

Understanding the Remittances Market and Institutions. The discussion in GEP on reducing remittance costs shows the complexity of the measures that are needed to realize the gains from a financial system that provides efficient and safe cross border remittance services. Building knowledge on the nature and structure of diverse remittance service providers and business, the bottlenecks faced, the role of government where there are scale economies and network externalities involved in the investments in financial infrastructure, will be crucial for policy makers to opt for, and for us to provide, suitable policy advice.

Over the past few years, there have been a variety of efforts undertaken in regions, FSEVP, CGAP, and regional units to build this knowledge on existing practices and institutions in various countries. The following lists these recent studies.

1. Study of remittances business, policy and regulatory environment in Southern Africa: the following topics are covered in separate papers: i) Regulation and Public Policy Objectives for remittances in South Africa as a sender country; ii) Technical Overview of Remittance Payment Corridors from South Africa into six neighboring countries; iii) Review of Regulatory, Policy and Business Issues relating to Remittance Payment Corridors from South Africa into six neighboring countries. (FSE).
2. Survey of Remittance Agents in the U.S. To investigate the business models, geographical coverage, size of flows and costs of remittance agents in the U.S. A policy research paper "Remittance service providers in the United States: how remittance firms operate and how they perceive their business environment" was produced (forthcoming). (FSE)
3. Regional Study on Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean (LCR). The objective of the regional study is to articulate the policy implications of available research findings on the impact of remittances on development in order to provide inputs for staff engaged in policy dialogue and other Bank operations. As secondary objectives, the study aims at generating new descriptive stylized facts on remittances flows to LCR and new robust estimates of the development impact of remittances in LCR. (LAC)
4. Workshops on securitization of remittance flows to understand some of the requisites and bottlenecks, and consequences, of these securitization structures.