

Summary

Microinsurance Conference 2007

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Parallel Session 15 – Innovative microinsurance products **How can remittances enhance access to insurance?**

Günther Müssig, IOM, Guatemala

Medical Insurance financed by remittances

“Salud a su alcance”

According to several surveys carried out by IOM Guatemala in recent years, 7% of all remittances received are spent on health. Based on these findings and the fact that the health care services in Guatemala are deficient, in rural areas even not existing, we decided to set up a Medical Service Plan to address the needs.

This Medical Service Plan is an insurance for the families of migrants who remained in Guatemala and provides different health care services according to the plan they purchased. Beneficiaries have to call a Call Center where they receive the indication where to be provided assistance. For that purpose a network of doctors and hospitals is available all over the country.

The programme provider in Guatemala is EPSS (Empresa Promotora de Servicios de Salud, S.A.), an institution that has enrolled more than 190,000 families, corresponding to 750,000 beneficiaries, mainly employees from the public sector.

In order to promote this insurance for migrants in the United States, we have partnered with MFIC (Microfinance International Corporation), a microfinance and remittance processing institution based in Washington, DC. The purpose is to promote enrolment on the occasion of the remittance transfer.

An advantage for implementation of this insurance we have with respect to the Guatemala-Canada Labour Migration Programme. All temporary workers in 2008 (estimated 2,500) will be enrolled in this Medical Service Plan after having gained certain experience through a pilot phase with a group of the 2007-workers.

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