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El Salvador Fiscal Policy and Expenditure Management Program (FPEMP)

Quarterly Report
June – August 2011

September 2011

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FISCAL POLICY AND EXPENDITURE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (FPEMP)

QUARTERLY REPORT June-August 2011

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
INTRODUCTION	3
COMPONENT A: PUBLIC EXPENDITURE MANAGEMENT	5
COMPONENT B: TAX REVENUE MOBILIZATION	9
COMPONENT C: PRIVATE SECTOR OUTREACH	12
MOF'S PROGRESS TOWARDS GOES GOALS	13
FPEMP'S PROGRESS REPORT – PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	14
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Executive Summary

USAID signed a Task Order with Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI) on June 10, 2011 to design and implement a program for modernizing and improving fiscal policy and expenditure in El Salvador.

The purpose of the Fiscal Policy and Expenditure Management Program (FPEMP) is to support a technical assistance program to the Government of El Salvador's (GOES) Ministry of Finance (MOF) in the areas of tax policy and administration, public expenditure management systems, and public-private dialogue between the government, the private sector, and the broader public. The main counterpart for the activity is the Ministry of Finance (MOF).

FPEMP has three main objectives, comprising three components. These are:

1. Component A: Enhanced Public Expenditure Management
2. Component B: Improved Revenue Mobilization
3. Strengthened Private Sector Engagement

Highlights for the quarter are listed below:

Start of the Project

- Annual Work Plan development
- Project Office establishment and organization

Activities Performed

- Annual Work Plan
- Work Plan revision
- Advocacy and definition of the ROB implementation strategy with the Budget directorate-DGP
- Advocacy and definition of the CUT implementation strategy with the Treasury directorate-DGT
- E-procurement system development plan definition
- SAFI development plan
- FPEMP IT strategy definition
- Taxpayer Registration System Cleaning strategy definition
- Taxpayer Current Account System Cleaning strategy definition
- CSMS upgrade strategy and plan definition

- Training on Users Cases development
- Tax Benchmarking study coordination
- Expenditure Benchmarking study
- Donors coordination

Quarterly results

- Established operations in the Ministry of Finance
- Drafted the First Year Work Plan
- Earned approval of the First Year Work Plan
- Established institutional relationships with USAID, DGII, DGP, DGT, DGICP, DGCG, DGPEF, DINAFI, UNAC
- Coordination with the IMF
- Development of a strategy for software implementation based on local capacity
- Alignment of the DGT toward a Treasury Single Account (TSA) implementation plan
- Tax Benchmarking study coordination
- Public Expenditure Modernization Program Plan

Introduction

This document represents FPMEP's first Quarterly Report. The report covers the project's activities during the period June 10 to August 31, 2011. The project began on June 10, 2011, when USAID and DAI signed the Contract. The project is for four years, with one optional year. The entire five-year period concludes on June 9, 2015.

USAID commissioned Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) and its FPEMP team to design and implement a program for modernizing and improving public expenditure and tax policy and administration in El Salvador. The project goals are to build a modern and transparent expenditure system that follows the best international practices, to strengthen the tax administration and to improve revenue collection and facilitate private sector outreach.

FPEMP proposes in this report and in the future to present our progress according to our work along the project's three components:

- Component 1: Public expenditure management
- Component 2: Tax revenue mobilization
- Component 3: Private sector outreach

Across FPEMP components and the GOES, the theme for this quarter was to focus on the establishment of project offices, building a well-qualified, motivated team to plan and begin project operations, establishing relationships with counterparts, and gaining approval on the proposed first year work plan. The FPEMP office opened its doors in early July, and our staff began full-time work with the project.

During the first quarter, FPEMP held several meetings with staff from the MOF and USAID to prioritize several key areas of assistance which include:

- Implementation of a results oriented budget (ROB) system;
- Implementation of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) program;
- Development of the TSA *Portal de Pagos*;
- Plan for modernizing the public investment system;
- Development of the new SAFI II (Government Financial Information System);
- E-procurement system;
- Clean and updated taxpayer registration system and taxpayer current account;
- Updated CSMS;
- Strengthening of the large taxpayer office; and
- Fiscal reforms dissemination program and private sector outreach initiatives.

The FPEMP team—keenly aware that the first quarter of project activities sets the tone for the life of the project—made an early effort to build strong relationships with counterparts at the MOF to design activities that will bring a lasting impact on El Salvador's expenditure and tax system.

Due to a highly collaborative effort of our project team, FPMEP achieved a quick start up by minimizing administrative and logistical obstacles and enabling immediate focus on the technical aspects of the project. The COP mobilized and started working on the project on June 29th and promptly began establishing institutional relationships with the project counterparts at the DGII, DGP, DGT, DGICP, DGCG, DGPEF, DINAFI, and UNAC. The FPEMP project benefited from the strong relationships the COP had developed during the TPAR project to obtain full counterpart support on the project activities and tasks without major obstacles.

The FPEMP office is in full operation and has been provided with adequate working conditions and equipped with resources from project funds—counterparts assigned office space promptly and provided the necessary support to accommodate the team. Per FPEMP’s request, the MOF has agreed to provide a counterpart team—on a component and activity basis—to support activities throughout the life of the project. Important progress has been achieved in the initial three months and the project looks forward to continued cooperation and productive working relationships with counterparts at the MOF and USAID.

An important first activity performed during the quarter—and also the project’s first deliverable—was the development of the first year work plan. The FPEMP team worked closely with USAID and the MOF’s Directorates of Budget, Treasury, Investment and Debt, DINAFI, Accounting, Internal Revenue, Customs, and the Vice-ministries of Expenditure and Revenue to develop a comprehensive annual work plan. This document was produced by the Chief of Party, the Deputy Chief of Party, the IT Coordinator and Eunice Heredia-Ortiz, with input from the USAID COTR and other MOF directorates. A work plan revision was done in conjunction with the USAID COTR, and a comprehensive work plan was agreed upon and approved by the MOF and the USAID mission.

The following sections summarize FPEMP’s work and achievements during the first quarter of operations (i.e., June 10 through August 31, 2011) and is structured to reflect the first annual work plan. This report presents achievements, challenges and next steps, using the work schedule tables included in the work plan to reflect progress against planned activities and deliverables in each of our three components.

COMPONENT A: Public Expenditure Management

FPEMP focuses its efforts on helping the GOES advance its PEM reform agenda, resulting in a budget process that is more effective, transparent, innovative and responsive. FPEMP supports the MOF to implement results oriented budgeting, treasury operations and an improved financial management information system.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS/HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE 1st QUARTER

Component A succeeded during the first quarter of FPEMP in accomplishing several important tasks.

- Deputy Chief of Party, and Component A lead, Jorge Shepherd mobilized and started work on the project full time.
- Project team held several meetings with GOES counterparts involved in the efforts to modernize public expenditure, including the DGP, DINAFI, DGT, DGICP, DPEF and the vice-minister of expenditure. After several rounds of meetings the FPEMP project and the GOES agencies reached an agreement on the Public Expenditure Modernization Plan.
- FPEMP's donor coordination efforts reaped fruit during the first quarter when the IMF—which is currently providing technical assistance to the GOES on TSA and Medium Term Expenditure Framework implementation—and FPMEP agreed on a schedule of mutual cooperation.
- The project team started working with the DINAFI to establish baseline indicators for a future expenditure benchmarking study which is scheduled to begin the next quarter.

ACTIVITIES/ WORK PROGRESS

The following paragraphs contain a short description of specific activities developed during the first quarter for Component A.

- **The Public Expenditure Modernization Plan**

The several rounds of meetings between the FPEMP staff and the MOF during the first quarter culminated with the agreement on the strategy for a Public Expenditure Modernization plan development. The MOF committed to the following under this plan:

- a. Begin the gradual implementation of ROB that includes the medium term expenditure framework and the Budget Programmatic Framework (BPF).
- b. The ROB implementation will begin with the Ministry of Health (1 Agency) and the Ministry of Agriculture (3 Agencies) for the budget cycle of 2013.
- c. Begin developing the SAFI II with the 'Budget Planning' application and deploying it by June 2013.
- d. Continue developing the SAFI II with the 'Budget Execution' and 'Budget Monitoring' application and deploying it by January 2014.

- e. Continue working with the TSA implementation Program and have the *Portal de Pagos* implemented by 2013.
 - f. Evaluate and approve the conceptual model that FPEPM will develop for the public Expenditure Modernization Program by the end of 2011.
 - g. Begin the development of the E-procurement system simultaneously with the SAFI development.
 - h. Dedicate a counterpart team full time to work with PEMP.
- **ROB implementation strategy with the Budget Directorate (DGP):** Extensive discussions between the FPEMP team, DGP and DINAFI took place during the first quarter to define an adequate implementation strategy for ROB that follows international best practices. Currently, the DGP is working on four different pilot programs for health, agriculture, education and environment, developed with the assistance of a part time team with the support of a consultant funded by the IDB. The MOF has demonstrated commitment towards advancing the ROB agenda and moving towards effectively implementing a programmatic approach to the budget, or BPF (i.e. obtaining clear and precise budget program and budget activity definitions) including in the context of a medium term budget framework (MTBF). The FPEMP team stressed the importance of integrating these two, and moving forward with the implementation by agencies. It was agreed that roll out would begin with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture (4 agencies in total).
 - **Treasury Single Account (TSA) implementation strategy with the Treasury directorate (DGT)**

The project team worked closely with the Treasury Directorate to discuss and formulate an adequate plan for implementing the TSA. The IMF has agreed to send a consultant for the development of the TSA implementation work plan the following quarter, and FPEMP will provide follow up technical assistance according to recommendations presented in the implementation plan while also assisting with the development of the TSA component at the SAFI II.
 - **E-procurement system development plan**

FPEMP agreed with the DINAFI that the e-procurement system will be developed with other donor's assistance. The first stage in this process will be the development of *Libre Gestion*—the system dedicated to small procurement programs supporting small and medium enterprises, which follows the government strategy. The project team discussed with the UNAC the methodology and steps for the system development and requested the formation of a counterpart team to guarantee its sustainability. They agreed on the request and have started working on the user's cases. The SAFI development will provide adequate integration with the e-procurement system.
 - **SAFI development plan**

The SAFI II system is one of the main priorities of the MOF, the system will be the orchestrator of the public expenditure modernization program. The COP and the DCOP explained to DINAFI the need to draft a detailed agenda for the entire PEM system modernization with coordinating efforts with other directorates before FPEMP can begin assistance with the system development. Numerous meetings were held in order to define and

agree with DINAFI on the agenda and stages of implementation. Additionally, the project requested the necessary counterpart team to guarantee capacity building of DINAFI staff and sustainability of the system. The DINAFI agreed with the project team requirements and an international expert on SAFI systems will be developing the work plan during the month of October.

- **Strategy for software implementation based on local capacity**

The project will implement a strategy of software development using local capacity in El Salvador with a software factory modality. The strategy was discussed with the MOF and the USAID mission and it was accepted by all parts. FPEMP will have project managers by IT application and will contract the development of the program code with local software companies, the business rules will be developed by the project IT expert and the reports tables will be developed by the MOF.

- **Expenditure Benchmarking study**

Establishing base line indicators and targets to track the project achievements is an important part of the project's monitoring and evaluation plan. An Expenditure Benchmarking study will provide a system of indicators informing the current public expenditure system stance against international comparators, and against the goals of the Salvadoran MOF. The study will provide an important starting point for analyzing public expenditure performance throughout the life of the project. The project developed a benchmarking model and discussed the indicators with the DINAFI, the discussion continues and it is expected that the study will begin the next quarter.

NEXT STEPS

During the second quarter the project will proceed with the development of the foundations of a successful expenditure modernization program by developing a conceptual model for the ROB implementation, public investment system and a draft model for the SAFI system. The main activities will be:

- **Conceptual model for RoB:** The project will develop a conceptual model that specifies in a logical framework the components and characteristics of the new budget model, including the necessary inputs, activities and expected outputs. This model will be the road map for the budget modernization program, including the medium term expenditure framework and the programmatic budget framework.
- **Conceptual model for the public investment modernization program:** The public investment system must be an integral component of the ROB model. A public investment expert from FPEMP, in coordination with the ROB expert, will develop the conceptual model for the public investment system.
- **Recommendations for the SAFI II system structure:** The new SAFI system must be developed in the context of a ROB system that incorporates the medium term framework and the programmatic budget framework. This new structure will be designed and the necessary recommendations for the SAFI II will be developed by a SAFI system expert from FPEMP.

- **FPMEP's IT assistance:** The MOF and FPEMP will plan a detailed scope of the program's assistance, in relation to the IT component.
- **Definition of the software architecture:** The MOF and FPEMP will establish the software architecture that will be used for the development of the IT applications for the MOF, as well as each of the components, taking into account the quality, the learning curve and other factors.
- **Assessment of the Software factory model:** FPEMP will identify the software's factory to use in the development of MOF IT applications. FPEMP will support and review the MOF's process requirements with the vision of ensuring quality and sustainability.

COMPONENT B: Tax Revenue Mobilization

FPEMP aims to develop a stronger, more modern Salvadoran tax administration that is more equitable, efficient and taxpayer-friendly.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS/HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE 1st QUARTER

- As part of the CSMS upgrade strategy, the project delivered training to the DGII user's committees in order to advance development of the 'user's cases' for the systems development and upgrade.
- The project delivered several trainings to other MOF directorates on the methodology for user's cases development. The training was attended by 72 officials from all the MOF Directorates.
- The project team worked jointly with the Tax Analysis Unit of the DGII to undertake a tax benchmarking study. The study is undergoing vice-ministry review and approval before it can be released—process which was not previously required under TPAR.
- The FPEMP project held numerous meetings with the DGII, the Administrative Court of Appeals and the vice-minister of revenue and reached agreement on a tax administration modernization plan which includes upgrades to the CSMS, and a cleaning plan for the taxpayer registry and the taxpayer current account.

ACTIVITIES/ WORK PROGRESS

The following paragraphs contain a short description of specific activities developed during the first quarter for Component B.

- **Tax administration strengthening Plan:** The FPEMP project held numerous meetings with the DGII, the Administrative Court of Appeals (TAII) and the vice-minister of revenue to obtain their concurrence with the CSMS upgrade, and the RUC and the TCA cleaning plan. Agreement was reached on the need for the MOF to commit itself—with full support from FPEMP—to:
 - Correct the process and procedures that impact the RUC and the Taxpayer Current Account in order to avoid the current situation from happening again in the future.
 - Upgrade the RUC and TCA application to avoid data pollution in the future.
 - Incorporate in the CSMS most of the procedures of tax control, including Fiscal Compliance, VAT and Income Tax Refunds, the Tax Hearings and the Appeals process.
 - Develop an institutional program for future fiscal reforms dissemination, following international benchmarks.

- **Taxpayer Registration and Taxpayer Current Account System Cleaning strategy**

The COP and the IT coordinator worked together with the DGII's Director General and the DGII technical team to develop an agenda for the RUC and the current account cleaning tasks. The project team explained the need to correct all the technical and administrative loopholes that generate the current circumstances that contaminate the RUC and the taxpayer current account making it unreliable. The DGII will develop an assessment document for RUC, the current account as well as the user's cases for the RUC and current account application upgrade by the end of September. The FPEMP project will make the necessary adjustments to the systems and the DGII will make the changes to the current process and procedures in order to avoid this situation from happening again. After these tasks are achieved the project and the DGII will create a joint team to work in the cleaning process.

- **CSMS upgrade strategy plan**

The FPEMP team discussed the strategy for the CSMS upgrade with the DGII's Director General and the president of the Administrative Court of Appeals. An agreement was reached in which the project will continue supporting the upgrade of the CSMS system, integrating all the different stages of the tax cases cycle, from the case selection process to the case appeals. This unique system concept will help the MOF expedite the tax control and compliance functions in a way that revenue collection will improve and processing times will be shortened. The system will be integrated with the tax arrears control at the Treasury Directorate.

The upgrade plan will also include the development of the case management function for fiscal compliance and the upgrade of the audit case management function during the first year. During the second year, the project will develop the case management function for the Tax Hiring and Assessment Department and the Administrative Court of Appeals-TAI. During the first quarter, the project delivered training to the DGII user's committees in order to have them developing the user's cases for the systems development and upgrade. By the end of October, the DGII must deliver the documents to FPEMP in order to start the software development and update.

- **Tax Benchmarking study coordination**

In order to have a system of indicators and targets to track the project achievements, the project in coordination with the Tax Analysis Unit is developing the tax benchmarking study. The Benchmarking Study includes an analysis of data against international comparators, and against the goals of the Salvadoran tax administration. The study provides an important starting point for analyzing tax administration performance throughout the life of the project. These benchmarks will be updated on an annual basis, in coordination with the Tax Analysis Unit. The previous USAID TPAR project trained and transferred the methodologies to DGII and MOF staff.

NEXT STEPS

For the Next Quarter, the Component B team plans are the following:

- **IT personnel recruitment:** To recruit the appropriate personnel that will be assigned to each IT application, in accordance to required skills and experience.

- **Support to the user's cases development at the DGII:** During the following quarter, the project will continue providing support and follow up on the development of the user's cases by the DGII.
- **Definition of a conceptual model for the Large Taxpayers Office:** The project will continue providing support to DGII in the definition of a conceptual model for the new Large Taxpayer Office and will plan the training and technical support required under the new scenario.
- **Development of a training program strategy for the MOF:** The project will work with the MOF in the draft of a strategy for a training system development.

COMPONENT C: Private Sector Outreach

Bridging differences and building consensus through outreach and dialogue is FPEMP's task. FPEMP aims to reinvigorate the dialogue between the government, the private sector, and the broader public through sustained, vibrant public-private exchanges.

Given the complex political, social and economic landscape of El Salvador, following our annual work plan, this quarter was dedicated to strategically selecting a Salvadoran private sector outreach and transparency specialist that would lead Component C. In coordination with the MOF and USAID, the project achieved this major milestone for this component and expects to move forward with activities planned for the year in the next quarter.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR THE 1st QUARTER

- Component Lead, Ms. Fressia Cerna was hired at the end of the first quarter to lead private sector outreach activities under FPEMP.

NEXT STEPS

- **Evaluation of a strategy to determine the GOES political will for a Fiscal Pact implementation:** The project will continue exploring the GOES wiliness to move forward with a Fiscal Pact.
- **Stakeholder focus group and survey's questionnaire :** Begin networking with local partners to design a focus group or a survey of business to identify the most disputed or misunderstood elements of the fiscal reforms of 2009, helping target outreach efforts.
- **Development of a strategy for fiscal reforms dissemination:** The project C component lead will work closely with the Unit of Tax Education from the DGII to develop a strategy for a fiscal reform dissemination program.

MOF's Progress towards GOES goals

The Task Order document mandates that DAI report quarterly on the Government of El Salvador's (GOES) progress towards the following targets:

Target	Progress
Build the foundations to move from the current budget system to a Result Oriented Budget system for Health, Agriculture and Education	The MOF agreed on a plan to successfully implement ROB, beginning with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture. The DGP will dedicate a team full time to implement the task.
Implement a fully operational Treasury Single Account	The DGT agreed on the development of an agenda and a detailed plan to successfully implement a TSA. FPMP will provide experts for the follow up and will develop the TSA component in the SAFI II.
Develop and implement the SAFI II	Based on the project recommendations the DINAFI agreed on a proposed agenda to develop the SAFI II.
Develop and implement an e-Procurement System	The MOF is currently working in the user's cases for the first component of the E-Procurement system, the <i>Libre Gestion</i> application.
Increase tax revenues by 2.0% of GDP by 2015	The CSMS upgrade, the RUC and the TCA update, and the strengthening of the Large Taxpayers Office will support revenue mobilization effort. The DGII has committed to the implementation of these tasks.
Develop new scenarios for private sector and civil society participation in fiscal matters and new transparency and accountability practices	The ROB system will include a system for accountability and transparency.
Successfully implement current and future tax reforms	The DGII expressed its wiliness to improve its current strategy for fiscal reforms dissemination and implementation with FPMP support.

FPEMP's Progress Report – Performance Indicators

Finally, we present FPEMP's progress towards achieving the project's objectives measured by various performance indicators set in the Task Order document:

Project Performance Indicator	FPEMP Progress
Component A	
a) No less than twenty-five Public Sector Institutions using multiyear results- oriented budgets	FPEMP has convened with MOF in prioritizing the phasing of multi-year ROB tools in no less than four key public entities during 2012-13 to then rolling out to the rest of Government afterwards, as part of SAFI II strategy and implementation plans being commissioned
b) Treasury enabled to make electronic payments on behalf of GOES entities by the end of the project under a Treasury Single Account system	FPEMP has coordinated with DGT to ensure that other donor assistance is geared towards fulfilling the purposes of FPEMP and enabling TSA system to operate under the SAFI II.
c) Modernized MOF's human resources system integrated with the "Sistema de Administración Financiera Integrado" (SAFI) which is the Integrated Financial Management System of the Government of El Salvador	FPEMP has conveyed to MOF authorities in that SIRH will be interfaced with SAFI II, as part of the ROB-led strategic plan for 2013-14
d) Strengthened MOF Budget-Planning and Public Investment Unit, by increasing the knowledge and IT resources of each Unit	MOF has agreed with FPEMP in that MOF must institute a linkage between strategic planning and budget management must and will form part of ROB reforms within Government. USAID will sponsor a meeting with STP to ensure broader GOES support on this matter
e) Strengthened MOF Regulatory Unit, by increasing procurement by no less than 50%	FPEMP has coordinated with UNAC to speed up gathering of systems specifications and other inputs required to commission the IT development work of the e-procurement
f) Six hundred MOF and GOES agencies personnel trained in modern expenditure system management techniques by the end of the project	MOF has agreed with FPEMP in that a unified PEM training program will be coordinated to better allocate FPEMP resources and others' and avoid duplication of training efforts for planning and financial management staff of no less than twenty five public sector institutions forthcoming, as part of the SAFI II implementation plan 2012-2013 to be discussed and agreed on before end 2011
g) Functional web-based Public Expenditure Tracking System available to the public	FPEMP will call on MOF to include PETS reports of selected line ministries in <i>Portal de Transparencia Fiscal</i>

Component B	
h) Clean and reliable taxpayer current account	FPEMP provided guidance and training to the DGII counterparts in order to have them developing the TCA modifications requirements so the project can proceed with the system update
i) Clean and reliable taxpayer registration system	FPEMP provided guidance and training to the DGII counterparts in order to have them developing the RUC modifications requirements so the project can proceed with the system update
j) updated Case Selection and Management System	FPEMP provided guidance and training to the DGII counterparts in order to have them developing the user's cases for the new CSMS case administration modules for fiscal compliance and VAT and Income Tax Refunds and the modifications requirements for the audit case management so the project can proceed with the system update
k) Technical assistance in the implementation of fiscal reforms, and no less than 300 MOF personnel trained to effectively apply the reforms in order to be able to generate the expected additional income	MOF agreed with FPEMP in the development of a strategy and a system for future fiscal reforms disseminations.
Component C	
l) GOES assisted and enabled in facilitating discussions with the private sector in forging a new fiscal pact to increase resources to address the pressing social and economic needs of the country	The FPEMP project is waiting for a political decision from the MOF on moving forward with a fiscal pact in order to provide the necessary technical support.
m) No less than 60 private sector actors, at all levels, assisted in better understanding of new fiscal reforms	FPEMP will provide support in the dissemination of the future fiscal reforms.
o) Effective promotion leading to the establishment of a public-private commission by Salvadoran actors, with the goal of monitoring on a yearly basis the approved budget versus actual GOES expenditures.	This strategy will be developed under the ROB implementation initiative
p) A functional state of the art in-house training program to provide MOF personnel with continuous up-to-date techniques and technical knowledge	The MOF agreed with the FPEMP recommendation of implementing an institutional training program to build capacity inside the MOF. The component C lead will begin operations during the first week of September.

