

V ANNUAL SEMINAR: IMPROVING CENTRAL BANK REPORTING AND PROCEDURES ON REMITTANCES PROGRAM

Guatemala City. September 8th to 10th, 2009.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Program database:

Many central Banks have not yet sent their information. The goal is to close the gap between the remittances sent and received.

The Working Group members have been invited to participate in some other seminars, congresses, and similar events. It's important to keep participating with IMF, World Bank, etc..

Country Missions:

At least 4 countries have shown interest in receiving missions during 2010. The main goal will be 13 country missions. Those who are interested should contact the Working Group or CEMLA in order to coordinate the missions.

VI Annual Seminar on Remittances:

Next year the seminar will be held in Madrid, Spain. The tentative date is for the second half of September, 2010.

Next year topics:

1. Database. In order to understand their methodology, we will ask IMF for their estimation methods, and this will allow identifying the possible causes of the gaps in official statistics between central Banks.
2. Origin information. There are no data on remittances flows by country or origin or receptor country. On this matter, CEMLA has made contact with entities in Europe and United States. There will be a questionnaire for MTOs to identify the flows by countries, so far as possible. The biggest MTOs are in the United States. The central idea is that data should converge between origin and receiving countries.

El Salvador had measurement problems resulting from MTO alliances and the out coming result was that those enterprises submitted their information to verify the official data. Taking this into account, we discussed the "pre-concepts" on MTOs which are not covered in the legal framework. That's why this is an appropriate time to ask for quarterly information. We proposed, in future sessions that the group would be interested to invite this kind of enterprises to analyze the market.

3. Manual on Good Practices. This Manual was drafted by the Working Group to compile the experiences of mission countries. A special group will be formed to elaborate a revised version of this Manual, the members are: Fernando Lemos from Banco Central do Brasil; Salvador Bonilla from Banco de México; María Mercedes Collazos from Banco de la República and Xiomara Hurtado from Banco Central de Reserva de El Salvador.

4. Migration Issues. Due to the current financial crisis, this subject needs to be taken into account. IADB is interested in doing a project on migration. The question for central banks is how easy can this theme be for central banks to explore? Therefore, the idea is joint work and collaboration with statistics institutes of each country.

The IOM studies on demography to estimate the migration flows could be financed by IADB, so in the future there won't be bias like in Mexico (about 50% to 60%). It is important to taking into account that in 2010 United States will conduct a new population census that will help with the data on migration.

5. Evaluation of IMF form. IMF wants to carry out a group survey, taking as a base the World Bank work, to see the degree of advance of the Program.

Regarding the IMF's new Balance of Payment Manual (6th edition), the Costa Rican delegate showed what has to be done and how. The idea is that CEMLA could publish a document on positions that countries in the region should take. The study should establish the legal frame and degree of responsibility for regulation of the payment systems, for example, and to consider liquidity risks.

Finally, the group revising the Manual on Good Practices will consider recommendations on whether remittances should be regulated or not, and to what extent.

6. Other Issues. It was established the invitation of other participants like the case of OECD, World Bank, etc.

All Remittances Group Members are invited to submit working papers on one of the following subjects:

- a) Macroeconomic consistency
- b) Mirror analysis statistics
- c) Seasonal flow adjustment for time series. At CEMLA we use X-12 ARIMA.

It was suggested that the blue books should be updated, and to elaborate for the countries that have not yet done this.