

Dominican Republic

Progresando con Solidaridad



Synthesis

CONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMS

Conditional cash transfer (CCT) programs are the main social programs used by Latin American and Caribbean countries to assist families living in poverty. In addition to supporting consumption, they encourage the accumulation of human capital.

To mark the 20 years since the implementation of CCT programs, the Inter-American Development Bank created this toolkit, which is primarily aimed at those who design and operate CCTs, as well as the general public. Here we describe how several countries implement the three main operational stages of a CCT program.

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The present work is a summary of the publication How Does Progresando
con Solidaridad Works?
The updated material as well as the summaries of the other programs in Latin America
and the Caribbean are available for downloading at the IDB's conditional transfer

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1/ INTRODUCTION

[Progresando con Solidaridad](#) (ProSoli) is a conditional cash transfer program that aims to interrupt the intergenerational transmission of poverty in the Dominican Republic. The program was created in August 2012 by [Decree 488-12](#), which combined the activities of a program known as Progresando to invest in human capital with the economic transfers and conditionalities of a program known as Solidaridad.

The program provides cash transfers to extremely poor and moderately poor families as long as the beneficiaries satisfy certain conditionalities related to investment in education and health. ProSoli aims to reduce poverty in the short term by granting cash transfers and in the long term through the use of conditionalities directed towards the accumulation of human capital and the creation of capacities and opportunities for life and work.

By the end of December 2017, ProSoli had reached 828,822 families. Its allocated budget was RD\$ 14,527,566,725 (an amount equivalent to US\$301,445,578 as of December 2017), which represented 0.40% of the Dominican Republic's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2017. The conditional cash transfer program is carried out by the [Social Policy Coordination Cabinet](#) (GCPS), an entity that is under the authority of the Vice Presidency of the Republic, which is responsible for ensuring the proper functioning of public institutions in the social sector.

2/ BENEFICIARIES

Eligibility

ProSoli's target population is households identified by the [Individual Beneficiary System](#) (SIUBEN) as living in extreme or moderate poverty. In order to be part of the program, in addition to meeting the poverty criteria, the head of the household must possess an identity card.

Targeting

The process of identifying families eligible to participate in ProSoli involves two stages. First, the SIUBEN identifies the areas of the country most in need using the official

poverty map, and then it collects socioeconomic information on each household. The information collected is used to calculate an average proxy means test called the Quality of Life Index (ICV). The index takes four factors into account: (i) Characteristics of the household; (ii) Basic services and furnishings of the household; (iii) Human capital and the gender of the head of the household; and (iv) The capacity of the family to support itself. The Quality of Life Index classifies households into four categories according to their vulnerability. Extremely poor families are classified under the ICV-I category and moderately poor families are classified under the ICV-II category.

Since the number of eligible households is greater than the budget, once these households have been identified, the Quality of Life Index applies a priority criterion to select the beneficiaries. For ProSoli, it is a priority to support households with a lower Quality of Life Index ranking that are located in rural areas, headed by single mothers, and that include members who are elderly and/or have disabilities or are sick. However, these priorities are limited to circumstances where health and education services are offered in the area where the household is located.

Enrollment

[Family Liaisons, or volunteers who visit families](#), visit the selected households and offer them the opportunity to be part of the program. The liaisons provide the potential beneficiaries with orientation sessions regarding the functioning of ProSoli and the commitments required of participating families. If the household accepts being part of the program, a commitment act is signed and this formalizes the enrollment.

Exit Criteria

The transfers can be interrupted if the households do not meet the conditionalities and regulations, or for administrative reasons. Depending on the specific cause, the interruption can be temporary or permanent. Some of the cases that lead to an interruption occur if beneficiaries (i) lend, give, or sell their Membership Card, (ii) fail to report in due time a change of address, which prevents locating them in order to verify the conditionalities, (iii) fail to meet the requirements for the eligibility criteria, (iv) fail to use the resources deposited on the card, or (v) possess more than one card.

3/ TRANSFERS

Structure of the Transfers

ProSoli offers three kinds of transfers: Eating Comes First (Comer es Primero - CEP), School Assistance Incentive (Incentivo a la Asistencia Escolar - ILAE), and the Student Voucher for Progress in Studies (Bono Estudiantil Estudiando Progreso - BEEP).

The CEP is conditioned on the use of health services by children under the age of 5 and by pregnant and postpartum women. Pregnant and postpartum women, and children under the age of 2, must get medical check-ups at least once every two months, and children between the ages of 2 and 5 must get check-ups at least once every six months. The CEP monthly benefit is RD\$ 825 (US\$17.20), which the household must use to buy food. The amount increases to RD\$ 1,000 (US\$20.80) monthly for households classified as ICV-I and residing in one of the 14 provinces prioritized by the conditional cash transfer program.

The ILAE is conditioned on enrollment in an initial or basic school level and minimum attendance of 80%. The transfers are made every two months to households with members of school age (5 to 21 years old) who meet the corresponding requirements. The amount received by each family depends on the number of students enrolled: RD\$ 600 (USD\$12.50) for one or two students, RD\$ 900 (US\$18.70) for three students, and RD\$ 1,200 (US\$24.90) for four or more students.

The BEEP is conditioned on enrollment in a secondary school and minimum attendance of 80%. The voucher is provided every two months to households with members of school age who satisfy the conditionalities. The payment is made for each household member according to conditionality type in which that member is enrolled and according to the grade the member is in. Under the normal modality, students in grades 1 and 2 receive RD\$ 1,000 (US\$20.80) and students in grades 3 and 4 receive RD\$ 1,400 (US\$29.10). Students enrolled in the technical program receive RD\$ 2,000 (US\$41.50) regardless of which grade they are in.

Payment Mechanisms

The payment method is the Tarjeta Solidaridad, which is an electronic Membership Card that enables the government to manage several virtual accounts (gavetas)

to deliver different transfers. This is useful because each of the virtual accounts can have different rules. For example, ProSoli's gaveta can only be used to buy food and school uniforms supplies, while the gaveta for the household gas voucher program (Bono Gas Hogar) can only be used to buy liquid gas.

Each family receives a card with the name of the household cardholder (generally the mother). The card can only be used by that person. The card is issued once the enrollment process is completed. ProSoli determines the number of requests for cards, and the [Social Subsidies Administration](#) (ADESS) validates the requests and forwards them to the pertinent financial institutions responsible for issuing them. When the families are informed of the means of payment, they also receive information about the scheduling of the payments and how they can use their card in the Social Supply Network (RAS), which is a network of affiliated businesses made up of food stores, including grocery stores, and shops for school supplies and uniforms.

4/ CONDITIONALITIES

Health

Verification of compliance with health conditionalities is based on information collected by the Ministry of Public Health (MSP) and on field information collected by ProSoli staff. More specifically, the MSP provides data about persons who attended a health center during a given period. For households that are subject to verification but are not in this database, ProSoli uses Health Control Attendance Verification Forms filled out in the field. ProSoli staff confirm attendance by using the Family Health Care Card or any other document proving that the beneficiary went to a health center. The information collected from the forms is added to ProSoli's information system and is used to determine whether or not the requirements for the conditionalities are met in order to execute the payment.

Education

The verification of compliance with education conditionalities is based on information collected by the Ministry of Education on enrollment in and attendance at school, and, to a lesser extent, on information collected in the field by ProSoli staff.

The Ministry of Education shares information from its database on enrolled students. For infants and young children who are not in the database, ProSoli generates Enrollment Confirmation Forms. The family liaison supervisors are responsible for visiting the households to fill out these forms and, subsequently, for visiting the education centers to validate the information provided by the families. Afterward, ProSoli sends the data collected to the Ministry of Education for validation. The records validated are incorporated into ProSoli's information system.

The Ministry of Education periodically shares information on the beneficiaries' school attendance. In addition, School Attendance Verification Forms are also used for students who are not in the ministry's database. To fill in these forms, family liaison supervisors go to the education centers and request information from the administrative staff about absences for a given period.

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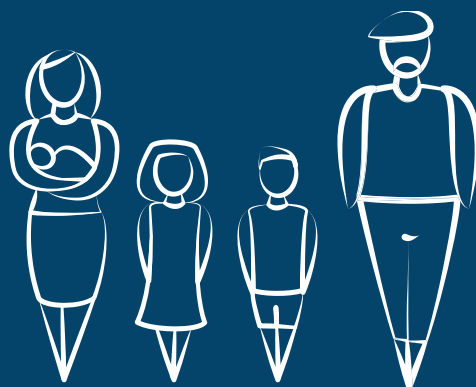
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