

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

This newsletter will give information on all of the relevant events, project outputs and project implementation for the period August 2013.

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 August 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 role 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 family members left behind, particularly in Macedonia and Albania and to test the main hypothesis of whether remittances have positive influence on the two subjects.

Methodology: The methodology includes a comprehensive literature review, 2 surveys in the respective countries, descriptive and economic analysis of the attained survey results. The end product is to be two empirical working papers and a policy paper containing recom-

mendations to the respective authorities based on the research results.

I. RESEARCH PRODUCTS AND ACTIVITIES

POLICY BRIEF: Migration and development in Albania and Macedonia: the effects of migration and of remittances on education and health of family members left behind”

This policy brief aimed to translate the research outcomes into a policy product to be disseminated to policy stakeholders. It stated that there was not an initiative shown for promoting the effects of migration and remittances on the socio-economic development in Macedonia and

Albania since the state migration policies are predominately general and do not target specific areas as education and health. Therefore, part of the recommendations are the governments to offer policies for reducing the negative effects on children from migration of their parents, including the impact of migration and remittances in the education and health policies, introducing policies for supporting migrants to invest the earned money in their home countries, enabling easy access to education and health insurance etc. Albania and Macedonia need to improve their data collecting systems in order to set a better database which will further on be a basis for analyzing the impacts of migration and remittances.

It will be published in September 2013. It will be disseminated to all relevant stakeholders.

REGIONAL WORKSHOP: “Migration and remittances in the Western Balkans”

The main idea behind the workshop “Migration and remittances in the Western Balkans”

is presenting the final results of the project and also initiating a debate on the research conducted in Macedonia and the region of Western Balkans on the topic of migration and remittances.

Present at the workshop were researchers from academia, civil society organizations from Macedonia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, representatives from the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia, representatives from the World Bank, International Organization for Migration, International Centre for Migration Policy Development, Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI), Economic Chamber of North-West Macedonia as well as representatives from the private sector.

Major topics were the positive and negative impacts of migration and remittances on the family members left behind in Macedonia and Albania; whether remittances in Macedonia affect poverty and inequality; the negative long term effects of remittance inflow in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the impact of remittances in

macroeconomic stabilization and development in Macedonia; the role of emigration and remittances as adjustment mechanisms in the labor market on the example of Macedonia; whether migration has any impact on the women empowerment in traditionally patriarchal countries as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia; and the use and prospects of remittances in Macedonia.

The topic of migration and remittances is very relevant both on macro and micro level in the region of Western Balkans, thus greater attention both in research circles and at policy level should be given to it. There is lack of empirical research, mainly due to lack of necessary data to determine the impact of remittances on children’s health status in Albania and Macedonia. In this regard, Albania and Macedonia should further strengthen their statistics and data collection systems to enable better analysis of the migration and remittances’ impact since for example there is no accurate data of the percentage of remittances. Governments

should introduce more family–friendly policies which could contribute to smoothing the direct negative effects of parental migration and any potential negative effect on the welfare of the

children. Policies which allow migrants to easily invest in their country of origin can help the developing of the positive impact of migration and remittances.

The conference proceedings covering all aspects and details of the workshop will be published in September 2013. They will be disseminated to all relevant stakeholders. ■



Regional Research

Promotion Programme | **Western Balkans**

This newsletter is prepared in the framework of the Regional Research Promotion Programme in the Western Balkans (RRPP), which is run by the University of Fribourg upon a mandate of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, SDC, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent opinions of the SDC and the University of Fribourg and neither the views of the organizations that the authors work for.

Please address any correspondence to: Ana Stojilovska, Analytica think tank, e-mail: astojilovska@analyticamk.org

