



## 1. Project Data

Project ID P090010	Project Name DO Social Protection Investment Project	
Country Dominican Republic	Practice Area(Lead) Social Protection & Labor	Additional Financing P116369
L/C/TF Number(s) IBRD-74810,IBRD-77980	Closing Date (Original) 30-Jun-2012	Total Project Cost (USD) 32,000,000.00
Bank Approval Date 02-Aug-2007	Closing Date (Actual) 30-Apr-2016	
	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	19,400,000.00	0.00
Revised Commitment	29,358,124.67	0.00
Actual	29,358,124.67	0.00
Sector(s) Central Government (Central Agencies)(55%):Social Protection(45%)		
Theme(s) Social Safety Nets/Social Assistance & Social Care Services(25%):Child health(25%):Education for all(25%):Income Support for Old Age, Disability & Survivorship(25%)		
Prepared by Salim J. Habayeb	Reviewed by Judyth L. Twigg	ICR Review Coordinator Joy Behrens
		Group IEGHC (Unit 2)

## 2. Project Objectives and Components

### a. Objectives

The project development objectives were to improve the coverage, targeting and effectiveness of the Borrower's social protection programs, through: (i) the provision of legal identity documents to the Borrower's poor population; (ii) institutional strengthening of targeting mechanisms; and (iii) the strengthening of systems for monitoring and evaluation of the Borrower's social programs (Loan Agreement, 9/18/2007). The PAD's statement of objectives is consistent with that of the Loan Agreement (PAD, p. 4).



- b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?

No

- c. Components

**Component 1: Provision of National Identity Documents to Poor Dominicans (Appraisal US\$12.86 million; Actual US\$11.73 million).** This component focused on improving access of poor households to basic social services and economic opportunities. It had three sub-components: (i) a nation-wide information, education and communication campaign aiming at stimulating demand; (ii) targeted family support to assist undocumented households who were identified to obtain their national identity documents; and (iii) support to the National Civil Registry.

**Component 2: Strengthening of Social Protection Services (Appraisal US\$5.19 million; Actual US\$15.65 million).** This component focused on strengthening the Social Cabinet and the Unified Beneficiary Identification System. It consisted of three sub-components: (i) institutional development of the Social Cabinet to strengthen planning, budgeting and inter-institutional coordination; (ii) building capacities of the Unified Beneficiary Identification System, including the provision of information and communication technology (ICT) hardware and software, support to data management, refining targeting processes, and supporting the nationwide survey; and (iii) social policy monitoring and evaluation, including social audit mechanisms, monitoring the poverty reduction strategy, research and social studies, and impact evaluation surveys. Additional Financing provided incremental resources to improve targeting performance, technological improvements for poverty mapping, digitalization, mobile devices, and geo-referencing systems to improve data quality.

**Component 3: Project Coordination (US\$1.96 million).** This component was for support to the project coordination team which evolved into a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) inside the Social Cabinet, including communication and operational expenses, office supplies, equipment, and training.

Note: The components illustrated in the ICR show the distribution of the loan proceeds only. The project team later added that, of the Borrower contribution, US\$2.6 million was allocated to Component 1, and US\$0.7 million to Component 2.

- d. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates

**Project cost and financing.** At appraisal, the project cost was estimated at US\$22.0 million, including a loan of US\$19.40 million and a Borrower contribution of US\$2.60 million. An incremental Bank loan of US\$10 million was provided through additional financing (AF) on 9/17/2009, with an additional Borrower contribution of US\$0.72 million. All the loan proceeds aggregating at US\$29.40 million were disbursed. The actual project cost amounted to a total of US\$32.72 million, including a Borrower contribution of US\$3.32 million. The project benefited through parallel support from three Performance and Accountability of Social Sectors Development Policy Loans (DPLs) approved by the Bank during 2009-2012, and from the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), as detailed in Section 5.

**Dates.** The project was appraised on 3/13/2006. Effectiveness was delayed by presidential elections. The project became effective on 12/19/2008. During that period (2007-2008), the country faced a food, fuel, and financial crisis. The government recognized the need for further strengthening the Conditional Cash Transfer Program (Solidaridad) to buffer the effects of the crisis on poor households, and requested additional financing, which was approved on 9/17/2009. The AF also aimed at scaling up efforts in targeting and documentation of poor households. The AF restructuring extended the closing date of the original loan to 12/31/2013. A mid-term review was held on 2/3/2014. The project was restructured seven times, including the AF. The other six level-2 restructurings are summarized as follows: on 7/17/2012 to reallocate loan proceeds; on 11/6/2013 to reallocate loan proceeds, and to extend the closing dates of the original project and the AF to 12/31/2014 to allow completion of project activities; on 12/19/2014 to reallocate loan proceeds, carry out documentation activities and studies, and extend the closing date to 6/30/2015; and on 4/8/2015 to add one indicator on effectiveness and sharpen the definition of some indicators. On 6/29/2015, the Bank extended the closing date to 4/30/2016 to provide time to the Borrower to request the inclusion of new construction. The last restructuring on 8/27/2015 amended the Loan Agreements for the original project and the AF to make formal provision for the construction of new offices for the Central Electoral Council. The project closed on 4/30/2016.

### 3. Relevance of Objectives & Design



a. Relevance of Objectives

The objectives were responsive to the conditions and needs of the Dominican Republic to improve social protection services. In 2003-2004, the country experienced an economic crisis that resulted in a dramatic deterioration of real incomes and an increase in poverty levels. By the end of 2004, about 49.7 percent of the population were poor, with about 6.5 percent extremely poor. Increasing poverty levels stressed the need to improve social protection services. Assisted by a US\$100 million Social Crisis Response Adjustment Loan, the government took actions to protect social program budgets, strengthen key institutions, and consolidate overlapping social programs. In order to advance and deepen the initial reform of social programs, the government wanted to increase the access of undocumented poor households to social assistance and human capital development opportunities, and to effectively implement consolidated and better targeted social programs. The project objectives were consistent with a main pillar of the Bank's Country Assistance Strategy (2006-09) to achieve greater social equity, and to increase coverage and quality of basic public services. The focus of the original project was on operational aspects of the national social protection strategy and not on the Solidaridad Program itself. However, in 2009, three years after project appraisal in 2006, the institutional needs changed, and the Government required more resources to strengthen Solidaridad, the Social Cabinet, and social policy monitoring (ICR, p.9). Additional financing was provided on 9/17/2009. The AF aimed to support the transformation of Solidaridad into a full-fledged conditional cash transfer program, by developing capacities and operational procedures for working with the ministries of health and education, and strengthening compliance verification. The objectives remain relevant to the goal of the country's National Development Strategy (2010-2030) to build an effective and efficient social protection system, and to the Country Partnership Strategy (2015-2018) for strengthening social service delivery.

Rating

Substantial

b. Relevance of Design

Relevance of project design was consistent with the stated objectives. The design showed a coherent results chain linking funding and planned activities to outputs and intermediate outcomes to outcomes. Provision of legal identity documents to the poor, institutional strengthening of targeting mechanisms, and increased monitoring, evaluation, and oversight of social programs would plausibly lead to the desired outcomes in the social protection programs. By supporting the undocumented poor to obtain national identity documents, the project addressed a key obstacle to improving access and coverage of key social programs.

Rating

Substantial

## 4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

### Objective 1

#### Objective

Improve the coverage of social protection programs.

#### Rationale

#### Outputs

The project provided support for a communication campaign, technical assistance and consultancies, training and workshops, ICT equipment, software, furniture, and transportation means. The project established 28 working centers for ICT platforms to monitor the documentation process. The project strengthened the Late Birth Certificate Unit of the Civil Registry with computers, printers, scanners, and other equipment. It provided output-based reimbursement to the National Civil Registry for expenditures incurred in the provision of identification documents to the poor, based on a unit cost per document issued (US\$5 per document, raised to US\$7 in 2013). The project financed five mobile civil registry offices, consisting of modified trucks outfitted with ICT equipment, which were linked to the civil registry network. The



project provided the PIU with office supplies, equipment, communication and operational expenses, and training.

### Outcomes

Evidence showed the expansion in coverage. The percentage of extremely poor heads of household who lacked identity documents decreased from a baseline of 28% in 2005 to 7.10% in 2016, exceeding the target of 10%. The percentage of households with at least one member targeted by the documentation efforts and integrated into the Conditional Cash Transfer Program (PROSOLI, Solidaridad previously) increased from a baseline of zero in 2005 to 97.90% in 2016, exceeding the target of 75%. The percentage of poor households enrolled in the Unified Beneficiary Identification System (SIUBEN) database and subsequently validated for participation in PROSOLI increased from 68.40% in 2005 to 94.9% in 2016; and the percentage of extremely poor households covered by PROSOLI increased from a baseline of 68.40% in 2005 to 86.10% in 2016, exceeding the target of 85. Achievement of this objective is rated High, as intended outcomes for reaching out to poor undocumented Dominicans were exceeded.

Rating  
High

## Objective 2

### Objective

Improve the targeting of social protection programs.

### Rationale

### Outputs

The project provided capacity building outputs for the Social Cabinet and for the Unified System for Beneficiary Selection (SIUBEN), consisting of technical assistance, consultancies, training, revised procedures to update the beneficiary census, management information system (MIS) training, equipment, computers and printers, mobile devices, ICT hardware and software, and furniture. The project provided financial and technical assistance to improve the targeting instrument, and supported SIUBEN surveys.

### Outcomes

The results showed that targeting improved through the strengthening of the SIUBEN identification system and the certification process, and that the poverty status of registered households was updated in the database: By 2016, about 2.2 million households were covered by the 2009 SIUBEN survey, which updated the poverty status of all registered households with poverty status. 100 percent of surveyed households were certified. The next survey is planned for 2017 under a new project. A study carried out by the Inter-American Development Bank benchmarked inclusion and exclusion errors with 13 other Latin American countries. The findings were favorable, with the study concluding that the exclusion error was lower than in Chile, Panama, Costa Rica, and Paraguay; and that the inclusion error was lower than in Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, and Costa Rica.

The project redefined the Implementation Strategy of the Documentation Unit, evolving from the individual focus to a geographical approach that considered poverty maps and pockets identified by SIUBEN. The project included poverty pockets which existed as enclaves within other areas not classified as poor, thereby better capturing potential eligible beneficiaries. Thus, both the expansion of SIUBEN, as well as enhanced targeting and improved targeting algorithms, increased the number of beneficiaries and improved focalization efficiency (i.e., targeting performance).

Good progress was made in adopting a unified registry in the country. Other programs gradually adopted SIUBEN as their targeting mechanism, including the National Health Insurance, Bono Gas, Bono Luz, the National Council for Aging, programs implemented by the General Directorate of Special Programs of the Presidency (i.e., Literacy National Program), and small programs such as support for Victims of Hurricanes Olga and Noel, the National Cancer Institute Rosa Emilia Duarte, the National Commission for HIV-AIDS, and the National Institute of Student Welfare. The ICR (p. 20) states that future synergies are being explored with other institutions such as the Land Authority, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Cabildos-local administrative representation. The increasing number of social programs opting to use the unified beneficiary registry is reflected by the expenditures of targeted social protection programs that use SIUBEN as a percentage of total



social assistance expenditures, which increased from 20% in 2005 to 64.4% in 2016, slightly exceeding the target of 60%.

Rating  
Substantial

## Objective 3

Objective  
Improve the effectiveness of social protection programs.

Rationale

### Outputs

The same outputs indicated under objective 1 and 2 relate to this objective as they pertain to the effectiveness of coverage and targeting. In addition, the project provided consultant services to support an impact evaluation, including a baseline study in 2011 and an impact evaluation survey in 2014. The project also provided consultant services, equipment, and supplies to support social audits by civil society (a system of Community Report Cards), to strength monitoring of the Poverty Reduction Strategy by the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development in concert with the Social Cabinet, to strengthen M&E, and to implement social program studies.

### Outcomes

The theory of change laid out by the ICR was that the project would improve the effectiveness of the Borrower's social protection programs by improving the M&E capacities of the Social Cabinet and PROSOLI (ICR, pp 20-21). The strengthening of M&E capacities was to improve the ability of these agencies to track beneficiaries, to assess the quality of social programs, and to identify strengths and weaknesses in social programs, thus leading to improvements. The creation of a social oversight mechanism and the wide dissemination of the community scorecards was to contribute to informed decisions by program authorities to adapt interventions and improve them.

At appraisal, explicit PDO-level indicators were not included to measure effectiveness. A PDO-level indicator was added during the fifth restructuring in 2015: the "establishment of a social audit mechanism for monitoring with the participation of the community." The ICR reports this indicator as having been achieved, since the mechanism was launched as a national process during the same year, after a piloting period. However, this indicator is not considered sufficiently robust to directly reflect improved effectiveness.

Overall effectiveness was demonstrated by the impact evaluation undertaken by the project, which assessed the effectiveness of documentation of poor households in terms of the resulting access to economic and social development opportunities. The project planned and financed an impact evaluation that was completed by the Fundacion de la Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica in November 2014. It compared differences in social and economic parameters between poor documented and undocumented households. Poor households, by virtue of obtaining legal identity, were able to access economic and social development opportunities. Seventy percent of the newly documented individuals had already used their identification cards, and 80% had used their birth certificates, both for varied purposes including for accessing social protection, education, health, and jobs. Access to employment and per-capita expenditure and consumption were higher for newly documented households. Sixty percent of the newly documented men were employed, compared to only 28% of undocumented men. Documented individuals were more likely to ask for loans than undocumented ones (66% versus 33%). Access to national identification documents meant better achievements for documented women in terms of labor market insertion, about 20 percentage points higher than for undocumented women. Family income for a documented "woman head of household" was about 33 percentage points higher than that of an undocumented woman. Access to preventive health care services for children of documented women was 27 percentage points higher than for undocumented women. The impact evaluation also confirmed some of the issues that were identified at appraisal: More than 50% of undocumented teens stated that they were not at school because they did not have a birth certificate.

In addition to increased coverage in PROSOLI, there was a notable change in access to social security between 2011 and 2014 for documented households. In 2011, 72% of these households did not have access to social security, and by 2014, only 33% remained without access. Documented households had more access to health insurance. Sixty-seven percent of documented individuals had health insurance compared to only 8% of undocumented individuals. Utilization of health care services was higher for documented households. Sixty one



percent of individuals from documented households who felt sick went to a public hospital, compared to 49% of undocumented individuals. Family members younger than 5 years from documented households were more likely to receive immunizations and preventive check-ups. Eighty percent of documented households with children under five reported attending well-child visits compared to fewer than half of undocumented households.

Rating  
Substantial

## 5. Efficiency

Given the multi-dimensionality of the project benefits, the ICR states that it is difficult to quantify in monetary terms all of the project's longer-term social and economic benefits, not only because of data-related issues, but also for conceptual reasons. The PAD's economic analysis focused on the private economic benefits of providing birth certificates to children in terms of allowing them to complete primary education and further. Children without birth certificates were evicted from school after the 7th grade. The PAD's analysis estimated the private benefit associated with improved education due to documentation in terms of expected additional earnings of direct project beneficiaries over their working lives. The Net Present Value was estimated at US\$16.4 million with an Internal Rate of Return of 22.4 percent. Using the same methodology, the ICR updates the economic analysis that was carried out at appraisal, showing a Net Present Value estimated at US\$39.0 million, with an Internal Rate of Return of 25.7 percent. The increase was mostly driven by higher returns of education. Also, the ICR calculates the unit cost of reaching an additional household at US\$12, and concludes that this cost was minor compared to the savings from improved channeling of public expenditure, expansion of focused social programs, and increase in targeting accuracy. The unified registry provided a main focalization instrument, reduced duplicative efforts, and improved registration accuracy. The ICR noted that, before the implementation of SIUBEN, the focalization of public resources was weak and regressive. The targeting algorithms implemented by the project were stronger and progressive. The enhanced targeting improved the channeling of the public expenditure of the sector. The project refined the proxy-means test to affect exclusion and inclusion errors. Enhanced targeting and improved targeting algorithms contributed to efficiency and focalization of public resources as demonstrated by a study carried out by IADB in 2015.

In addition to favorable returns and efficiency gains in the wider sector, aspects of design and implementation have contributed to efficiency in project implementation. The project used the complementarity of other operations, other donors, various actors and stakeholders, and built on and utilized the operational capacities of existing key national institutions and stakeholders. The project used the parallel backing of three DPLs approved by the Bank during 2009-2012 to promote its goal of strengthening and reforming Solidaridad, as the DPLs supported structural reforms and protected the budget for social protection. Furthermore, by strengthening primary health care units and schools, the DPLs were also supporting the improvement of the conditional cash transfer program in the country. The project team worked closely with IADB in coordinating their roles and avoiding duplication. The IADB supported the reforms with the financing of the Management Information System and the Solidaridad cash transfers. The project drew on other Bank-assisted health and education operations that were supporting the strengthening of sector systems and training of personnel. The project operated by utilizing and further strengthening the capacities of the Central Electoral Council, the Social Cabinet and its technical directorates, existing social protection programs, and other agencies. The project used the operational capacity of a vast array of community stakeholders who had comparative advantage, such as community organizations, non-governmental agencies, churches, school principals, local providers, and neighborhood stores.

However, efficiency of implementation was moderated by some shortcomings. Since the planned national communication campaign experienced difficulties during the procurement process, a smaller campaign with radio messages was carried out, potentially diminishing the level of expected awareness of the poor about the government's documentation campaign. There were delays in processing national identity documents as the verification of birth certificates was understandably slow. There were also delays in strengthening the registry offices of the Central Electoral Council. Project extensions were required to complete the implementation of project activities. Within the broad context of overall implementation efficiency, these are considered to be relatively minor shortcomings.

Efficiency Rating  
Substantial



a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal	✓	22.40	25.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	25.70	25.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

\* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

## 6. Outcome

Relevance of objectives is rated Substantial, as they were responsive to the conditions and needs of the country, where poverty levels escalated after the economic crisis in 2003-2004. There was a need to increase access of undocumented poor households to social assistance and to implement better targeted social programs. The objectives remain consistent with the country's National Development Strategy (2010-2030) to build an effective and efficient social protection system, and with the Bank's Country Partnership Strategy (2015-2018) for strengthening social service delivery. The relevance of project design is rated Substantial, as it was consistent with the stated objectives, and the results chain adequately linked funding and planned activities to outputs and intermediate outcomes to outcomes. The objective to improve coverage is rated High as it exceeded its intended outcomes. The objective to improve the targeting of social protection programs under a Unified Beneficiary Identification System was achieved and is rated Substantial. The objective to improve the effectiveness of social protection programs was achieved and is rated Substantial. Efficiency is rated Substantial in view of favorable returns, but with some shortcomings in the efficiency of implementation. Institutional strengthening was extensive. These ratings are indicative of minor shortcomings in the project's preparation and implementation, and therefore an Outcome rating of Satisfactory.

a. Outcome Rating  
Satisfactory

## 7. Rationale for Risk to Development Outcome Rating

Overall, the risk that development outcomes would not be maintained appears to be modest. Government ownership and commitment to continue supportive policies and to maintain budgetary provisions are strong. The strengthened Social Cabinet, the improved operational capacity of PROSOLI, and the enhanced M&E and social oversight are widely recognized. Concurrently, some risks have been identified. In terms of coverage, and despite the irreversible benefits that documentation has brought to beneficiaries, the institutionalization of the documentation component under PROSOLI may face a risk without a full program structure. The project has shown the complexity of the documentation process, which involves a series of steps, including awareness activities, gathering proof of birth documents, and transaction costs. In terms of targeting, SIUBEN is increasingly being used as the main targeting mechanism for social programs; however, unless SIUBEN is formally institutionalized by decree, it may be altered with changes in government. Also, there is the usual risk that budgetary constraints may affect the performance of social protection programs.

A new Bank-assisted operation builds on project achievements, including cooperation agreements among agencies, Social Cabinet expertise, and strong donor coordination with different partners, such as the Inter-American Development Bank and UNDP. Current public awareness about the importance of documentation to access social services and economic opportunities, and the creation of an Inter-Institutional Technical Committee for Poverty Reduction, will contribute to further moderating the above-noted risks.

a. Risk to Development Outcome Rating  
Modest





## 8. Assessment of Bank Performance

### a. Quality-at-Entry

The strategic relevance of the project was high, as the project was responsive to the country's needs and social protection priorities. The Bank engaged with the main stakeholders in developing the operation, including non-governmental organizations, civil society, and beneficiaries. The Bank identified areas where its support would add value within the larger sector, such as targeting and access, while duly considering the role of other partners in the sector. The Bank carried out extensive sector work, the Poverty Assessment 2005, and benefited from past lessons learned and good practices, notably the impact of the lack of documentation and its exclusion of the poor from social programs, which led the Bank to incentivize multi-sectoral actors to carry out active search for the poor. Other lessons included the need to improve targeting, the need for clear delineation of roles among participating institutions, and the importance of expanded monitoring and evaluation to increase transparency and accountability. Technical aspects were of high quality. Preparation and appraisal were consistent with the Bank's fiduciary role. Implementation and M&E arrangements were adequately prepared, although the measurement of the effectiveness outcome lacked benchmarks. Overall risk assessment was adequate. However, the Bank team did not foresee the complexities of rehabilitating 50 civil registry offices, a large number of which were rented; and the Bank team underestimated the intensive allocation of human and financial resources that would be needed to carry out the Unified Beneficiary Identification System study. Along with the changing needs discussed in Section 3, both of the above issues contributed to the preparation of an AF shortly after approval of the original project. In conclusion, there were moderate shortcomings in the way the Bank identified, facilitated preparation of, and appraised the operation with the aim to achieve the planned development outcomes, consistent with a Quality-at-Entry rating of Moderately Satisfactory.

Quality-at-Entry Rating  
Moderately Satisfactory

### b. Quality of supervision

Overall, the Bank team was very proactive in identifying and resolving arising issues facing the achievement of project objectives and the Bank's fiduciary role. The pro-activeness of the Bank team is also reflected in seven restructurings. The Bank focused on development impact and provided relevant technical assistance workshops. The Bank was effective in coordinating project implementation with other operations, and in taking advantage of potential synergies in targeting and budget planning among social protection operations executed by the Social Cabinet. The Bank adequately supervised fiduciary and safeguard aspects, and resolved issues that arose. The Bank supported transition arrangements towards the Integrated Social Protection and Promotion Project, which became effective in October 2015, and which aims at addressing the multi-dimensionality and regional disparities of extreme poverty as well as further improvements in the social protection system.

There were some shortcomings in supervision and implementation support. New construction was added without amending the Legal Agreement, and this issue had to be resolved retroactively. Team rotation affected the pace of implementation and the quality of reporting (ICR, p. 32).

Quality of Supervision Rating  
Moderately Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating  
Moderately Satisfactory

## 9. Assessment of Borrower Performance

### a. Government Performance

The Government, under the Presidency and Vice Presidency structures, showed ownership and commitment to achieving development objectives under three administrations. The Government provided an enabling environment for the social sectors and social protection through policy and budgetary support, and through stakeholder consultations. It safeguarded social expenditures in the national multiannual budgeting cycles, and provided budgetary resources for CCT that were not funded by the Project. Project preparation and implementation benefitted from strong leadership that facilitated the preparation and implementation of the project and related social policy reforms. Counterpart funds were provided in a timely manner.





Government Performance Rating  
Satisfactory

b. Implementing Agency Performance

**The Social Cabinet and its Project Implementation Unit.** The Social Cabinet and its embedded PIU were the main nodal bodies for project implementation. The Social Cabinet was committed to achieving development objectives and provided leadership in project preparation activities and in launching implementation. The Social Cabinet worked effectively with the Bank to address arising issues during implementation. It maintained a high level of stakeholder consultations. It appointed members of the core team in its PIU, consisting of one technical coordinator, two component coordinators, a financial manager, procurement specialists, professionals in the Documentation Unit, and secretarial staff. Training in fiduciary topics was provided. The Social Cabinet strengthened M&E in its Technical Directorate to ensure adequate monitoring of the project. Information from SIUBEN, PROSOLI, the Documentation Unit, and the Administrator of Social Subsidies was also collated by the PIU. In view of its operational capacity, the PIU started to manage other projects financed by Inter-American Development Bank in support of the country's social protection efforts (ICR, p. 7).

There were some shortcomings. Procurement experienced delays and challenges in the communication campaign that led to its downsizing. Issues were reported in the adequacy of consultant contracts. Given the long implementation period, the unit experienced staff turnover. The legal agreement was amended retroactively to include new construction, and there were delays in the construction of new offices for the Central Electoral Council.

**The Central Electoral Council.** In concert with the Social Cabinet, the Council implemented activities related to the provision of national identity documents to the poor. The Council upgraded the infrastructure of its regional offices and strengthened the capacity of its units to cope with the additional workload. Its overall performance was adequate, but its engagement to implement the documentation mechanism for the extremely poor was gradual, as it took time to agree on and finalize the mechanism with the Social Cabinet; the Electoral Council was not a natural ally to carry out active search of undocumented poor (ICR, p.29).

Implementing Agency Performance Rating  
Moderately Satisfactory

Overall Borrower Performance Rating  
Moderately Satisfactory

## 10. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

The M&E design was sound, and the outcome indicators reflected project objectives on coverage and targeting, but the design lacked robust indicators to assess the outcome of the third objective concerning improved effectiveness in terms of access to economic and social development opportunities. An indicator for this purpose was introduced at the fifth restructuring in 2015: the "establishment of a social audit mechanism for monitoring with the participation of the community." This new indicator did not directly measure effectiveness improvements. However, data on effectiveness was made available by the impact evaluation (see Section 4). The rest of the indicators were measurable, and basic arrangements for data collection and results reporting were appropriate. The project design placed emphasis on strengthening M&E in the Social Cabinet to facilitate tracking of indicators in collaboration with other government agencies.

b. M&E Implementation

The Project Implementation Unit was the focal point for M&E implementation, gathering information from the SIUBEN, PROSOLI, the Documentation Unit, and the Administrator of Social Subsidies. The unit monitored project activities, recorded progress against intermediate and outcome indicators, and reported the results. An integrated MIS was developed to systematically monitor and evaluate the



implementation of social policies led by the Social Cabinet, and was used in multiannual plans. M&E functions were implemented effectively and were owned by the main stakeholders. Data was of adequate quality. The project introduced a community oversight system through the Community Reports Cards as a participatory mechanism to involve beneficiaries and communities in identifying problems, expressing opinions, and providing feedback on the functioning of PROSOLI. Community reporting also included a wide range of local professionals, e.g., from the health sector, education sector, schools, and community organizations. By project completion, Community Report Cards were institutionalized. Baseline and impact evaluations on the documentation component were carried out in 2011 and 2014 respectively to assess the impact of providing legal identity documents to the poor.

#### c. M&E Utilization

M&E findings were regularly reported by the Borrower to stakeholders and partners. They were documented in the Bank's Implementation Status and Results Reports. The findings were effectively used to monitor and improve performance on the ground. M&E findings allowed the project to adapt and to re-frame some operational strategies. The documentation strategy was modified to include poverty enclaves in areas that were not classified as poor (see Section 5), thereby capturing more eligible beneficiaries. The information generated by Community Report Cards was used to address shortcomings identified by the beneficiaries themselves, and contributed to improving the effectiveness of the program. At the beneficiary level, common issues that were identified concerned the performance of Colmados (neighborhood stores), timeliness in receiving funds, and adequacy of community services such as water and school sanitation. The Social Cabinet used project information to influence policy decisions related to the expansion of coverage and co-responsibilities of stakeholders, and to inform the work of inter-sectoral commissions.

M&E Quality Rating  
Substantial

## 11. Other Issues

#### a. Safeguards

The project was classified under environmental category C. The Project intended to rehabilitate fifty existing civil registry offices to facilitate the installation of essential ICT equipment as part of the Central Electoral Council modernization program. The minor works did not trigger safeguard policies. When the construction of four new civil registry buildings was introduced, an environmental assessment was undertaken in 2014. The environmental category C was maintained, and the safeguard team worked closely with the government to ensure that there was compliance with the Bank's environmental policy and with the seismic regulations in the country. There was no involuntary resettlement as a consequence of the new construction plans.

#### b. Fiduciary Compliance

**Financial Management.** The PIU of the Social Cabinet was assigned fiduciary responsibilities, procurement tasks, and the coordination of project implementation and monitoring. Financial management arrangements were adequate and acceptable to the Bank, including organization, staffing arrangements, planning and budgeting, accounting, and flow of funds. The quality of the financial reports was adequate, and the audit reports were regularly carried out and submitted to the Bank, but with some delays. The project team stated that audits were unqualified. After linking the project with the integrated financial management information system in 2011, incorrect recording of exchange rates was noted in the system. This was a systemic issue affecting other agencies as well, and was rectified. Also after 2011, there was a delay in the reconciliation of counterpart funds upon switching to the integrated system. Reconciliation was achieved in 2014. Similarly, there was a delay in the reconciliation of Bank advances, which was also resolved in 2016 when an outstanding balance of US\$ 41,875 was refunded to the Bank.

**Procurement.** Overall, procurement performance was mixed during the initial years of project implementation, but proceeded satisfactorily



in the latter part of the project. Procurement was intensive throughout implementation, notably during the 2011 socio-economic study and during regional training activities. By the end of the project, the skills of the procurement staff were significantly enhanced, and staff was absorbed by the new Bank-supported operation.

The project faced delays mainly in procurement related to the communications campaign, both at the design stage and the execution stage. The project encountered difficulties in finding interested companies that would meet the technical requirements. The PIU unsuccessfully tried on three occasions to attract firms and to develop a short list. Subsequently, the design of the communications campaign was given to a short-listed company in October 2010, and the design was completed by March 2011. However, similar issues were encountered in preparing the implementation phase of the campaign. Between June and December 2011, the procurement process for selecting an implementing firm was twice declared deserted. The budgets that were proposed were substantially higher than the planned allocations. Given that three years had already passed since effectiveness, the Borrower opted for undertaking communication activities on a smaller scale, using local non-profit community organizations to carry out ad-hoc communication activities. In addition, Radio Santa Maria, an educational and religious radio station, was used to disseminate information on the availability of assistance to the undocumented poor.

Issues were also encountered in civil works, as noted previously. Since many civil registry offices were rented, and since the Central Electoral Council used its own construction firms in accordance with its own procedures, rehabilitation was financed from other resources outside the project. Subsequently, the Council built four new registry offices under the project. The Legal Agreement was amended retroactively. Also, during one post-review supervision mission, issues concerning consultant contracts were identified and resolved. These consisted of mismatches in names and terms of reference, and an inappropriate hiring of a professional working for two public institutions.

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)  
None identified.

d. Other  
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## 12. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	---
Risk to Development Outcome	Modest	Modest	---
Bank Performance	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	---
Borrower Performance	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	---
Quality of ICR		Substantial	---

### Note

When insufficient information is provided by the Bank for IEG to arrive at a clear rating, IEG will downgrade the relevant ratings as warranted beginning July 1, 2006.

The "Reason for Disagreement/Comments" column could cross-reference other sections of the ICR Review, as appropriate.

## 13. Lessons

The project provided a number of lessons (ICR, pp. 30-32), and the following ones are drawn from the ICR and adapted by IEG:

**Transparency contributes to successful implementation of social protection programs.** In this case, the lists of beneficiaries were published. Public conferences were held to disseminate information about the targeting mechanism and poverty maps. PROSOLI established a system of complaints to address inaccuracies and household updates. The Community Report Cards gave a voice to beneficiaries and



communities in improving service delivery. Such measures contributed to the program's reputation and credibility, and were continued after project closing.

**A unified system to target beneficiaries is key to improving efficiency in social protection programs.** The project has strengthened SIUBEN as a single, unified identification system, and as a live database that can be continuously updated, thus providing relevant information for social protection operations and resource allocations. Under the project, other national programs gradually adopted SIUBEN (see Section 4), thus promoting synergies. The unified registry provided a main focalization instrument, reduced duplicative efforts, and improved registration accuracy.

**Inter-institutional collaboration and coordination among development partners contributes to successful implementation of social programs.** Collaboration was effectively pursued under the project among key national agencies and stakeholders, and between the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank.

**A national communication campaign to build awareness, when new or transformational strategies are introduced, is important for ensuring implementation readiness.** Under the project, it was necessary to build support for the new documentation strategy, targeting various levels including provinces, institutions, stakeholders, non-governmental organizations, and churches, which were already providing support to undocumented poor Dominicans at the local level.

## 14. Assessment Recommended?

No

## 15. Comments on Quality of ICR

The ICR presents a thorough analysis of the project experience. Its narrative and conclusions are internally consistent. The ICR is outcome-driven. The quality of the evidence demonstrating the achievement of objectives is high. The report identifies useful lessons derived from project experience. However, the ICR could have been more concise.

- a. Quality of ICR Rating  
Substantial