

Staggered Banknote Identification Card Aids The Blind

Universidad de Costa Rica



In order to improve the quality of life of the blind and visually-impaired people, Costa Rican banknotes use different colors, sizes, and tactile marks to distinguish the different types of banknotes used in the country. Professor Eric Hidalgo-Valverde of the University of Costa Rica (UCR)'s Plastic Arts School proposed a design of a credit-card sized plastic card enabling the identification of Costa Rican banknotes through their sizes and colors.

“ *By using the banknote identification card, blind and visually-impaired people are enabled to immediately and correctly identify a banknote without aide from a third-party, reducing their risk of being scammed by dishonest individuals, and reducing their need to depend on others to live their daily life.*

As mentioned before, the banknote identification card is credit-card sized, therefore, easy to carry in their wallets or purses, it also has a socket to attach a cord to it, enabling them to carry attached to any body part they wish.

A first batch of 10,000 cards were produced and freely-distributed through an alliance between the UCR, the Costa Rican Central Bank (BCCR), the National Patronage for the Blind (PANACI), and the BAC Credomatic private bank.

Although the identification card is designed specifically for Costa Rican banknotes, it is possible to adapt it for other countries' banknotes sizes (assuming they use a similar staggered system).

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