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World Bank Plans Special Advisory Unit To Assist Central American Governments In Poverty Reduction Programs

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Dec. 4 in Washington, Rainer Steckhan, regional director for Mexico and Central America, told reporters that the World Bank plans to create a special advisory unit in Central America to help regional governments strengthen social welfare and poverty reduction programs. Steckhan said the unit will rely on World Bank experts, and possibly others from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and experts from the six Central American governments. Called RUTA-Social, the new office will be parallel to the Rural Technical Assistance Unit (RUTA), headquartered in San Jose, Costa Rica. Steckhan said the World Bank office has already been approved by the six governments, and location will be determined by consensus. According to Steckhan, over the next three years World Bank loans for social welfare programs in Central America are projected at about US\$250 million. (Basic data from Agence France-Presse, 12/04/91)

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