CENTER FOR LATINAMERICAN MONETARY STUDIES

PROJECT FOR THE DESIGN OF A DISTANCE TRAINING COURSE

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INTRODUCTION

This project document consists of a comprehensive proposal for the starting of a distance training system on human resources for Latin-American and the Caribbean Central Banks.

This documents contain an analysis of the situation of Latin-American and the Caribbean Central Banks in connection with underlying professional performance, guidelines and basic criteria for the development of a distance training system, as well as the detail of the actions to be taken and decisions to be made, in order to carry it out. In this document the following can be found::

- Increase of professional performance through education and training. Situation of the Latin-American and the Caribbean Central Banks. By Esteban Villamayor.
- Goals
- Presentation of the Strategy.
- Definition of the subsystems.
- Proposed means.
- Participant support network.
- Assessment.
- Administration.
- System operation.
- Key recommendations for project development.

Increase of professional performance through education and training. Situation of the Latin-American and the Caribbean Central Banks

Esteban Villamayor

Introduction

Within the dynamics inherent to the functions that are performed in human resources management, the challenges we are to face are several and of a diverse nature.

If we're not able to re-think the model of the organizations that we work for, in order to face them, we will have no rest. The more turbulence, the greater the stress, the disconnection with what we do and the increase in internal competitiveness. People will work harder, but without learning to work better (which we are already noticing).

Any kind of growth is the result of interaction between the processes fueling said growth and other processes constraining it. In struggling against these processes, we find ourselves limited, for instance, by our own collective learning abilities.

Central banks has been experiencing for some years a significant change. Since 1996 to this date, a series of experiences of a valuable content have been received, same that have been discussed in meetings attended by human resources specialists through white papers.

The shared commitment with respect to change is only attainable when the organization has the ability to build common aspirations through culture. People will discuss the topics considered as "untouchable" at developing the capacity to

reflex and challenge on sound ground and, in turn, when this activity is considered valid by the direction, it will bring along better contributions.

Change processes tend to circumscribe to work with growth and not with restraining factors. I believe that strengthening the commitment and people's energy in favor of individual and collective achievement is ok, but there will be no growth if there exist elements such as culture and learning generating restrictions.

In the work "La Educación en la Empresa" (Education in business) (Editorial Garnika, 1996) Ernesto Gore performs an acute analysis of sudden change experimented by society, turning a society of organizations and knowledge into a production factor. Central Banks "produce" for society through the knowledge present in each of its member's heads.

In the context we live in, educational needs have surpassed responsiveness of traditional educational institutions. It is, has and will be necessary (as of the mid 80´s) to utilize the educational potential of organizations not engaged in education, such as work, in order to respond to ever-changing/compounding functions.

If we observe what happens in most of the Latin-American economies, only a few domestic firms compete against foreign ones. Companies turn into networks and a country's competitiveness is its people's competitiveness to add value to such networks.

Work core today stems from applied knowledge of a specific task. In the case of Central banks, competitiveness is related with accurate decisions made to face both structural and circumstantial needs.

In a document I prepared for the III Human Resources Administration Meeting ("value-added Human resources") held in Mexico in 1997, I referred to the work

developed by central bank analysts. There I discussed the significance assigned to people's analysis chore. I called that chore: "Analysis service".

Such value added depends of the originality, quality, capacity and timeliness with which the chore is approached. The biggest contribution we can find when there is significant time dedicated to conceptualize the problem, determine possible solutions and plan its implementation.

The worker's category that adds value to its day-to-day chore is not given by the years in service, the accumulated knowledge and performance of routines, but by its particular skills to identify and solve problems - the more reason if it provides innovative ideas

In a society of knowledge, nothing outmatches the provision of ideas and concepts contributed with by each qualified employee as regards value-added. In this field, most part of the time we will run into university graduates requiring efficientation of their chores: ***abstraction, systematic thinking, experimentation and collaboration***.

These skills may be acquired in university, but will mainly develop in the field, performance or implementation of their specific job.

Knowledge is an all-important factor, but if it can't be correctly and efficiently conveyed, the value it has will be lost. So this won't happen, let's practice the following actions on a regular basis: **work-learn-teach**.

Thence the importance of pointing out that each organization plays a relevant role in each employee's performance through shared experience and in-the-job training.

More often than not, both shared experience and in-the-job training are exercised without considering the strong impact on individuals (that is the information I obtained from several central banks which I have interacted with on professional training topics, anyway). And that, today more than ever, must be the goal to be learned by those of us who work in human resources.

Education seen as investment

I am going to discuss this topic with the purpose of illustrating on a number of aspects I consider important for the work approach. It is not intended, however, to be a postulate of concepts or definitions, because specialists in economy have dedicated a lot of time to it. I have taken those elements that have to do with our task as enablers for a good human resources administration.

For this, I will make use of comments extracted from the research work “Work Training and retraining” by Mrs. Silvia Montoya, published by Argentina-based Foundations Mediterranean and Konrad Adenauer (1995).

In the study of education as a factor contributing to economic growth of a country, the human capital theory clearly stands out. This theory assimilates education expenses in an investment improving “labor quality” and, as a result, contributes to generate a higher social product.

The human capital theory can be traced back to Adam Smith, who around 1776 mentions the importance of education as a factor increasing worker productivity. Thus emerges the analogy education expenses as an investment in the same way as capital assets. At the dawn of the 60´s, this concept acquires the form of a theory through the works of economists Schultz and Becker.

The biggest merit of this approach is to have given a consistent explanation to the close association between income levels of workers and their degree of education.

The income difference among people of different education reflects – within labor markets – a higher "quality" of trained labor, which translates into increased productivity. (the productivity index stems from the relation between yearly product/service rendered volume and the amount of inputs used – including human resources).

It is noteworthy that the human capital model I referred to above crucially lays on the assumption that market-determined income reflects worker productivity.

In a wide sense, economist T. Schultz (*) focuses his analysis on five major expenses tending to improve human ability:

- Sanitation facilities and services
- Professional training
- Formal education
- Adult studies programs
- Individual migrations to adapt to job opportunities

The magnitude of human investment is estimated in relation to physical assets through expenses made to produce capital assets. To do the same with human capital we need to differentiate consumption expenses from investment expenses. For this inconvenience, a calculation method based more strongly on return on investment than on costs is utilized. While any increase on capacity produced by human investment turns into a part of the individual – and therefore may not be subject of sale – it is, however, connected with the market as it affects salaries and wages that the economy agent may receive. Return on investment will work in terms of the ensuing income increase.

It is evident that by establishing calculation assumptions and methodologies, a return calculation may be obtained, both for education and professional

training/adult training programs. In general, a cost-benefit analysis – a methodological structure facilitating decision-making in evaluation of investment alternative projects – is used.

The option among the various alternatives for appointment of available resources calls for evaluation of the magnitude of costs and income involved and distribution of same.

Generally, each central bank handles a budget for staff training, which is in consistence with identified needs and that has a yearly life horizon that may or may not repeat. At the end of such cycle results are always expected.

What worries us about the money invested in training?

Attainment of a measurable, verifiable result –that clearly shows there was "something" that made a difference in performance. We must always have present that the money disbursed in training must be planned ahead and not be something isolated or outside the needs context.

The above concept has a pretext in that significance of a company in the market is conditioned by a set of variables providing it with identity and, in turn, differentiating it from the rest. Training is just another variable. It may be a added to or subtracted from the set, but does not define it by itself..

All disbursements appointed to staff training may be seen as investment if related to:

- With a project for change
- With evolution of jobs and professions
- With improvements to rendering of services

In a nutshell, all money paid to train staff, in order to accompany job evolution, modernization projects, or organization development making a new job organization is an investment. Why? Because people is being trained to have a new professional behavior.

Likewise, the following training-related disbursements are considered investments:

- Those that are related with existing competition between employees, because the goal is to keep that competition to date and maintain learning skills.
- Those that are linked to the solution of a problem, because, for that to happen, new knowledge/techniques are needed.

As a synthesis of the above, those training processes consolidating, modifying and/or allowing incorporation of new competition or contributing to solve a problem are adding value. If that value has a positive impact in potential labor work of human resources, that value is investment.

As for results, each banking institution expects a rate of return with respect to their investment in human capital. Such a rate of return includes the costs directly affecting individuals who are the beneficiaries of programmed education (granting of a scholarship to get degrees overseas, for instance), which should be added with those of the bank doing without that individual and his/her work during the term of the studies.

There is no simple or crushing theory – says specialists – explaining the existence of labor training and education, the optimal level of investment for the bank and for that individual. This is due the fact that it is a form if investment in human capital producing a rate of return via increase of the marginal product of trained labor.

From our job in human resources we observe that increase in skills and knowledge, through excellence education, yields a significant improvement in the work quality of an individual.

(*) T. Schultz - "Investment in human capital". American Economic Review, volume 51, pag. 1-17, 1961. "Reflections on investment in man". Journal of Political Economy, volume 70, n° 5, part 2, October 1962. "The economic value of education". Columbia University Press, 1968.

Comments on central banks training

A poll carried out in central banks in early 1998 showed that 43% of 14 polled banks existed under interest for training-related, personal development and career planning aspects, as well as that connected to behavior associated with continuous improvement of employees. (this information was part of the work "The road towards new leadership", which I prepared and presented during the IV Meeting of Human Resources Administration for Central Banking held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic in June, 1998).

Training always goes hand-in-hand with the organization's strategic processes. In general, the activities designed from the direction of human resources to help constant improvement of performance heavily focus on the whole training cycle and disregard the final result.

Thus, diagnosis, planning, implementation and evaluation of processes must be carried out stemming from teamwork. Said actions are oriented to staff development within a competition framework.

Each program created to enhance performance of people must attend to the needs of all staff in the organization – in our case, all those working for central banking.

At this point, management, a matter corresponding to human resources, must take a 180° turn with respect to its former action-taking. Various management approaches speak through keys to have in mind, in order to achieve management success. Change must happen now, without delay.

We know, however, that the only thing valid for each management is solution of problematic situations and attainment of concrete results.

Management needs, connected with non-predictable or non-structured events, required high-management through strategic thinking – thinking reflected in an innovative attitude allowing working in a different manner, busted with available resources and rendering economic value-added decisions.

In this information era we have and process a huge amount of data. We don't realize – most of the times – that all of this information torrent modifies our chorus's structure and the processes we take part in. Work is organized differently stemming from subdivisions in smaller portions that gradually become one specialty that is a must know.

The current trend is to give each team full responsibility for management. It is rare to find an employee dedicated exclusively to fulfill one single function. Work life in this context must be planned, in order to develop efficient work strategies. From now on, it will be necessary to know all education levels achieved, their experiences and warranties to which it will add its work skills in the future.

This means to start the search of each individual's possibilities to use criteria to approach to chores, in order to overcome difficulties through temper and to show his/her wish to do before only carrying out a faultfinding exam.

In order to better understand the above, we will say that until the 80´s, the important stuff was measured by the to-do factor. If someone complied with a

series or requirements and routines in time and form, he or she was considered valuable for the rest of the organization.

The dawn of the 90´s exposes another necessity. Apart from “doing”, it is necessary to examine, reflect, and propose – not in a separate way but simultaneously. Examining and analyzing all that happens around and wherever we have influence. Reflecting with respect to what we are doing in order to find out whether we can improve things or whether they need modifications. To propose as from new data obtained or the future vision exposed by different scenarios.

For this we haven’t been educated. We don’t have that much experience. We progress by trial and error. Only in a few cases does experience work for us.

Human resources are a part of the strategic planning process. They have big impact on results, and it is responsibility of managers to train each individual to be able to have a value-added performance.

This topic, could be said, is relatively new in staff management. Successful organizations do not comply with the market requirements if the products or services they market are not made or rendered by individuals of a high personal quality.

The current conditions under which organizations develop –irregardless of their size and type of business – indicate the need of turning to learning as a factor for competitive differentiation. This places the human resources task in an important position within the company, for there is a clear link between worker education and team capacity to face complex tasks.

Allow me to pose some questions I deem to be useful, in order to better understand the scope of the above concepts:

- In what way can qualified staff be better trained?
- In what way can they obtain more experience and knowledge in terms of "being part of the central banking business" more than being specialized workers?
- What kind of help can be provided to an individual so that he or she incorporates new knowledge to his or her workplace?
- From the human groups point of view, can we talk organizational learning?

The above questions bring forth the need to find out what is the new knowledge to be acquired and, in turn, what should be done to enhance what is working smoothly. It is a labor requiring critical action and an external view to focus on diagnosis.

It is not sufficient, though, to incorporate new knowledge. It is necessary to apply said knowledge and to check if differences have been produced by modifying routines. In that respect, it is important to review the structure layout, because perhaps layout linked to culture is part of the hindrance to convey change. Everyone shall commit their will-power to learn and adapt.

Having the best human resources to work with has long been a concern of central banking. People have always tried to "capture" people standing out and provide them with the necessary tools to perform.

This, however, is not enough. It is also necessary that employees benefit from the whole existing infrastructure and develop useful relationships in such a way as to achieve application of the most recent knowledge. At this point we are talking human capital management.

Intellectual capital embraces not only knowledge and training, but also the relationship with others (in and out of the organization), motivation of all personnel

and a series of other processes that wind up increasing the power of individual values.

In terms of organization, everything that can be measured is feasibly manageable. However, as Einstein would say: “That which can be measured is not always what is important, and that which is important can not always be measured”.

Today, a great number of leading companies are trying to develop some kind of mechanism by which growth of intellectual capital may be captured and be appointed a determined category as well as to measure same.

To achieve this, it is of essence to have an operating commitment to progress on this topic with the support of top management, since the system must be affixed to the vision and mission of the organization. What we are looking for are indicators and not coefficients with decimal precision.

For instance, it may be started as from establishing categories per work area in terms of operating needs and specific profile requirements. What is going to be measured is individual and group performance of people in relation with the products and services they deliver within a pre-agreed time and space and estimated costs. And we shouldn’t have fear to show what we get, because it’s going to be of great use to know that.

Typically, we take training as “the tool” that gives us the key to solve any problem related with new learning and/or knowledge having impact on results. We already proved this will not do.

We know, thanks to our experience in central banking, that a significant part of the improvement in performance has to do with the starting of specific programs oriented to incorporating knowledge into continuous plans. And, while it is true that it has a lot to do with people development, it is not everything.

Also, we have the experience that traditional training often does not work as expected by those who believe – or invest- in it. This brings along another type of problem such as casting doubt on efficiency of same by the use of resources we do.

Training costs are always directly high – all the more when we send a collaborator to study abroad, which also includes travel expenses and accommodation, apart from lacking the presence of said individual – as well as the cost of opportunity.

Our concern is that since we are asked for results, these results appear uncertain, ambiguous, or not easily provable in a cost-benefit ratio.

If we look at our organization as a whole, with a global look (and considering the principles announced some years ago by Chris Argyris), same should be in conditions:

- To identify problems
- To look for solutions
- To implement same
- To analyze the processes that are carried out

The interesting part about the above is that none of these conditions (or skills) work separately, but are related with each other. Thus, instead of being four possibilities, they are actually sixteen.

For this to work, those working in each of the parts into which the organization is divided must be in full possibility of learning on a permanent basis.

It is important to note that group learning needs the correct environment provided by the organization.

In a different light, the organization “teaches” people to put their effort for the missions established and to communicate and interact beyond the functions and specialties of each of them.

Staff education through training brings about a series of expectations among people. Each individual expects something from a training program. In this vein, it is important that the training goals be in line with the expectations of those being trained.

A valid mechanism for this age, from the point of view of efficient help to management extending the scope of human resources, is distance education. So that distance education can be formulated, appropriate advertising within the organization seamlessly explaining the scope of its contents and the results expected within a preset time is required.

Disclosure of how distance education works is the key for those who believe – and those who don’t- that their knowledge achieving capacity will satisfy their concerns or complaints.

This new form of education is strongly supported by technology. Its current development is directly related with information and communication technology progress. However, massive use of this type of education depends on availability of minimum computing facilities and qualification of appropriate human teams to implement the new educational procedures.

It should be noted that from the start, utilization of this type of education does not imply disappearance of the classroom or instructors. What is going to happen is, among other things, a change in the classroom’s role in the learning process and in each participant’s individual committed responsibility.

In distance education, the classroom stops being a place where education goals are achieved and turns into the space where the conditions for these goals to be achieved in the job position are created.

THE IDENTIFIED PROBLEM AND DISTANCE LEARNING

The situation described shows a complex reality experienced by Latin-American and the Caribbean Central Banks. However, in spite of all drawbacks, not only must training proposals be maintained, but also we are finding out that same must be increased.

The challenge is to design training systems meeting the needs of having a labor force of a higher level that are permanently available to walk along growth and the changes required by our institutions.

Summing up, the problematic of human resources training in Latin-American and the Caribbean Central Banks may be summarized in the following aspects:

- Permanent training and updating need.
- Great geographical dispersing of human resources to be trained, scattered all throughout Latin-American and the Caribbean.
- High cost of transfers to centralized training institutions.
- Difficulty of doing without people being trained.
- Need for in-the-job/job-oriented systematic training.

It is important to also consider that there is another phenomenon that gives distinction to the context we are defining. It is the important role that the media have acquired in people's lives. While this trend is not a new one, it is deepened in this social scenario, in which information circulation is imposed as a rule for the decision-making process. The media in this sense are transmitters of information par excellence. However, they not only have that function, but also a productive function as "meaning producers" that have impact in the ideas people generate about the world and reality.

Thus, recent and explosive technological developments in the fields of information and communication, together with innovative proposals, provide the opportunity to introduce significant changes in the training systems used to meet the above needs and requirements.

Distance education has given endless examples in various fields and organizations by offering valid alternatives for achievement of objectives similar to those inspiring this project.

Its essential characteristic is that of establishing biased communication among those who teach and those who learn and the use of the most varied technology, allowing not only bringing down space and time borders, but also granting greater flexibility in terms of administration of training actions, thereby helping solve the exposed problematic.

Considering the exposed context, this multimedia project intends to build upon dynamic response to the exposed problematic, aiming to put together a distance training course proposal, by using IT and printed media as main means, completed with a final component of an attending seminary.

DEFINITION OF OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the project consists of:

Implementing a multimedia distance training system complementing and enhancing the efficiency of current training programmes at Central Banks in Latin America and the Caribbean.

It is specifically intended:

- ✓ To design the structure and underlying support of the course in the distance mode.

- ✓ To design a methodological proposal based on Distance Education, able to enable the above objective.

- ✓ To provide orientation for decision-making and starting of the project.

PRESENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

The strategy proposed is the organization of a "Distance Human Resources Training System" that, considering on the one hand identification of a significant amount of needs not satisfied through the traditional means and, on the other, development and existence of non-conventional resources and strategies, may – appropriately combining same – constitute a valid, innovative educational response.

The exposition of a "Distance System" with these characteristics does not imply the conformation of a conventional institutional structure, but the development of an organization able to allow coexistence of different proposals with various objectives oriented to different levels.

To achieve this, the strategy to be developed shall meet the following characteristics:

- ✓ To be multimedia, that is, use various means to achieve the proposed objectives.
- ✓ To use the distance mode, that is, propose a biased pedagogic relation encouraging autonomous study and work of the attendants, appropriately guided through the various means and strategies organized by the project.
- ✓ To ensure at all times the integration of the proposal through various actions and dynamic interrelation of same so that they ebb into achieving the set goals and avoid fragmentation of activities and information.

In the long run, the virtual space to be developed in this course may be conformed by different areas which will have the possibility of eventually developing into a great amount of courses.

We define the course as an integral training proposal tending to achievement of goals of a certain level of complexity in the developed area.

In order to achieve these complexity goals, a multimedia development is required.

The basic course multimedia structure requires exposition of the following lines of action: printed means and magnetic support. On the other hand, development of a third and supplementary line of action – planned for development at a second stage of the course : attending seminar – is contemplated.

LINES OF ACTION

Printed means

This will be the natural support of the information developed in the course, since it allows permanence of the message. Through it, most of the information will be sent and the contents of the course will be developed, in the means's own language.

The characteristics of this means shall be used to send analytical information, apart from the proposal of various types of activities, both for learning and transference and auto-evaluation, thereby promoting accomplishment of a comprehensive learning process.

IT Support

IT support will allow establishment of a permanent communication between the tutor and the attendants, by weekly forwarding a work proposal ensuring a systematic orientation and guidance of the actions to be developed, in order to achieve the proposed goals.

That way, introductory information and data on the course development (such as, timetable, activities) will be available via the Internet.

On the other hand, this means will provide the possibility of making inquiries and receiving replies to same on the part of the tutor in charge of the course, as well as interaction with the rest of the attendants.

Attending Seminar

Once developed and approved, the course, firstly a distance course, will offer the possibility of participating in an Intensive Attending Seminar.

This seminar will be held in a centralized manner during the days that are considerer necessary.

Its goal will be to allow the necessary interaction among the participants for the purposes of performing a joint verification of the achieved objectives, adjust deviations and complete the necessary information.

DEFINITION OF THE SUBSYSTEMS

1. COORDINATION SYBSYSTEM.

This subsystem will concentrate all general direction and coordination functions. It will have different levels:

I. The first level where both the institutional policy and the training policy guidelines, as well as any other course global definitions will be defined.

It will be represented by a General Coordinator and the CEMLA de Mexico headquarters and will be assisted by a Consulting Board comprised by Central Banks representatives and one distance education advisor.

Its functions will be to define and evaluate – on a permanent basis – the political guidelines to be followed by the institution, as well as the course proposals and the analysis of the results obtained.

II. The second level in which the technical-educational guidelines for development of the various lines of action for the course will be defined. It will be comprised by the Tutor of the course and his/her team collaborators.

Its functions will be to design and enable operation of the lines of action as from institutional political guidelines. It also carries out and controls compliance of the established timetables; accomplishes or controls accomplishment of the project's process and products quality control.

In a nutshell, this subsystem is in charge of coordinating and organizing the various activities and/or functions of the other subsystems, in order to ensure that the course develops as foreseen at all participant institutions.

2. PRODUCTION SUBSYSTEM.

This subsystem is in charge of designing and producing the various materials needed for the course.

Its specific functions are:

- ✓ Generates the global design of different materials (printed and IT) that will be required.
- ✓ Produces, drafts or defines the contents.
- ✓ Generates the design of each material considering the language of the means and the technical specifications established by the system.
- ✓ Presents the original material prepared to be supervised by the coordination and evaluated through the tools designed by the system.

- ✓ Adjusts the design and contents in accordance with the results of the evaluation.
- ✓ Produces or reproduces the approved material.

This system is comprised by the Contents Expert and the ad-hoc Team that is conformed.

Conformation of Teams:

The necessary teams will be conformed by:

I. For printed means:

- Didactic designers
- Contents Experts
- Graphic Designers
- Proofreaders

II. For IT support:

- Software Designers
- Contents Experts
- Producer/Programmer

To conform the work teams for development of the course, two alternatives may be considered:

i. Alternative 1: Conformation of a central permanent work team level in charge of the design and production of all materials necessary for this course and future courses. That is, to establish a fixed structure in CEMLA's headquarters.

ii. Alternative 2: Outsourcing material production through hiring of expert people or bodies. CEMLA will maintain the function of evaluating and approving the designed product.

Both alternatives have advantages and drawbacks that must be evaluated on making decisions, such as:

i. Alternative 1: The institution maintains all functions and may, in the future, autonomously develop any other courses.

However, overhead and maintenance of this equipment may represent a big disbursement for the institution since there tends to be downtime and hard-to-predict delays. On the other hand, also it must be considered the fact that given the institutional relevance of the incorporation of these characteristics, a strict screening system of the best resources available in the market must be developed and a permanent training system of same must be implemented.

ii. Alternative 2: In this case, it is clear that when an essential function of the system is outsourced, dependency on external institutions or bodies, in order to develop proposals to the institution will always exists. The search system for the best proposal will have to be repeated on each course.

However, the advantage is that the hired institution shall comply with all guidelines and terms agreed, and will do so at its own risk. CEMLA will maintain evaluation and acceptance of the produced material.

It's important to consider that institutions or groups that already have important experience in production of materials for this type of system will typically be selected, which may be deemed a guaranty.

3. PARTICIPANT SUPPORT SUBSYSTEM

This subsystem is characterized by being the interacting link connecting the means of the organization with the student's needs.

Its specific functions are:

- ✓ To encourage and promote interest in the participants in the study of proposed topics.
- ✓ To guide and/or reorient the student in the learning process attending to his/her doubts or difficulties, contributing with clarifying examples.
- ✓ To extend the information – specially on the most complex topics.
- ✓ To evaluate the learning process followed by the participants.
- ✓ To take part in the design of learning evaluations.

This subsystem is the Academic Responsible for the course and the ad-hoc team of tutors and enabler comprising same.

The Academic Responsible develops its functions at CEMLA's headquarters, while the Enablers and the Tutors will do so in a decentralized fashion at each of the Latin-American and the Caribbean Central Banks. The Tutor will be a specialist from the involved technical area in the course. The Enabler will be a functionary from the Human Resources area. On these aspects there are main developments in the chapter "Participant support network" (see forward pp. 33 to 37)

4. EVALUATION SUSBYSTEM

This subsystem is the one in charge of designing, obtaining and providing useful on-the-double information on the system's operation for decision-making at different stages of same.

Its specific functions are:

- ✓ To design tools to collect information from the different components of the project.
- ✓ To apply or become responsible for the application of the designed tools.
- ✓ To process the collected information.

- ✓ To inform to the different evaluating components of the results obtained.
- ✓ To suggest rectifying action for the processes or products where deficit has been found.
- ✓ To advise material production teams on evaluation activities to be included.
- ✓ To prepare periodical reports where major achievements and program difficulties are consigned.

This subsystem is comprised by the evaluation coordinator and the ad-hoc evaluator team.

Conformation of teams:

- Evaluator
- Tool Designer
- Information Processor.

As is the case of the production subsystem, in order to conform an evaluation team for the course, two alternatives may be considered:

Alternative 1: Conformation at a central level of the permanent evaluation team.

Alternative 2: Contracting of external evaluating teams.

In general, the advantages and drawbacks of both alternatives are similar to those stated in relation with the material production teams, with the difference that in some instances and evaluation parameters, it is recommendable that the evaluators be external to the institution to avoid slants in the collected information.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE SUBSYSTEM

This subsystem has the function of organizing and executing the administrative management necessary so that the course is put into operation, obtaining and sharing the necessary resources for the essential planned functions to be duly complied with.

For effective compliance of these functions it will be necessary that this subsystem acquire a multiple structure. That is, there will be functions that will have to focus and become effective in a centralized way, jointly with the system's coordination (for instance, resource management, contracting of work teams, etc.) and there will be other that shall be carried out at each of the Central Banks (for instance, material sharing, etc.)

It will be integrated by an administrative coordinator that will comply with managerial functions defining, through concrete and quantified programs, the priorities, time, resources and actions necessary to obtain the objectives at operating level. Also, the presence of enablers at each of the Central Banks may be used so that they comply with the necessary administrative functions at a decentralized levels.

PROPOSED MEANS

PRINTED MEANS

Through printed means all contents of the course will be developed, ensuring the permanence of the message.

This characteristic takes great relevance in this course, since the participants must follow a systematic, continuous, and independent process to approve same through evaluation.

The printed means will thereby offer the participant the possibility of having at all times information, allowing management of its study time, and providing it

with the advantage of going over the contents irregardless of the sequential moment of the course he/her is at.

On the other hand, this means proposes a series of activities of reflection, application and integration of each topic block, allowing the student to complete the learning process and to evaluate this process and achievement of partial objective on a permanent basis.

The information that will be transmitted through the printed means will have specific and distinctive characteristics differentiating them from other means. Therefore it shall:

- ✓ Develop the most important theories or theoretical discussions of the approached topics.
- ✓ Consign more extended and detailed descriptions and explanations.
- ✓ Suggest bibliography for inquiries and deepening of developed topics.

IT SUPPORT

We can classify the functions that this means will comply in at least three different lines.

1) On the other hand, conformation of an **IT Network** will allow permanent interconnection between – and among- the beneficiaries and the "server". Thus, it will be used as an interactive resource, through which information will flow and will be available to all participants.

   Development of this network will also contribute to promote research and deployment of creativity in the beneficiaries, making available a quick and fast interconnection to them. This will allow maximization of work, as well as constant information, resources and material sharing, thereby

reducing unnecessary effort in terms of transfer, resource reproduction, etc.

The Network may also be used as an alternative means to spread out information of a more administrative nature through a Website or a free-access BBS, that will include all information related to the courses, such as tutors, schedule, registrations, credentials, etc., and a template with which the parties interested may registered.

Last, by this means, course evaluation templates may be sent, so that the users fill them out with their opinion, thereby obtaining another access channel to the data necessary for permanent evaluation and feedback of the system.

2) Secondly, and also supported by the above line, is the use of **E-mail** as a means of communication and inquiry between tutors and participants (and among the latter). The use of this means encourages continuous exchange of ideas, concepts and additional information.

   Such exchange would happen through the proposed Forum or individually.

3) Last, the third line of development and action of the IT means is related with utilization and/or production of **Educational Software**. At planning, the need and feasibility of using this resource for information transfer into a more interactive support, simulation of problems, etc., will be evaluated

ATTENDING SEMINAR

The objective of this seminar – as already exposed – is to increase interaction among participants, this time, in an attending way, thereby deepening the distance interrelation generated during the first part of the course.

Good learning of these systems is ensured when interactivity and interaction exist.

Interactivity depends on good material design allowing direct relation and confrontation with the contents to be learnt.

Interaction, on the contrary, has to do with communication and activity among the students.

While there has already been distance interaction in the first part of the course, the seminar will be used to promote and encourage it so as to generate confrontation of ideas, hypothesis contrasting and joint construction.

It will be a requirement to take part in this seminar, to pass the first stage of the course. Thus, we will value both achieved learning and work done under the new mode. Also, we will give an evident signal of the decision to introduce this development in the valid strategies repertoire for human resources training of Central Banks in equal conditions as those already used.

Other reasoning justifying introduction of the attending seminar is, on the one hand, the respect for the attendant's culture who has been receiving attending education during all his/her life and, on the other, the need to have a high-exposure space to work on the implications of the introduced change, which does not necessarily imply abandonment of traditional practices, but re-significance of spaces, moments and opportunities for training by making use of current technological progress.

A recommendable structure for this seminar may be to divide into three moments:

1. A first work moment for analysis and experience obtained at distance, with doubts, success and achievements.
2. A second moment for group activities.
3. A third moment for joint construction of synthesis and integration.

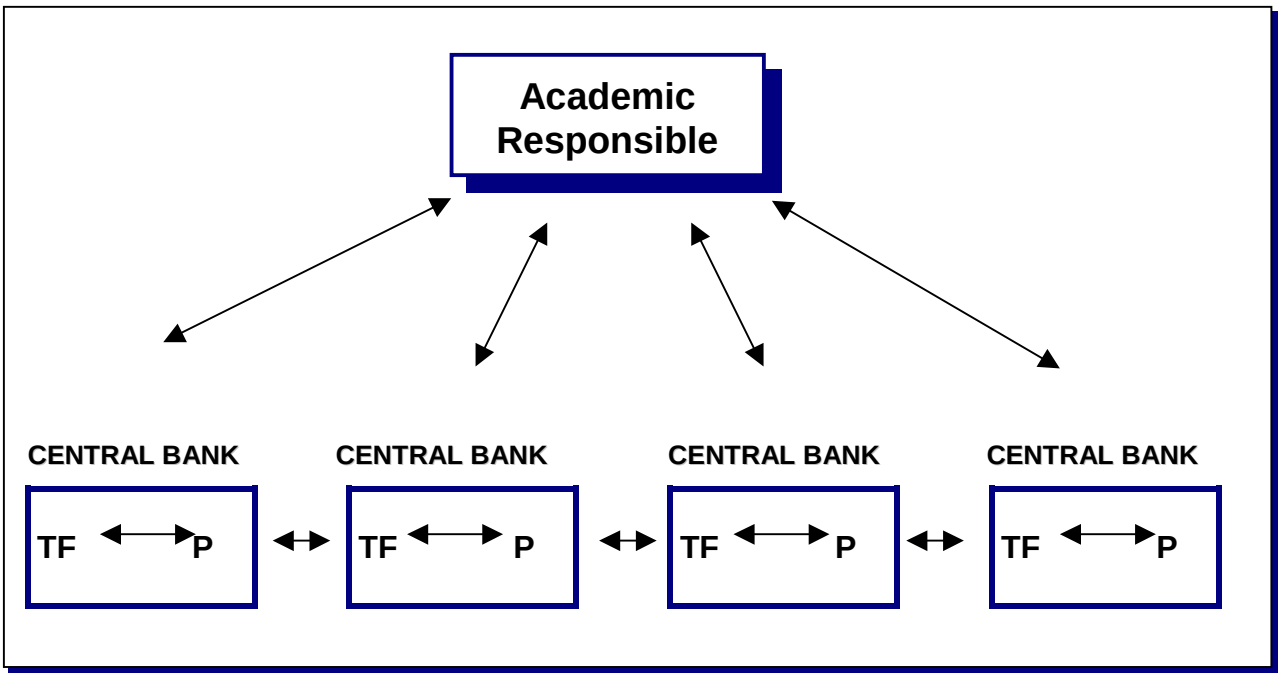
PARICIPANT SUPPORT NETWORK

With the purpose of orienting learning by the participants of the course in a permanent way, the System will organize a support network conformed by the Academic Responsible, the Participant the Tutor and the Enabler, with multiple connection means between the three.

Thus the Academic Responsible will permanently send messages, consigns and work proposals, while the participant may reply to all proposals from the former, and inquire about doubts, as well as request new information.

It may also contact other participants. They all will have the possibility of permanently requesting help from the Enabler and the Tutor, whom will also help and support in a concrete manner the participant's learning process, and may contact those responsible for the centrals of the course about operation of same at local level.

The following layout shows a possible organization.



P: Participant

ET: Enabler Tutor

TYPES OF SUPPORT/TUTORSHIP

Distance

Most part of the Participant Support system will be defined by this type of tutorship, which will be carried out through various means, coordinated by the Academic Responsible:

1. **IT Network:**

   Through use of the IT network, permanent communication channels can be established along the course, through which the Academic Responsible and the participants may talk to each other, solve problems and expose and reply to inquiries, both in a synchronous and asynchronous fashion.

2. **E-mail:**

   The participant may permanently submit inquiries through this means, as well as receive messages from the Tutor and other participants.

3. **Phone/Fax:**

   This will be the third alternative means to establish communication within the Support Network. While the most recommendable means for this purpose is IT, it is important that there always be an alternative communication means, replacing any temporary difficulties in communication.

   The student may make phone inquiries during specific days and time, and may also send inquiries by Fax 24 hours a day.

   The tutor will reply on a weekly basis to all replies received through this means.

Attending

Will be in charge of the Tutors who will comply with guiding functions of each Central Bank. For that purpose inquiry days and time will be set.

FUNCTIONS OF THE ACADEMIC RESPONSIBLE AND ENABLER TUTORS

In order to clearly present the functions complied with by those in charge of operating the Participant Support Network, below is a functions distribution chart within a distance system. That will make evident that in this type of system the chores often carried out by the tutor in an attending mode, are distributed and appointed to various responsible people. Let's see:

ACTIVITIES/ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE IN SEMI-ATTENDING AND DISTANCE COURSES
Course planning	Interdisciplinary team
Contents development	Tutor author (Academic Responsible), with collaboration by the team.
Activities proposals	Didactic designer and Tutor author (Academic Responsible).
Student orientation, guidance, and advisory	Tutor (Academic responsible and Tutor).
Learning process evaluation	Tutor (Academic responsible, Tutor and Enabler).
Evaluation of results	Tutor author and Tutor (Academic responsible)

In systems like this, of great geographical extension, in view of the difficulty to find tutors with the ideal profile, the role of **Enabler** is often created, which differs from the tutor's concept in an attending system, since it is not essential that this individual be an expert in the contents of the course, which gives more flexibility to select the individual to be in charge of this function.

The Enabler maintains the function of being the interacting link between the system and the students, but not the knowledge demands of the contents of the course, and sometimes, neither the methodological education ones. In this case, the system must ensure an component where the students may effectively find answers to their doubts in relation to the contents through aid by the enabler, who will be the link with the contents specialist – in this case, with the Academic responsible.

Firstly, we could say that the role of the tutor, either the Academic responsible, the Tutor or the Enabler, is not that of developing new topics, teach theoretical lessons, or verbally transmit the information included in the materials. Its function will be to ensure that the participants had understood the information and be able to reflect, discuss, and implement the new knowledge.

The tutor is not the contents carrier (a role complied in this systems by the materials) but the *learning mentor and motivator*.

The functions of the teaches we have previously mentioned in section "Definition of subsystems" (Participant Support Subsystem).

The Enabler tutor and the administration.

Since the Enabler tutor is the natural intermediary between the system and the participants, it is very likely that it will be the depositary of endless inquiries of an administrative nature coming form the students (reception of materials, date and form of delivery of the evaluation activities, types of credentials, etc.). For that, it is absolutely necessary that he deeply knows the administrative operation of the program, its standards and people in charge of same.

Besides, typically the tutor is the responsible for collaboration with the administration in all that related with delivery of evaluation results and transmission of all information related with this area that helps optimize its operation.

In the development of its role with respect to administration, it is important that the tutor:

- Attends to administrative inquiries.
- Cooperates in certain administrative chores, such as delivery of evaluations, etc.
- Collaborates with all that necessary to optimize operation of the system.

EVALUATION

While the evaluation process is important in any educational mode, a distance education project like this one takes a special dimension due to the imperative need of collecting data allowing us to know about the development of the actions we plan and that happen in a certain time deferred from space.

We can single out two evaluation levels in this process. One related to political-institutional decisions and the other, a more operational one, related with the permanent adjustment of the system developed in the course:

I. The evaluation process was started from the very beginning of this planning job, in order to define feasibility of the project. This first ***"diagnostic evaluation "***, which included the analysis of infrastructure of material and human resources available in relation with the project's goals, is of essence both for the definition and organization of the System, and projection of future possibilities.

II. On the other hand, a series of evaluation tools contributing with information on the course's operation will be implemented.

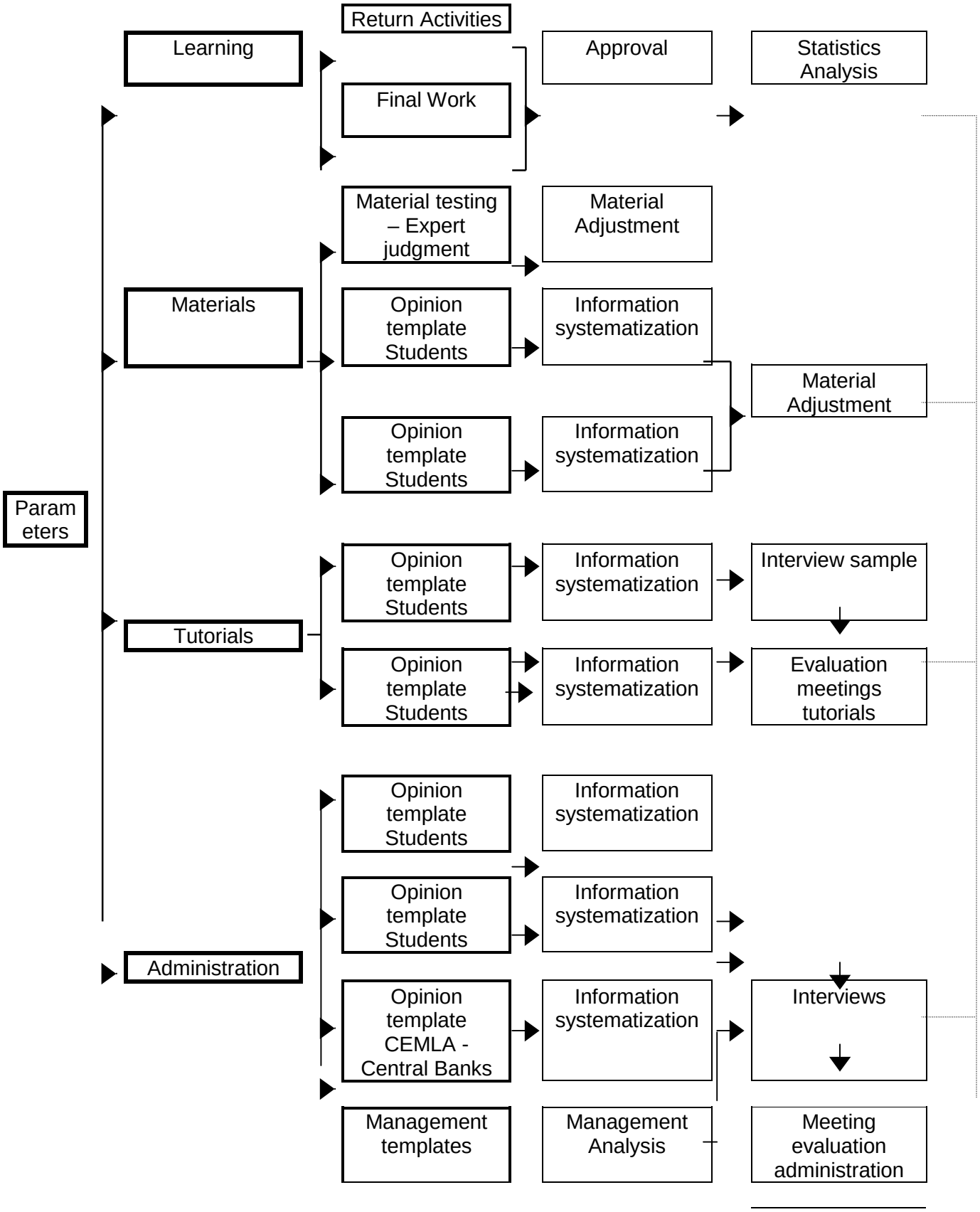
This evaluation will orient both the students and the tutors and those responsible of the subsystems.

Below we will focus on describing the latter evaluation level.

EVALUATION MODEL

In this project four evaluation parameters will stand out: Learning, Materials, Tutorial Organization (Participant Support), and Administration.

The following layout shows the organization to be assumed by the distance system evaluation process.


Parameters
Learning
Return Activities
Final Work
Approval
Statistics Analysis
Materials
Material testing – Expert judgment
Material Adjustment
Opinion template Students
Information systematization
Opinion template Students
Information systematization
Material Adjustment
Tutorials
Opinion template Students
Information systematization
Interview sample
Opinion template Students
Information systematization
Evaluation meetings tutorials
Administration
Opinion template Students
Information systematization
Opinion template Students
Information systematization
Opinion template CEMLA - Central Banks
Information systematization
Interviews
Management templates
Management Analysis
Meeting evaluation administration

1. LEARNING EVALUATION.

The main objective of learning evaluation is observation and assessment of the learning process followed by the participants to determine – using the defined criteria – approval and completion of the course.

Participant learning will be evaluated by the Academic Responsible people with the collaboration of the Enabler Tutors through return Activities, Final Works that said individual will deliver, as well as evaluations from the attending seminar.

To evaluate the success degree attained by the participants, statistical data on the amount of Passed and Failed students are analyzed, in order to determine efficiency of and dropping out from the course.

2. MATERIAL EVALUATION.

The objective of material evaluation is optimization of same, as from troubleshooting, deepening of critical topics and adaptation of a real and dynamic profile of the beneficiaries.

For material evaluation, implementing different control strategies is suggested, before the participants make contact with the materials. Said strategies will immediately determine approval or the necessary adjustments. Once the material has been distributed, evaluation may be instrumented through Opinion templates to be completed by participants and tutors. Then, we proceed to the systematization of the information and its subsequent analysis, which determines new adjustments to be made.

3. EVALUATION OF THE PARTICIPANT SUPPORT NETWORK.

The objective of this evaluation is to obtain valid information on its operation allowing to adapt its planning to the participants needs.

As is the case of the above parameter, in order to evaluate this support network, Opinion templates were instrumented for participants and enabler tutors, following the same process. Then, as from quantitative and qualitative data stemming from analysis of the information contributed with by the participants, interviews will follow – in order to deepen qualitative data – to a representative sample of the participants.

4. ADMINISTRATION EVALUATION

The objective of administration evaluation is the optimization of the processes and products made by the management and its interaction with the participants and the Central Banks.

In the evaluation of administrative processes, also opinion templates will be implemented.

On the other hand, the opinion of those responsible of the administrative operation at the various Central Banks shall be recorded (Enabler tutor).

Last, a compliance control system of all actions, procedures and timetables shall be instrumented. For this, a template with the initial course planning shall be designed. Then, each central bank shall gradually complete a similar template consigning the actions, procedures, and effective dates. Finally, compliance with the expected procedures and deviations produced will be evaluated.

The evaluation team shall be responsible for keeping the rest of the work teams of the other subsystems posted on the most important data found.

Once the information unburdened on the various parameters has been processed and analyzed, a General Evaluation Meeting shall be called upon, where the drafted evaluation report will be disclosed and the adjustments to be made in order to enhance the Course's System will be submitted to the consideration of various.

SYSTEM OPERATION

PRE LAUNCHING

1) Official approval of the project and its implementation. Development of the necessary actions in order to obtain an institutional agreement is required.

2) Planning is made. Here, the stages and lines of action to be covered are defined; work teams are conformed, and materials are developed, as well as selection of the most appropriate participant Support Network. CEMLA sends the convocatories to the central banks for the registration to the course.

START OF THE COURSE ACTIVITIES

3) The interested or respective Central Bank requests information including instructions, and registers via Internet the potential participants providing data.

4) The participants receive, on one hand, the printed material and, on the other, access to information managed through the IT support. A password will be provided.

5) The participant shall work independently with the materials, relating the information and orientation received through same.

6) The participant may access to a permanent distance and attending tutorial support.

7) The Academic responsible will send weekly proposals of activities to the student and will orient work team.

8) Likewise, the system will monitor the development of action taken, both for tutorial organization and material design, as well as administration. Finally, the participant will be evaluated at this first stage of the course, for purposes of the corresponding certification.

9) Those participants who have passed the distance stage will have the option of taking part in the Intensive Attending Seminar. Thereby strengthening the significance of independent and distance work and ensuring all participants get to the attending seminar with the tools necessary so that the latter has a level ensuring achievement the objectives of same.

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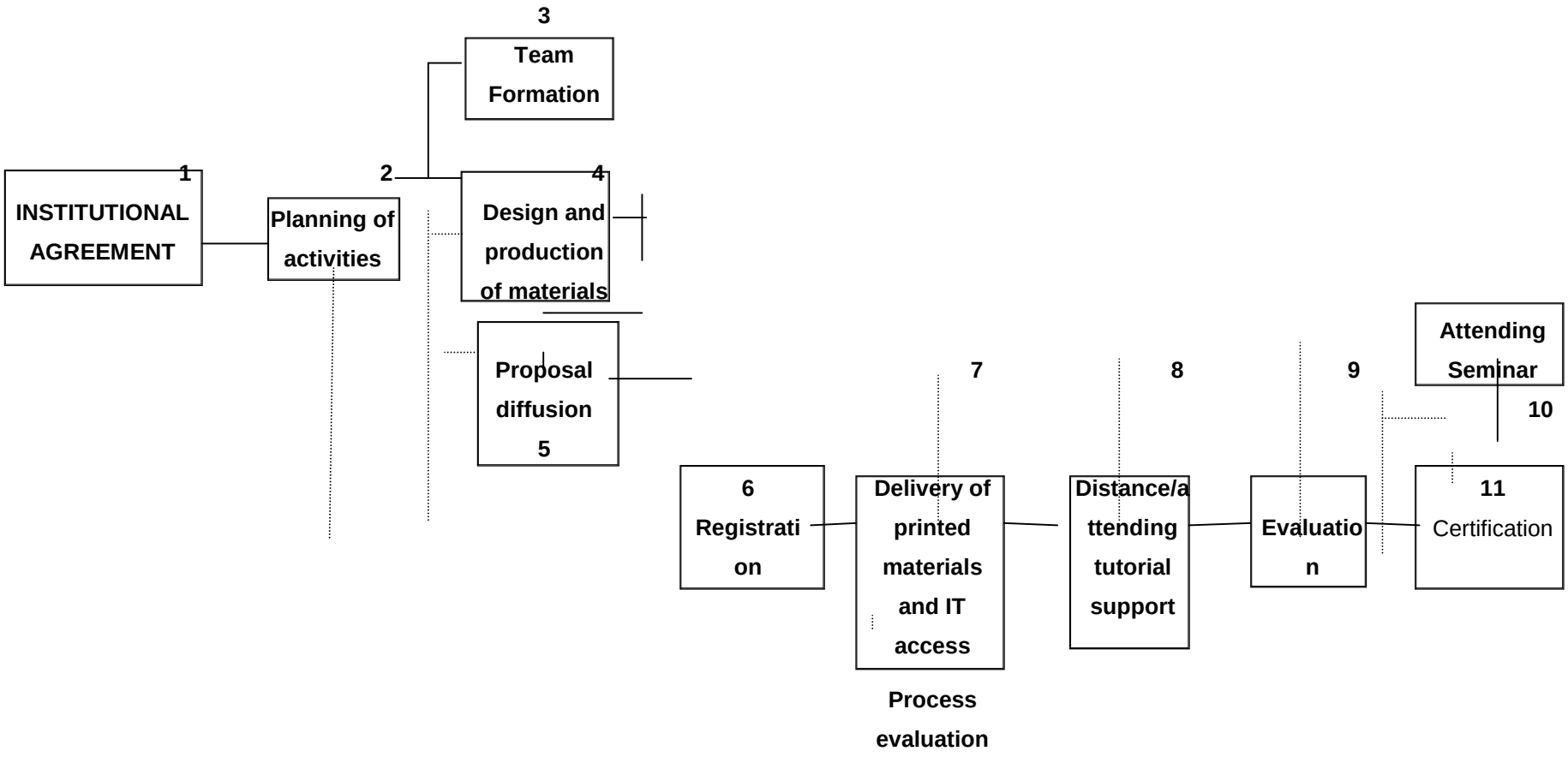
ORGANIZATIONAL CIRCUIT



SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION

The administrative support of the system will have the general function of organizing, controlling and conducting all the administrative management process of the course.

To organize multiple administrative tasks it is recommendable to establish different management areas, according to the specific functions that each must carry out. This does not mean that a resource must be appointed to each area. What is emphasized are the different functions each must carry out. Firstly, we could define four areas:

1) FINANCIAL ECONOMIC AREA. (CENTRALIZED)

In charge of managing financial economic resources of the project.

Will determine the budget available to start the course.

Will manage financial contributions coming from different sectors.

Will distribute the percentages of this budget to various actions and work teams.

2) RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AREA (CENTRALIZED)

This area will be in charge of organizing the control and management of human and material resources necessary to carry out the various stages of the project.

Will be responsible for contracting professional and staff in general, and for permanent inputs supply.

3) LEGAL AREA (CENTRALIZED)

This area will be in charge of advisory and supervision of all legal aspects of the project.

Will be responsible for drafting of contract and covenants, managing the copyright of the produced materials, etc.

4) LOGISTICS AREA (CENTRALIZED AND DESCENTRALIZED)

This area will be in charge of coordinating the organization and operation of the course at the various central banks.

For that it shall:

- ✓ Register the participants to the course.
- ✓ Keep a detailed record of the amount and distribution of the registries to the course.
- ✓ Organize the materials distribution process, evaluations, etc.
- ✓ Receive the evaluations and deliver same to the evaluation team.
- ✓ To outline and distribute the certifications of the participants that had passed the course.

This area should have a sufficiently flexible structure so as to meet the specific needs of the course. Both efficiency in transfer of resource from the headquarters to the various central banks and the possibility of system feedback are essential to the logistics area. Any deficiencies in this area may have strong impact in the learning development of the participants.

PLANNING OF STEPS TO FOLLOW

Suggestion of steps to follow:

1. ADJUSTMENT AND PREPARATION OF THE DEFINITIVE DOCUMENT OF THE PROJECT.
2. SELECTION / CONTRACTING OF TEAMS. (depending of selected alternative)
3. TEAM TRAINING
4. PREPARATION OF TIMETABLES
5. DESIGN OF MATERIALS
6. DESIGN OF EVALUATION. PREPARATION OF TOOLS (depending of selected alternative)
7. STARTING OF THE COURSE
    - Registration of participants.
    - Delivery of materials.
    - Expert weekly guide.
    - Permanent tutorship.
    - Permanent evaluation.

KEY SUGGESTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

To ensure appropriate development of the system implies special attention to four key aspects:

- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Planning
- ✓ Participation

- ✓ Resources

1. INNOVATION

It must be considered that this project implies strong innovation to the institutional culture. Awareness on the change implications to endeavor must be created, along with the necessary measures/actions to support same until its definite incorporation to the organization's identity.

2. **PLANNING**

Indeed, one of the fundamental aspects determining the project's success is, on the one hand, the existence of strategic planning foreseeing its different components and actions to be taken and, on the other, the ***close coordination and integration*** of the different components to conduct said planning.

When the planning activity is disassembled from conducting, planning becomes a useless tool.

Diverse components coexist with different planning possibilities within the project.

It is a key factor that all of the above exercise this possibility so as to – at all times – precedes and presides action.

3. PARTICIPATION

To develop a project of these characteristics leads to the need of having a team that is strongly committed with the task and with a great sense of institutional belonging. This is achieved not only through good knowledge of the objective and actions to be taken, but also through ample and permanent participation in one of the decision-making components.

4. **RESOURCES**

Another all-important aspect in the development of the project is that of Resources. It is clear that certain financial, material and human support is needed to carry out implementation of such an innovation.

It is necessary to have certain resources previously available, but it is also necessary to make other arrangements for future needs while initial action is taken. Even so, other arrangements will have to be foreseen for the maintenance stage of the project.

Material resources are the most obvious needs. Start of a project like this demands great effort for supply the necessary technical equipment and material.

It must be considered that the quality of the produce has a great deal to do with the equipping characteristics. If we relate this with the need of good initial positioning of the project, we can conclude that this aspect should not go overlooked.

Human resources – though often underestimated – acquire a relevant dimension in this project.

Because it is an innovation within the institution, the experience, education, and quality of human resources convoked by the project will be its letter of introduction and will determine its status and credibility.

Time resources are as important as the above to ensure smooth development of the project.

The complexity of the project in the long run requires 2-3 years to achieve definitive institutionalization.

It is necessary to respect the necessary planning and development time for each of the courses, in order that the teams carry out their work with the necessary quality, thereby ensuring continuity.