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# Study on Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Latin America and the Caribbean

El Salvador case study

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## Preface

This report is part of an assignment commissioned by the World Food Programme (WFP) to Oxford Policy Management (OPM, [www.opml.co.uk](http://www.opml.co.uk)). The project manager is Rodolfo Beazley. Please contact Rodolfo for comments or additional information [Rodolfo.Beazley@opml.co.uk](mailto:Rodolfo.Beazley@opml.co.uk) or alternatively Giulia Baldi [Giulia.Baldi@wfp.org](mailto:Giulia.Baldi@wfp.org).

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## Executive summary

### Introduction

There is increasing global recognition, within governments and their partners, of the potential linkages between social protection and disaster risk management (DRM) in responding to and mitigating shocks. In the case of the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region, relatively advanced and large-scale social protection systems appear to be a unique opportunity to support emergency response.

The El Salvador case study forms part of a wider **Study on Shock-Responsive Social Protection in LAC**, commissioned by the World Food Programme (WFP) and undertaken by Oxford Management Policy (OPM), in collaboration with WFP. The study includes a literature review of experiences in the region (Beazley *et al.*, 2016), seven case studies (Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Peru, Dominican Republic, and Dominica), and a final report with the main findings and recommendations to strengthen the role of social protection in shock response in LAC. The following box briefly describes the theoretical framework used in this research.

#### Box 1: Shock-responsive social protection: theoretical framework

Our theoretical framework guides an assessment of the **preparedness** and **responsiveness** of social protection systems to covariate shocks that represent threats to the well-being, health, food security, nutrition, and safety of the population.

##### System preparedness

In this study we assess the level of preparedness of the social protection system based on three programme design and implementation aspects, which could be ‘tweaked’ in advance of a disaster to ensure timely and effective response:

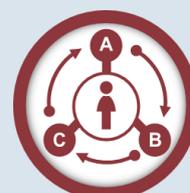
1. **Targeting system and data management** – the capacity of the system to identify and select people affected by shocks
2. **Delivery mechanisms** – the capacity to transfer cash or in-kind support
3. **Coordination and financing** – the capacity to align resources and actors for an integrated response



Targeting system and data management



Delivery mechanism



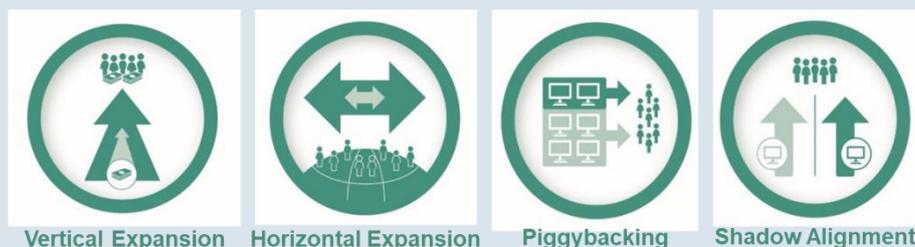
Coordination & financing

##### System response

When policy-makers consider the use of a social protection system to address emergency needs, there are a number of strategies that they may employ to scale up the overall level of support that the system provides to vulnerable people:

1. **Vertical expansion**: increasing the benefit value or duration of an existing programme or system;

2. **Horizontal expansion:** adding new beneficiaries to an existing programme or system;
3. **Piggybacking:** a response in which humanitarian actors or governments use part of the administrative capacity of the national social protection system to channel their support;
4. **Shadow alignment:** developing a parallel humanitarian system that aligns as well as possible with a current or possible future social protection programme.



Sources: OPM (2015) and Beazley *et al.* (2016).

## Non-contributory social protection in El Salvador<sup>1</sup>

Since its origin, El Salvador's non-contributory social protection system has played a responsive role, i.e. assisting the population affected by shocks. El Salvador was hit by the global crisis of 2008, even more severely than other LAC countries due to its high dependence on remittances from the United States (Acosta *et al.*, 2012). It was in response to this crisis that the government designed the Universal Social Protection System (*Sistema de Protección Social Universal: SPSU*), conceived as a social policy tool based on a human rights approach (Ocampo, 2016). Its cross-cutting themes are the promotion of equity and equality between women and men, and the specificity of the life cycle approach (Government of El Salvador, 2012).

**El Salvador's non-contributory social protection system is still young and in the process of development and transition.** In 2017, the Poverty Eradication Strategy (*Estrategia de Erradicación de la Pobreza*) was first implemented, including a series of changes in social protection programmes, with the objective of 'addressing fundamental human rights; creating sustainable livelihoods and strengthening productive and human assets; and increasing capacities to address vulnerability' (Technical Secretariat and Presidency Planning [*Secretaría Técnica y de Planificación de la Presidencia: SETEPLAN*], 2017).

As of 2017, the main programmes of the non-contributory social protection system are:

- **Comunidades Solidarias Rurales (CSR)**, which began in 2005 under the name *Red Solidaria*, is implemented in 100 rural municipalities in conditions of severe and high extreme poverty. CSR includes the cash transfer programmes **Pensión Básica Universal (PBU)** for older adults and **health and education allowances**. PBU is an unconditional cash transfer programme, while the health and education allowances are conditioned on co-responsibilities in those sectors.

<sup>1</sup> The contributory social protection system has low coverage, so its potential to respond is more limited; therefore, we focus on the non-contributory system.

- The **Programa de Alimentación y Salud Escolar (PASE)**, implemented by the Ministry of Education (*Ministerio de Educación: MINED*), provides students with a daily snack. It delivers beans, rice, sugar, oil, fortified drinks, and dried milk, the latter to schools that are not receiving liquid milk (*Vaso de Leche*) yet. Students' parents are in charge of preparing and delivering the snacks.
- The **Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería: MAG)** provides assistance to small producers through the delivery of **Paquetes Agrícolas** containing corn and beans. This programme, with national coverage, aims to provide the conditions for the production of quality basic food at affordable prices.

**The social protection system has a limited geographical coverage.** The programmes implemented by the Social Investment Fund for Local Development (*Fondo de Inversión Social para el Desarrollo Local: FISDL*)<sup>2</sup> do not have presence in all the 262 municipalities, but only in 100 rural municipalities and 25 urban municipalities. According to the World Bank, both the expenditure and coverage of CSR, the main non-contributory cash transfer scheme, are among the lowest in Central America (World Bank, 2015a). Outside FISDL's orbit, PASE and *Paquete Agrícola* are the main social programmes with national coverage.

**Both the CSR and Comunidades Solidarias Urbanas (CSU) cash transfer programmes have experienced significant payment delays.** CSR and CSU state that transfers are to be made every four months but this was not achieved in 2015, 2016, and 2017. In 2017, for example, a single payment was made in the last quarter of the year.

Following our methodology, we have studied the mechanisms of targeting and delivery of the social protection system as well as its coordination with actors involved in the response to emergencies.

## Targeting and data management

**Targeting is one of the pillars of El Salvador's non-contributory social protection system.** FISDL's programmes combine geographic, categorical (i.e. age range), and income targeting criteria. Yet the new Poverty Eradication Strategy seeks to assist only the poorest people according to the Prioritisation Index of the Unique Registry of Participants (*Índice de Priorización del Registro Único de Participantes: IRUP*).

The **Registro Único de Participantes (RUP)** is a social registry that includes families that might access certain type of state assistance, and contains structured, systematised, and standardised information that allows identifying, learning, and segmenting the socioeconomic characteristics of individuals and households. The RUP aims to become the main targeting tool in non-contributory social protection as well as other sectors. The **IRUP** is an algorithm that estimates the quality of life of households and produces a household ranking. The objective is that all governmental social policy programmes conduct their targeting using the IRUP ranking, establishing cut-off points based on their particular objectives and budget constraints.

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<sup>2</sup> FISDL is a governmental institution that implements some of the country's main non-contributory social protection programmes.

**The RUP is a system still under development.** First, only FISDL uses it for targeting. Although MINED and MAG share their data with the RUP, they do not use the system to select beneficiaries. Second, the system is not interconnected yet, so the different state agencies cannot access RUP data at will. Third, although the different data collection and updating strategies are encouraging, it is important to evaluate their effectiveness. The difficulty and high cost of updating data are typical barriers faced by social registries in LAC and globally (Barca, 2017). Finally, the RUP coverage is still very limited; it only includes 16% of the population (as of 2017).

**The effectiveness of the RUP in the identification of people living in poverty is still to be determined, as is its potential to recognise those in a situation of vulnerability.** These kinds of algorithm – i.e. proxy means tests – are typically designed to detect long-term conditions (such as chronic poverty or belonging to a certain age group) and not to detect sudden changes in welfare and livelihood (Beazley *et al.*, 2016), although this does not mean that they cannot provide useful information for emergency response.

## Delivery mechanisms

**The vast majority of FISDL cash transfers are delivered manually.** The government makes payments through banks, which stage in-person operations. FISDL has tested mechanisms of bank transfers (without bank account and taking payments at the counter) and mobile money, but in only a few municipalities and without the expected results, as reported by the officials interviewed for this research.

One of the biggest barriers for the creation of an e-payment system is the low coverage of the banking system. According to World Bank estimates, El Salvador is the Central American country with the lowest number of commercial bank branches *per capita*.

## Coordination and financing

In the section below, we show how the Civil Protection, Prevention, and Disaster Mitigation Law does not provide social protection an active role in emergency response. This results in the absence of coordination mechanisms between civil protection and social protection.

With regard to emergency response financing, El Salvador has the following *ex ante* financing strategies:

- The Fund for Civil Protection, Prevention, and Disaster Mitigation (*Fondo de Protección Civil, Prevención y Mitigación de Desastres*: FOPROMID), administered by the Ministry of Finance (*Ministerio de Hacienda*), which consists of a US\$4 million fund for prevention and emergency response; and
- A contingent loan from Japan for US\$50 million, which is implemented in case of any of the events previously established.

As for *ex post* strategies, reallocation of budgetary resources and eventual international assistance are the most frequent ones.

## Social protection, civil protection, and resilience

### Social protection and civil protection

Although every governmental agency participates in the National System of Civil Protection, Prevention, and Disaster Mitigation (*Sistema Nacional de Protección Civil, Prevención y Mitigación de Desastres*: SNPC), **social protection does not play a significant role in the national civil protection plan**. So far, interaction, coordination, and joint work between civil protection and social protection has been minimal. Some points to highlight in this regard are the following:

- SNPC is formed by eight technical sectoral committees, including the Technical Logistics Committee, coordinated by the armed forces and in charge of national humanitarian aid. However, it is not clear what entity is responsible for providing assistance after the delivery of food and basic needs immediately after a shock.
- FISDL is only part of one committee, the Infrastructure and Basic Services Committee (*Comisión de Infraestructura y Servicios Básicos*), and this is because of its mandate in the reconstruction of local infrastructure. Thus, its capacity and experience in assisting vulnerable populations is not exploited by the civil protection strategy.
- PASE is not involved in any committee, although MINED is.
- There are no protocols for responding through social protection programmes, either through vertical or horizontal expansions or piggybacking responses, for example.
- The civil protection strategy does not contemplate the use of RUP data.
- The national civil protection strategy is focused on prevention, mitigation, and response to rapid-onset disasters; to date, the Dry Corridor droughts have not been considered emergencies and have, therefore, been left outside the orbit of civil protection.

### Social protection and resilience

As with many other countries, the vulnerability to which the population of El Salvador is exposed is multifactorial. This is detailed in the study '*Hambre sin fronteras*' (WFP, 2017), which presents a scenario beyond those caused by the effects of climate change. However, for purposes of this study we will mainly focus on the effects of climate change, which lead to the need to implement strategies to strengthen the resilience of communities and of the population, including in regard to migration. This is particularly relevant for the regions exposed to recurrent shocks, such as the Dry Corridor, or the coastal area floods, and for the people who live off of agriculture.

Social protection systems can contribute not only to the response to emergencies caused by climate change (Beazley *et al.*, 2016; OPM, 2015) but can also help individuals and communities adapt to climate effects, reduce risks, and become more resilient (Davies *et al.*, 2013).

**However, the main non-contributory social protection programmes have not been designed or adapted to promote resilience.** As for FISDL's transfer programmes, they have no national coverage and the areas where they are implemented are chosen based on structural poverty maps, not in relation to vulnerability to climate change. Second, delays in the payment of transfers and the

uncertainty about when allowances will be delivered reduce their effectiveness and potential effect on resilience. Third, these programmes are designed and implemented with little or no coordination with other important actors in the area of resilience, such as MAG or the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (*Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales*: MARN). As for the in-kind transfer programmes studied in this research, PASE – presumably due to the type of aid it provides, the amount, and its frequency – seems to have a more limited role in strengthening resilience. The *Paquete Agrícola*, on the other hand, does have that potential, since it contributes to the production of small producers. However, the programme does not seek to promote crop diversity, for example, which is something of utmost importance for small producers' resilience, or include co-responsibilities or actions for the care of the environment.

**The lack of a strategy to strengthen the resilience of the population affected by climate change should be noted.** It is also unclear who has the mandate to promote the population's resilience.

## **Policy recommendations: Toward a more shock-responsive social protection system**

**El Salvador's non-contributory social protection system is still young, so the first recommendation is to continue along the path of system development and strengthening.** Regional and global experience shows that the most mature systems, in the sense that they are financed and directed by the government, are solidly established, have broad coverage, and tend to be more capable of responding (Beazley *et al.*, 2016 and OPM, 2015).

**It is important not to overburden this still young system.** While El Salvador's level of vulnerability calls for an exploration of the use of social protection in emergency response and in strengthening the population's resilience, it is important to avoid imposing burdens that the system cannot withstand. It is therefore necessary to make a careful analysis to evaluate which aspects of a more responsive and flexible system can be incorporated at this stage, and which ones should wait.

**A first step toward a more responsive social protection system would be to determine and assign social protection a role in the national civil protection plan and to create the corresponding normative framework.** This is the appropriate place to determine the response strategy from the social protection standpoint. For such a decision, joint work among the Directorate General of Civil Protection, Prevention, and Mitigation (*Dirección General de Protección Civil, Prevención y Mitigación de Desastres*: DGPC), SETEPLAN, FISDL, and other entities will be indispensable.

**Within the revision of the national civil protection plan, we recommend strengthening and expanding the capacities of the technical committee of national short-term humanitarian aid or early recovery.** Currently, the Logistics Committee is responsible for the distribution of in-kind assistance during the first days of an emergency. However, after such support and depending on the type, magnitude, and duration of the emergency, supplementary humanitarian aid may be necessary, through cash transfers, housing assistance and livelihood recovery support, as has occurred in recent emergencies in other countries in the region (Beazley *et al.*, 2016).

**When determining the role of social protection, it will be necessary to evaluate the possibility of expanding some programmes horizontally or vertically.** This will require comparing the coverage of social protection programmes with vulnerability maps and agricultural schedules. El Salvador now has an updated edition of livelihood maps by department. The Dry Corridor, being a recurrent shock, offers an opportunity to plan the social protection response in good time.

- **Vertical expansion** – FISDL’s cash transfer programmes could increase the amount of their transfers during droughts, or PASE could provide take-home food rations, for example. Such vertical expansions seem affordable within current administrative capacity.
- **Horizontal expansion** – FISDL’s current capacity in areas of the country where it has ongoing programmes could allow for the temporary incorporation of affected families. The main challenge lies in how to identify the affected.

In the case of the Dry Corridor, since it is a recurrent and slow-onset shock, RUP data could be used to identify vulnerable families that are not receiving cash transfers (additional information may need to be collected with the RUP).

Alternatively, protocols could be established for targeting at the local level, either through municipalities or community committees, for example. Such protocols must be developed prior to the shock, the staff involved should be trained, and the processes and systems should be adapted.

Horizontal expansion into municipalities where FISDL does not have coverage would be a major challenge. In those municipalities, we recommend looking for alternative assistance strategies. PASE, given its national coverage, offers opportunities in this sense, although its capacity to expand in a sudden way should be carefully evaluated. However, protocols could be developed to at least allow for the use of available food stocks beyond solely those schools functioning as shelters.

**Table 1: Recommendations by process**

Process	Recommendations
<b>Targeting and data management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the interoperability of the RUP and the information it contains on the participants of different programmes.</li> <li>• Evaluating the effectiveness of the RUP to identify poor people and study the possibility of adapting this tool to identify people vulnerable to climatic shocks such as droughts and floods.</li> <li>• Incorporating into the RUP information about cooperation agencies’ programmes and allowing an agile exchange of information.</li> <li>• Using the RUP for targeting in all targeted social programmes, while allowing each programme to establish its criteria based on the information available.</li> <li>• Evaluating the creation of an index to identify vulnerable households, particularly those vulnerable to droughts and floods, which are so recurrent in some areas of the country.</li> <li>• Geo-referencing households in the RUP, thus mapping all people in the system, which can be extremely useful in emergency response.</li> <li>• Evaluating and improving the different existing strategies for updating and collecting data for the RUP.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing emergency protocols and adapting targeting systems and/or programme rules for the expansions foreseen in the national civil protection plan.</li> <li>• Protocols for horizontal and vertical expansions could be linked to early warning indicators.</li> <li>• Incorporating into the Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (<i>Evaluación de Daños y Análisis de Necesidades</i>: EDAN) form the information needed for expanding social protection programmes (if it were decided to incorporate these strategies into the national plan), and ensuring that the EDAN database can be linked to that of the RUP. Also, ensuring that municipalities and departments have the capacity to carry out EDANs in emergency contexts.</li> <li>• Updating poverty maps or creating new maps with more recent information.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Delivery mechanisms</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoiding delays in the transfer of benefits that affect the credibility of the programmes and its impact.</li> <li>• Developing protocols that ensure the operational continuity of the current delivery system in emergency contexts (FISDL, PASE, and <i>Paquetes Agrícolas</i>).</li> <li>• Evaluating the feasibility of making extraordinary payments if the intention is to incorporate programme expansions into the national civil protection strategy.</li> <li>• Preparing the delivery system accordingly; for example, defining standby agreements with service providers to expand existing delivery systems.</li> <li>• When considering and evaluating new mechanisms for delivering FISDL's transfers, as intended by the government, taking into account their flexibility and the possibility of operating and expanding in emergency contexts.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Coordination and financing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social protection could make use of civil protection tools, such as vulnerability maps, to identify geographic areas where vertical or horizontal expansions could be planned or to collect additional data for the RUP, or early warning indicators to initiate social support, as in the case of the Dry Corridor.</li> <li>• Civil protection could make use of social protection tools. The RUP, for example, contains rich information on an important segment of the population, which could be valuable for civil protection actions.</li> <li>• Social protection programmes could be used as a means of spreading civil protection information. Thus, for example, FISDL's programmes could incorporate in their training short modules (or capsules) with information on risk prevention and mitigation.</li> <li>• Jointly organising training workshops and conferences on social and civil protection.</li> <li>• We recommend evaluating the need to incorporate more <i>ex ante</i> financing strategies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resilience</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a multisectoral national strategy for strengthening the resilience of the population and communities, with clear roles and mandates for MAG and MARN, and considering the role of social protection programmes.</li> <li>• Seeking to ensure that the <i>Paquete Agrícola</i> is related not only to production assistance but also to resilience activities and crop diversification, maybe as co-responsibility for the delivery of the subsidy.</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coordinating with the international cooperation agencies so that their resilience programmes follow the ‘shadow alignment’ response logic; that is, that programmes are designed and implemented so that the government can implement or replicate them in the future.</li></ul> |
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## List of abbreviations

CCRIF	<i>Fondo de Seguro contra Riesgos de Catástrofe para el Caribe</i> (Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility)
CCT	Conditional cash transfer
CSR	<i>Comunidades Solidarias Rurales</i> (Rural Solidarity Communities)
CSU	<i>Comunidades Solidarias Urbanas</i> (Urban Solidarity Communities)
DGPC	<i>Dirección General de Protección Civil, Prevención y Mitigación de Desastres</i> (Directorate General of Civil Protection, Prevention, and Mitigation)
DIGESTYC	<i>Dirección General de Estadísticas y Censos</i> (General Statistics and Census Administration)
DRM	Disaster risk management
ECLAC	UN Economic Commission for LAC
EDAN	<i>Evaluación de Daños y Análisis de Necesidades</i> (Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis)
FISDL	<i>Fondo de Inversión Social para el Desarrollo Local</i> (Social Investment Fund for Local Development)
FOPROMID	<i>Fondo de Protección Civil, Prevención y Mitigación de Desastres</i> (Fund for Civil Protection, Prevention, and Disaster Mitigation)
IRUP	<i>Índice de Priorización del Registro Único de Participantes</i> (Prioritisation Index of the Unique Registry of Participants)
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MAG	<i>Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería</i> (Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock)
MARN	<i>Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales</i> (Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources)
MGDT	<i>Ministerio de Gobernación y Desarrollo Territorial</i> (Ministry of Government and Territorial Development)
MINED	<i>Ministerio de Educación</i> (Ministry of Education)
OPM	Oxford Management Policy
PASE	<i>Programa de Alimentación y Salud Escolar</i> (School Food and Health Programme)

PATI	<i>Programa de Apoyo Temporal al Ingreso</i> (Temporary Income Support Programme)
PBU	<i>Pensión Básica Universal</i> (Universal Basic Pension)
PROACT	<i>Proyecto Respuesta al Fenómeno de El Niño en el Corredor Seco de Centroamérica</i> (Project Response to the El Niño Phenomenon in the Dry Corridor of Central America)
RUP	<i>Registro Único de Participantes</i> (Unique Registry of Participants)
SETEPLAN	<i>Secretaría Técnica y de Planificación de la Presidencia</i> (Technical Secretariat and Presidency Planning)
SNPC	<i>Sistema Nacional de Protección Civil, Prevención y Mitigación de Desastres</i> (National System of Civil Protection, Prevention, and Disaster Mitigation)
SPSU	<i>Sistema de Protección Social Universal</i> (Universal Social Protection System)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme

# 1 Introduction

There is increasing global recognition of the promising linkages between social protection and DRM in responding to and mitigating shocks. This recognition has been clearly expressed, for example, in the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit by SPIAC-B<sup>3</sup> commitment to ‘support the further expansion and strengthening of social protection systems to continue to address chronic vulnerabilities and to scale up the utilisation of social protection as a means of responding to shocks and protracted crises.’ In the same line, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, approved by the UN in September 2015, clearly points toward the creation of social protection systems that allow all people to enjoy a basic standard of living.

In LAC, natural disasters<sup>4</sup> have occurred increasingly and more frequently since the 1960s: there were 19 disasters per year in the 1960s but 68 per year in the first decade of the twenty-first century (UN Economic Commission for LAC (ECLAC), 2015). For this reason, the adoption of mitigation measures to reduce the population's exposure to natural disasters and to restore infrastructure, together with economic and social measures, is becoming increasingly essential.

Meanwhile, social protection systems in LAC have evolved and expanded substantially in the last few decades, with, for example, the percentage of gross domestic product allocated to public social investment growing from 15% in 2000 to 19.1% in 2012 (ECLAC, 2015). Cash transfers have become part of virtually every social protection system in the developing world (World Bank, 2015b) and LAC was a pioneer in developing sophisticated programmes with multiple objectives, such as conditional cash transfers (CCTs), which have been replicated worldwide. The proportion of the population benefitting from CCTs in LAC, for example, increased from 5.7% to 21.1% between 2000 and 2012 (ECLAC, 2015).

In this light, fairly advanced social protection systems and large-scale safety nets seem to provide a unique opportunity to support shock response in LAC. However, social protection systems can involve conflicting objectives, target populations, and operational processes when compared to humanitarian interventions and institutions. This can impede their ability to play a role in accommodating additional demand for assistance at the time of an emergency.

This El Salvador case study forms part of a wider ***Study on Shock-Responsive Social Protection in LAC***, commissioned by WFP and undertaken by OPM in collaboration with WFP. The study includes a literature review of experiences in the

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<sup>3</sup> The Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board (SPIAC-B) is an inter-agency coordination mechanism to enhance global coordination and advocacy on social protection issues and to coordinate international cooperation in country demand-driven actions. SPIAC's board is chaired by the World Bank and ILO and includes representatives of ADB, IFAD, IMF, ISSA, FAO, OECD, UN-DESA, UNDP, UNESCO, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, UN Women, WHO, WFP, and others.

<sup>4</sup> According to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (2009), disaster is defined as a severe disruption in the functioning of a community or society, causing a large number of deaths, as well as material, economic, and environmental losses and impacts that exceed the capacity of the affected community or society to cope with the situation with its own resources. It is often described as the result of a combination of exposure to a hazard, present conditions of vulnerability, and insufficient abilities or measures to reduce or cope with potential negative consequences.

region (Beazley *et al.*, 2016), seven case studies (Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Peru, Dominican Republic, and Dominica), and a final report with the main findings and recommendations to strengthen the role of social protection in shock response in LAC.

The objective of this study is to generate evidence and inform practice for improved emergency preparedness and response in LAC linked to more flexible national social protection systems. The main research question for the study is: **What factors enable social protection systems to be more responsive<sup>5</sup> to shocks?**

Following this short introduction, the next section in this case study briefly frames the context in terms of poverty and vulnerability in El Salvador. Section 3 presents the theoretical framework employed and the methodology used, while Section 4 outlines the non-contributory social protection system. Section 5 presents aspects related to the link between social protection, civil protection, and resilience. Section 6 proposes recommendations to make the country's social protection system more responsive to emergencies and, finally, Section 7 summarises the most important aspects of this case study.

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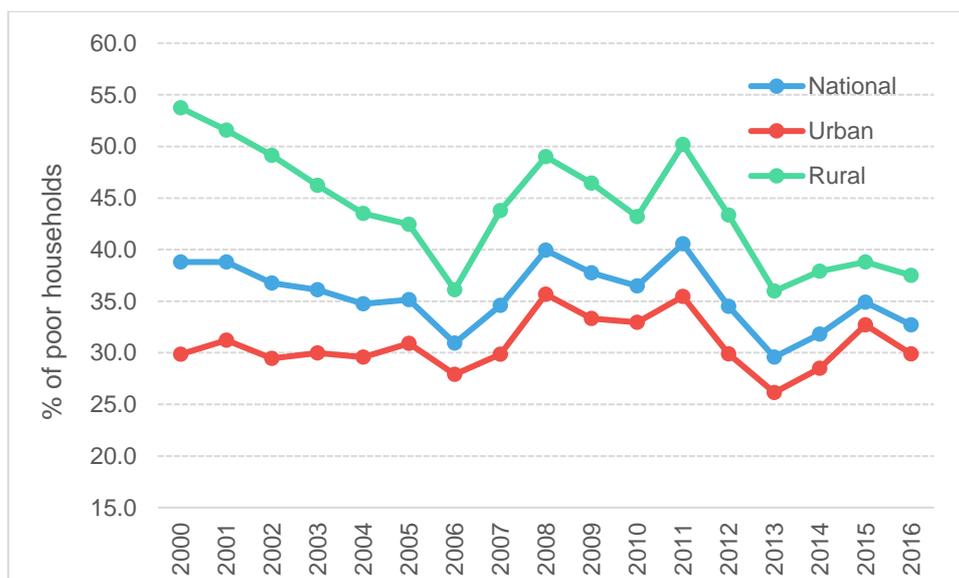
<sup>5</sup> The term *responsive* is used to describe the reaction of social protection systems to exogenous risks or shocks that affect the well-being of people (Beazley *et.al.*, 2016).

## 2 Poverty and vulnerability in El Salvador

**Poverty levels continue to be high in El Salvador, particularly in the country’s rural areas.** In 2016, 32.7% of the country’s households were below the poverty line; in rural areas, it reached 37.5% and in urban areas 29.9% that same year. Extreme poverty, on the other hand, reached 8% nationwide.

**Poverty is at levels similar to those of a decade ago.** Although a significant drop is observed when compared to the figures of 15 years ago, reduction in the last decade has been moderate. In 2007, 34.6% of households were living in poverty.

**Figure 1: Monetary poverty in El Salvador**



Source: General Statistics and Census Administration (*Dirección General de Estadísticas y Censos: DIGESTYC*)

**Along with the rest of Central America, El Salvador has seen a steady increase in extreme events (storms, floods, and droughts) over the past 30 years, with impacts on the population and the economy.** From 2000 to 2009, for example, there were 39 hurricanes in Central America compared to 15 in the 1980s and nine in the 1990s (United States Agency for International Development (USAID), 2017).

**The geography of El Salvador is affected by the ‘Dry Corridor’, which is characterised by recurrent droughts and intense rainfall.** The Dry Corridor is an eco-region of dry tropical forest highly affected by human activity (Solórzano, 2017). It extends from Chiapas, in the south of Mexico, to Costa Rica, and covers a strip along Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Cyclical droughts occur in this territory, many of which are closely related to the El Niño phenomenon. Droughts in the Dry Corridor are due to both biological and human factors. Much of the region has rainfall below 1,000 mm per year, which is why the semi-arid climate prevails (Solórzano, 2017). Water scarcity is not only due to the natural variability of rainfall associated with El Niño, however, but also to growing water demand, lower water recharge related to deforestation, lack of coordination in water distribution, river extraction, and extraction of surface aquifers (Guerra, 2016b).

Small farmers are severely affected by climate change. Severe deforestation and soil degradation have negatively impacted agricultural lands, and only a fraction of the country's historical forest cover remains, increasing the country's vulnerability to climate variability and change (USAID, 2017). Lack of access to irrigation systems and low soil productivity also negatively affect subsistence farmers.

Slow-onset shocks, such as prolonged drought in the Dry Corridor, are often the result of cumulative socio-ecological drivers that increase the vulnerability of households. If livelihoods are not fully recovered after a shock, households may stay trapped in poverty, increasing the risk of food insecurity (Solórzano, 2017).

In addition to the effects of the Dry Corridor, **certain regions of El Salvador are affected by recurrent flooding**. The country is in the path of storms from both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, which have increased in frequency and intensity in recent decades. The 307km Pacific coast is already experiencing rising sea levels and 10–28% of the country's coastal territory is expected to be lost by the end of the century. Coastal areas, home to more than 30% of the population, are highly vulnerable to the combination of rising sea levels and El Niño events (USAID, 2017).

## 3 Research methodology

In this section, we present a framework that helps us understand the two key dimensions of a shock-responsive social protection scheme: system preparedness and responsiveness. We also present the overarching research questions and describe briefly the tools and fieldwork.

### 3.1 Theoretical framework

#### 3.1.1 System preparedness

In this study, we assess the level of preparedness of the social protection system based on three aspects that are essential for a prompt and effective response: **targeting system and data management**, **delivery mechanisms**, and **coordination and financing**. Below we describe each of these in turn. Although these are not the only three factors involved in effective preparedness, both international experience and the relevant literature highlight how crucial they are (Bastagli, 2004; OPM, 2016).

**Figure 2: Typology of system preparedness for shock-responsive social protection**



Source: Author.

#### Targeting and data management

Social protection programmes tend to rely on a variety of targeting mechanisms, including demographic, geographic, and poverty targeting. Many of these mechanisms are designed to detect well-established conditions – for example, chronic poverty or belonging to a certain age group – and rely on the use of administrative registries and household surveys. Consequently, they are not conceived as tools to detect sudden changes to well-being and livelihoods. In order to be effective in emergency response, it is necessary to engage during the planning and preparation phase in an assessment of existing targeting tools, then adapting them or creating new complementary systems, to be able to reach recipients affected by different kinds of shock.

#### Delivery mechanisms

Rapid delivery of either cash or in-kind benefits is of course crucial for effective support. During emergencies, the capacity to deliver faces challenges due to the

urgency of the situation, the constraints imposed by the particular shock (such as infrastructure or local markets collapse), and the coordination of different actors (Bastagli, 2014).

Delivery mechanisms implemented by social protection schemes typically include manual transfers, delivery through a banking system, and mobile money and other types of e-payments. Some of these mechanisms – e-payments, for example – have the potential to be rapidly scaled up during emergencies. However, these systems need to be foreseen, developed, and tested prior to a crisis.

### Coordination and financing

Preparedness should also include a significant level of planning and coordination among the actors involved in emergency response. This includes not only actors in the social protection field but also, and mainly, those working in DRM and humanitarian aid. This involves international, national, and subnational levels, as well as governmental and non-governmental organisations.

However, the challenge of achieving coordination among these different actors should not be underestimated. The social protection and DRM sectors not only have different objectives and target populations (with some areas of intersection, though not all areas intersect) and different methodologies and traditions, but most importantly they also involve different actors and institutional interests.

The availability of resources is also a determining factor for emergency preparedness and response. There are different forms of *ex ante* and *ex post* financing that allow governments to have the necessary resources to respond, whether through social protection or not.

### 3.1.2 System response

When policymakers consider the use of a social protection system to address emergency needs, there are a number of strategies that they may employ to scale up the overall level of support that the system provides to vulnerable people. Based on OPM (2015) and O'Brien *et al.* (2018), we consider four main types of scale-up.<sup>6</sup> These can be used in combination.

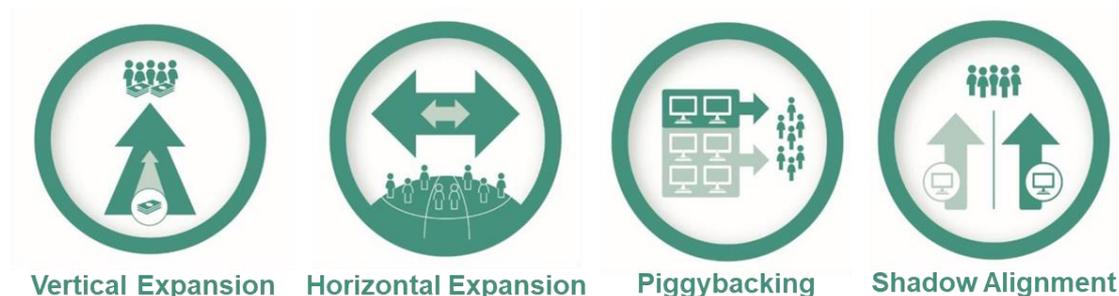
1. **Vertical expansion:** increasing the benefit value or duration of an existing programme or system:
  - adjustment of transfer amounts/values;
  - introduction of extraordinary payments or transfers;
2. **Horizontal expansion:** adding new recipients (temporarily or longer term) to an existing programme or system:

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<sup>6</sup> The original theoretical framework proposed by OPM (2015) and adapted to this study included an additional strategy: **Refocusing:** adjusting the social protection system to refocus assistance on groups most vulnerable to the shock. However, since no such experiences have been found in the region, and following O'Brien *et al.* (2018), we have decided to exclude this fifth type of response from the current analysis.

- extension of the geographical coverage of an existing programme or system;
  - extraordinary enrolment campaign;
  - modifications of eligibility criteria;
  - relaxation of requirements/conditionalities to facilitate greater participation;
3. **Piggybacking**: response in which humanitarian actors use part of the administrative framework of the national social protection system to channel their assistance.
4. **Shadow alignment**: developing a parallel humanitarian system that aligns as best as possible with the national current or possible future social protection programme.

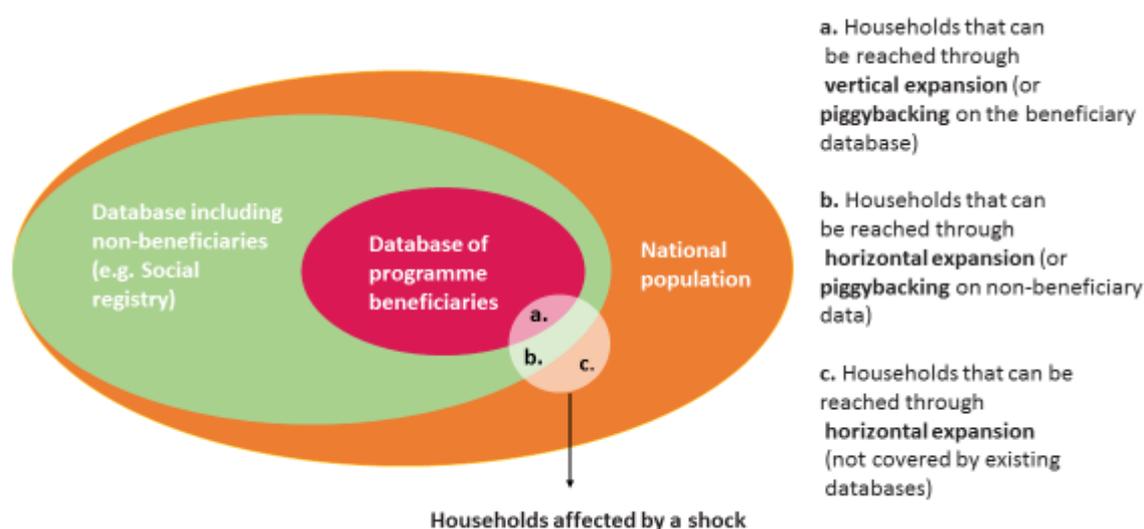
**Figure 3: Typology of shock-responsive social protection**



Source: OPM (2015).

Before moving on to the next section, it is important to describe the central challenge that social protection systems face in responding to emergencies according to the typology presented. First, **the basis of the targeting challenge is the fact that the households affected by the shocks are not necessarily beneficiaries of existing social protection programmes or included in the social registry or other registries** (see Figure 4). Consequently, despite having strong targeting programmes and systems, horizontal expansion would be necessary in any case. However, the greater the coverage of programmes and registries, and the better the quality of the data they contain, the easier it will be to respond. In principle, if beneficiaries of social protection programmes could be easily reached with vertical expansion and non-beneficiaries whose information is in the registries could be easily reached with horizontal expansion, then the challenge would only be in reaching those affected households that do not belong to any of these two categories.

**Figure 4: Targeting challenge in the expansion of a responsive social protection**



Source: Adapted from OPM (2015)

## 3.2 Overarching research questions

The main research question for the study is: **What factors enable social protection systems to be more responsive to shocks?** With this in mind, we have developed a number of overarching questions to guide the analysis:

- What relevant national and local laws, regulations and policies exist in relation to shock-responsive social protection?
- What priorities does the national social protection strategy signal, for example in addressing poverty, vulnerability, resilience, etc.? Does it offer a role for shock response?
- What targeting mechanisms are used by the largest social protection programmes? How are recipients identified? How frequently? Does a national database exist? Is it integrated with other databases?
- How are the benefits of the main social protection programmes delivered (both cash and in-kind)?
- What design and implementation features of the social protection system have elements of flexibility and adaptability to facilitate rapid and adequate shock response?
- What is the evidence of the effectiveness – in terms of promptness and adequacy (for example, coverage and transfer levels) – of social protection support in the event of each of the major shocks identified?
- Has there been any recent experience of coordination between, or integration of, social protection and DRM policies?
- Is there space for dialogue and collaboration between these two sectors? How could this dialogue be promoted?

### 3.3 Research tools and fieldwork

The research in El Salvador consisted of three phases: a literature review, fieldwork, and analysis. In relation to the first phase, we conducted a thorough review of legislation, policy plans and strategies, manuals of operations, periodic reports, and programme reviews and evaluations. Our theoretical framework and the research questions presented above guided the review. This analysis is based on the review of literature about experiences in LAC conducted as part of this work (Beazley *et al.*, 2016) and the review of world literature conducted by OPM (OPM, 2016).

Fieldwork was conducted from 27 November to 5 December 2017. The research team was led by Rodolfo Beazley (OPM) with the participation of Elia Martínez, Rafael Guillén, and Jaime Hernández (WFP country office). Research took place in San Salvador and the departments of Morazán in the Dry Corridor and Usulután in the coastal area, both usually affected by floods. The research tools used were:

- **Key informant interviews:** We interviewed key informants from SETEPLAN, FISDL, MINED, PASE, MAG, DGPC, MARN, UN agencies such as the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, civil society organisations such as *Plan Internacional* and Save the Children, and the governors of San Miguel and Usulután, among others. These interviews serve to triangulate findings from other data sources. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, supplemented by selected tools.
- **Morazán and Usulután case studies:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted in households affected by droughts in the Dry Corridor. We interviewed beneficiaries of FISDL’s programmes, *Paquete Agrícola* and PASE, and of resilience programmes. Local officials, such as governors, and FISDL and DGPC experts were also interviewed.

The list of key informant interviewees can be found in Annex A.

The third phase consisted of analysing the data collected and findings of the literature review and answering the research questions. Preliminary results were shared for review with WFP staff of the regional office and country office.

## 4 Non-contributory social protection in El Salvador

**Since its origin, El Salvador's non-contributory social protection system has played a responsive role, i.e. assisting the population affected by shocks.** El Salvador was hit by the global crisis of 2008, even more severely than other LAC countries due to its high dependence on remittances from the United States (Acosta *et al.*, 2012). It was in response to this crisis that the government designed the SPSU, conceived as a social policy tool based on the human rights approach (Ocampo, 2016). Its cross-cutting themes are the promotion of equity and equality between women and men, and the specificity of the life cycle approach (Government of El Salvador, 2012).

In 2014, the Social Development and Protection Law was passed, and this represented an important step in the institutionalisation of non-contributory social protection, no longer in response to a global crisis but as an essential pillar for guaranteeing the rights of the population. This law created the National System of Development, Protection and Social Inclusion (*Sistema Nacional de Desarrollo, Protección e Inclusión Social*), the aim of which is to coordinate the implementation and enforcement of social policy, which includes, in turn, the Universal Social Protection Subsystem (*Subsistema de Protección Social Universal*) – the governmental body in charge of coordinating social protection programmes.

In the absence of a ministry in charge of non-contributory social protection, it is fragmented among different institutions. The main national governmental actors responsible for non-contributory social protection are: the Social Management and Inclusion Cabinet, coordinated by MINSAL and composed of a wide range of actors; SETEPLAN, in charge of design and planning; FISDL, the executing agency; and other ministries such as MINED and MAG, which implement their own social programmes.

**El Salvador's non-contributory social protection system is still young and in the process of development and transition.** In 2017, the Poverty Eradication Strategy was first implemented, including a series of changes in social protection programmes, with the objective of 'addressing fundamental human rights; creating sustainable livelihoods and strengthening productive and human assets; and increasing capacities to address vulnerability' (SETEPLAN, 2017).

The main programmes and entities of the non-contributory social protection system are described below, focusing on FISDL's transfer programmes. After that, we present a brief analysis of the characteristics and performance of the system.

### 4.1 Main programmes of the non-contributory social protection system

**CSR**, which began in 2005 under the name *Red Solidaria*, is implemented in 100 rural municipalities in conditions of severe and high extreme poverty, according to the 2005 poverty map. This is done through four axes: i) territorial management, which involves the strengthening of local governments and citizen participation; ii) basic services, which address issues related to the provision of drinking water, sanitation, electricity, and other services; iii) income generation, which seeks to promote the productive capacities of families; and iv) human capital, which includes the cash transfer

programmes **PBU** for older adults and the **health and education allowances**. PBU is an unconditional cash transfer programme, while the health and education allowances are conditioned on co-responsibilities in those sectors.

**CSU** is implemented in precarious urban settlements (*asentamientos urbanos precarios*) in the 50 most vulnerable municipalities in the country, according to the Urban Poverty and Social Exclusion Map. It includes the PBU and education allowance cash transfer programmes, as in the case of CSR.

The **Programa de Apoyo Temporal al Ingreso (PATI)** was a CCT programme designed as response to the global crisis of 2008 and has now been discontinued. The programme financed the participation of people in the implementation of community projects and assistance for training, through the delivery of individual financial support of US\$100 per month for six months. It was aimed at young people between 16 and 30 years of age and was geographically focused.

The **PASE**, implemented by MINED, provides students with a daily snack. It delivers beans, rice, sugar, oil, fortified drinks, and dried milk, the latter to schools that are not receiving liquid milk (*Vaso de Leche*) yet. Students' parents are in charge of preparing and delivering the snacks.

The **MAG** provides assistance to small producers through the delivery of **Paquetes Agrícolas** containing corn and beans. This programme, with national coverage, aims to provide the conditions for the production of quality basic food at affordable prices. For the delivery of such packages, the programme uses the Official Registry of Beneficiaries (*Padrón Oficial de Beneficiarios*).

**Table 2: Main transfer programmes**

Programme	Type of transfer	Eligibility	Benefits	Coverage
PBU	Unconditional cash transfer	Geographical Over 70 years of age Income poverty Not receiving any other pension	US\$50 per month	CSR – 26,022 beneficiaries CSU – 4,572 beneficiaries
Education and health allowances	CCT	Geographical Income poverty Health allowance: Families with children under five or women who were pregnant at the time of the census Education allowance: Families with children over five and under 18 who have not completed sixth grade Health and education allowance: Families with children under five or women who were pregnant at the	US\$30 per month for health allowance or education allowance US\$40 for both	CSR – 61,041 beneficiaries CSU – 5,002

		time of the census; and with children five or older, or under 18 who have not completed sixth grade		
PATI	CCT	Geographical Man or woman over 16 years of age, preferably female head of household and young person between 16 and 30 years of age No formal employment Residence of more than six months in the community No studies/vocational training on working days and during working hours (except flexible modalities)	US\$100 per month	Discontinued Reached a maximum of about 30,000 participants
PASE	Conditional in-kind transfer	Assistance to public school	One snack per day	5,377 schools About 1,200,000 students
<i>Paquete Agrícola</i>	Unconditional in-kind transfer	Being registered in registry Subsistence farmer By profession farmer, day labourer, cattleman, housewife, or domestic trades Land area greater than zero blocks, and smaller than or equal to three blocks of land	Box of corn and beans	About 570,000 boxes

## Box 2: The Poverty Eradication Strategy

The Poverty Eradication Strategy consists of a set of actions and resources aimed at the population living in poverty. Its purpose is to sequentially combine strategic interventions seeking to address fundamental human rights, to create sustainable livelihoods and strengthen productive and human assets, and to enhance the capacity of addressing vulnerability.

The strategy includes important changes in existing social programmes, ranging from their objectives and eligibility rules to their geographical coverage. In this way, it seeks to expand social protection throughout the national territory, starting in 30 municipalities in 2017 and reaching the entire country by 2025. In terms of targeting, it focuses on strata 1–7 of the IRUP (see Section 4.2.1), which amounts to 35% of the total population of the country.

The strategy is made up of four components, which will be interrelated with each other to ensure comprehensive assistance for families:

- **Family accompaniment** – It seeks to promote the generation of skills in the individual and his/her family to identify and develop a life project, which contributes to improving self-esteem, to recognising their human dignity, aspirations and dreams, and their ability to transform their reality and social environment, making use of their resources and access to state services, as well as to generating spaces for the construction of good living, social cohesion, and a culture of peace at the community level.
- **Financial inclusion and productive development** – It seeks to improve employability skills and increase the productive, human, social, and financial assets of families living in poverty, promoting mainly associative ventures to strengthen the production network and local development. Also, to promote responsible consumption and introduce a culture of savings through mechanisms for participants to relate themselves to the country's financial system and reduce their vulnerability in the face of unforeseen events.
- **Social infrastructure** – It seeks to reduce gaps in the access to basic water, basic sanitation, and energy services, among others, which contribute to improving families' quality of life.
- **Income support** – It seeks to reduce inequality gaps, through income support that allows families to increase their consumption capacity and have access to health, education, and the fulfilment of basic rights, so that the lack of income does not limit the development of the family and its members.

For the provision of income support, priority will be given to households in strata 1–7 that have children between 0 and 2 years of age, pregnant women, active students or those who re-join any of the modalities offered by the official education system in the third cycle and baccalaureate with a maximum age of 21, people with severe disabilities, and adults over 70 years of age. Annex B describes the income support programmes.

Source: SETEPLAN (2017)

## 4.2 System characteristics and performance

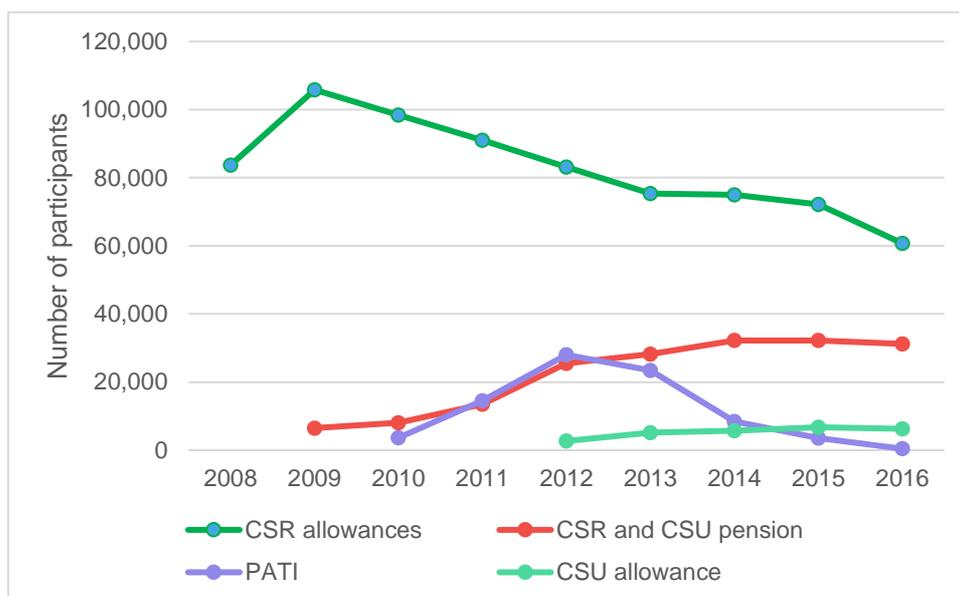
**The non-contributory social protection system in El Salvador is still young and in a process of development and expansion, within the framework of the new Poverty Eradication Strategy (see Box 2).**

**The social protection system has limited geographical coverage.** FISDL's programmes have no presence in the 262 municipalities, but only in 100 rural municipalities and 25 urban municipalities. This geographical targeting, typical of a system under development, provides partial protection to the rights of the population,

as stated by the Law on Social Development and Protection, and also limits the power to use social protection in emergency response.

According to the World Bank, **both the expenditure and coverage of CSR, the main non-contributory cash transfer scheme, are among the lowest in Central America** (World Bank, 2015a). CSR education and health allowances were provided to 60,741 families in 2016, CSU allowances to 6,276, and PBU pensions reached 31,165 older adults. The number of CSR allowance beneficiaries has fallen systematically since 2009, while the number of PBU recipients has been increasing.

**Figure 5: Coverage of the CSR, CSU, and PATI programmes (2008–2016)**



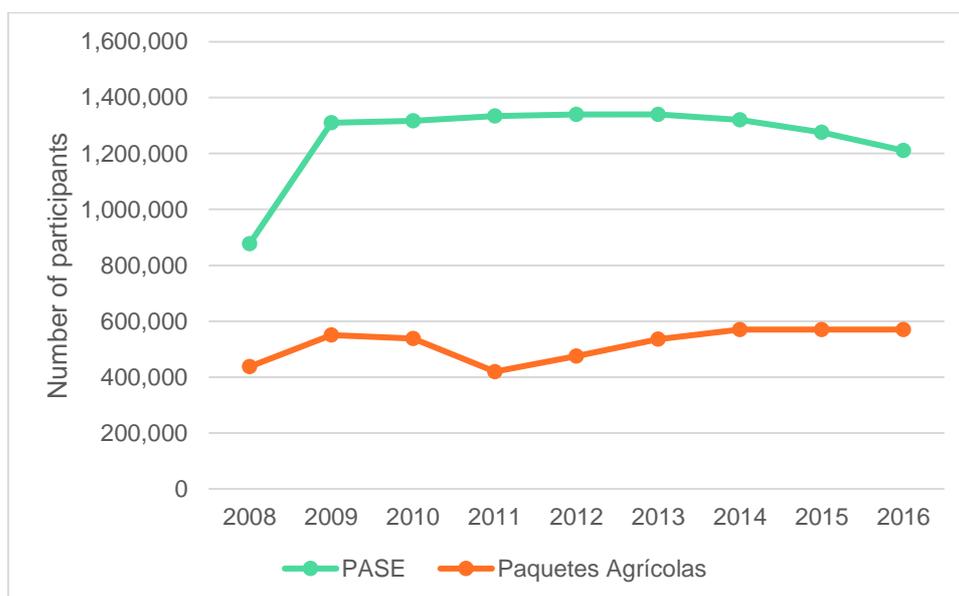
Source: Data provided by SETEPLAN in February 2018.

**Both the CSR and CSU cash transfer programmes have experienced payment delays.** CSR and CSU state that transfers are to be made every four months; however, this was not achieved in 2015, 2016, and 2017. In 2017, for example, a single payment was made in the last quarter of the year. As reported by informants interviewed for this study, holdups were due to delays in the availability of funds from the Ministry of Finance.

Outside FISDL’s orbit, **PASE and Paquete Agrícola are the main social programmes; they have national coverage and reach many more participants than FISDL’s programmes.**

As reported by key informants, PASE usually experiences delays at the beginning of the year until the budget is approved. Apart from this delay at the beginning of each year, however, PASE and *Paquete Agrícola* seem to have been more armoured against the lack of funds that affected FISDL’s programmes during recent years.

**Figure 6: Coverage of the PASE and Paquetes Agrícolas programmes (2008–2016)**



Source: Data provided by SETEPLAN in February 2018.

Following our methodology, in the sections below we describe the mechanisms of targeting and delivery of the social protection system as well as its coordination with actors involved in the response to emergencies.

## 4.2.1 Targeting

**Targeting is one of the pillars of El Salvador's non-contributory social protection system.** FISDL's programmes combine geographic, categorical (i.e. age range), and income targeting criteria. However, the new Poverty Eradication Strategy seeks to assist only the poorest people as determined by the **RUP**.

**Geographic targeting is based on poverty maps that use information from more than a decade ago.** The Urban Poverty and Social Exclusion Map, used for geographic targeting of CSU, contains data from the last population census, corresponding to 2007. The prioritisation of CSR municipalities was determined based on the 2005 Poverty Map.

The **RUP**, under the control of SETEPLAN, aims to become the main targeting tool in non-contributory social protection as well as other sectors. It is a social registry of families eligible for some state assistance. The Social Development and Protection Law, under its Article 34, establishes the need to create a mechanism for identifying individuals eligible to receive cash or in-kind transfers, guaranteeing objectivity and transparency in the functioning of the programmes.

In this way, the RUP is a social management tool that contains structured, systematised, and standardised information that allows for identifying, learning, and segmenting the socioeconomic characteristics of individuals and households. The RUP seeks to consolidate and unify information with the purpose of facilitating the management of social policies, particularly targeting, making decision processes more

transparent and coordinating and articulating different interventions. The RUP aims to become the gateway for all the social policy actions of different governmental sectors.

The RUP has different strategies for collecting and updating data. In its beginnings, data collection was carried out by DIGESTYC through census sweeps in the poorest municipalities. This was a progressive sweep between 2010 and 2015, and it covered 81 municipalities. Subsequent data collection and updating stages were carried out through FISDL census sweeps or the incorporation of questions to calculate IRUP in the family files used by MINSAL and collected by community health promoters (*promotores comunitarios de salud*). Combining these three strategies, the RUP has managed to cover 118 of the 262 municipalities, reaching 257,154 households and 1,000,309 people (16% of the national population).

Regarding the interoperability of the RUP, the system validates its data with the databases of the National Registry of Natural Persons (*Registro Nacional de las Personas Naturales*), the Salvadoran Social Security Institute (*Instituto Salvadoreño del Seguro Social*), the Financial System Superintendence (*Superintendencia del Sistema Financiero*), and the National Registry Centre (*Centro Nacional de Registros*). The RUP also receives data on the beneficiaries of social programmes implemented by MINED, MAG, the National Ministry of Economy (*Ministerio Nacional de Economía*), and FISDL, and is seeking to establish agreements with other organisations.

**The RUP is a system still under development.** First, only FISDL uses it for targeting. Although MINED and MAG share their data with the RUP, they do not use the system to select beneficiaries. Second, the system is not interconnected yet, so the different state agencies cannot access RUP data at will. Third, although the different data collection and updating strategies are encouraging, it is important to evaluate their effectiveness. The difficulty and high cost of updating data are usual barriers faced by social registries in LAC and globally (Barca, 2017). Finally, the coverage is still very limited; RUP only includes 16% of the population. Although the coverage is widely varied, social registries in other countries in the region cover a greater proportion of their population: 86% in Dominican Republic, 73% in Colombia, 75% in Chile, 43% in Brazil, and 47% in Mexico (Barca, 2017).

The IRUP is an algorithm that estimates the quality of life of RUP households based on their socioeconomic characteristics and produces a household ranking. The objective of SETEPLAN is that all governmental social policy programmes conduct their targeting using the IRUP ranking, establishing cut-off points based on their particular objectives and budget constraints.

**The effectiveness of the IRUP in the identification of people living in poverty is yet to be determined, as is its potential to recognise those in a situation of vulnerability.** These kinds of algorithm – i.e. proxy means tests – are typically designed to detect long-term conditions (such as chronic poverty or belonging to a certain age group) and not to detect sudden changes in welfare and livelihood (Beazley *et al.*, 2016), although this does not mean that they cannot provide useful information for emergency response.

Finally, it is worth noting that MAG has its own registry of participants, the Official Registry of Beneficiaries, which is used for the selection of *Paquete Agrícola* beneficiaries. This is a registry of producers, however, rather than of households like the RUP.

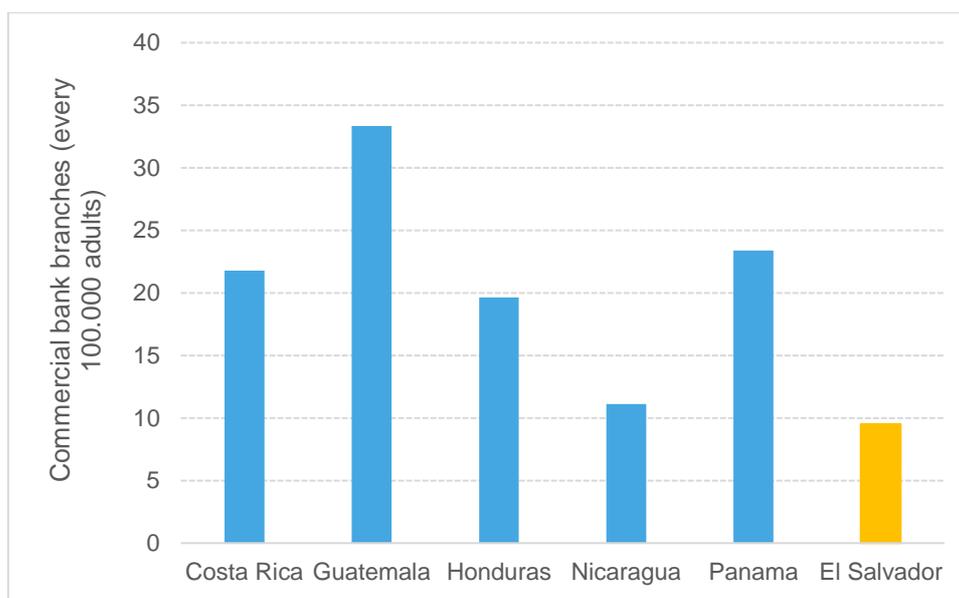
## 4.2.2 Delivery

**The vast majority of FISDL cash transfers are delivered manually.** The government makes payments through banks, which stage in-person operations. In the interviews conducted for this study, both SETEPLAN and FISDL were interested and active in the search for an alternative to manual payments, which are perceived as inefficient and expensive, although we have been informed that this methodology is delivering cash transfers without greater difficulties. Also, an electronic payment system would be in tune with the Poverty Eradication Strategy, which seeks to improve the population's access to the financial system (see Box 2).

Through FISDL, the government has tested mechanisms of bank transfers (without bank account and taking payments at the counter) and mobile money, but in only a few municipalities and without the expected results, as reported by the officials interviewed for this research.

One of the biggest barriers for the creation of an e-payment system is the low coverage of the banking system. According to World Bank estimates, El Salvador is the Central American country with the lowest number of commercial bank branches *per capita*. The lack of bank branches, particularly in the poorest municipalities, leads to the need to explore innovative mechanisms.

**Figure 7: Coverage of commercial banks in Central America**



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

In terms of in-kind transfer mechanisms, MINED purchases food for PASE and transfers it to the distribution centres in every municipality in the country, where school principals and parents are responsible for collecting, preparing, and delivering meals. MAG, for its part, delivers the *Paquete Agrícola* directly to the people registered in the Official Registry of Beneficiaries; deliveries take place in authorised warehouses.

### 4.2.3 Coordination and financing

In the section below, we show how the Civil Protection, Prevention, and Disaster Mitigation Law does not provide an active role in emergency response for social protection. This results in the absence of coordination mechanisms between civil protection and social protection.

With regard to emergency response financing, El Salvador has the following *ex ante* financing strategies.

- FOPROMID, administered by the Ministry of Finance, which consists of a US\$4 million fund for prevention and emergency response.
- A contingent loan from Japan for US\$50 million, which is implemented in case of any of the events previously established.

Until a few years ago, El Salvador used to receive a contingent loan from the World Bank. Also, as reported by DGPC authorities, the possibility of the country joining the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (*Fondo de Seguro contra Riesgos de Catástrofe para el Caribe*: CCRIF) was evaluated. CCRIF uses parametric insurance to provide a quick payment and short-term liquidity to finance the response and recovery of 16 countries in the Caribbean and Central America exposed to major earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes. However, it was considered that the types and magnitude of the disasters covered by the insurance were not appropriate for El Salvador.

As for *ex post* strategies, reallocation of budgetary resources and eventual international assistance are the most frequent.

## 5 Social protection, civil protection, and resilience

The 2005 Civil Protection, Prevention, and Disaster Mitigation Law created the SNPC and regulates the action of the state in terms of civil protection and risk management. The Law establishes the following objectives:

- To incorporate into development plans prospective risk management in matters of disasters.
- To prepare and coordinate plans and actions to educate and inform the population about the need to be adequately ready in the event of any possible disaster.
- To develop and update risk maps at each organisational level of the system, as well as to prepare the corresponding operational plans.
- To design and execute civil protection plans to respond to any type of disaster event, trying to mitigate the damage they cause or reduce their impact.
- To exchange information and knowledge among its members, and to make public useful information, at the appropriate time, for preventing, mitigating, preparing for, and attending to disasters.

The SNPC is composed of a national committee, chaired by the Ministry of Government and Territorial Development (*Ministerio de Gobernación y Desarrollo Territorial*: MGDT), whose function is to administer and coordinate with SNPC institutions and departmental, municipal, and community committees, presided over by governors, mayors, and community representatives, respectively.

**Table 3: Civil protection, prevention, and disaster mitigation committees**

Committee	Functions
<b>National</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design the National Policy on Civil Protection, Risk Prevention, and Disaster Mitigation.</li> <li>• Monitor the implementation of civil protection, risk prevention, and disaster mitigation plans in vulnerable areas of the country, based on risk maps.</li> <li>• Dictate, when opportune, the appropriate measures to be taken during disasters and national emergencies to safeguard the life and property of those affected directly.</li> <li>• Propose to the President of the Republic the State of Emergency, in accordance with Art. 24 of this Law.</li> <li>• Recommend undertaking preventive work to the governmental agencies in charge.</li> <li>• Recommend the demolition of any building threatening to collapse or cause a tragedy in the life or property of the people, considering the opinion issued by the Advisory Board.</li> <li>• Propose to the President of the Republic, for approval, the necessary regulations to execute and integrate this Law, such as the regulation of urban settlements in dangerous or potentially dangerous areas, construction codes, measures for preventing contamination, seismic guides, and transportation of hazardous materials.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate the work of the departmental, municipal, and communal committees for civil protection, prevention, and disaster mitigation, through the General Administration.</li> <li>• Meet on appeal the decisions and resolutions of the Director General.</li> <li>• Establish temporary easements when necessary and restrictions on the use of private or public property, as long as it is justified by the existence of the disaster, having to consider the opinion issued on the matter by the Advisory Council.</li> </ul>
<b>Departmental</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design its workplan, including prevention and disaster mitigation actions and strategies.</li> <li>• Coordinate its work with the National Committee and be subject to its national guidelines.</li> <li>• Monitor compliance with the national plan and its provisions in the department.</li> <li>• Assess damage and disaster needs during disasters, and share findings with the National Committee.</li> </ul>
<b>Municipal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design its workplan, and plan prevention and disaster mitigation actions.</li> <li>• Coordinate actions with the Departmental Committee.</li> <li>• Monitor compliance with the national plan and its provisions in the municipality.</li> <li>• Assess damage and disaster needs, and submit findings to the Departmental Committee.</li> </ul>
<b>Communal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design its workplan and plan prevention and disaster mitigation actions.</li> <li>• Coordinate with the Municipal Committee.</li> <li>• The National Administration will monitor compliance with the national plan and the provisions of the National Committee in the neighbourhood or community.</li> </ul>

Source: Civil Protection, Prevention, and Disaster Mitigation Law

SNPC is made up of eight sectoral technical committees, presided over by the following institutions:

**Table 4: Sectoral technical committees**

<b>Technical committee</b>	<b>Intervention area</b>	<b>Coordination</b>
Technical Scientific	Monitoring and weather forecast	Environmental Observatory Administration ( <i>Dirección del Observatorio Ambiental</i> )
Emergency Services	Search and rescue in collapsed structures Pre-hospital care Firefighting and fire extinction Responding to incidents involving hazardous materials	Fire Brigade
Safety	Watching over supplies	National Civil Police

	Security in transfer of supplies Security in the distribution of aid Isolation of affected areas Security in shelters Reinforcement of prison security Regulation of vehicular traffic flow	
Health	Sanitary surveillance Medical care Comprehensive care Environmental sanitation Mental health	MINSAL
Infrastructure and Basic Services	Road infrastructure Telecommunications Electricity service Drinking water and sewage system Public infrastructure damage assessment	Ministry of Public Works ( <i>Ministerio de Obras Públicas</i> )
Logistics Management	Reception Storage Transportation Distribution Accountability	Armed Forces
Shelters	Channelling of support to shelters	MGDT
International Humanitarian Aid	Management and coordination of international humanitarian aid	<i>Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores</i>

Source: National Earthquake Contingency Plan (*Plan Nacional de Contingencias ante Terremoto*)

**The national civil protection strategy is focused on prevention, mitigation, and response to rapid-onset disasters; to date, the Dry Corridor droughts have not been considered emergencies and have, therefore, been left outside the orbit of civil protection.** There are, however, signs that this is in the process of change; DGPC, with the support of WFP, had prepared by the end of 2017 a first draft of a drought response plan.

## 5.1 Social protection and civil protection

Although every governmental agency participates in the SNPC, social protection does not play a significant role in the national civil protection plan. So far, interaction, coordination, and joint work between civil protection and social protection has been minimal. Some points to highlight in this regard are the following:

- Although the Technical Logistics Committee, coordinated by the armed forces, is in charge of national humanitarian aid, a committee or entity is missing for providing assistance after the delivery of food and basic needs immediately after the shock.
- FISDL is only part of one committee, the Infrastructure and Basic Services Committee, and this is because of its mandate in the reconstruction of local infrastructure. Thus, its capacity and experience in assisting vulnerable populations is not exploited by the civil protection strategy.
- PASE is not involved in any committee, although MINED is.

- There are no protocols for responding through social protection programmes, either through vertical or horizontal expansions or piggybacking responses, for example.
- The civil protection strategy does not contemplate the use of RUP data.

**Despite not playing a role as a first-response actor, there are some experiences in El Salvador of the use of social protection in emergency responses.** The following stand out:

1. As mentioned above, the development and expansion of the non-contributory social protection system responded to a great extent to the effects of the 2008 global crisis in the country. The phase of expansion of social protection is closely related to assisting the population affected by a shock (see Section 4).
2. The PATI was an employment programme conceived as a social protection tool for emergency response. It was designed to respond to the economic crisis caused by the 2008 global crisis, and was expanded horizontally in response to the tropical storm Ida in 2009, when more than 3,000 people from the most affected municipalities participated in the programme (Government of El Salvador, 2013).
3. In the event that any governmental institution requests it, FISDL can use its local presence and linkage with local committees to communicate information of public interest. In this vein, as FISDL staff informed us during the interviews conducted for this study, during dengue-related epidemiological emergencies MINSAL requested that FISDL pass on prevention and mitigation information to municipal committees. Using the administrative capacity of social protection to communicate useful information for prevention and emergency response is a strategy used by other countries in the region, such as Mexico (Beazley *et al.*, 2016).
4. In the response to recent floods, PASE allowed for the use of the available food stock only in those schools used as shelters. However, it does not have the budget nor protocols for either horizontal or vertical expansion.
5. In its response to the 2015 drought, MAG delivered 104,971 *Paquetes Agrícolas* (corn seeds and fertiliser) and 44,990 food boxes (including corn, rice, beans, oil and flour, among others) (MAG, 2016).

## 5.2 Social protection and resilience

The vulnerability to which the population of El Salvador is exposed, caused largely by the effects of climate change (see Section 2), leads to the need to implement strategies to strengthen the resilience of communities and of the population. This is particularly relevant for the regions exposed to recurrent shocks, such as the Dry Corridor, or the coastal area floods, and for the people who live off agriculture. Following WFP (2015), resilience is understood in this report as ‘the ability to ensure that disruptive factors and crisis situations do not have adverse long-term consequences on development’.

Social protection systems can contribute not only to the response to emergencies caused by climate change (Beazley *et al.*, 2016; OPM, 2015) but can also help individuals and communities adapt to climate effects, reduce risks, and become more resilient (Davies *et al.*, 2013). Social protection tools can be vehicles for protecting

people with low adaptive capacity from climate risks, avoiding negative coping strategies, and promoting resilient livelihoods, thereby increasing people's capacity to resist shocks (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004).

However, the main non-contributory social protection programmes have not been designed or adapted to promote resilience. As for FISDL's transfer programmes, they have no national coverage and the areas where they are implemented are chosen based on structural poverty maps, not in relation to vulnerability to climate change and/or climate-related shocks. Second, delays in the payment of transfers and the uncertainty about when allowances will be delivered reduce their effectiveness and potential effect on resilience. Third, these programmes are designed and implemented with little or no coordination with other important actors in the area of resilience, such as MAG and MARN. As for the in-kind transfer programmes studied in this research, PASE, due to the type of aid it provides, the amount, and its frequency, seems to have a more limited role in strengthening resilience. The *Paquete Agrícola*, on the other hand, does have that potential, since it contributes to the production of small producers. However, the programme does not seek to promote crop diversity, for example, which is something of utmost importance for the resilience of small producers.

**Box 3: Requirements for a positive impact of cash and asset construction of a public works programme on recipients' resilience**

**The specific requirements for a positive impact of cash transfers on short-term resilience are the following:**

- (i) The cash level must be adequate to meet consumption needs.
- (ii) The opportunity cost of collecting cash must be low.
- (iii) Payments must be regular, reliable, and frequent.
- (iv) Employment must be of sufficient duration to have a significant impact.
- (v) The duration of individual employment should not be reduced by subdividing employment opportunities among the community.
- (vi) The timing of employment should reflect seasonal variations in food security and domestic and market labour demand. In relation to increasing adaptive capacity, cash enables investment in productive inputs and capital, which can support livelihood diversification into activities less vulnerable to climate change and enable recipients to move out of the poorest paid forms of casual labour.

To get a long-term resilience impact, the additional requirement is that the cash level must be sufficient to enable investments as well as meet immediate needs.

**The requirements for the asset-building component to increase resilience are the following:**

- (i) Assets must be relevant to local needs.
- (ii) Assets must be designed, located, and constructed in line with technical specifications, with adequate capital inputs.
- (iii) Labour-intensive methods must be adopted.
- (iv) Adequate technical inputs must be ensured during design, implementation and maintenance.
- (v) Local government and/or community ownership and management of the asset must be ensured.

- (vi) Follow-up maintenance must take place to ensure ongoing functionality.
- (vii) Access to asset benefits must be equitable.
- (viii) The functionality and usage of the asset must be monitored.

To get a long-term resilience impact, the additional requirements are:

- (ix) Public works programmes must improve returns to labour, either by increasing productivity or by enabling the adoption of alternative or diversified livelihoods that are less vulnerable to climate change.
- (x) Assets need not only to meet the requirements for coping capacity but may also require that functioning markets are in place to allow for the purchase of inputs and/or marketing.

Source: Beazley, McCord and Solórzano (2016).

**The lack of a strategy to strengthen the resilience of the population affected by climate change should be noted. It is also unclear who has the mandate to promote the population's resilience. As previously described, this is not the objective of social protection programmes, even though their regular functions may contribute to resilience.** MAG is more focused on guaranteeing national production, and therefore the country's food autonomy, and although its programmes can also contribute to the resilience of small producers, they are not designed for that purpose. Finally, MARN is the main authority in relation to governmental policy on climate change. Its mission is to reverse environmental degradation and reduce socio-environmental risks, and it contributes to resilience through activities such as reducing ecosystem vulnerability, increasing forest carbon stocks, increasing protection activities, and rehabilitating biodiversity. However, the only programmes directly aimed at strengthening families' resilience are financed and implemented by international organisations, with government participation.

The resilience programmes implemented in Morazán and Usulután are briefly described below:

### **Project Response to the El Niño Phenomenon in the Dry Corridor of Central America (*Proyecto Respuesta al Fenómeno de El Niño en el Corredor Seco de Centroamérica: PROACT*)**

PROACT is a European Union project implemented in Central America. In El Salvador, it benefits 900 small-producer families (4,500 people) in 24 communities of eight municipalities in the departments of Usulután and Morazán. It was implemented jointly by WFP and MARN between 2016 and 2018, and receives EUR 1.5 million in funding from the European Union. The project was born out of the need to respond to the negative effects of climate change that strongly affect the production and marketing capacity of small producers, including women and youth. Rural communities are increasingly struggling to fulfil their food and nutritional security needs and to sustain their livelihoods, particularly those families living on subsistence agriculture of basic grains (mainly corn and beans).

The objective is to contribute to ensuring food and nutritional security in a sustainable way for participant small families and small producers, by building community resilience that will enable them to better cope with future climate crises. This is done through the development of soil and water conservation works, the diversification of their

livelihoods with agroforestry plots, and good water resource management through the protection and conservation of groundwater recharge zones.

Within the framework of Food Assistance for Asset Creation (*Asistencia Alimentaria por Creación de Activos*), participant families receive cash transfers three times a year, for a nominal value of US\$75.

**Associativity, Resilience, and Markets: Promoting agribusiness associativity in small agricultural producers (Asociatividad, Resiliencia y Mercados: Impulsar la asociatividad agro-empresarial en pequeños productores agropecuarios)**

This project is implemented by WFP with national partners such as MAG, MARN, the National Centre of Agricultural and Forest Technology (*Centro Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria y Forestal*), and *Ciudad Mujer*. It seeks to contribute to ensuring food and nutritional security in a sustainable way for small-producer families. With a budget of around US\$730,000, the project has the following specific objectives: i) to improve agricultural practices to increase the resilience of small producers; ii) to encourage associativity of small producers; and iii) to increase business opportunities for small producer associations.

In the first phase of the project, implemented between May 2016 and April 2017, 250 producers were trained on issues relevant to building resilience and provided with transfers of the necessary tools for them to implement soil conservation works in their plots or in the community, as well as inputs to start a new agricultural livelihood based on crop diversification into vegetables. Each family received food assistance through three transfers (August 2016, November 2016, and April 2017), either in cash or through a food voucher, as preferred. The amount per transfer was defined according to family size, providing US\$44.64 to families of 1–3 members, US\$74.40 to families of 4–6 members, and US\$104.16 to families of seven members or more.

## 6 Policy recommendations: Toward a more shock-responsive social protection system

**El Salvador's non-contributory social protection system is still young, so the first recommendation is to continue along the path of system development and strengthening.** Regional and global experience shows that the most mature systems, in the sense that they are financed and directed by the government, are solidly established, have broad coverage and tend to be more capable of responding (Beazley *et al.*, 2016 and OPM, 2015). Although not designed with emergency response purposes in mind, experience shows that the systems with greater coverage, resources, and administrative capacity, with a greater variety of services and level of integration, are generally better placed to respond to crises. El Salvador's social protection system is undergoing a process of transition and redefinition toward a new strategy, with prospects of achieving national coverage.

**It is, however, vitally important not to overburden this still young system.** While El Salvador's level of vulnerability calls for an exploration of the use of social protection in emergency response and in strengthening the population's resilience, it is important to avoid imposing burdens that the system cannot withstand. It is therefore necessary to make a careful analysis to evaluate which aspects of a more responsive and flexible system can be incorporated at this stage, and which ones should wait.

**A first step toward a more responsive social protection system would be to determine and assign social protection a role in the national civil protection plan and to create the corresponding normative framework.** This is the appropriate place to determine the response strategy from the social protection standpoint. For such a decision, joint work among DGPC, SETEPLAN, FISDL, and other entities will be indispensable.

**Within the revision of the national civil protection plan, we recommend strengthening and expanding the capacities of the technical committee of national short-term humanitarian aid or early recovery.** Currently, the Logistics Committee is responsible for the distribution of in-kind assistance during the first days of an emergency. However, after such support and depending on the type, magnitude, and duration of the emergency, supplementary humanitarian aid may be necessary, through cash transfers, housing assistance and livelihood recovery support, as has occurred in recent emergencies in other countries in the region (Beazley *et al.*, 2016). We suggest forming this technical committee with SETEPLAN, FISDL, MINED (with PASE representation), MINSAL, MAG, and the Vice-Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (*Viceministerio de Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano*), among others.

**When determining the role of social protection, it will be necessary to evaluate the possibility of expanding some programmes horizontally or vertically.** This will require comparing the coverage of social protection programmes with vulnerability maps and agricultural schedules. The Dry Corridor, being the location of a recurrent shock, offers an opportunity to plan the social protection response in good time.

- **Vertical expansion** – FISDL's cash transfer programmes could increase the amount of their transfers during droughts, or PASE could provide take-home food rations, for example. Such vertical expansions seem affordable within current

administrative capacity but would require adequate planning and the corresponding budget allocation.

- **Horizontal expansion** – FISDL's current capacity in areas of the country where it has ongoing programmes could allow for the temporary incorporation of affected families. As described in Figure 4, the challenge lies in how to identify the affected. In the case of the Dry Corridor, since it represents a recurrent and slow-onset shock, RUP data could be used to identify vulnerable families that are not receiving cash transfers (additional information may need to be collected with the RUP). Alternatively, protocols could be established for targeting at the local level, either through municipalities or community committees, for example. Such protocols must be developed prior to the shock, the staff involved should be trained, and the processes and systems should be adapted.

Horizontal expansion into municipalities where FISDL does not have coverage would be a major challenge. In those municipalities, we recommend looking for alternative assistance strategies. PASE, given its national coverage, offers opportunities in this sense, although its capacity to expand in a sudden way should be carefully evaluated. However, protocols could be developed to allow at least the use of available food stocks beyond solely those schools functioning as shelters.

#### i. Targeting

- Increasing the interoperability of the RUP and the information it contains on the participants of different programmes.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the IRUP to identify poor people and study the possibility of adapting this tool to identify people vulnerable to climatic shocks such as droughts and floods.
- Incorporating into the RUP information about cooperation agencies' programmes and allowing an agile exchange of information. To this end, it is necessary to create protocols that ensure a timely and correct use of data and data protection strategies.
- Using the RUP for targeting in all targeted social programmes, while allowing each programme to establish its criteria based on the information available.
- Evaluating the creation of an index that, unlike the IRUP (which seeks to identify households in structural poverty), succeeds in identifying those who are vulnerable, particularly those vulnerable to droughts and floods, which are so recurrent in some areas of the country.
- Geo-referencing households in the RUP, thus mapping all people in the system, which can be extremely useful in emergency response.
- Evaluating and improving the different existing strategies for updating and collecting data for the RUP.
- Developing emergency protocols and adapting targeting systems and/or programme rules for the expansions foreseen in the national civil protection plan (if this is the case).
- Protocols for horizontal and vertical expansions could be linked to early warning indicators. This could be particularly relevant in the case of droughts in the Dry Corridor, when it is difficult to define when to initiate social protection support.
- Incorporating into the EDAN form the information needed for expanding social protection programmes (if it were decided to incorporate these strategies into the national plan), and ensuring that the EDAN database can be linked to that of the

RUP. Also, ensuring that municipalities and departments have the capacity to carry out EDANs in emergency contexts.

- Updating poverty maps or creating new maps with more recent information.

## ii. Delivery

- Carrying out transfers according to programme rules, avoiding delays that affect the credibility of the programmes and their impact.
- Developing protocols that ensure the operational continuity of the current delivery system in emergency contexts (FISDL, PASE, and *Paquetes Agrícolas*).
- Evaluating the feasibility of making extraordinary payments if the intention is to incorporate programme expansions into the national civil protection strategy and preparing the delivery system accordingly; for example, defining standby agreements with service providers to expand existing delivery systems.
- When considering and evaluating new mechanisms for delivering FISDL's transfers, as intended by the government, taking into account their flexibility and the possibility of operating and expanding in emergency contexts.

## iii. Coordination and financing

The joint determination by social protection (SETEPLAN) and civil protection (DGPC) of the role of social protection programmes and institutions in the national emergency response plan will also serve to create a space for joint work. These are other areas of collaboration:

- Social protection could make use of civil protection tools, such as vulnerability maps, to identify geographic areas where to plan vertical or horizontal expansions or to collect additional data for the RUP, or early warning indicators to initiate social support, as in the case of the Dry Corridor.
- Civil protection could make use of social protection tools. The RUP, for example, contains rich information on an important segment of the population, which could be valuable for civil protection actions.
- Social protection programmes could be used as a means of spreading civil protection information. Thus, for example, FISDL's programmes could incorporate in their training short modules (or capsules) with information on risk prevention and mitigation. We suggest incorporating these modules on a permanent basis, and not only in emergency contexts. These modules should be developed with the assistance of the civil protection sector.
- Jointly organising training workshops and conferences on social and civil protection. The lack of coordination between the two sectors is due, to some extent, to a limited understanding of the role of the other sector. Increased knowledge will create new opportunities for collaboration.
- We recommend evaluating the need to incorporate more *ex ante* financing strategies. If the insurance offered by CCRIF is inappropriate, as reported by DGPC for this study, then El Salvador can join other Central American countries exposed to similar risks and request that CCRIF create financial mechanisms to cover such risks. It is the intention of CCRIF to incorporate more Central American countries, so this may be an opportunity for El Salvador. If not, then it may be necessary to create a new fund for Central America.

#### iv. Resilience to climate change

- Developing a multisectoral national strategy for strengthening the resilience of the population and communities, with clear roles and mandates for MAG and MARN, and considering the role of social protection programmes.
- Seeking to ensure that the *Paquete Agrícola* is related not only to production assistance but also to resilience activities and crop diversification, maybe as co-responsibility for the delivery of the subsidy, as already proposed in the Assessment of Food and Nutritional Security (*Diagnóstico de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional*) prepared by FLACSO in 2017.
- Coordinating with the relevant international cooperation agencies so that their resilience programmes follow the ‘shadow alignment’ response logic; that is, that programmes are designed and implemented so that the government can implement or replicate them in the future.

## 7 Conclusions

El Salvador is highly exposed to different kinds of shocks, from international economic crises, due to its heavy dependence on remittances, to natural phenomena such as storms and floods, particularly in the coastal area, and droughts in the Dry Corridor.

There is a trend globally and particularly in LAC to use social protection systems to respond to emergencies. The premise is that these systems have administrative capacity, coverage, information, and linkage with the most needy people and communities, which represents a great opportunity for a better emergency response.

In the case of El Salvador, however, the social protection system is still young, its coverage is limited, and its main systems and processes, such as targeting and delivery, need to be strengthened in order to meet the objectives for which they were created. In this context, although El Salvador's level of vulnerability invites us to explore the use of social protection in emergency response and in strengthening the population's resilience, it is important to avoid imposing burdens that could detrimentally affect the system. It is therefore necessary to make a careful analysis to evaluate which aspects of a more responsive and flexible system can be incorporated at this stage, and which should wait.

At present, the national civil protection plan does not give a significant role to social protection. Thus, the first step toward a more responsive social protection system would be to determine and assign a role. This is the appropriate place to determine the response strategy from the social protection standpoint. For such a decision, joint work between DGPC, SETEPLAN, FISDL, and other entities will be indispensable.

The vulnerability to which the population of El Salvador is exposed leads to the need to implement strategies to strengthen the resilience of communities and the population. This is particularly relevant for those regions exposed to recurrent shocks, such as the Dry Corridor or the coastal area floods, and for the people who live off agriculture. In theory, social protection systems can help individuals and communities adapt to climate effects, reduce risks, and become more resilient. However, to achieve this goal, it is necessary to adapt social protection systems, develop a multisectoral national strategy for strengthening resilience, and articulate the efforts of different sectors.

Finally, it is important to mention the need to evaluate the role of social protection not only in emergency response and resilience but also in the face of other phenomena that severely affect the country, such as violence and the return of migrants. These very important issues are beyond the scope of this study.

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## Annex A List of interviewees

Institution	Name	Position
SETEPLAN	Juan Meléndez	Director of Strategic Programmes
	Irma Núñez	Strategic Programmes Administration Technical Team
	Marta González	Strategic Programmes Administration Technical Team
	Jesús Valencia	Strategic Programmes Administration Technical Team
	Juan Francisco Grande	Social Protection Technical Specialist
MAG	Luis Vargas	Director of Agricultural Economics
	Elsy Sorto	Director ad Honorem, CENDEPESCA
	Jorge Salinas	Director of Planning and Sectoral Policy
	Luis Torres	Director of Forest Management, Watersheds and Irrigation
DGPC	Jorge Meléndez	National Director of Civil Protection and Secretary of Vulnerability
	Aida Zeledón	Head of the Legal Unit General Administration of Civil Protection
	Armando Vividor	
FISDL	Melissa Martínez	Director of Registration and Transfers
	Rafael Artiga	Social Development Manager
	Fanny Martínez	Head of Human Capital Development
MARN	Miguel Gallardo	Social Watershed Management Specialist
PASE	Leonardo Quiroga	Director
UNICEF	Jimmy Vásquez	Social Policies and Social Protection Specialist
UNDP	Silvia Vides	Programme Officer
	Monica Merino	Deputy Resident Representative
World Bank	Nancy Banegas	

Plan Internacional	Cristina Pérez	National Adviser on Emergencies and Climate Change
Save the Children	Martin Peña	Monitoring and Evaluation Expert
FLACSO	Xochitl Hernandez	Researcher
Usulután and Morazán	Rene Ramos	Governor of Usulután
	Marcelino Hernández	Civil Protection Coordinator in Usulután
	Evaristo Romero	Governor of San Miguel
	Rómulo Orellana	FISDL Expert in Morazán
	Miguel Ángel Baires	FISDL Expert in Usulután

## Annex B Income support component of the Poverty Eradication Strategy

Concept	Description	Amount
Pensions for ensuring social security	Adult over 70 years of age (not receiving any other pension)	US\$50 per person
	People with severe dependent disability as assessed by MINSAL, under 70 years of age	US\$50 per person
Family income support to reduce gaps in rights (health, nutrition, and education)	Child from 0 to 2 years old	US\$20 per family
	Pregnant woman	US\$20 per family
	Young people studying the third cycle and baccalaureate, including flexible modalities, until completing the baccalaureate (maximum 20 years old)	US\$20 per young individual (third cycle) US\$20 (baccalaureate)
	Teenage mothers who re-enter the education system until they finish high school (maximum 20 years old)	US\$5 extra per person

Source: SETEPLAN (2017)