



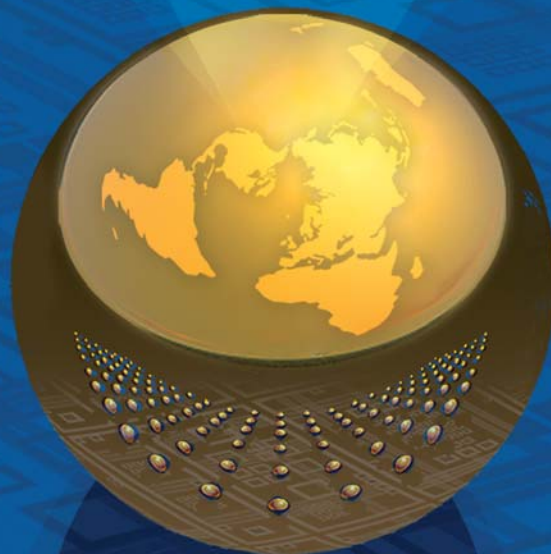
Enabling poor rural people
to overcome poverty



Global Forum on Remittances 2009

Remittances as a development tool in Africa

22-23 October 2009, Tunis



Background

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the African Development Bank (AfDB), in collaboration with the Inter-American Dialogue (IAD) are pleased to organize the Global Forum on Remittances 2009, to be held in Tunis on 22-23 October.

The Global Forum on Remittances is the third in a series of groundbreaking conferences dedicated to highlighting the importance of international migration and the vital flow of remittances that result. The forums have been devoted to the creation of worldwide synergies among government, civil society and the private sector stakeholders that are key to maximizing the development impact of migration. The importance of this process is

further highlighted by the G8's explicit call on reducing the cost of remittances by 50 per cent over the next five years. During this time of economic instability, the relative resilience of remittances as an international flow is a stabilizing force for many nations. At the same time, the ability of migrant workers to surmount the economic challenges they face is a testament to their dedication to send money home.

The 2009 Forum

With global attention in the field of remittances shifting towards Africa, the Global Forum on Remittances 2009 will focus on the African remittances market, the role of regulatory frameworks and the private sector in

maximizing the micro, local and national impacts of remittances. The conference will be a follow-up to the widely attended forums held in 2005 and 2007.

The central objectives of the Forum are to share experiences and raise awareness among diverse stakeholders in the remittances market and to highlight the potential benefits that remittances can bring to the social and economic development of the African continent. Partners such as the World Bank, the International Network of Alternative Financial Institutions (INAFI) and private sector stakeholders will contribute their unique insights to the achievement of these objectives.

The 2009 Forum will bring both private and public sector stakeholders into the discussion, and will seek to foster an

enabling environment for remittances. Focused on African remittances markets and international best practices, the Forum will address regulatory, economic and social remittances-related issues in Africa. The two-day event will include a series of round-table discussions and working groups devoted to an in-depth exchange of ideas and of business models for urban and rural remittances worldwide.

Central to the Forum will be the official release of the regional study entitled "Sending Money Home to Africa". This study provides an overview of the African marketplace, competition and regulatory framework, and possibilities for financial intermediation.

Key topics

- Remittances in Africa: current crisis and future prospects
- Financial intermediation and inclusion
- The remittances marketplace
- Technological innovation
- Regulatory framework
- Remittances and rural development

Forum topics

Remittances in Africa: current crisis and future prospects

The Forum's main objective is to raise the profile of international remittances in Africa by focusing on three main issues, namely (i) offering expert analysis of trends and patterns of these flows in Africa, especially given the significance of the financial crisis; (ii) sharing experiences and lessons learned from other regions of the world; and (iii) identifying policy solutions that can improve the environment for remittances transfer to Africa.



The remittances marketplace

The Forum will deal with the great potential of Africa's almost US\$40 billion remittances marketplace. As the cost of remittances to Africa remains high, increased competition and the use of technologies that bridge the urban/rural divide provide the potential to reshape cost structures and rural access. Discussions will depart from the "Sending Money Home to Africa" study (such as constrained competition and exclusive agreements).



Regulatory framework

The Forum will serve as an opportunity to review central regulatory issues in the African context, as well as experiences and solutions from other regions throughout the world. Special attention will be paid to the potential effects of the recent European Payment Services Directive on remittances services to Africa, and to the role of domestic regulatory action in allowing alternative financial institutions to serve rural areas.



Financial intermediation and inclusion

Speakers will discuss the link between remittances and financial access with a focus on the African experience as well as comparative experiences elsewhere. Issues to be addressed include the current patterns of financial intermediation to remittances recipients, factors that constrain financial institutions and other banking institutions from offering financial products (particularly in rural areas), and efforts to strengthen financial inclusion. The panel will depart from an analysis of the results of the study.



Technological innovation

The Forum will highlight Africa's leading role in innovative and development-driven remittances transfer methods and products that are reshaping the ability of financial services to reach rural areas. It will discuss the role of technology in deepening the marketplace and stimulating competition, its role in closing the gap between rural remittances recipients and financial services, and the challenges that lie ahead as technology takes the place of brick-and-mortar establishments.



Remittances and rural development

Migration and remittances are the human face of globalization and the time has come to move from studying them in the *abstract* to truly maximizing their *impact*. The Forum will bring together the stakeholders central to achieving real advances in rural development. Whether it be donors, companies, legislative or regulatory actors or migrant organizations, there is still a long way to go before synergies are achieved.



Remittances, Business Models and Technology Fair

The Remittances, Business Models and Technology Fair will take place in parallel with the Forum, and will provide private sector entities and other stakeholders with an opportunity to exhibit their products and services. The Fair will also serve as a networking venue for interaction with other key remittances market players from the public and private sectors and civil society. It will provide an opportunity for participants to become aware of business-technology approaches that can best reduce

transaction costs, create profitable business models, deliver additional value to users, and indicate means of maximizing the benefits of remittances by linking them to other financial services.

The Fair will showcase new business models, tools and technologies for remittances and banking to a high-level audience of government officials, commercial bankers, industry representatives, and development workers from all over the African continent and the world. The Fair will take place in the main atrium of the Forum, in which exhibitors will display their products, sales and marketing literature, and interact with other vendors and potential clients.

- Registration www.ifad.org/remittances
- Contact remittances@ifad.org - Telephone: +39 06 5459-2386
- Forum venue Hotel Laico Tunis - Avenue Mohamed V - 1080 Tunis - Cedex, Tunisia

The IFAD Financing Facility for Remittances

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) works with poor rural people to enable them to grow and sell more food, increase their incomes and determine the direction of their own lives. It is an international financial institution and a specialized UN agency. IFAD's US\$15 million multi-donor Financing Facility for Remittances, funded by the European Commission; the Inter-American Development Bank; the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor; the Government of Luxembourg; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Spain; and the United Nations Capital Development Fund, works to (i) increase economic opportunities for poor rural people through the support and development of innovative, cost-effective and easily accessible remittances services, (ii) support productive rural investment channels, and (iii) foster an enabling environment for rural remittances.

The AfDB Migration and Development Initiative

The primary objective of the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) is to promote sustainable economic growth to reduce poverty in Africa. To achieve this objective, AfDB mobilizes resources for investment in African countries, and provides policy advice and technical assistance to support development efforts. As part of these efforts, the AfDB Migration and Development Initiative aims at maximizing the development impact of remittances by (i) reducing their cost, (ii) increasing their productive use, and (iii) promoting business opportunities and job creation at the grassroots level. A multi-donor trust fund was created in AfDB, with initial contributions from France and IFAD, to support this initiative.



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