policy international centre for inclusive growth

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

research brief 84

April 2022

ISSN 2358-1379

The International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth is jointly supported by the United Nations Development Programme and the Government of Brazil.

Social protection response to COVID-19 in rural LAC: The potential of digitalisation to build back better[1]

Beatriz Burattini, Camila Rolon, Lucas Sato, Victor Thives and Louisa Wagner (International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth—IPC-IG) and Arniela Rénique and Mauricio Mireles (Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations—FAO-RLC)

Abstract

This policy research brief analyses how digitalisation can facilitate rural populations' access to effective and adequate social protection and economic inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean. It investigates the region's social protection response to COVID-19 and highlights three good practices in providing digitalised social protection to vulnerable rural populations during the crisis. Based on this analysis and considering the local obstacles to digitalised social protection in rural areas, recommendations are provided to build rural social protection back better after the pandemic.

1 Introduction

As countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) implemented social distancing measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, agricultural markets and social protection had to be adapted to safeguard the health of those involved. **The digitalisation of production and social protection services[2] became paramount to reach beneficiaries** (ECLAC 2020).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, social protection systems innovated by employing information and communication technologies (ICTs) to target and register beneficiaries and deliver payments (FAO 2020a; ECLAC 2021d). While some countries in LAC facilitated the process for opening bank accounts (Chile), others digitalised cash transfers, enabling the purchase of goods (Panama) or cash withdrawals (Guatemala, Paraguay) through identification (ID) cards (Martinez, Palma, and Velásquez 2020).

However, **rural populations' lack of access to (digital) services undermined economic inclusion and social protection in rural LAC during the crisis** (CAF 2020; ECLAC 2021d). The most prevalent occupations in rural LAC were not easily adapted to teleworking (ECLAC 2021c; FAO and ECLAC 2020a).[3] While agriculture has been impacted less than some other sectors by social distancing (ECLAC 2021e), the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC 2021d) estimated a 1 per cent probability of agricultural workers engaging in remote work. The sector also employs a high proportion of informal, seasonal and migrant workers, who were particularly vulnerable to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 (ECLAC 2021e). These workers may have been prevented from accessing social protection due to poor Internet connectivity and exclusion from the banking system (Martinez, Palma, and Velásquez 2020; ECLAC 2021e). Insufficient digital literacy and a lack of awareness of how to enrol for benefits may also have contributed as obstacles to social protection (ILO and FAO 2021).

Considering the above-mentioned issues, this policy research brief analyses LAC's good practices in using digitalisation to enhance the coverage and efficacy of rural social protection during the pandemic.

1.1 Relating digitalisation to social protection and economic inclusion

Digital technologies as facilitators of social protection

ICTs may facilitate access to social protection by enabling poor people in rural areas to remotely apply for and receive benefits, thus **overcoming physical barriers** (ILO and FAO 2021; Alzúa and Catterberg 2021). Through online benefit application processes and cash transfers directly from governments to beneficiaries, individuals from remote areas do not need to physically visit institutions. This reduces the opportunity costs of applying for benefits in terms of missing time on income-generating activities and spending income on transportation. By reducing travel time and the number of steps and people involved in the enrolment process, ICTs can decrease the time between benefit application and delivery, ensuring timely benefit delivery (Benni 2021; Alzúa and Catterberg 2021; Ramirez 2021; FAO 2018).

Further, remote benefit application and delivery may **reduce transaction costs for implementing agencies**, such as costs associated with staff who would process physical applications or office space (FAO and ECLAC 2021). This is especially true when ICTs are used to **streamline service provision—**for example, by simplifying administrative procedures (ILO and FAO 2021; Allieu and Ocampo 2019). Removing intermediaries from the process also avoids the risk of payment diversion, further decreasing transaction costs associated with corruption (Martinez, Palma, and Velásquez 2020). However, this depends on several prerequisites that will be expanded on in the following subsection.

As ICTs facilitate the **gathering and sharing of data**, the effectiveness of social protection can be enhanced. Through digital data collection, information can be updated more regularly, possibly even in real time (FAO 2021). ICTs may also improve data quality, allowing decision makers to better monitor and evaluate programmes, understand rural communities' needs and identify eligible groups. Targeting can also be made more accurate, as ICTs support data-sharing. Digital databases can be more easily integrated, allowing for the creation of unified beneficiary or social registries (Chirchir and Barca 2020; WWP n.d.). Interoperable databases facilitate data cross-checking, reducing the probability of inclusion and exclusion errors (FAO and ECLAC 2020b; Chirchir and Barca 2020; WWP n.d.).

Finally, improving the gathering and sharing of data through ICTs facilitates the creation of **synergies between social protection and other sectoral policies**. Integrated registries, for example, can be used for programmes outside the social protection sector, such as rural development and agricultural policy. These improvements also facilitate the creation of integrated multisectoral interventions to boost economic inclusion (Chirchir and Barca 2020).

Digital technologies as facilitators of economic inclusion

Economic inclusion involves a rights-based approach to provide productive and other economic support for households and individuals, linking it to social protection (FAO 2019). In rural areas, it can be achieved through employment promotion programmes and the reinforcement of the economic environment, and social protection programmes that support access to assets, markets, credit, inputs and skills training (Rolon et al. 2022). However, economic inclusion must be accompanied by financial inclusion (facilitating savings and access to credit), social inclusion (via access to social capital, social networks and access to social programmes) and the provision of infrastructure and public services to enable poverty reduction (FAO 2020b).

Digitalisation can support the rural communities' economic inclusion by facilitating the above-mentioned processes. Regarding **financial inclusion**, ICTs can support small-scale rural producers' awareness of financial support through real-time collection and sharing of production records. By facilitating small producers' communication with each other, governments and private credit providers, they may be more easily informed about government subsidies and rural credits. Digital data collection and sharing may also enhance governments' and private financial institutions' knowledge about how to adapt their financial products to the needs of rural communities (FAO and ECLAC 2020b). Further, mobile technology, money and payment methods may increase rural communities' access to credit and bank transfers without the need for a physical banking presence (FAO and ECLAC 2021; Alzúa and Catterberg 2021).

Mobile technologies may help overcome physical barriers and support rural communities' **access to infrastructure and public services**. Like their role in facilitating access to social protection, ICTs reduce time, transportation and transaction costs for rural communities and financial institutions. Automated teller machines (ATMs), physical bank offices and other physical financial services may be replaced by mobile financial services (Alzúa and Catterberg 2021). However, this depends on several prerequisites explained in the following subsection.

As ICTs facilitate communication, they may enhance **social inclusion** and **access to markets**. Digital data collection and sharing may facilitate rural producers' ability to communicate with each other and with agricultural extension and advisory services.[4] These exchanges facilitate the creation and sharing of knowledge about agricultural production (FAO and ECLAC 2020b). Further, rural producers in LAC have been benefiting from e-commerce since before the COVID-19 pandemic. Through mobile communication and payments, small agricultural producers can sell their products directly to consumers (FAO and ECLAC 2020b; 2021; FAO 2018; Ramirez 2021).

However, digitalisation's potential contributions to social protection and economic inclusion are unlikely to be realised in rural communities lacking access to ICTs and/or the capacity to use them (FAO and ECLAC 2020b).

Enabling the adoption of digital technologies by poor rural communities

Digitalisation cannot adequately contribute to social protection and economic inclusion, and **may even exclude vulnerable rural communities**, if various challenges are not addressed.

In rural LAC, there is a lack of digital infrastructure and poor connectivity, resulting from a lack of policies to facilitate access to digital services (ILO 2021; FAO 2018; FAO and ECLAC 2020b).[5] The provision of services in rural LAC has been affected by development strategies that have promoted institutional decentralisation, privatisation and a reliance on users for funding (FAO 2018). Thus, **there are still major gaps in the provision of basic services and newly demanded services (such as digital innovation and technology transfer) that mainly exclude poor people in rural areas, small-scale producers and traders** (FAO 2018; FAO and ECLAC 2021). Further, while initiatives to universalise digitalisaton in the region have borne fruit, it remains particularly costly to reach more remote areas due to a lack of access to electricity (ECLAC, FAO, and IICA 2019). Finally, low levels of digital literacy impede rural populations' use of the digital services that are available (Jung 2021).

Further, multinationals and other private actors from the agri-food and technology sectors have been leading the digitalisation of food systems,[6] potentially excluding small producers (Prause, Hackfort, and Lindgren 2021). **The lack of use of ICTs by small producers** may also translate into lower productivity compared to those who do use ICTs, and barriers to accessing financial services (FAO and ECLAC 2020b; 2020c; FAO 2018; 2020b).

Further, while digitalised information systems can facilitate data collection for social protection, **targeting mechanisms that rely on them may exclude rural populations** (Chirchir and Barca 2020; Ludeña 2021). If not designed properly, social registries may not offer enough information for accurate targeting. Ludeña (2021) found, for example, that proxy means-testing may exclude those living in poverty in Ecuador, because registries do not accurately capture informal workers' income fluctuations.

There are several prerequisites to address the above-mentioned challenges and enable rural communities to benefit from digitalisation. The necessary measures to achieve them are summarised in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Measures from outside and within the social protection sector needed to fulfil the prerequisites for the digitalisation of poor rural communities

Prerequisites	Non-social protection measures	Social protection measures
Connectivity	• Planned public and private efforts to expand infrastructure (access to electricity, telecommunications, mobile and satellite coverage) and adequate services to rural areas • Increase competition, but supply-side subsidies and other financial incentives can also push service providers to establish a presence in rural areas and offer digital services at affordable prices	• Demand-side subsidies for low-income households, such as subsidised electricity and Internet access
Access to digital equipment	• Income generation • Access to market at affordable prices	• Demand-side subsidies for low-income rural households • Cash and in-kind transfers • Other income-generating or income protection programmes, such as unemployment insurance and public works programmes
Digital capacity (digital literacy)	• Access to education • Digital skills training and sharing	• Digital agricultural extension and advisory services • Technical education and training programmes
Collaborative networks for a denser digital ecosystem	• Policies incentivising dialogue and collaboration between governments (all levels), education institutions, private actors and civil society, with the goal of ensuring that poor people in rural areas can benefit from digital technology • Policies supporting entrepreneurship and incentivising accessible innovation in rural areas	• Social protection programmes that address beneficiaries in groups, such as training programmes • Cash transfers that enable beneficiaries to cover costs associated with networking
Sustainable and value-generating services	• Incentives for service providers to provide adequate digital services in rural areas (subsidies, other fiscal incentives) • Local-global collaboration for service providers to develop scalable digital solutions for rural areas • Regulations that ensure access to necessary data on rural populations' needs to make services seem useful and, therefore, generate demand • Data protection regulations to ensure that personal and financial data of poor people in rural areas are safe from privacy breaches, public profiling and surveillance by either private or public actors	• Labour market programmes targeting entrepreneurs • Subsidised credit • Cash Plus and integration with (digital) agricultural extension and technology transfer services • Social registries and targeting mechanisms sensitive to the specific vulnerabilities of rural communities

Source: Authors' elaboration based on ECLAC (2021c); FAO (2020b; 2021); FAO and ECLAC (2020b; 2021) ECLAC, FAO, and IICA (2019); Ramirez (2021); Prause, Hackfort, and Lindgren (2021); Benni (2021); and Ludeña (2021).

LAC has a history of unequal service provision, with export-oriented agricultural producers tending to have benefited disproportionally more than others from services provided in rural areas. To ensure that poor people in rural areas are not ignored by public and private efforts, governments must implement the above-mentioned policies and social protection programmes with a clear rural digitalisation plan that includes them (FAO 2018).

2 Methodology

To explore the role of digitalisation for "building back better" rural social protection in LAC after the COVID-19 pandemic, this policy brief analyses LAC's good practices in digitalising social protection for rural populations. The methodology outlined in Box 1 was applied in all three policy briefs comprising this series.

BOX 1

Methodology for case study selection and analysis

An initial pool of programmes that targeted rural populations and addressed food security or production during the COVID-19 pandemic was selected based on a mapping of social protection responses to the pandemic conducted by the IPC-IG (2021). This mapping contains adapted social protection programmes and new measures created specifically to respond to COVID-19 that were implemented by governments of low- and middle-income countries up to July 2021.

While this mapping does not discriminate by ministry, measures by ministries not typically associated with social protection may have been overlooked. Thus, based on the literature and discussions with the FAO, the sample for case study selection was adapted to include interventions that combined social protection for food security with economic inclusion.

The final step to select the case studies entailed the definition of the following selection criteria based on which the programmes were evaluated:

- Explicitly targeting vulnerable groups within the rural population
- Sustainability of the programme:
    - Prioritisation of programmes funded by domestic resources
    - Preferably linked to existing social, farmers' or beneficiary registries
    - Priority given to programmes that already existed before the pandemic, and to programmes created during the pandemic with the goal of remaining after it
- Government-led implementation was compulsory, but the responsible line ministry was not a selection criterion. Programmes with too many reported implementation issues were excluded. For that, we considered the following:
    - Programmes with low coverage rates (less than half) of target groups during the pandemic were avoided, but not necessarily excluded.
    - The suitability of benefits was only considered for cash benefits, where the value of the benefit in relation to the minimum wage or the national poverty line could be estimated by the authors.
    - News reports about implementation issues were also considered, although positive factors could outweigh some of the problems encountered.
- Case studies ideally covering LAC's different sub-regions
- Availability of information

The analysis of the selected programmes was based on a desk review of official public documents, as well as semi-structured interviews triangulated with relevant secondary literature. The interviewees were officials responsible for devising and implementing the programmes, researchers or FAO country office experts. Through their responses, the case studies' planning and implementation phases, factors pertaining to political will, and the programmes' success, obstacles and future plans were investigated. Our analysis of the interviews and secondary data considered how local particularities may have impacted the programmes, by including questions about this matter in the interviews and comparing country responses.

Note that interviewees' willingness and ability to elaborate on more controversial aspects of these programmes was a limitation. Related to this, their answers may have been biased towards pointing to programmes' successes, given their relationships with the respective governments. For programmes implemented during the pandemic, no impact evaluations could be considered to overcome this bias, as they are too recent. Finally, some interpretation was needed to clearly identify interviewees' main points.

The following three programmes were chosen and analysed based on this methodology:

- Brazil: Food Acquisition Programme (*Programa de Aquisição de Alimentos*—PAA)
- Dominican Republic: *Quédate en Casa* (including PROSOLI and *Supérate*)
- Peru: *Bono Rural*.

Given the particular context of digitalisation in rural areas in LAC, additional consideration was given to the selection of good practices. We also considered negative factors to be of particular interest for this study, as we identified several barriers to digitalisation of rural social protection by examining case studies' shortcomings. Further, when looking for innovative uses of digitalisation, **innovation was understood as technological, governance or process "changes and practices that rapidly and effectively enhance the inclusion of those in need". These changes do not have to entail completely new practices and can include the translation of existing practices into a different context** (Hammad, Bacil, and Soares 2021, 8).

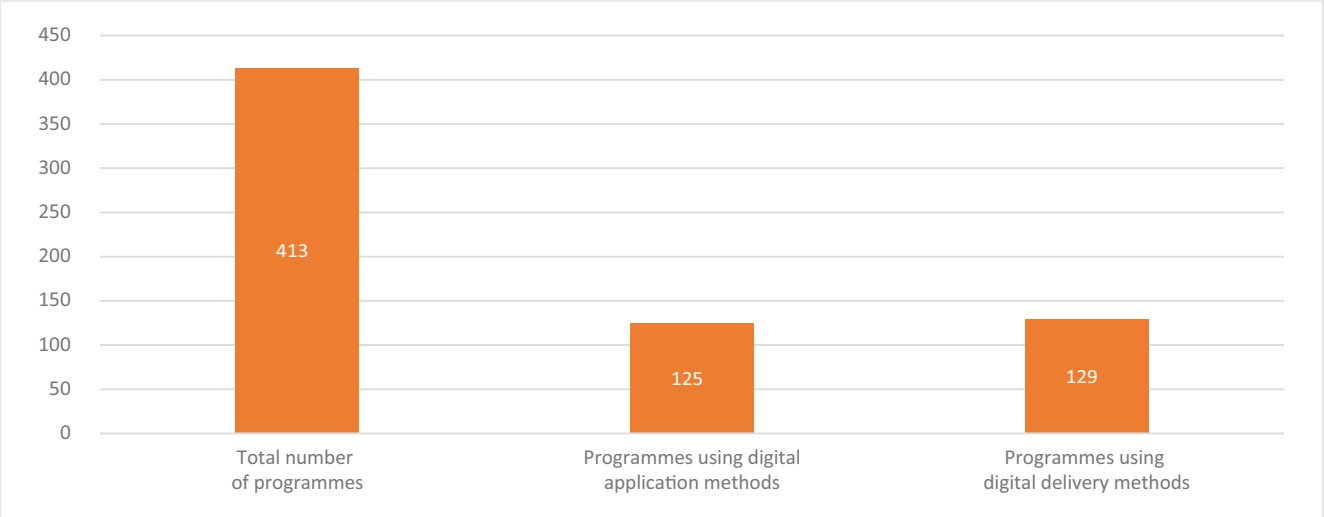
3 Findings

3.1 Government social protection responses to COVID-19

This subsection is based solely on the IPC-IG 'Mapping of Social Protection Responses to COVID-19 in the Global South',[7] including social assistance, social insurance and labour market measures. It takes a shock-responsive perspective, considering programmes that were **horizontally or vertically expanded** or **operationally adapted**[8] to function during the pandemic. In LAC, this mapping identified **208 social assistance, 163 labour market and 42 social insurance responses** adopted by 37 countries and territories.[9] Many of these measures used digital technologies to reach their beneficiaries, especially by using online platforms for identification and registration, or by delivering benefits through electronic transfers to bank accounts or mobile money (IPC-IG 2021).[10]

FIGURE 1

Use of ICTs in the application for and delivery of social protection programmes in LAC during COVID-19



Source: Authors' elaboration based on IPC-IG (2021).

However, **this use of technology was not an innovation in itself**. Digital platforms for applying for social protection programmes already existed in LAC, despite not being widely used. Social protection was also already delivered digitally before the pandemic, although the COVID-19 crisis accelerated digital delivery in LAC countries (Beazley, Marzi, and Steller 2021).

In LAC, the number of programmes focused on the rural sector that used ICTs was much lower. Out of 45 social protection programmes explicitly targeting rural populations, **only one mentioned the use of ICTs not related to the use of mobile money and digital application forms:** the distribution of tablet computers in Peru, which also had issues reaching the rural population (IPC-IG 2021).

According to Beazley (2021), **the use of digital registries to identify beneficiaries of emergency programmes benefited rural populations in many countries**.

Cash transfer programmes tend to focus on poor households and, consequently, on rural populations. When these cash transfers are linked to registries, this connects rural communities to those registries. This is especially true for Peru (ibid.).

However, **the lack of mapped programmes making use of ICTs in rural areas highlights the digital gap between rural and urban areas**. Further, the lack of access to digitalised social protection responses has potentially excluded poor people in rural areas from the general COVID-19 response.

In the following sections, three good practices of digitalised social protection covering rural populations during the pandemic are presented. Recalling the limitations of IPC-IG (2021) highlighted in Section 2, after finding a limited number of social protection responses focused on rural areas, we expanded our research to programmes that may have been overlooked due to their implementation by institutions not typically

associated with social protection, and pre-COVID programmes that only underwent minor adaptations during the pandemic. Consequently, the PAA was not originally included in IPC-IG (2021). Based on the findings from this policy brief series, the IPC-IG aims to update its COVID-19 response mapping.

3.2 Brazil: PAA

The **PAA** is a permanent federal programme established under Brazil's Zero Hunger strategy. It purchases food from family farmers that is then distributed as in-kind transfers (see Table 2) (Government of Brazil 2021).

TABLE 2

Programme information: PAA[11]

Goal	To promote access to food and encourage and support family agriculture
Implementation year	2003
Implementing institution	Ministry of Citizenship and the National Supply Company (*Companhia Nacional de Abastecimento*—CONAB)[12]
Components	• Government purchases from family farmers with simultaneous donations to the social assistance network, public food services and public schools • Direct purchase • Support for stock formation • Institutional purchase • Seed acquisition
Value and frequency of the benefit	• Purchase with simultaneous donation: Up to BRL6,500 (USD2,640.37 purchasing power parity—PPP) per year for individual farmers and up to BRL8,000 (USD3,249.69 PPP) per year for farmers who participate through family farming organisations • Direct purchase: Up to BRL8,000 (USD3,249.69 PPP) per year per family farmer • Support for stock formation: Up to BRL8,000 (USD3,249.69 PPP) per family farmer per year and up to BRL1.5 million (USD 609,316.67 PPP) per organisation per year, with a limit of BRL300,000 (USD121,863.33 PPP) for the first award • Institutional purchase: Each family can receive up to BRL20,000 (USD8,124.22 PPP) per year, and family farming enterprises can receive up to BRL6 million (USD2.437 million PPP) per year • Seed acquisition: Up to BRL6 million (USD2.437 million PPP) per year per supplying organisation
Targeting mechanisms	Categorical
Targeted group	• **Producer beneficiaries:** Family farmers, land reform settlers, foresters, aquaculturists, extractivists, artisanal fishers, indigenous people, members of the quilombola communities, and other traditional communities • Consumer beneficiaries: People in a situation of food and nutritional insecurity and those served by the social assistance networks
Eligibility criteria	• Family farmers must prepare sales proposals in accordance with the criteria of each public call for proposals • Included in the Individual Taxpayer Registry (Cadastro de Pessoas Físicas—CPF) • Have a Declaration of Aptitude (Declaração de Aptidão—DAP) for the National Programme for Strengthening Family Farming (Programa Nacional de Fortalecimento da Agricultura Familiar—PRONAF), which allows family farmers to access public policies targeting this segment
Coverage[13]	53,600 farmers and 6.5 million consumer beneficiaries in 2018
Expenditure[14]	• BRL285 million (USD115.770 million PPP) in 2019 • BRL168.2 million (USD68.325 million PPP) in 2020 + BRL812.3 million (USD329.965 million PPP) during the pandemic • BRL101.7 million (USD 41.312 million PPP) in 2021—the lowest budget since the PAA's creation

Source: Authors' elaboration based on Sambuichi et al. (2019; 2020); Government of Brazil (2020); Globo Rural (2021); Ministério da Cidadania (2019); Vilarino (2021); and Bezerra and Sobreira (2021).

Digitalisation prior to the COVID-19 response

The CONAB was already digitalising the PAA prior to COVID-19. It developed an offline app—PAANet—drawing from Brazil's tax revenue system, which enables users to file a digital income tax declaration even without Internet access. PAANet allows farmers to apply for the PAA, cooperatives to register their purchases from farmers, the CONAB to monitor whether cooperatives are properly distributing PAA funds to members, and farmers' associations to find out when PAA resources are available to buy their products. To use PAANet, producers only

need the Internet to download it and to send information to CONAB, allowing forms to be filled out offline. Farmers may be assisted in these tasks by cooperatives (if they are members) or by municipalities. PAANet requires personal data on all farmers involved in the PAA purchase, the amount and type of products to be delivered, and their prices. Personal data are protected by Brazil's general data protection law and are only shared with the Ministry of Citizenship. PAANet helped to reduce the average payment time from 20 days to 3 days (Cruz, Viegas, and Sambuichi 2021).

To access this app, farmers must be registered in the PRONAF through the DAP, which is also requested digitally. This may be done through cooperatives, facilitating registration for farmers lacking digital literacy or ICT access. Still, requesting the DAP might be difficult for farmers, both in terms of digital access and documentation. In some cases, technical assistance is also available through agronomists or agricultural extension and advisory service workers provided by municipalities. Capacity-building is also offered to train farmers to use PAANet (Cruz, Viegas, and Sambuichi 2021; Sambuichi 2021).

The PAA has also digitalised payments, as the Ministry transfers the money directly to farmers' accounts. However, this is not always possible, as some smallholders may remain excluded from the necessary infrastructure (Cruz, Viegas, and Sambuichi 2021; Sambuichi 2021).

Similar, cooperatives in remote areas might still have problems accessing the necessary technology. As family farmers might lack digital and general literacy skills, some cooperatives may have no members with the necessary ITC skills to complete applications. **These are instances where digitalisation could cause more harm than good to programme implementation** (Cruz, Viegas, and Sambuichi 2021).

COVID-19 response

During the pandemic, PAANet allowed farmers to sell their products to the government despite social distancing restrictions. Further, bureaucratic aspects of the programme were relaxed, allowing for further digitalisation, as ICTs were used to make minor administrative adaptations to the programme. For example, documents sent to public institutions could be e-mailed instead of mailed, which further accelerated implementation of the PAA.

This experience may be incorporated into the programme after the pandemic. The CONAB officials interviewed stated that alternative digital procedures are being considered. For example, allowing beneficiaries from remote traditional communities to register with CONAB by sending photos of their documents via WhatsApp on their mobile phones, which are widely used even in rural areas. WhatsApp is already used to inform family farmers whenever there are resources to purchase their products, as these farmers have established wide WhatsApp networks through which they communicate. One concern, however, is the need to maintain data protection and guarantee that PAA transactions can be audited (Cruz, Viegas, and Sambuichi 2021).

3.3 Dominican Republic: *Quédate en Casa* (including PROSOLI and *Supérate*)

With the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, the Government of the Dominican Republic implemented the emergency programme ***Quédate en Casa*** ('Stay at Home') (see Table 3). It extended the pre-existing ***Progresando con Solidaridad (PROSOLI)***[15] by expanding the cash transfers under its Comer es Primero component to beneficiaries of its other component, *Bonogas Hogar* (ECLAC 2021b). *Quédate en Casa* also provided a temporary cash transfer from April 2020 to April 2021 to families who had become vulnerable due to the pandemic (Government of Dominican Republic 2020a). In April 2021, the newly elected government announced ***Supérate***,[16] which replaced PROSOLI and benefited 1.35 million of the 1.5 million *Quédate en Casa* beneficiaries (Acento 2021). While the main pandemic response took place under *Quédate en Casa*, both PROSOLI and *Supérate* must be considered when assessing digitalised social protection for rural populations.

TABLE 3

Programme information: *Quédate en Casa*

Goal	Ensure income for informal households and support for vulnerable families as a response to the pandemic
Implementation year	April 2020
Implementing institution	Presidency of Dominican Republic, Ministry of Finance and Administrator of Social Subsidies
Components	Cash transfer
Value and frequency of the benefit	DOP5,000 (USD196.70 PPP) until December 2020, then DOP3,000 (USD118.02 PPP)
Targeting mechanisms	Proxy means testing according to the Quality of Life Index (*Indicio de Calidad de Vida*—ICV) computed by the Unified System of Beneficiaries (*Sistema* Único *de Beneficiarios*—SIUBEN)
Targeted group	Beneficiaries of PROSOLI and those registered in SIUBEN classified as poor or vulnerable
Eligibility criteria	• PROSOLI beneficiaries who received Comer es Primero or Bonogas Hogar • Families in SIUBEN without a PROSOLI beneficiary card • Elderly people or persons with a disability or critical disease • Households with members working in the informal sector
Coverage	1.5 million households (811,003 from PROSOLI and 688,997 additional households)
Expenditure	DOP80.155 billion (USD3.153 billion PPP)

Source: Authors' elaboration based on ECLAC (2021a; 2021b); Bisonó (2021); Government of Dominican Republic (2020a; 2020b; 2021a; 2021b); Noticias SIN (2021); Bacha (2021); Garcia (2021); Arias (2021); and Diario Libre (2021).

Digitalisation prior to and during the COVID-19 response

Digitalisation of the Dominican Republic's social protection programmes also precedes the COVID-19 pandemic. The national social registry, SIUBEN, was instrumental in identifying and selecting vulnerable families not covered by PROSOLI: *Quédate en Casa* extended cash transfers to two additional SIUBEN categories (ICV-3 and ICV-4), marginally non-poor households not eligible for PROSOLI. The new beneficiaries may include, for example, owners of small businesses who are vulnerable to disasters and normally not covered by social protection (Bisonó 2021).

Further, under PROSOLI, benefits were delivered through the Social Subsidies Payment System (*Sistema de Pagos de Subsidios Sociales*—SPSS) card: a single card for multiple subsidies that functions like a debit card. When *Quédate en Casa* was implemented, it was transferred to PROSOLI beneficiaries through the SPSS card, which could be used in small grocery stores from the Social Supply Network (*Red de Abastecimiento Social*—RAS).

For new beneficiaries to access these transfers quickly and easily, they were delivered to their national IDs (Redacción 2020). This technology made it easier to reach additional people and expand the network of places to buy food from 6,000 to about 9,000 businesses (Bacha 2021). However, to prevent fraud, the government started to distribute SPSS cards to the new beneficiaries (Diario Libre 2021). Building on this, a chatbot was created so that families could use their national IDs to check their eligibility for *Quédate en Casa* and the balance of the cash transfer (Bacha 2021).

Communication with beneficiaries also relied on digital channels. The chatbot explained to beneficiaries that this was a temporary programme (ibid.), and beneficiaries could receive quick programme updates through social media. As Internet coverage is advanced in the country, most farmers have mobile phones and can use Whatsapp. Nevertheless, field communication was used to reach those without Internet access (Bisonó 2021).

Finally, *Supérate* is part of the government's Digital Agenda 2030, which aims to digitalise the entire population and reduce the digital gap between urban and rural areas (Bacha 2021). Thus, *Supérate* aims to contribute to the digitalisation of social protection, as illustrated in Box 2.

BOX 2

Digital innovations in social protection under ***Supérate***

- Supporting the economic inclusion of smallholders by developing an e-commerce platform where they can market their products
- Sending SMS messages about irrigation to farmers
- Training on technology to ensure digitalisation will reach everyone
- A pilot project facilitating transactions by making payments to beneficiaries through a QR code and eliminating the need for cards; data collected will allow policymakers to track families' consumption patterns, which will be key when implementing new public policies (Bacha 2021).

COVID-19 response

Thanks to the availability of SIUBEN data, *Quédate en Casa* almost doubled the number of beneficiaries accessing cash benefits through PROSOLI's *Comer es Primero*. Since 40 per cent of the people who benefit from social programmes live in rural areas, the programme has had a significant impact on the protection of the rural population (Bisonó 2021). It also allowed a larger benefit value (DOP5,000 or USD196.70 PPP) than *Comer es Primero* (DOP825 or USD32.45 PPP), although when *Supérate* was announced, the *Quédate en Casa* benefit had already been reduced to DOP3,000 (USD118.02 PPP) (Observatorio de Políticas Sociales y Desarrollo 2020).

In 2021, when *Supérate* replaced PROSOLI, it combined all social protection responses to avoid duplications and improve effectiveness and efficiency, covering all PROSOLI beneficiaries and doubling *Comer es Primero*'s transfer amount to DOP1,650 (USD64.91 PPP). As the pandemic made the government reconsider which groups should be considered poor and vulnerable, new components were included in *Supérate*'s design to mitigate other vulnerabilities. Therefore, in addition to distributing a cash transfer, *Supérate* also promotes food security through economic inclusion. To achieve this, *Supérate* encompasses multiple components, projects and subprogrammes with a focus on family farmers and the use of digital technologies.

3.4 Peru: *Bono Rural*

The Peruvian government implemented the ***Bono Rural*** cash transfer during the COVID-19 pandemic to protect the income of poor rural families (see Table 4). This programme was part of a group of four cash transfers designed to provide assistance during the crisis, each targeting a different population group.[17]

TABLE 4

Programme information: *Bono Rural*

Goal	Protect the income of poor rural families
Implementation year	May 2020
Implementing institution	Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (MIDIS)
Components	One-off cash transfer
Value and frequency of the benefit	PEN760 (USD400.76 PPP) one-off payment
Targeting mechanisms	Proxy means-testing through the Household Targeting System (*Sistema de Focalización de Hogares*—SISFOH)
Targeted group	(Extremely) poor families in the agriculture sector or rural area who have not benefited from other measures
Eligibility criteria	• Households must live in rural areas • They must be classified as poor or extremely poor according to the SISFOH • They must not have benefited from other support during the COVID-19 national emergency
Coverage	966,217 families[18]
Expenditure	PEN836 million (USD 440.838 million PPP)

Source: Authors' elaboration based on Government of Peru (2020; 2021a; 2021b; 2021c); ECLAC (2021c); and Loza (2021).

Digitalisation during the COVID-19 response

The *Bono Rural* was part of an emergency cash transfer 'package' in which the role of **pre-existing registries for shock-responsive targeting** was noteworthy. Within this package, the SISFOH, Peru's social registry, and the National Identity and Civil Status Registry (*Registro Nacional de Identificación y Estado Civil*—RENIEC) were used to identify those who would be the most vulnerable during the pandemic (Loza 2021; President of the Republic 2020). Further, coordination with other sectors was also used to gain information necessary to identify beneficiaries. For the *Bono Rural*, this included data from the Ministry of Agriculture (Government of Peru 2021a).

The *Bono Rural* was delivered to rural families primarily through digital means: deposits to bank accounts, mobile banking, money transfers and in-cash distribution. Most of the beneficiaries (485,000 families) accessed the benefit through mobile banking. Around another 100,000 families received the benefit through bank deposits, and 100,000 at bank counters (through money transfers) (Gestii 2020). To retrieve their benefits, families had to verify their ID numbers through a website by answering questions about their personal information that was found in the RENIEC. After this step, they would receive a code by SMS for the final confirmation of their identity, after which they could withdraw the benefit from an ATM or the bank (Murga 2021).

Given that it might be difficult to access the Internet in some areas, the MIDIS arranged for 375 *tambos* to support rural families. *Tambos* are facilities from the MIDIS National Programme of Action Platforms for Social Inclusion (*Plataformas de Acción para la Inclusión Social*—PAIS) that provide social services to remote facilities (SIGRID 2019). Among many services, such as hygiene and medical services, emergency kits and training, they also provide satellite Internet in 21 departments of the country where the Internet is limited or unavailable (Plataformas de Acción para la Inclusión Social n.d.)Through them, families could access the verification website and benefit delivery mechanism, and receive advice on the procedures for accessing the benefit (Gestii 2020; AS Perú 2020). In general, Peru has some interesting experiences on how to overcome geographical barriers for service provision, including digitalisation, which are summarised in Box 3. However, this may not have been enough to overcome barriers to access to ICTs for some families during the implementation of the *Bono Rural*, as the second most commonly used delivery modality was direct distribution, which was done through vehicles for around 140,000 families (Gestión 2020).

BOX 3

Peruvian mechanisms for providing social services in remote areas lacking digital and financial infrastructure

Since before the COVID-19 pandemic, Peru has relied on specific services to overcome geographical barriers to infrastructure for social service provision:

- Besides the services described above, tambos are also used for a variety of social programmes and as community spaces to consult public services. There are plans for new tambos to open in the future.
- Itinerant Social Action Platforms (Plataformas Itinerantes de Acción Social—PIAS) are small boats connected to satellites that bring certain social services to remote communities. These include the RENIEC, health care and social programmes such as pensions and Juntos, among others. Currently, there are between five and seven routes that these boats travel on the rivers Napo and Moronas and on Lake Titicaca.
- *Carritos pagadores* (payment vehicles) visit remote areas without digital or financial infrastructure to deliver benefits, as was done for the *Bono Rural*.

Source: Murga (2021).

3.5 Common features of good practices

The programmes analysed in this study offer several lessons learned for digitalising social protection to improve its efficacy and coverage in rural LAC. This subsection outlines the common success factors and obstacles highlighted during the interviews about the three programmes analysed above and about the state of digitalisation in LAC.

A common positive feature of the above-mentioned programmes is that **at least some digital innovation existed prior to the pandemic, making countries' social protection systems more shock-responsive** prior to the crisis. In Brazil, the PAA already relied in part on CONAB's offline app and on the use of the DAP, allowing for remote beneficiary identification, registration for and delivery of benefits, and monitoring to continue despite social distancing (Cruz, Viegas, and Sambuichi 2021). Additional digital innovations were implemented in the Dominican Republic during the pandemic, showing how the crisis fuelled some innovation in social protection in the region. Nevertheless, PROSOLI's SPSS cards and the SIUBEN were key to delivering cash transfers to existing beneficiaries and expanding social protection to new ones (Bisonó 2021; Bacha 2021). Further, even Peru's *Bono Rural*, which was implemented solely during the pandemic, relied on the country's pre-existing social and civil registry and on alternative infrastructure in remote areas to identify beneficiaries and deliver social assistance (Loza 2021). Note that in all three examples, **pre-existing infrastructure, especially social and civil registries, were key to identifying beneficiaries during the pandemic response**.

The programmes analysed in Brazil and the Dominican Republic **relied on farmer associations for programme implementation**. In the Dominican Republic, interviewees explained that little work is done with individual farmers, while in Brazil, the PAA either had direct contact with individual farmers via municipalities or relied on cooperatives through the CONAB (Bisonó 2021; Cruz, Viegas, and Sambuichi 2021). The case of the PAA highlights the **role of cooperatives in supporting vulnerable producers' access to and capacity to use ICTs**, although particularly vulnerable cooperatives also struggled with digital literacy issues (Cruz, Viegas, and Sambuichi 2021).

Finally, interviewees from Brazil and the Dominican Republic emphasised the usefulness of **applications such as WhatsApp**. Such tools have been important to establish social networks for farmers and are being considered for future social protection endeavours in both countries (Bacha 2021; Cruz, Viegas, and Sambuichi 2021).

Nevertheless, these good practices have been exceptions rather than the rule, and they also highlight how digitalised social protection for poor people in rural areas still faces several barriers in LAC. All case studies report **connectivity or access barriers despite having measures in place to support vulnerable rural communities' access to digital social protection** (Bacha 2021; Bisonó 2021; Cruz, Viegas, and Sambuichi 2021; Murga 2021). In Brazil, some producers live in areas that are too remote, do not know how to read, or lack capacity to use digital or banking systems (Cruz, Viegas, and Sambuichi 2021). In Peru, the government estimates that around 5 per cent of the target population has not received the transfer due to communication barriers (Murga 2021). While the Dominican Republic did not report major Internet coverage issues, some farmers faced obstacles regarding information on how to use the benefit delivery mechanism (Bacha 2021).

Related to connectivity and access barriers, Brazil and Peru also reported **local facilities being overloaded by citizens who needed to update their records**, either because some beneficiaries had to visit banks to collect their benefits at the same time as beneficiaries for another emergency programme (Brazil) or because it was difficult to maintain social distancing during in-person benefit delivery (Peru) (Cruz, Viegas, and Sambuichi 2021; Murga 2021).

Exclusion errors were also reported in the Dominican Republic and Peru. In the former, this was because ICV scores became outdated quickly, while in Peru, exclusion errors stemmed from how payments were initially processed (Bacha 2021; Bisonó 2021; Loza 2021). At first, the payment was made to one specific person in each household, but sometimes that person was not there. This gave people an incentive to register as unitary households, so each person would receive a payment. This was eventually changed (Loza 2021).

Finally, despite their positive experiences, the PAA and *Supérate* both face future risks due to **insufficient budgets** (Bacha 2021; Sambuichi 2021). In Brazil, budget cuts are already affecting the PAA's ability to offer adequate and timely support to farmers, who are losing trust in the programme (Sambuichi 2021). This highlights how the quality of regional best practices may deteriorate if political will is not upheld.

4 Recommendations

Considering the above-mentioned social protection responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in LAC and the limitations of digitalised social protection in rural areas, the authors recommend the following measures to ensure the effective use of digital innovation in building social protection systems back better in rural areas of the region.

4.1 Use digitalisation to facilitate rural social protection

- Expand the use of **mobile payments** to the rural population when capacity to use mobile phones is adequate.
- Provide beneficiaries with **single electronic cards** that can be used to deliver more than one social protection benefit.
- **Digitalise management information systems** when possible, considering that digitalisation in rural contexts may be harmful when specific characteristics of the rural context are not considered and when not all operating agencies are equipped to use ICTs.
- **Establish unified or interoperable registries that store data digitally** so that they can be shared more easily for cross-checking and for making social protection programmes more shock-responsive. When possible, make registration for these registries digital, but keep the option to register in person with local government agencies that are present in remote areas. To achieve this, **collaboration with institutions outside the social protection sector** may be considered, such as the postal service or public health facilities.
- Increase electricity and Internet supply in rural areas by **closing or overcoming infrastructure gaps**. While the former is ideal, the latter may be financially viable and less

environmentally harmful and can be achieved through **social innovations adapted to the geographical context**.

- **Incorporate social protection in rural digitalisation strategies** to guarantee universal access and capacity to use ICTs.

- **Ensure that non-digital options for access to social protection are available.** This includes access to financial systems through ATMs, post offices and other physical establishments for benefit delivery and enrolment.

4.2 Use digitalisation to facilitate economic inclusion

- **Reduce the documentation, steps and personal interaction required to open bank accounts and apply for social protection programmes and agricultural interventions.** When this is not possible, **communicate the necessity for the requested data and visits** in a way that addresses any historical tension and mistrust between the vulnerable target community and the State.

- **Upgrade national ID** cards to incorporate the necessary technology to be used for cash transfers. Note that a necessary prerequisite to make this a useful change for rural social protection is that rural communities have access to national ID cards in the first place.

- Increase electricity and Internet demand in remote areas through **income-generating programmes and subsidies**.

- **Collaborate with rural communities' existing social networks**, such as farmer associations, to increase the digital capacity of at least selected community members who can capacitate or at least support others to use digital social protection services.

4.3 Support the digitalisation of rural LAC

- Increase access to digital services, including social protection, through the **adaptation of existing services**.

- When Internet connectivity is an issue but access to digital equipment is possible, consider using **offline digital tools** to operationalise parts of social protection programmes.

- Create social protection programmes focused on **training rural populations to use digital technologies**, to help them acquire digital skills.

- **Use social media to facilitate communication** between government and beneficiaries or between beneficiaries.

- **Consider the vulnerabilities of the rural population and the digital gap, including the digital gender gap,** when designing and communicating about social protection programmes. The participation of rural communities in programme design and implementation may be an asset.

- **Establish legal and regulatory frameworks to protect social protection beneficiaries' personal data and privacy.** These regulations must consider that rural communities' vulnerabilities, such as a lack of (digital) literacy, may require additional provisions to safeguard their rights as ICT users and protect them from abuse.

---

1. This report was commissioned by the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO-RLC) under a United Nations Agency to Agency Agreement with the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG).

The authors thank Adib Elias Bacha, Arturo Bisonó, Eduardo Ramirez, Gustavo Lund Viegas, Jan Van Oordt Murga, Javier Loza, Kelma Christina Melo dos Santos Cruz, Regina Helena Rosa Sambuichi and Rodolfo Beazley for kindly participating in the interviews regarding the selected case studies. Their contributions were vital to this study and offered valuable lessons learned for building back better in the region.

We also thank Alejandro Grinspun, Gala Dahlet, Pablo Faret, Rodrigo Rivera and Qiushi Yue (FAO); Fabio Veras (IPC-IG/IPEA); Fabianna Bacil (formerly IPC-IG); and Anna-Catharina Truschner, Gabriela Garcia, Jean Alva and Maddalena Sartor (UN Volunteers).

2. Digitalisation refers to altering processes using digital technologies (Gupta 2020). These are used here interchangeably with information and communication technologies (ICTs) and include biotechnology, automation, artificial intelligence and robotics, computers, the internet, mobile phones, radio, and other electronic devices (Prause, Hackfort, and Lindgren 2021; Vasilescu et al. 2020; Røpke, Haunstrup Christensen, and Ole Jensen 2010; Oliveira Neto and Pinheiro 2013).

3. ECLAC (2021c) argues that workers in occupations that could not be easily adapted to teleworking were more likely to face unemployment during the pandemic in both rural and urban areas.

4. Different types of actors from the private or public sectors that provide access to skills related to agriculture (FAO and ECLAC 2020b).

5. Digital services include digital information systems, digital financial services (digital transfers, payments, mobile phones, Internet, mobile network operators, banks, non-bank financial institutions and electronic money issuers), and digital grievance and accountability mechanisms (Carter et al. 2019).

6. The production, "processing, trade, transportation or retail and consumption" of food (Prause, Hackfort, and Lindgren 2021, 642).

7. See the IPC-IG online dashboard (Social protection responses to COVID-19 in the Global South) and the Dashboard methodological note.

8. Here, horizontal expansion refers to an increase in coverage to previously uncovered people by the social protection systems; vertical expansion refers to an increase in benefit amount or added benefits to existing beneficiaries; and operational adaptations refers to changes in payment methods or frequency, delivery mechanism, among others.

9. Apart from LAC's 33 countries, territories that are not sovereign countries, such as dependencies or dependent territories from other countries or areas of special sovereignty and autonomous territories (like Anguilla, Aruba, Curaçao, Cayman Islands, etc.) were considered.

10. The delivery method was only mapped for cash-based transfers, and the digital application methods refer only to programmes where the applicant had to apply to receive the benefit.

11. Note that the PAA may change due to executive measures.

12. The federal government institution involved in operationalising the PAA (Sambuichi et al. 2020).

13. Excluding the institutional purchase component (Sambuichi et al. 2020).

14. See previous note.

15. Created in 2012, it provided conditional cash transfers, socio-educational support, and linkages with other services through actions focused on beneficiaries' identification, health, education, training, food security, nutrition, income generation, habitability, protection of the environment and access to ICTs (ECLAC 2021a).

16. Besides cash transfers, Supérate also provides in-kind transfers and subsidies for capacity-building and other activities to promote social and economic inclusion (Bisonó 2021; Presidency of the Dominican Republic 2021).

17. The three other cash transfers were Yo Me Quedo en Casa (for poor urban households), the Bono Independiente (for informal and independent workers) and the Bono Familiar Universal (for vulnerable rural and urban beneficiaries excluded by the other programmes) (Ministerio de Desarrollo e Inclusión Social 2020). At a later date, the Bono Universal was implemented, also benefiting those who had received the previous four benefits. The Bono 600 was also delivered to urban families living in extreme health emergency conditions (Government of Peru n.d.). The latest benefit, the Bono Yanapay, started in September 2021 and could also have reached those who had benefited from the Bono Rural when it was implemented (Loza 2021).

18. Another 258,000 families were covered by the Bono Familiar Universal, which includes both rural and urban communities. Further, the Bono Universal covered beneficiaries of the Bono Familiar Universal and the Bono Rural. Considering the Bono Universal, around another 600,000 households were covered, resulting in around 2 million rural families being covered by the three programmes (Loza 2021).

References:

Acento. 2021. "Beneficiarios activos de 'Quédate en casa' pasarán de forma automática a 'Supérate'." Acento website, 13 April 2021. <https://acento.com.do/el-financiero/beneficiarios-activos-de-quedate-en-casa-pasaran-de-forma-automatica-a-superate-8933628.html>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Allieu, Andrew Mundalo, and Ana Ocampo. 2019. *On the Path to Universal Coverage for Rural Populations: Removing Barriers of Access to Social Protection*. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org/3/ca7246en/ca7246en.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Alzúa, María Laura, and Gabriela Catterberg. 2021. "Inclusión digital y desarrollo humano." *Nota de Política*, No. 4. New York: United Nations Development Programme. <https://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/es/home/library/human_development/inclusion-digital-y-desarrollo-humano.html>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Arias, Socorro. 2021. "El Gobierno de RD Pagó RD$122,632.3 Millones en Programas Sociales por COVID-19." *Diario Libre*, 5 March. <https://www.diariolibre.com/economia/el-gobierno-de-rd-pago-rd-1226323-millones-en-programas-sociales-por-covid-19-DI24792463>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

AS Perú. 2020. "Bono Rural 760 soles: qué hacer y dónde ir si no tienes Internet." Tikitakas, 15 May. <https://bit.ly/3IADZ5q>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Bacha, Adib Elias. 2021. Personal communication with *Supérate*.

Beazley, Rodolfo. 2021. Personal communication with an independent consultant on digitalisation of social protection in LAC.

Beazley, Rodolfo, Marta Marzi, and Rachael Steller. 2021. *Drivers of Timely and Large-Scale Cash Responses to COVID-19: What Does the Data Say?* Social Protection Approaches to COVID-19 Expert Advice Service (SPACE). <https://bit.ly/3EKU7Pp>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Benni, Niclas. 2021. *Digital Finance and Inclusion in the Time of COVID-19: Lessons, Experiences and Proposals*. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org/3/cb2109en/cb2109en.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Bezerra, Lucila, and Vinícius Sobreira. 2021. "Cortes no PAA: agricultores perdem produção enquanto famílias passam fome em Pernambuco." Brasil de Fato website, 13 August. <https://bit.ly/3Gu5trz>. Accessed 1 December 2021. Bisonó, Arturo. 2021. Personal communication with *Supérate*.

Bisonó, Arturo. 2021. Personal communication with Supérate.

CAF. 2020. *El Estado de La Digitalización de América Latina Frente a La Pandemia Del COVID-19*. Corporación Andina de Fomento. <https://bit.ly/3Gu5pYR>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Carter, Becky, Keetie Roelen, Sue Enfield, and William Avis. 2019. *Digital Social Protection*. Birmingham, UK: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre. <https://gsdrc.org/topic-guides/social-protection/global-issues-and-debates-2/digital-social-protection/>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Chirchir, Richard, and Valentina Barca. 2020. *Building an Integrated and Digital Social Protection Information System*. Bonn and Eschborn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit. <https://bit.ly/3IATj1R>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Cruz, Kelma Christina Melo dos Santos, Gustavo Lund Viegas, and Regina Helena Rosa Sambuichi. 2021. Personal communication with CONAB.

Diario Libre. 2021. "Entrega de Tarjeta Quédate En Casa Se Inicia Hoy." *Diario Libre*, 6 June. <https://bit.ly/335Imol>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

ECLAC. 2020. *Universalizar El Acceso a Las Tecnologías Digitales Para Enfrentar Los Efectos Del COVID-19*. Santiago: United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/45938/4/S2000550_es.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

ECLAC. 2021a. "Base de datos de programas de protección social no contributiva en América Latina y el Caribe: Progresando con Solidaridad (2012-)." United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean website. <https://dds.cepal.org/bpsnc/programa.php?id=91>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

ECLAC. 2021b. "Desarrollo Social y COVID-19 en América Latina y el Caribe." United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean website. <https://dds.cepal.org/observatorio/socialcovid19/fichamedida.php?id=333>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

ECLAC. 2021c. *Tecnologías Digitales para un Nuevo Futuro*. Santiago: United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/46816/1/S2000961_es.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

ECLAC. 2021d. *Panorama Social de América Latina, 2020*. Santiago: United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/46687-panorama-social-america-latina-2020>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

ECLAC. 2021e. *The Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas: A Perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2021-2022*. Santiago: United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://bit.ly/3dFW1Vq>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

ECLAC, FAO, and IICA. 2019. *Perspectivas de La Agricultura y Del Desarrollo Rural En Las Américas: Una Mirada Hacia América Latina y El Caribe 2019-2020*. San José, Costa Rica: Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture. <https://bit.ly/3pLKidX>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

FAO. 2018. *Overview of Rural Poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Santiago: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org/3/ca2275en/CA2275EN.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

FAO. 2019. *FAO Framework on Rural Extreme Poverty: Towards Reaching Target 1.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals*. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org/3/ca4811en/CA4811EN.PDF>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

FAO. 2020a. *Social Protection and COVID-19 Response in Rural Areas*. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org/3/ca8561en/CA8561EN.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

FAO. 2020b. *The Contribution of Social Protection to Economic Inclusion in Rural Areas.* Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org/3/cb2458en/CB2458EN.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

FAO. 2021. *Protecting Livelihoods - Linking Agricultural Insurance and Social Protection*. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org/3/cb2690en/cb2690en.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

FAO and ECLAC. 2020a. "Food Systems and COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean: The Role of Social Protection Measures."

Bulletin, No. 7. Santiago: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/publication/files/45721/ca9435_en.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

FAO and ECLAC. 2020b. "Sistemas Alimentarios y COVID-19 En América Latina y El Caribe: La Oportunidad de La Transformación Digital." Boletín, No. 8. Santiago: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/publication/files/45722/ca9508_es.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

FAO and ECLAC. 2020c. "Sistemas Alimentarios y COVID-19 En América Latina y El Caribe: Medidas de Financiamiento Para Superar La Crisis." *Boletín*, No. 13. Santiago: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/publication/files/46050/cb0710_es.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

FAO and ECLAC. 2021. "Sistemas Alimentarios y COVID-19 En América Latina y El Caribe: Digitalización de La Agricultura Para La Transformación Inclusiva de Sociedades Rurales." *Boletín*, No. 18. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/publication/files/46917/cb4677_es.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

García, Pablo. 2021a. "El Estado Destinará RD$15,000 Millones Para La Extensión de 'Quédate En Casa'." *Diario Libre*, 4 January 2021. <https://www.diariolibre.com/economia/el-estado-destinara-rd-15000-millones-para-la-extension-de-quedate-en-casa-PB23555497>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Gestión. 2020. "Coronavirus Perú: Bono rural S/ 760: hoy se inicia el pago del apoyo económico a más de 800 mil hogares." *Noticias Gestión*, 14 May. <https://bit.ly/3ICTEkP>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Globo Rural. 2021. "Governo Reduz Dinheiro de Programas de Segurança Alimentar Na Pandemia." *Revista Globo Rural*, April. <https://glo.bo/3pG3VUG>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Brazil. 2020. "PAA Compra Institucional." Government of Brazil website. <https://bit.ly/3yhM7mz>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Brazil. 2021. "Portal Do FNDE - PNAE." Government of Brazil website. <https://www.fnde.gov.br/programas/pnae>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Dominican Republic. 2012. *Decreto 488-12*. Santo Domingo: Government of Dominican Republic. <https://bit.ly/3dySGb1>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Dominican Republic. 2020a. "Gobierno lanza un paquete de ayuda económica para proteger a la República Dominicana." Ministerio de Hacienda blog, 27 March. <https://bit.ly/3dRbLW5>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Dominican Republic. 2020b. "Gabinete de Política Social detecta irregularidades en programa Quédate en Casa." Gabinete de Política Social blog, 2 September. <https://gabinetesocial.gob.do/gabinete-de-politica-social-detecta-irregularidades-en-programa-quedate-en-casa/>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Dominican Republic. 2021a. *Decreto 377-21*. Santo Domingo: Government of Dominican Republic. <https://bit.ly/30giSUM>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Dominican Republic. 2021b. "Progresando Con Solidaridad/Progressing with Solidarity: Cifras Seleccionadas/Selected figures (2012-)." <https://bit.ly/33gR1ow>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Peru. 2020a. "Alrededor de 5.3 millones de hogares ya cobraron el bono de S/ 760." Government of Peru website. <https://bit.ly/3IMdgmH>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Peru. 2020b. "Normas Legales." *Diario Oficial El Peruano*, 19 April 2020. <https://bit.ly/3DzF7CJ>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Peru. 2021a. "Acceder al bono rural." Government of Peru website. <https://www.gob.pe/9070-acceder-al-bono-rural>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Peru. 2021b. "Bono Rural Consultar Beneficiarios." Government of Peru website. <https://bit.ly/3oFenMN>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Peru. 2021c. "Sistema de Focalización de Hogares (SISFOH)." Government of Peru website. <https://bit.ly/3lPwtda>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Government of Peru. n.d. "Consultar si tu hogar recibirá el Bono 600." Government of Peru website. <https://bit.ly/3GvlGNi>. Accessed 24 November 2021.

Gupta, Mark Sen. 2020. "What Is Digitization, Digitalization, and Digital Transformation?" ARC Advisory Group blog, 24 March. <ibit.ly/PVMF>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Hammad, Maya, Fabianna Bacil, and Fabio Veras Soares. 2021. "Next Practices—Innovations in the COVID-19 Social Protection Responses and Beyond." *Research Report*, No. 60. Brasília: International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth. <https://ipcig.org/publication/30869?language_content_entity=en>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

ILO. 2021. *Empleo Informal en la Economía Rural de América Latina 2012-2019. Un Panorama y Tendencias Regionales Pre-Pandemia COVID-19*. Lima: International Labour Organization Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://bit.ly/3GxoOIa>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

ILO and FAO. 2021. *Extending Social Protection to Rural Populations: Perspectives for a Common FAO and ILO Approach*. Geneva: International Labour Organization and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb2332en>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

IPC-IG. 2021. "Social Protection Responses to Covid-19 in the Global South - Mapping table." Google Docs. <https://bit.ly/3pKUXWb>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Jung, Juan. 2021. "Mesoamérica Digital 2025: Propuesta Para Una Agenda Digital Mesoamericana." *Desarrollo Productivo*, No. 227. Santigao: United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/46999/1/S2100255_es.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Loza, Javier. 2021. Personal communication with the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion.

Ludeña, María Gabriela Palacio. 2021. "Falling through the Cracks: Digital Infrastructures of Social Protection in Ecuador." *Development and Change*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12664>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Martinez, Rodrigo, Amalia Palma, and Adriana Velásquez. 2020. "Revolución Tecnológica e Inclusión Social: Reflexiones Sobre Desafios y Oportunidades para la Política Social en América Latina." *Políticas Sociales*, No. 233. Santiago: United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://bit.ly/3DGHung>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Ministério da Cidadania. 2019. "PAA Compra Institucional." Ministério da Cidadania website. <https://bit.ly/3GsdlV1>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Ministerio de Desarrollo e Inclusión Social. 2020. "Alrededor de 4.7 millones de hogares ya cobraron el bono de S/ 760." Ministerio de Desarrollo e Inclusión Social website, 4 June. <https://www.gob.pe/institucion/midis/noticias/179010-alrededor-de-4-7-millones-de-hogares-ya-cobraron-el-bono-de-s-760>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Murga, Jan Van Oordt. 2021. Personal communication with Pension 65.

Noticias SIN. 2021. "Prosoli Explica Nuevo Funcionamiento Quédate en Casa." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_AKMUTayNs>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Observatorio de Políticas Sociales y Desarrollo. 2020. *Protección Social y Resiliencia al COVID-19: Volver a Empezar*. Santo Domingo: Observatorio de Políticas Sociales y Desarrollo. <http://www.opsd.gob.do/media/29600/boletin41-proteccion-social-frente-al-covid-19_-2020.pdf>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Oliveira Neto, Alfredo de, and Roseni Pinheiro. 2013. "O que a saúde tem a ver com rádio comunitária?: uma análise de uma experiência em Nova Friburgo - RJ." *Ciência & Saúde Coletiva* 18 (February): 527–536. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1413-81232013000200024>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Plataformas de Acción para la Inclusión Social. n.d. "Plataformas Fijas (Tambos)." Programa Nacional PAIS website. <https://bit.ly/31Ij2EG>. Accessed 16 November 2021.

Prause, Louisa, Sarah Hackfort, and Margit Lindgren. 2021. "Digitalization and the Third Food Regime." *Agriculture and Human Values* 38(3): 641–655. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-020-10161-2>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Presidency of the Dominican Republic. 2021. "Componentes." Supérate website. <https://www.superate.gob.do/nuestras-acciones/componentes/>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

President of the Republic. 2020. "Decreto de Urgencia No. 042-2020." *El Peruano*. <https://bit.ly/3ycDIk8>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Ramirez, Eduardo. 2021. Personal communication with the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Redacción. 2020. "ADESS paga 'Quédate en Casa' a los beneficiarios con cédula." *Periódico El Caribe*, 8 October. <https://bit.ly/3DFkTrb>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Rolon, Camila, Beatriz Burattini, Lucas Sato, Victor Thives, Louisa Wagner, Nicole Figueiredo, Arniela Renique, and Mauricio Mireles. 2022. "Social Protection Response to COVID-19 in Rural LAC: Social and Economic Double Inclusion." Policy Research Brief, No. XXX. Brasília: International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth and Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Røpke, Inge, Toke Haunstrup Christensen, and Jesper Ole Jensen. 2010. "Information and Communication Technologies – A New Round of Household Electrification." Energy Policy 38(4): 1764–1773. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2009.11.052>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Sambuichi, Regina Helena Rosa. 2021. Personal communication with Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada.

Sambuichi, Regina Helena Rosa, Ana Flávia Cordeiro S. de Almeida, Gabriela Perin, Paulo Asafe Campos Spínola, and Antônio Fernando Costa Pella. 2020. "O Programa de Acquisição de Alimentos (PAA): Instrumento de Dinamismo e Econômico, Combate à Pobreza e Promoção da Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional em Tempos de COVID-19." *Nota Technica*, No. 17. Brasília: Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada.

Sambuichi, Regina Helena Rosa, Ricardo Kaminsk, Gabriela Perin, Iracema Ferreira de Moura, Elisângela Sanches Januário, Danilo Barbosa Mendonça, and Ana Flávia Cordeiro Almeida. 2019. "Programa de Aquisição de Alimentos e Segurança Alimentar: Modelo Lógico, Resultados e Desafios de uma Política Pública Voltada ao Fortalecimento da Agricultura Familiar." Texto para Discussão, No. 2482. Brasília: Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada. <https://bit.ly/3GzZbXz>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

SIGRID. 2019. "Mapa de ubicación de Tambos a nivel nacional." Sistema de Información para la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres website. <https://sigrid.cenepred.gob.pe/sigridv3/documento/7969>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Tejero Puntes, Suhelis, and Pablo García. 2021. "Quédate En Casa Finaliza Este Viernes y El Gobierno Evaluará El Futuro de FASE 1." *Diario Libre*, 27 April. <https://www.diariolibre.com/economia/quedate-en-casa-finaliza-este-viernes-y-el-gobierno-evaluara-el-futuro-de-fase-1-MG25891805>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Vasilescu, Maria Denisa, Andreea Claudia Serban, Gina Cristina Dimian, Mirela Ionela Aceleanu, and Xose Picatoste. 2020. "Digital Divide, Skills and Perceptions on Digitalisation in the European Union—Towards a Smart Labour Market." PLOS ONE 15(4): e0232032. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0232032>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

Vilarino, Cleyton. 2021. "Governo reduz dinheiro de programas de segurança alimentar na pandemia." *Revista Globo Rural*, 8 April. <https://revistagloborural.globo.com/Noticias/Economia/noticia/2021/04/governo-reduz-dinheiro-de-programas-de-seguranca-alimentar-na-pandemia.html>. Accessed 1 December 2021.

WWP. n.d. "Apresentação do Cadastro Único Brasileiro." World Without Poverty website. <https://bit.ly/3rUZyHU>. Accessed 7 November 2019.

International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth

SBS, Quadra 1, Bloco J, Ed. BNDES, 13º andar
70076-900 Brasília, DF - Brazil
Telephone: +55 61 2105 5000

ipc@ipc-undp.org ▪ www.ipcig.org

international policy centre for inclusive growth