

RRPP: Migration and development in Albania and Macedonia: the effects of remittances on education and health of family members left behind

NEWSLETTER

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This newsletter will give information on all of the relevant events, project outputs and project implementation so far.

Project description: Analytica and ACSER are implementing the RRPP funded project *Migration and development in Albania and Macedonia: the effects of remittances on education and health of family members left behind* from February 2012 till June 2013. Albania and Macedonia as small developing countries have high dependency on remittances which play an important role both in providing complementary social protection, poverty alleviation etc. Beside their important microeconomic impact, remittances have a key impact on both education and health outcomes of the family members left behind.

Project aim: The project aims to inspect the impact of remittances on health and education outcomes of the families left behind in Macedonia and Albania and to test the main hypothesis of whether remittances have positive influence on the two areas.

Methodology: The methodology includes a comprehensive literature review, 500 surveys for each country and econometric analysis of their results. The end product is to be a policy paper containing recommendations to the respective authorities based on the research results.

Project progress: So far the literature review has been completed, the survey was designed, the first team meeting has taken place and the first RRPP training was attended. In addition, Analytica issued a call for papers for the journal *Analytical*.

SIGNING OF THE RRPP CONTRACT

On 10 February 2012, LCU Macedonia held its first meeting with the two lead Macedonian organisations provided grants within the 2011 RRPP Call for project proposals. For this purpose, a Memorandum of Understanding among the University of Fribourg, the Foundation Open Society–Macedonia and each partner organisation was signed. This meeting also provided an opportunity for RRPP procedures and requirements related to the projects' implementation and grant reporting to be explained in detail. On behalf of the Analytica and ACSER, Sonja Zuber, Analytica presented the project.

FIRST RRPP TRAINING IN TIRANA

This training took place in 23-24 February 2012 in Tirana, in which Ana Stojilovska, Analytica and Edit Permeti, ACSER participated. The training had the aim to gather the winners of the RRPP grant for the purpose of networking and offering capacity building training to young researchers. In fact, the training was intended to present the large EU programs and give the Western Balkan CSOs information on possibilities how to prepare themselves for these programs as FP7, CIP, LLL etc. The trainers were researchers at the Austrian CSO Centre for Social Innovation www.zsi.at which is in fact a very successful example of a CSO working constantly on FP7 and other large programs and has 60 employees including high-profile experts. The main message from the Training was the Western Balkan CSOs to re-shift their focus on EU programs. The EU programs

demand excellence of proposals unlike the local and regional funds for the Western Balkan region which usually have the goal to contribute to reconciliation, democracy establishment etc. The key lesson learnt for FP7 projects is preparing project with serious impact, fully meeting the donor's guidelines (both technical and substantive); and when required showing the proposal has significant policy relevance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Analysis of literature on the effects of remittances on education and health of family members left behind

An important aspect of the migration and development debate concerns the effect of migration or remittances on educational and healthcare attainments in the migrants' origin countries. Looking at interactions between remittances on the one hand, and education and health on the other, this review reflects on the following questions: what is the value of migration and remittances for the developing countries? How remittances impact on education performance and health outcomes? The consequences of remittances have gone well beyond the confines of simply development.

Despite the existence of contrary views, the remittances do impact educational attainment and healthcare in various countries of the developing world. Although the literature on these cases is weak, this review has made an effort to look exhaustively to the sources that exist on the migration and remittances for Albania and Macedonia. While remittances can benefit households by lifting liquidity constraints, migration of a family member may have also a deleterious impact on the household's well-being. The short-term effect of

remittances is usually related to increases in consumption, poverty alleviation and income inequality that result in changes in labour market participation. While long-term effect is more pertinent to socio-economic development and specifically on education performance and health status improvement.

Key words: *literature review, migration, remittances, education, health, Albania, Macedonia*

The literature review had the aim to give an in-depth insight into the existing research on migration, remittances and their effect on health and education outcomes. The complete text of the literature review may be found at Analytica's website: <http://www.analyticamk.org/images/stories/files/2012002.pdf> and at ACSER's: http://www.acser-albania.org/uploads/1/0/9/0/10902427/literaturereview_26032012_final.pdf.

FIRST TEAM MEETING

On 30-31 March 2012 Analytica and ACSER had their first working meeting in Skopje. The aim of the meeting was discussing the project plan, its possible risks and challenges as well as the design of the survey and its implementation. The team has concluded that the Macedonian team will have more work to do having in mind the lack of data and research on remittances and especially on their impact on the families left behind. Possible strategy which was adopted is Macedonia to focus its research on three representative regions in the country. The teams decided on focusing on children on the age of 6-15 and on interviewing their mothers. Other details on the survey design were adopted as well. It was decided the next team meeting

to take place in August or September 2012 in Albania.

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR ANALYTICAL

For the purpose of initiating more research on the Western Balkans on this very important topic and increasing the understanding of remittances and their impact, Analytica issued a call for papers for the journal Analytical. The topic is the same, but it welcomes research from the whole region of Southeast Europe. Analytical Journal invites articles that address these issues from any perspective. Analyses utilizing different methodologies will be welcomed.

Deadline for Abstracts and CVs: 31st May 2012. (Maximum 400 words). Deadline Papers: 15th September 2012. (Maximum 10.000 words, excluding bibliography). All abstracts, CVs and papers must be submitted to: journal@analyticamk.org and astojilovska@analyticamk.org.

SURVEY DESIGN

Based on the conclusions adopted on the first team meeting, the draft survey was completed. It will have a general part enclosing all relevant information on the family left behind's profile and focuses on including information on child education and health patterns. This survey is the main methodological tool which will give the answers on the effect of remittances on health and education of their children left behind.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Second RRPP training in Macedonia

Ana Stojilovska, Analytica and Teuta Saka, ACSER will be attending the second RRPP

training in Skopje on 3-4 May 2012. This training is a Workshop on academic writing and will be run by Dr Simone Baglioni and Dr Ross Campbell, Glasgow School for Business and Society, Glasgow Caledonian University (UK). This workshop will provide generic sessions in which participants may obtain a deeper appreciation of the demands in academic writing, the skills and techniques required, as well as will provide one-to-one interaction on areas where participants' writing skills may be improved.

RRPP Annual Scientific Conference 2012

On 25-26 May 2012 in Sarajevo, Ana Stojilovska, Analytica and Isilda Mara, ACSER will be attending the RRPP Annual Scientific Conference 2012. The title of the conference is "Social, Political and Economic Change in the Western Balkans" <http://www.rrpp-westernbalkans.net>. The conference gathers approximately 100 researchers from the region and beyond (mainly PhD students) and aims to provide a platform for scientific exchange, as well as regional and international networking. This year, RRPP will also organise a round table discussion regarding the question of region diversity in EU-integration processes. Analytica and ACSER will be presenting this project. In addition, in order to ensure the visibility of so far produced knowledge in the region (and RRPP related publications), as well as better networking among researchers and institutions in the region, RRPP will be organizing Research Market at this conference. Research market is an opportunity for all interested to present their organisation, research publications and books at one place. For this purpose, Analytica and ACSER will disseminate their publication either from RRPP or from other projects.



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