of people using the most common modes**

Pedestrians and cyclists do not cause pollution but are exposed to health risks caused by motor vehicle users

Policies that reduce the health risks of the poor help reduce poverty

Healthy mobility for the poor also improves health by increasing access to jobs, education and services

"Passion drives action."



"Information, raw data, does not have passion, until someone transforms it into intelligence, into judgements of comparative advantage, or raises a particular issue in the context of local socio-political trends."

...data needs to be translated into something that will move people, like politics or money, these are **passion parameters"**

Decision making is at the heart of science and policy dialogue



Modes of Scientific Enquiry competes and coexists with other modes of speculation and reasoning, as may be reflected in traditional knowledge, values, religion, amidst conditions of change, economic need, deprivation and social unrest.

Tension between scientists/government officials trained in dispassionate enquiry and discussion and need to frame evidence in terms of passion parameters, of the public or politicians.

The passion of the scientist/civil servant and of the politician continue to shape the development and the possible integration of THE decisions

Knowledge about Good Practice is essential but not sufficient:



Drivers of policy decisions:

- Good press
- Need to be seen to respond to specific constituencies (if left - take social & environmental responsibility on board, if right to respond to industry & employment)
- Fear of litigation
- Economic development & trade
- To respond to international processes and peer pressure

What institutions can do to facilitate integration?



- Understand the policy and decision making process and identify opportunities to intervene/influence
- Identify and experiment with tools to influence decision making
- Network with others that have similar interests
- Civil servants as actors in the policy process as well as implementing government decisions

1. Support strategic decisions, goals and targets/ support the politician:



- Analysis of future implications of BAU and alternative policy decisions, Monitoring, information, transparency
- Knowledge base on consequences of certain policies and strategies for H&E, and other priorities
- Clarifying costs and benefits, and the links with economic growth and development
- Engage wholeheartedly with key constituencies (e.g. public health, specific sectors – energy, transport)
- Create a demand, communication about the wider benefits of certain policy options and scenarios

2. Develop institutional links that facilitate policy integration



- Understand culture and practices
- Work together in practical projects – working groups, research projects, impact assessment work, inter-sectoral working groups, joint assessments
- Network informally – football
- Develop a culture of dialogue



3. Listen /give a voice to the common citizen priorities

- Develop mechanisms – citizens panels, unstructured interviewing
- Include them in Impact Assessment procedures
- Engage with consumer associations, unions, NGOs and other civil society actors

HIA & Development Project



1. **Understand the demand:** what health impact information decision making use, in what format?
Country Context & Local Decision-making Process.
2. **Give Guidance on where to find the Knowledge:**
Briefs on Key Environment & Health Hazards
Tailored to Policymakers.
3. **Inform about Decision Support Tools:** Impact Assessment & Cost-Effectiveness/Cost Benefit Analysis.
4. **Collaborate in Pilot Intersectoral Projects:** involving Health, Environment & Economic Sectors.
5. **Build Capacity:** Workshops for dialogue & Knowledge Exchange.

Pilot Integrated assessments



- **Uganda:** Livestock Management options, including use of Agro-Chemical, implications for health, food and trade.
- **Jordan:** Water Scarcity and Security: Health and Environment Costs/Benefits from Integrated Water Management options.
- **Thailand:** Environmental Health Impact Assessment of Pesticide Use in Agriculture.
- **China:** Urban transport and land use options for large cities.

Projets intersectoriaux pilotes



- **Ouganda:** Options pour la Gestion des Bétails, comprenant aussi l'Utilisation d'Agents Agro Chimiques, Implications pour la Santé, les Aliments et le Commerce international.







POSSIBLE POLICY SOLUTIONS



- Strategic level – Promotion of organic farming
- National policy level – Monitoring system for pesticide use
- Community level – Community/occupational information on pesticide use
- Flagship issues- Banning of specific agrochemicals, such as paraquat

EARLY FEEDBACK



- Interest among key actors in working with experts from other agencies
- Agreement that much of what we already know is not reflected in policy
- Many suggestions on practical improvements that could be made to policy
- Commitment from agencies to endorse findings and integrate into future policy