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I. INTRODUCTION

Food insecurity is increasing in many countries around the world, reversing years of progress and jeopardizing the ability to reach the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in time by 2030. In fact, according to UNICEF’s latest report “The State of Food Security and Nutrition” (2021), globally countries were already behind the goal of abolishing world hunger in all forms by 2030 even before the start of the global health crisis. Starting in 2020, the combination of the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic with diminishing incomes and interruptions in supply networks has caused chronic and acute hunger to rise starkly. This rise is further due to a variety of variables such as social conflicts, socioeconomic conditions, pests, climate change, and the effects of extreme weather, among others. The pandemic has only exacerbated these issues resulting in significant and pervasive increases in global food insecurity, affecting populations in situations of vulnerability in nearly every country in the Western Hemisphere. These serious effects are predicted to last beyond 2022.

Although economies are slowly recovering from COVID-19, uncertainty and disruptions persist. As fiscal capacity deteriorates, the prospects for food and nutrition security in many low- and middle-income nations remain a serious concern. While the forecast for global food supplies remains positive, food prices have risen dramatically because of high input prices, which, when combined with high transportation costs and further trade interruptions caused by the conflict in Ukraine, are driving up import costs. Poor and emerging countries are the most severely hurt in this scenario as they rely on food imports the most. Many countries in the Americas fall under this category.

In April 2022, the Heads of the World Bank Group (WBG), International Monetary Fund (IMF), United Nations World Food Program (WFP), and World Trade Organization (WTO) prepared a joint statement appealing to the international community to take immediate action to tackle food insecurity, maintain open trade, and support vulnerable countries by giving financial assistance. The following month in May, the World Bank announced it will make available $30 billion for current and new initiatives and projects to address food insecurity over the next 15 months in sectors including nutrition, water and irrigation, and agriculture. Currently, the World Bank is preparing to launch $12 billion worth of new projects with countries around the world aiming to support production and producers, facilitate increased trade, support vulnerable households, and invest in sustainable food and nutrition security.
To respond to the grave challenges triggered by food insecurity, countries throughout the Americas have relied on existing food programs and other emergency programs and incentives to help provide food to their populations. To get a sense of the status of these programs and following the mandate of AG/RES. 2956 (L-0/20) “The Challenges to Food Security and Nutrition in the Americas in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic within the Framework of the Plan of Action of Guatemala 2019” in which the OAS Member States agreed to promote spaces for dialogue and for disseminating information about this priority issue for the region, the Department of Social Inclusion of the Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity (SARE/DSI) sent to all OAS Member States a questionnaire to collect information that has been systematized into this regional report on best practices and lessons learned to combat food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The DIS received information from the following Member States: Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, the United States, and Uruguay.

The following regional report examines the programs put in place, best practices, lessons learned, and challenges in the fight against food insecurity in the Americas.
According to the Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition (2021) by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in the Americas during 2020 the pervasiveness of hunger reached 9.1%. Between 2019 and 2020, this rate increased by 2%, meaning that in 2020, 59.7 million people in the Americas were undernourished, 13.8 million people more than in 2019, making it now the highest rate in the last 15 years.6

In the Americas in 2020, 41% of individuals had moderate or severe food insecurity, with 14% experiencing extreme food insecurity, defined as running out of food and going a day or more without eating. In addition, 267 million people were affected by moderate or severe food insecurity, indicating that 60 million more individuals than in 2019 lacked physical or economic access to the amount and quality of food needed for health and development.7

When broken down further geographically, the inequalities of hunger become even more evident. Central America has had the largest increase in food insecurity, 2.5% between 2019 and 2020, reaching its highest figure in the last 20 years: 10.6%, or 19 million people. In the Caribbean, hunger affects 7 million people, or 16.1% of the population; and in South America it affects 33.7 million people, representing 7.8% of the population.8

Populations that are already vulnerable, such as certain groups of women, indigenous and Afro-descendent peoples, persons with disabilities, older persons, migrants and refugees, among others, are at particular risk of food insecurity in the region. 41.8% of women in the region suffered moderate or severe food insecurity in 2020, in contrast to 32.2% of men. In the last six years, this gap has widened dramatically, growing from 6.4% in 2019 to 9.6% in 2020.9 According to the United Nations Survey on Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean, in 2020, 44.9% of indigenous youth believed food shortages existed in their communities and 32.2% did not have sufficient economic resources to purchase food during the COVID-19 pandemic.10

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6 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2021), report, “Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2020.” Available at: https://doi.org/10.4060/cb7497en
7 FAO (2021) report.
8 The World Bank (2022).
Recent data published by the World Food Programme (WFP) from regional surveys demonstrates just how much the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated food insecurity in the region. By August 2021, the WFP estimates that 81.8 million people in the region have experienced food insecurity, with 12.3 million people suffering from severe food insecurity, a rate that is nearly four times higher than before the global health crisis.

Certain countries’ geographic location and climatic conditions, including susceptibility to extreme weather conditions, inadequate land, and poor natural water supply, among others, hinder agricultural production and the achievement of food security and nutrition. The pandemic has also had an impact on the productive capacities of countries in the region, increasing unemployment in agricultural areas and disrupting food distribution chains, unleashing the complex intersection between food insecurity, climate change and migration, revealing migratory corridors in the region strongly conditioned by situations of hunger and lack of protection.

For example, a recent study conducted by the Migration Policy Institute examined the migration of Central Americans towards the United States and has asserted that individuals suffering food insecurity were 23% more likely to make concrete arrangements to migrate than persons with food security (7%). In comparison, data from the WFP surveys reveals that individuals in Central America experiencing food insecurity were 43% more likely to want to migrate, nearly double those who are food secure. In other parts of the region, most notably Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, Venezuelan migrants make up noteworthy portions of people facing severe food insecurity (450,000 of 12.3 million). These figures demonstrate the critical link between food insecurity and migration throughout the region.

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13 The World Food Programme (2021), report.
III. OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY MANDATES

To tackle the threat of food insecurity in the Americas, the OAS General Assembly has passed resolutions to focus on the issues at hand. In this manner, the topics discussed in this regional report contribute both to the achievement of the strategic objectives of the OAS and the SDGs of the 2030 agenda, specifically SDG 2: “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”. The last resolution of the fifty-first regular session of the General Assembly, held on November 10 and 11, 2021, hosted by Guatemala, addressed the topic of food insecurity in the region, including in the Declaration “Renewed Commitment to Sustainable Development in the Americas Post Covid-19” (AG/DEC. 104 (LI-O/21)), highlighting the “commitment to continue promoting national and regional measures, to respond to the multiple crises that have been unleashed, addressing the structural causes, particularly to counteract the effects of climate change and the loss of biodiversity, as well as discrimination, hunger and food and nutrition insecurity, displacement, poverty and violence”.

Another of the resolutions from the last OAS General Assembly, AG/RES. 2967 (LI-O/21) “Advancing Hemispheric Initiatives on Integral Development: Promoting Resilience” reaffirms the importance of advancing the implementation of declaration AG/DEC. 88 (XLVI-O/16) “Declaration on Climate Change, Food Security, and Migration in the Americas”, which was approved by the General Assembly on June 14, 2016.

Lastly, this regional report aims to strengthen the implementation of mandates related to resolution AG/RES. 2956 (LI-O/20), which was adopted by the OAS General Assembly in October 2020 during the fiftieth regular session. In this resolution, the Member States agreed to promote cooperation to strengthen national social development institutions, in collaboration with international organizations, growth, development, and prosperity experts, civil society, the private sector, and academia responsible for combating poverty, reducing inequality with integral focus, expanding social protection and promoting social programs to eradicate hunger and malnutrition in the fight against food insecurity, through actions aimed at dialogue, capacity building, and the exchange of knowledge and lessons learned, as well as technical assistance and monitoring of indicators related to these issues.
It is also important to highlight that the resolution reiterates the Interamerican instruments through which our governments have pledged to eradicate poverty and hunger, such as the Social Charter of the Americas, and the adoption, for the first time in a meeting of Ministers and High Level Authorities of Social Development at the OAS, of a Plan of Action which delineates concrete activities in some of the areas where the OAS has a proven track record: promoting dialogue and the exchange of experiences and lessons learned amongst countries; promoting technical cooperation between the institutions in charge of social policies in our countries; and providing technical assistance to strengthen the social policies and programs on food insecurity, eradicating poverty and hunger in the region.
IV. RESPONSES FROM MEMBER STATES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON GOOD PRACTICES, CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED REGARDING FOOD SECURITY

The following information was provided by OAS Member States in response to a questionnaire prepared and sent by the OAS Department of Social Inclusion (see Annex). Thus, the contents of this regional report is limited to the information presented by each country that responded to the questionnaire.

ARGENTINA

Argentina’s Ministry of Social Development oversees the National Plan Against Hunger as the national mandate to end hunger in the country. The plan involves the promotion and strengthening of access to basic food baskets, mainly through the mechanism of a Food Card. Acquiring this Food Card provides a monthly allocation of funds to account holders to purchase food and hygiene products.

For more information, please visit the following links:
https://www.argentina.gob.ar/desarrollosocial
https://www.argentina.gob.ar/argentina-contra-el-hambre

The following programs have also been implemented in Argentina to promote and support national small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), family and sustainable farming, to further help people in states of vulnerability. As will be discussed, the challenges facing Argentina range from ensuring access to nutritious products for all the population, to rethinking what food in the future will look like in the face of climate change mitigation.

National Program for Socio-Productive Inclusion and Local Development "Empower Work"

Established in June 2020, this program was started to contribute to improving employment and generating new productive proposals through the development of socio-productive, socio-community, socio-labor, and education completion in Argentina, which has resulted in enhanced productive sectors, seeking to boost the economy from the bottom up.
The largest challenge thus far has been the ability to promote full social inclusion for people who are in situations of social and economic vulnerability. Lessons learned include the importance of reactivating the economy and production because doing so generates intensive labor that can positively impact local development and the social economy in areas such as construction, food production, textile, the care economy, and the collection and recycling of urban waste. Participating entities include the National Microcredit Commission (CONAMI).

For more information, please visit the following link: https://www.argentina.gob.ar/desarrollosocial/potenciartrabajo

**National Bank Program of Machinery, Tools and Materials**

This program, launched in March 2020, was formed to serve people in situations of high social and economic vulnerability through the delivery of supplies, tools and/or equipment, allowing these individuals to generate a source of genuine income. Doing so is meant to mitigate the risk and exclusion factors caused by the context of the current social emergency. This has resulted in the development of productive or service initiatives, individually or in partnership.

The challenge of this program has been the formulation and execution of technical assistance and training, and the accompaniment of projects by universities, educational institutions, and civil society organizations. Participating entities involve Government agencies and civil society organizations. The program has cost approximately 150 million Argentine pesos.

For more information, please visit the following link: https://www.argentina.gob.ar/desarrollosocial/programas/bancodemaquinas

**National Program to Sow Food Sovereignty**

This program was established in August 2020 to encourage the production, processing and distribution of food during the pandemic. Thus far the Program has allowed for the agroecological production and transitional experiences towards agroecology and the promotion of good practices of production, processing, and distribution of food.
Some of the most important challenges identified in the implementation of this program are rebuilding the conditions for upward social mobility, making food policy go beyond assistance and coverage, and opting for nutritional quality are still relevant challenges. Lessons learned include the need for institutional strengthening, more food production, and increased access to local water and supply. The program costs 1000 million Argentine pesos approximately.

For more information, please visit the following link: https://www.argentina.gob.ar/desarrollosocial/sembrar#::text=EEl%20progra
ama%20Sembrar%20Soberan%C3%ADa%20Alimentaria,partir%20de%20re
des%20de%20producci%C3%B3n%20}%%

**National Pro Huerta Program**

Since August 1990, the Pro Huerta Program has promoted food security and sovereignty, the use of environmentally friendly production techniques, the use of local resources and the use of appropriate technologies that improve the habitat and quality of life of the producing families and their communities. Results include increased support for agroecological production and access to healthier products for adequate nutrition.

However, challenges of the program include the promotion of orchards and agroecological farms (family, school and community/institutional), technical assistance and training, food and environmental education, strengthening of productive projects and access to water, and support for marketing through local markets. The program has partnered with the National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA) and costs roughly 400,000 million Argentine pesos.

For more information, please visit the following link: https://www.argentina.gob.ar/desarrollosocial/prohuerta

**BOLIVIA**

Bolivia has addressed the food and nutritional needs of its population at the national level through multiple sources including: the Economic and Social Development Plan (PDES 2021-2025) approved by Law No. 1407 dated November 9, 2021, and the Multisectoral Plan for Food and Nutrition (PMUAN) 2016-2020, which will be updated for the next five years after the approval of the Institutional Development Sector Plan (PSDI) of the Ministry of Rural Development and Land (MDRyT).
The Economic and Social Development Plan (PDES) constitutes the national regulations, whose guidelines allow for the development of the Sectoral Plan of the Ministry of Rural Development and Lands, in order to promote and implement programs and projects that contribute to food security with sovereignty, the economic reactivation, and substitution of imports, and the PMUAN through multi-ministerial resolution No. 0001 of April 10, 2017, which was implemented by the National Council of Food and Nutrition (CONAN). Its objective is to rebuild the national economy to live well and towards industrialization with import substitution. Specifically in the agricultural sector, the plan aims to strengthen food security with sovereignty, promote value-added exports and improve tourism development. Thus far agricultural productivity has been diversified and there has been an increase of supply in the domestic market for industrialization with import substitution and value-added export.

Fundamental challenges to food security in Bolivia include researching, generating, financing and facilitation of appropriate technologies for the increase of production and productivity of food sources, as well as the implementation of irrigation through different technical systems. To this end, the National State, within the framework of the policies of productive reactivation, food security with sovereignty, and support for national agricultural production, is prioritizing the creation of a support program for different agricultural sectors. In addition, the State has also considered the implementation of strategic components of productive resilience necessary to address the recurrent external factors of climate change.

The following programs have been created to fulfill these aspirations:

**Multisectoral Food and Nutrition Plan 2016 – 2020 "Knowing How to Feed"**

Since 2016, this multisectoral plan has strived to contribute to deepening the sustained reduction of malnutrition in childhood and to improving the diet and nutritional status of the Bolivian population with a focus on the course of life. Results have shown an increase of wheat production, consequently reducing the deficit in production for domestic consumption. In addition, the production of strategic products has increased including corn, quinoa, potato, coffee, tomato, among others. The number of cattle, cattle, sheep, pigs and others have also increased. The agricultural area with irrigation has been increased along with the diversification of agricultural production in Bolivia and the volume of organic products.

Some of the key challenges identified in the implantation of the plan have to do with the generation and dissemination of technologies linked to the development of strategic agricultural products. Participating entities in the Plan comprise the Departmental Autonomous Governments, Municipal Autonomous Governments, farmer, indigenous and Indigenous Economic Organizations (OECAS), Community Economic Organizations (OECOM),
Agricultural productive organizations, and public and private institutions of the agricultural sector.

**National Groundwater Well Drilling Program (“Our Well”)**

Through the 2017 supreme decree N°2852, “Our Well” was established to create the decentralized public entity, Unidad Ejecutora de Pozos (UE) Pozos. Through this entity, the following results have been obtained:
- Attendance to drought emergencies and prioritizing drought-affected municipalities for the implementation of well drilling projects.
- Assistance in research to identify underground aquifers.
- Carrying out the rehabilitation of old wells and equipment of new wells for proper operation to ensure that water wells include all necessary drilling infrastructure, impulsion pipe, filters, shed, connection to energy source, water pumping system and storage.

The main challenge has been the financing efforts for the implementation of new wells.

**Food specific programs (Decree 4560 of 08/02/2021)**

Lasting from 2021-2025, the objective of this decree is to create programs pertaining to vegetables, cattle, pineapple, bananas and plantains, within the framework of the policies of productive reactivation, food sovereignty and support for national agricultural production.

The expected results will be an increase of the yields of onion, tomato, carrot, pea and bean crops, strengthening the processes of technological innovation, phytosanitary management, technical assistance, support for production, post-harvest and commercialization of crops. There should also be a surge in the production of the livestock sector, considering the diversity of ecoregions and improving production processes for the domestic market and export of meat.

1. These programs are being overseen by producer associations and the municipal governments. Financial resources have come from the following sources:
   - National Program to Support the Production and Marketing of Vegetables
   - Livestock Promotion Program Coil for small producers
   - Intervention Program for the Improvement of Pineapple Production for Export and
   - National Market
   - Program for the Improvement of the Production and Marketing of Bananas and Plantains
**Food specific programs (Decree 4632 of 12/01/2021)**

Lasting from 2022-2025, the objective of this decree is to create the programs pertaining to tubers and roots, cotton, Andean grains, urban and semi-urban agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, and support for beekeeping production within the framework of the policies of productive reconstruction and food security with sovereignty. The anticipated results will be the following:

- Strengthening of cotton production in traditional and potential areas to reduce imports through the competitiveness of the item.
- Improvement of the productive conditions of potato and cassava cultivation to de-seasonalize production and increase supply in the national market through new varieties.
- An increase of the production and productivity of quinoa, cañahua, amaranth and tarwi, articulated to the national and export market, contributes to the security and food sovereignty of the Bolivian population.
- Strengthening and consolidating the national beekeeping sector as an efficient, integrated, resilient and sustainable productive sector, guaranteeing the offering of products with guaranteed quality to supply the domestic market.
- Increase in food production and consumption from urban and semi-urban agriculture to contribute to food security and sovereignty.
- Encourage and strengthen the development of fisheries and aquaculture in Bolivia to increase production volumes and promote fish consumption at the national level.

Like the previous decree, the programs are being overseen by producer associations and the municipal governments. Financial resources have come from the following sources:

- National Program to Support Cotton Production in Bolivia
- National Program of Tubers and Roots
- National Program to Support the Production and Marketing of Andean Grains
- National Program for Strengthening and Supporting Beekeeping Production, under criteria of resilience to climate change
- National Program for the Promotion of Urban and Semi-Urban Agriculture
- National Program for the Development of Fisheries and Sustainable Aquaculture in Bolivia

For more information, please visit the following link:

The Ministry of Citizenship under the Secretariat for Social and Productive Inclusion has two actions focused on food security of the Brazilian population at the national level. The first is the Food Distribution Action to Population and Specific Groups (ADA) which provides food baskets for people and communities in situations of food and nutritional insecurity that have been identified by specialized public agencies and other development actions. The second is the Food Program Brazil, which purchases food from family farming, thus promoting local production, and allocates them as donations to entities that serve families in situations of food and nutritional insecurity.

For more information, please visit the following link: https://www.gov.br/cidadania/pt-br/acoes-e-programas/inclusao-produtiva-rural/alimenta-brasil

There is also the Program for the Promotion of Rural Productive Activities serving as a public policy for rural productive inclusion aimed at families living in rural areas in situations of extreme poverty or poverty, with the objective of generating income and ensuring food and nutritional security. It combines two actions: (1) the offer of social and productive monitoring and, (2) direct transfer of non-reimbursable financial resources to families for investment in productive projects. The program was created by Law 12.512/2011 and is regulated by Decree 9.221/2017.

Other programs in Brazil addressing food insecurity also help promote and support national small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), family farming and sustainable farming. They include the following:

**Food Distribution Action in a Situation of Emergency and Public Calamity**

Established in 2020 under Ordinance MC 618, this program aims at distributing food baskets in municipalities affected by emergency situations recognized by the National Civil Defense. The food comes from donations from private partners. The program has cost approximately R$60 million Brazilian real.

As a recent initiative, results have not been published thus far, however, the logistics for the removal and distribution of baskets by municipalities has been identified as a challenge.
**Food Program Brazil (former Food Acquisition Program)**

Since 2003, the Food Program Brazil has promoted family farming and food security for families in states of vulnerability. Over the years, the program has resulted in improved conditions for small farmers who have difficulty accessing private markets to make their production feasible, ensuring the supply of healthy food in small municipalities. It has guaranteed the offer of healthy foods for the preparation of meals of social entities that often depend on donations of products only from industries.

Some of the key challenges identified in the implementation of this program are related to the ability to manage local entities and offering technical assistance to small farmers which have been difficult tasks. Moreover, the need and involvement of local agents and social control entities so that the objectives are achieved effectively has been identified as a necessity. The program has cost roughly R$600 million Brazilian real over the last 10 years.

For more information, please visit the following link:

**Rural Development Program**

Established in 2012, the Rural Development Program aims to:
- Stimulate the generation of sustainable work and income.
- Promote the food and nutritional security of its beneficiaries.
- Encourage the participation of its beneficiaries in social, educational, technical and professional training actions.
- Support the associative and cooperative organization of its beneficiaries.

Reports have shown that due to this program there has been an increase of families obtaining greater food security and monthly incomes. In addition, an impact assessment is underway and will enable a more robust and in-depth understanding of the program’s results.

The main challenges are linked to the volume of resources to give to families and the difficulties of cooperation among the official participating entities of the states.

For more information, please visit the following link:
Brazil Assistance Program

1. Starting in 2021, the objectives of the Brazil Assistance Program are to:
   - Promote citizens with guaranteed income and support through benefits and services offered by the Unified Social Assistance System (SUAS), with a view to improving the social benefits of families.
   - Reduce poverty and extreme poverty for beneficiary families.
   - Encourage, as a priority, the development of children and adolescents through financial support to pregnant women, nursing mothers, children and adolescents in poverty or extreme poverty.
   - Promote the development of children in early childhood, focusing on health and stimuli to physical, cognitive, linguistic and socio-affective skills.
   - Expand the provision of care for children in daycare centers.
   - Encourage children, adolescents and young people to have excellent scientific and technological performance.
   - Stimulate the emancipation of families in poverty and extreme poverty, mainly through:
     - Allowing adolescents over 16 years of age, young people and adults into the labor market.
     - Integrating social assistance policies with policies to promote productive inclusion.
     - Encouraging entrepreneurs and microcredit into the formal labor market.

For more information, please visit the following link: https://www.gov.br/cidadania/pt-br/auxilio-brasil

Overall, the main challenges Brazil is facing in the fight against food insecurity include improving the effective purchasing power of the population, and incentives of production aimed at the population, especially of traditional food programs, programs to promote family farming, and government purchase programs.

CHILE

The Choose to Live Healthy System is a national management model that was established into Chilean law in May 2021 and is made up of policies, plans and programs developed and executed by different State agencies, aimed at contributing to generating healthy habits and lifestyles and preventing and reducing the risk factors and behaviors associated with noncommunicable diseases. The administration, coordination and supervision of this system is overseen by the Ministry of Social Development and Family of Chile through the Secretariat of Choose to Live Healthy, dependent on the Undersecretariat of Social Services.
One of the main purposes of the Choose to Live Healthy System is the coordination of the annual Public Offering, which is composed of plans, policies, and programs that meet the objectives of the system, including the promotion of healthy eating and the reduction of obstacles that hinder access to healthy habits and lifestyles of the most vulnerable people. Doing so contributes to the generation of healthy behaviors and environments to facilitate healthy eating, physical activity and the well-being and quality of life of Chileans.

The 2020 Public Offering of the Choose to Live Healthy System considers 36 measures, including:
- Food Scholarship Program for Higher Education (JUNAEB)
- Program for the Monitoring and Control of Food Environments (MINSAL)
- Program from the Sea to My Table (SUBPESCA)
- Pilot Program for Food Education Programming TV Educa Chile (EVS)
- Family Support Program for Self-Consumption (MDSF)

Food Security Plan of the Choose to Live Healthy Secretariat was developed throughout 2020 and published in March 2021 and adds 29 additional measures specifically to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on food insecurity. Initiatives include:
- The continuation of the School Feeding Program (JUNAEB)
- Fund for the Development of Free Fairs (SERCOTEC)
- National Complementary Feeding Program for children under six years of age (MINSAL)
- National Complementary Program for the Elderly (MINSAL)
- Micro food banks (EVS)

In 2020, the budget dedicated to Choose to Live Healthy was $1.704 billion Chilean pesos (CLP), while in 2021 it was $1.469 billion CLP.

As part of the Choose to Live Healthy System, in 2021 the Project Delivery of healthy food to common pots provided more than 1,280,289 kilos of healthy products to 110,373 people in a situation of food insecurity. In addition, the free Healthy Orders application was launched as a new alternative to buy fruits and vegetables, with home delivery at no or reduced shipping cost. Through the Choose to Live Healthy Fund, since 2015, 108 projects have been implemented such as evening fairs, healthy kiosks, sports promotion activities and healthy eating workshops throughout the country.
However, the health and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, including diminished access to healthy food and a decline in household income, has created challenges for these projects. An intersectoral approach involving different public agencies, the private sector, and civil society is key to ensuring the population’s food security. Furthermore, another key challenge which has been identified is the need to include a gender perspective in all programs to recognize barriers that prevent women from participating.

**Food Safety Plan**

The Food Safety Plan also arose in Chile in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2021. Its objective is to develop short and medium-term measures to mitigate the effects that the pandemic may cause on the increase in food insecurity. According to the COVID-19 Social Surveys, moderate to severe food insecurity fell from 19.4% in June 2020 to 11.5% in November to December of that year. However, this change can be attributed to a set of other factors not established by this specific plan.

The simultaneous dedication and implementation of measures in different sectors, including agriculture, health, and education, among others, has been a challenge and has resulted in a wide variety of relevant and effective initiatives for specific groups such as children, the elderly, and farmers. Yet, fluid communication and feedback from the development of different measures through an intersectoral approach led by the Secretariat Choose to Live Healthy has lessened these challenges. Additionally, political readiness was also a key point, highlighting the participation of figures such as the First Lady, Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI), and the undersecretaries and directors of other essential public services.

For more information, please visit the following link:

[https://programassociales.ministeriodesarrollosocial.gob.cl/](https://programassociales.ministeriodesarrollosocial.gob.cl/)
Colombia has a breadth of national programs that are coordinated by numerous state entities that make up the Intersectoral Commission on Food and Nutrition Security (CISAN), including: Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Housing, City and Territory, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, National Planning Department, Rural Development Agency, and Colombian Institute of Family Welfare.

Prominent examples include the following initiatives:

**National Development Plan 2018 – 2022 "Pact for Colombia, Pact for Equity"**

The Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition hold the following objectives:

- **Objective 1.** Increase food production through the efficient use of land to generate a stable and sufficient supply of food to cover the nutritional needs of the Colombian population.
- **Objective 2.** Improve the capacity of households to access food in a physically and economically stable way through tools and mechanisms for the production or acquisition of food, market access and income generation.
- **Objective 3.** Achieve adequate nutrition and improve the nutritional status of the population, with special emphasis on the Guajira, Chocó and dispersed areas.
- **Objective 4.** Establish a multi-level articulation and governance mechanism.

For more information, please visit the following link:

**National Food and Nutrition Security Policy (PSAN)**

This policy is aimed at the entire Colombian population and requires the achievement of actions that allow contributing to the reduction of social and economic inequalities, associated with food and nutritional insecurity, in population groups in conditions of vulnerability. For this reason, priority will be given to actions towards the most vulnerable population groups, such as
those displaced by violence, those affected by natural disasters, ethnic groups (indigenous, Afro-Colombian, Raizales, gypsies), children, pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers, and the groups of people and farmers with the lowest income.

More information is available at: https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/Conpes/Social/113.pdf

**Colombian Institute of Family Welfare (ICBF) Programs of Attention to vulnerable population**

The ICBF aims at improving life and the enjoyment at the highest possible level of health and maintaining an adequate nutritional status of early childhood programs, through the supply of sufficient food using the implementation of some areas as described below:

- **Availability of food:** through the guidelines provided to the Service Administration Entities (EAS), regional and zonal centers, on food.
- **Access:** through the provision of food with quality, opportunity and safety to enable the population in early childhood to achieve adequate and sustainable food.
- **Quality and safety of food:** by complying with the quality and safety requirements defined in the technical data forms of food, which guarantee that the products are suitable for human consumption and must be implemented by the EAS at the time of acquiring the products to be supplied to the users of the services.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, food deliveries have been provided to households of vulnerable children. Specific methods that the ICBF uses include:

**Strategy for the Care and Prevention of Malnutrition:**

Creates a set of actions in food and nutrition, family and social, aimed at the attention and prevention of child malnutrition, mainly in rural and dispersed areas where the highest rates of malnutrition and food and nutritional insecurity are evident. This strategy includes a service and methods in which actions are carried out to promote food and nutrition, or specifically to prevent malnutrition. Below is a brief description of the services, with special emphasis on the food and nutrition component, which contributes to access to food by the families served:

► **1,000 Days to Change the World**

This modality aimed at children under 5 years of age at risk of acute malnutrition and pregnant women with low weight, is developed in the family and community environment, with the support of an interdisciplinary team whose activities are related
support of an interdisciplinary team whose activities are related to food supplementation, nutritional monitoring, food and nutritional education (healthy lifestyle habits) and family strengthening actions as a protective environment within the framework of food and nutritional security.

The following link provides the operating manual where the guidelines to execute this modality are provided:

**Nutritional Recovery Centers:**

These centers are a modality of intramural care coordinated with the health sector, which seeks the recovery of the nutritional status of children under 5 years of age with moderate or severe acute malnutrition, without evidence of medical complications. For the care, there is an interdisciplinary team and support staff, who develop actions with children and their families in health care, food, supply of nutritional supplements, promotion and prevention in health and nutrition.

The following link provides the operating manual where the guidelines to execute this modality are provided:

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Colombia also has public policy instruments that focus on food insecurity, some of which are described below:

**Solidarity Income Program (Decree 518 of 2020)**

Effective April 4, 2020, this program provides economic support from the national Government to households in conditions of poverty, extreme poverty and economic vulnerability to mitigate the impacts of the emergency caused by COVID-19. The program seeks to support three million households in conditions of poverty and economic vulnerability that are not beneficiaries of other social programs such as Families in Action, Youth in Action, Sales Tax Compensation or Protection of the Elderly. The program mitigated the harmful effects of job loss of beneficiaries and increased consumption in those households that became unemployed due to the crisis.
**Contract Farming (2018 to 2022)**

The objective of this program has been to contribute to reducing the uncertainty and risks that characterize agricultural marketing processes, through the advance sale of agricultural, livestock, forestry, aquaculture and fishing production of small and medium rural producers, to industry, large commercial areas and final markets, seeking to generate less intermediation and greater equity in the distribution of profits produced along the marketing chain. 130,075 producers will make commercial agreements worth about $1 billion, generating 757 commercial allies in 2020. Yet, to ensure that in the four-year period 2018 to 2022 three hundred thousand (300,000) producers, men and women, sign commercial agreements for the safe sale of their agricultural, forestry, aquaculture or fishing production. It is a sectoral strategy of a national nature, which is why its population and territorial focus is determined by the target population prioritized by each of the programs and sectoral entities that make up the institutional offer of the agricultural sector.

**El Campo Emprende (2012-2020)**

This program aims to contribute to improving the living conditions, income and employment in the poorest rural territories of Colombia, through the operation of four components: (1) associative social capital formation and business development; (2) development and strengthening of financial assets; (3) knowledge management, capabilities and communications; and (4) project coordination. This program involves the participation of small farmers, indigenous villages, Afro-Colombian communities, families with female heads of household, rural youth, rural women, victims of the armed conflict, and displaced rural families.

**Alianzas Productivas (2020)**

The Support for Productive Alliances (PAAP Project) is an instrument that links small rural producers with markets through an agribusiness scheme with a formal commercial ally, with a profitable, sustainable and competitive productive proposal, seeking to strengthen the weakest link in the chain. The invitation to submit Alliance profiles is addressed to small rural producers (formally associated or not) and to sectors related to agricultural production that wish to do so on their behalf, so that during the defined period they present the Alliance profiles to the Departmental Secretariats of Agriculture that correspond to them or whoever takes their place.

**Public Goods - Land Adequacy (2020)**

This program focused on the construction, rehabilitation, complementation, modernization and conservation or maintenance of infrastructure aimed at providing a given area with irrigation, drainage and / or protection against floods, as well as complementary activities with the purpose of increasing agricultural productivity in that area. By 2021, it is projected to impact 4,466 users, with 22,650 hectares rehabilitated in 10 districts with an investment of 10.1 billion Colombian pesos.
Public Agricultural Extension Service (2020)

Accompaniment process through which the development of capacities of agricultural producers is managed, their articulation with the environment and access to knowledge, technologies, products and support services; to make their production competitive and sustainable while contributing to the improvement of the quality of family life. By 2021, it is projected to impact 223,860 new producers, with an approximate investment of 39,197 million Colombian pesos.

Support Program for Producers Affected by Climate, Health or Market Aspects (2020)

The program’s objective is to support producers affected by climate, health or market aspects. It has benefited 46,483 producers and costs approximately 14.88 billion Colombian pesos.

Additional relevant initiatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Colombia include the following:

- Program to Support the Reduction of Production Costs—Inputs (2020): Aims at reducing the production costs of inputs
- Program to Support the Reduction of Production Costs—Transportation (2020): Aims at reducing the costs of transportation
- Program to Support the Reduction of Production Costs—Good Agricultural Practices (2020): Aims at reducing the production costs for the implementation of good agricultural practices.
- Law 2046 of 2020: “By which mechanisms are established to promote the participation of small local agricultural producers and farmers, family and community agriculture in public food purchase markets”.
- Decree 248 of 2021: “By which Parle 20 is added to Book 2 of Decree 1071 of 2015, Single Regulatory Decree of the Agricultural, Fisheries and Rural Development Administrative Sector, related to public purchases of food”.
- Law 2071 of 2020 “By means of which financing measures are adopted for the reactivation of the Fisheries, Aquaculture, Forestry and Agro-industrial Agricultural Sectors”.
- Decree 803 of 2020 “By means of which the Support Program for the Payment of the Service Premium (PAP) for the Agricultural Sector is created, within the framework of the Health Emergency caused by the Coronavirus COVID-19”.
- Decree 796 of 2020 “By which measures are adopted in the agricultural sector to mitigate the economic effects derived from COVID-19 on agricultural workers and producers, within the framework of the State of Economic, Social and Ecological Emergency”.
- Decree 486 of 2020 “By which an economic incentive is created for workers and producers in the field and other measures are adopted to guarantee the permanent functioning of the system of supply of agricultural products and food security throughout the national territory, within the State of Economic, Social and Ecological Emergency”.

• Document 3099 of 2020. Initial response strategy to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on public health, households, the productive apparatus and public finances. The strategy aims to: Take stock of the most significant initial response measures of the national Government, defined within the framework of the economic, social and ecological emergency, to strengthen the initial response strategy to the effects of the crisis generated by COVID-19 and promote the gradual reactivation of the economy.

ECUADOR

In Ecuador, no specific legal framework has been made at the national level regarding food security. However, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG), in coordination with the Technical Secretariat Ecuador Grows without Chronic Child Malnutrition, has been implementing strategies to reduce chronic child malnutrition in 90 prioritized cantons of the country, allowing for the involvement of local actors.

Indeed, the Undersecretariat of Farmer Family Agriculture, through the Directorate of Management of Alternative Circuits, has as its mission “To formulate and coordinate the implementation of public policy through the management of planning, design and implementation of Alternative Marketing Circuits and rural enterprises for Family Farming and the strengthening of Sustainable and Sustainable Agri-Food Systems”. Within this framework, 8 types of Alternative Marketing Circuits have been implemented at the national level, with the following distribution: (15) Direct supply, (15) Agrotourism, (8) Baskets, (153) Fairs, (14) Supply to Hotels, Restaurants and Coffee Shops – HORECA, (35) Points of sale, (8) Farmer Shops, (15) Farm sales. The Alternative Marketing Circuits are spaces for direct encounters between producers and consumers, which allow for the negotiation and commercialization of products of Family Farming, where equitable conditions are established for both parties, which exceed the purchase and sale of products.

Specific programs that have been implemented in Ecuador include the following:

Direct Supply Strategy of Products to Family Farming During the Health Emergency

This strategy, which lasted from April 2020 to July 2020, provided the direct sale of 40,418 food baskets to homes nationwide in Ecuador. The promotion of the strategy and dissemination of direct purchasing from the producer, as well as the logistics, collection and distribution of the delivery of baskets to consumers’ homes proved to be difficult. Lessons learned from this strategy
El Salvador has expressed its political will and commitment to food and nutrition security (SAN), generating the necessary support from a political, legal and institutional context through the signing and ratification of international treaties that recognize the right to adequate food and the creation of a series of binding laws beginning with the establishment of the National Council for Food and Nutrition Security (CONASAN), in 2009, under the Ministry of Health with the Executive Decree No.63. This body's functions include the coordination and articulation of SAN actions of the different sectors and actors linked to food security, as well as the surveillance, monitoring and evaluation of the food and nutritional condition, the formulation and implementation of the Policy and its Strategic Plan, institutional and capacity building, and monitoring and accountability for policy developments and plans. CONASAN was later reformed under Executive Decree No.127.

In addition, Political Constitutional Amendment 69: inclusion of the right to food and nutrition (2021) is pending ratification.

The current Government has established lines of action for the reduction of poverty and hunger through the Social Development Plan 2020-2024, as well as the Grow Together Policy, which defines one of its main objectives as the eradication of malnutrition in the population, with emphasis on early childhood and throughout the life cycle. From this, the Healthy and Sustainable School Feeding Strategy (2021) has also been recently launched, which emphasizes food and nutrition education, the provision of healthy food and dissemination of direct purchasing from the producer, as well as the logistics, collection and distribution of the delivery of baskets to consumers' homes proved to be difficult. Lessons learned from this strategy is the need to strengthen the associative marketing of fresh and locally produced products, and the enhancement of post-harvest processes to improve food quality. Partnering entities included the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the German Cooperation (GIZ), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the European Committee for Training and Agriculture (CEFA).

Ecuador’s main challenges facing food security include the following:

- Ability to produce and purchase quality and safe food;
- Sufficient availability of food, whether from domestic production, stocks, imports or donations; and
- Guarantee the quality of food and diets from the nutritional standards, but also through a sociocultural point of view.
to students, the promotion of food production in schools and the community, as well as involving local markets. It seeks to guarantee the permanent delivery of healthy and nutritious school snacks to students in the public education system, as well as to institutionalize the national mechanism articulated with local actors for the supply of food to educational centers. Likewise, to strengthen the capacities of the educational community in food and nutrition education through different spaces and platforms, contribute to the improvement of family economies (through productive linkages with initiatives of family and community gardens and farms), and initiate the mainstreaming of food and nutrition education in the national curriculum.

For more information, please visit the following links:
https://crecerjuntos.gob.sv/

In addition, the Master Plan for Agricultural Rescue (PMRA) (2021) has been created, which will contribute to improving the living conditions of the population, investing in bettering credit conditions for small producers and productive infrastructure for agriculture. Its mission is to rescue the coffee sector, promote the production of agricultural products, fishing among others. The approach is determined to generate the necessary resources and technical assistance to reanimate a historically forgotten sector. The focus is through technology, technical assistance and marketing assistance so that producers can generate more and seek to reduce dependence on food imports.

For more information, please visit the following link:
https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/taxonomy/term/861

In the context of the crisis generated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of El Salvador launched the Health Emergency Program (PES) (2020), which establishes among its lines of work, taking care of the sovereignty and food security of the population, prioritizing among its actions the delivery of the food baskets that provide El Salvadorans with the necessary basic products. Recent results include the delivery of 2.1 million food baskets to the most vulnerable families across the country.

For more information, please visit the following link:
https://www.presidencia.gob.sv/category/programa-de-emergencia-sanitaria/

Challenges that El Salvador face are the reduction of production costs and improving harvests; cooperation among partner organizations to reactive the agricultural sector, increasing nutritional education in schools, and competing with foreign markets.
El Salvador has also had difficulty tackling the weakness in the regulatory and institutional frameworks to transform food systems under a new approach, the lack of interest of some sectors to work in a coordinated manner, as well as gaps in the planning processes of policies and programs, with comprehensive, articulated and inclusive approaches, obesogenic environments or food deserts, external and conjunctural factors, such as the impact on production due to climate change, and international crises in food prices.


guatemala

Guatemala has many national programs that are overseen by the Ministry of Social Development (MIDES) to promote food security in the country:

Katun National Development Plan ‘Our Guatemala 2032’ was established at the national level under the Government Agreement 11-2002 Law on Urban and Rural Development Councils. The plan constitutes the long-term national development policy that coordinates policies, plans, programs, projects and investments in the country, formulated by the Urban and Rural Development Council in compliance with its constitutional mandate. It has 5 priority branches:

1. Rural Urban Guatemala
2. Wellness for the People
3. Wealth for All
4. Natural Resources for Today and for the Future
5. State Guarantor of Human Rights and Driver of Development

Welfare for the People seeks to guarantee people access to universal social protection, comprehensive quality services in health and education, basic services, safe living, access to food and resilience, while recognizing inequality gaps and ethnic-cultural specificities.

Food and Nutrition Security Act: Law on the National System of Food and Nutrition Security

This act was put into effect by the Congress of the Republic through Decree 32-2005, which considers access to food as a right to Guatemalans and seeks comprehensive and multicultural solutions for food and nutrition insecurity. The law prohibits discrimination in access to food for any reason and assumes the policy of food and nutrition security as a transversal policy that is compliance for all. It establishes the National Food and Nutrition Security System, the Food and Nutrition Security Council and the Secretariat of Food and Nutrition Security (as a coordinating entity) and creates the conceptual framework of Guatemala’s Food and Nutrition Security.
**Food and Nutrition Security Policy**

This policy conceptualizes food and nutrition security as a right that the State must guarantee as a priority. In short, the policy seeks to guide the government’s efforts by directing the State in relation to food and nutrition security. Its purpose is to provide a coordinated, efficient and permanent strategic framework between the public sector, civil society and international cooperation organizations, which guarantees food and nutrition security, which is understood as the right of the population to have, at all times, the physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food, to meet their nutritional needs, according to their cultural values and with gender equity, in order to lead an active and healthy life. The policy contains nine programmatic branches that correspond to the fields of action and the functioning of the National System of Food and Nutrition Security:

1. Food availability
2. People’s access to food
3. Food consumption
4. Biological use of food
5. Prevention and treatment of malnutrition
6. Information, monitoring and alert system for food and nutrition insecurity
7. Institutional strengthening
8. Resource allocation
9. Cooperation

**Bolsa Social (Conditional Cash Transfer for food, Ministerial Agreement DS-148-2018)**

Bolsa Social has been active since 2012 as a monthly stipend for the purchase of food established by MIDES. For the selection of families, a socioeconomic conditions form is used that is qualified by means of the Unsatisfied Basic Needs method to determine the situation of poverty. Its objective is to increase access to the products of the basic food basket for people and families in conditions of poverty and extreme poverty in urban and rural areas.

**Soup Kitchens (Ministerial Agreement DS-149-2019 of the MIDIS)**

This program provides free food rations to people in vulnerable situations, strategically located to serve families and people at greater social risk or in crisis situations. It also offers support to vulnerable people and families due to their situation of poverty, crisis, emergency, calamity or other, which affects their access to food, providing rations of nutritious, balanced and hygienic food. The provision of the service is inclusive and provides special attention to older adults and / or with disabilities.
Food Support and COVID-19 Prevention Program (Decree 12-2020 of the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala)

The program was executed in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food, and was created by the emergency law to protect Guatemalans from the effects caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program has sought to serve families prioritized according to the decree of creation, with families who have members that are elderly people (60 years of age or older), children under 5 years of age, people with disabilities and families that due to their situation of poverty do not have electricity. Thus far the program has supported 339,023 households, which represents 14.9% of households in 6 parts of the country.

Articles 28 and 29 of the Food and Nutrition Security Law establish that Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA) is responsible for promoting actions that contribute to the food availability of the population, either by local production or through imports, in a timely, permanent and safe manner, and as co-responsible, to promote actions aimed at contributing to the physical, economic and social access to food of the population in a stable way, to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, and the Ministry of Communications, Infrastructure and Housing, in coordination with other State institutions represented or not in the National Council for Food and Nutritional Security (CONASAN).

The Internal Organic Regulations of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food contained in Government Agreement 338-2010, establishes the organization and structure of the Vice Ministry of Food and Nutritional Security for the achievement of institutional purposes, which is currently in the process of reformulation with the aim of responding according to the General Government Policy 2020-2024 in order to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in the actions of the legal mandate in force.

Institutional Strategic Plan 2021-2026 of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food:

For the implementation of the results formulated within the framework of the MAGA, 7 strategic branches have been defined that have grouped the different actions for its execution as the following:

- **Strategic Branch 1**: Production of the agricultural, livestock and hydrobiological sectors
- **Strategic Branch 2**: Marketing of the agricultural, livestock and hydrobiological sectors
- **Strategic Branch 3**: Organization of the agricultural, livestock and hydrobiological sectors
- **Strategic Branch 4**: Infrastructure of the agricultural, livestock and hydrobiological sectors
- Strategic Branch 5: Regulations and surveillance for sanitary, phytosanitary, food safety, phytozoogenetic and native resources inspection
- Strategic Branch 6: Access and food availability
- Strategic Branch 7: Institutional strengthening

The interventions carried out by the Vice-Ministry of Food and Nutrition Security are directly linked to Strategic Branch 6: Access and food availability, which refers to the institutional response for food care in compliance with the institutional mandate regarding accessibility and availability through:
  - Food assistance and supply.
  - Training and technical assistance in rural home improvement. These interventions will benefit families with children under 5 years of age through the delivery of food in communities in response to crisis, crop failure, urgency or severity.
  - Implementation of family and community gardens.
  - Technical assistance for the implementation of school gardens for pedagogical purposes.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food for the current fiscal year presents its Annual Operational Plan 2021, which implements a budgetary structure that integrates the actions and interventions that support the institution meet the objectives to reduce food insecurity and levels of chronic and acute malnutrition, and improving the living conditions of the prioritized subject through the following budget programs:

**Program 11: Support for Family Farming**

The program is linked to the National Policy for Integral Rural Development, which is aimed at addressing the prioritized subject, being "the rural population in a situation of poverty and extreme poverty, with priority in the villages and indigenous and farmer communities with insufficient, unproductive or landless areas; indigenous and farmer women; permanent or temporary employees; artisans; small rural producers; micro and small rural entrepreneurs".

**Subprogram 01: Support for Adequate Food Consumption**

The subprogram focuses on supporting the food and nutritional security of the vulnerable population due to risk and disasters, as well as strengthening the technical and social organization capacities of communities and families focused on the production of self-consumption of food, its storage and support for backyard agriculture and healthy home practices promoted at the family level.
Grand National Crusade for Nutrition Strategy (January 2020 to December 2023):

The objective of this strategy is to improve the health and nutrition of the Guatemalan population, with emphasis on children under five years of age, preschoolers and schoolchildren, women of childbearing age, rural and indigenous populations, in poverty and extreme poverty. Regarding interventions at the individual level aimed at children from 0 to 59 months, different actions are carried out. Participating entities include the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Development, Secretariat of Food and Nutrition Security, Development Councils, and the private sector.

Active Search for Cases of Acute Malnutrition in the Context of COVID-19 (July 2020 to December 2021):

This project was implemented to timely identify children with acute malnutrition and provide treatment for their recovery. In response, 801,897 children under 1 year of age were evaluated, who were provided with preventive and treatment actions for acute malnutrition. Participating entities included the Secretariat for Food and Nutrition Security, UNICEF, civil society and non-governmental organizations.

School Feeding Program (PAE) (2017 to present):

PAE was created in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Finance, Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food, General Secretariat of Planning and Programming of the Presidency, Secretariat of Food and Nutrition Security and Organizations of Parents and International Cooperation to guarantee school feeding, promote health and healthy eating for children and adolescents who attend public establishments, in order to take advantage of their teaching-learning process and the formation of healthy eating habits, in face-to-face mode. As a result, there has been an increase in student enrollment to 2.6 million. With the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, food rations have been prepared to be delivered to the homes of students.
1. **School Feeding Program:** Since 1998, this program aims to guarantee the child population of the country’s public educational centers access to a ration of healthy and nutritious food. Doing so has decreased school dropouts and established more purchases of local products. The challenges facing this program include insufficient budgets, instability of the personnel that manages the program, loss of school days due to natural phenomena and more recently the COVID-19 pandemic, and lack of basic sanitary conditions, such as drinking water, in many schools.

2. **Solidarity Food Program:** Operating since 2011, the program serves the entire Honduran population in a situation of poverty and extreme poverty, prioritizing the vulnerable groups of the country. Its objective is to contribute to food and nutritional security for people living in poverty, extreme poverty, vulnerability, risk and social exclusion. More than 6,305,000 food baskets have been delivered between 2014 and 2021 in the 298 municipalities of the country. During the health emergency, Honduras was divided into 8 sectors, with a liaison delegate in each, to listen to the approach of the sector’s problems. Organized civil society could approach these links and submit the application through them. The liaisons, with the accompaniment of the departmental governor, made the request for food to be delivered on a need’s basis.

For more information, please visit the following link:
https://sedis.gob.hn/

Yet, national food security remains a serious issue in Honduras and presents many challenges, including:

- Crop/produce availability is being greatly affected by the effects of climate change as producers often lose their seed and other agricultural inputs due to water shortages in critical periods.
- Due to the food crisis some populations are changing their consumption to less healthy diets, leading to other health issues.
- The reduction of economic resources due in many cases to the loss of jobs, whether formal or informal, affects the availability and access to food.
- The lack of a defined strategy of nutritional education to the population means that the proliferation of information that promotes inadequate eating habits is easily adopted by a large majority.
- The health system has a curative approach, therefore programs and strategies that promote healthy lifestyles are necessary.

**JAMAICA**

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of Jamaica has established the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2013 to provide food and nutritional needs of its population at the national level. The policy focuses on four pillars: food availability, food access, food utilization and stability of food supplies.
For more information, please visit the following link:

In addition, Jamaica’s Vision 2030 National Plan Goal 1: Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential with a national plan to meet the food and nutritional needs of its population. https://www.vision2030.gov.jm/

Other programs in Jamaica include the following:

**Production Incentive Programme**

Since 2009, this recurrent initiative strives to increase and sustain agricultural production to meet market demand. This has brought about the following results:

- Over 19,000 farmers were impacted under the program with 9,842 directly trained in best practices and provided inputs for production.
- Production expansion plan for 12 priority crops and the small ruminant industry.
- Rapid recovery in production level through the provision of packages for farmers who suffered from drought, flooding and/or storms.
- Promotion of precision technology via technology – two out of six drones procured for collection of harvesting and production data.
- Increase access to equipment and tools for the farming community, such as tractors and their implements.

However, the main challenge to this program has been extreme weather, which has pushed for the need for the on-going implementation of climate smart technologies and the need to strengthen farmer groups to share resources and knowledge. The Program has cost approximately $600M (2009/10) - $1.02B (2021/22) per annum US$40,000 – US$6.8M.

**COVID-19 Recovery Agriculture Project**

Starting in April 2020 and lasting until March 2021, this project was launched to reduce the impacts of COVID-19 and the Government of Jamaica's countermeasures on select industries in the agriculture and fisheries sector. In response, 2,000 farmers, who were suppliers of the Hotels and Restaurants Industry, received compensation for produce that would have been lost via Buy Back component. Food valuing $15M was provided to communities under lockdown due to COVID-19 counter measures. Approximately 8,350 fishers and small ruminant farmers received equipment and outputs to replace equipment loss during closures and inputs to begin back fish food and meat production. From partnering organizations, Jamaica received US$6.9M (including support from the Food and Agriculture Organization).
Yet, the following challenges remain:

- Inadequate storage of agricultural produce.
- Registration of fishers.
- Procurement of equipment and inputs that are sourced from overseas (COVID-19 impacted logistics and cost).
- Impact of extreme weather changes – drought and flooding exacerbated the impact of the Government’s countermeasures.
- Limited funds to impact all.

Promoting Community–Climate Based Resilience Project. This project was established to increase the adoption of climate resilient practices among targeted fishing and fish farming communities. It has been in operation since 2018. Partnering with the private sector and costing US$4.875M, thus far, results have included:

- Targeted fishers have adopted climate resilient fishing practices.
- Development of fisheries-based alternative livelihood to directly impact the livelihoods of ten fisher groups; conserve fisheries habitats and increase training opportunities for interested persons.
- Enforcement vehicles to protect fisheries.
- Increase in consumption of local fish food.
- The main challenges to food security in Jamaica are price instability of inputs, impacts of climate change, inadequate access to irrigated lands and appropriate post-harvesting facilities.

To counteract these challenges, Jamaica has moved towards including access to climate smart technologies (capacity and equipment), strengthening access to consistent inputs for crop, livestock and fisheries production, increasing irrigation infrastructure and a network of post-harvesting facilities across the island. In addition, the country is working towards improving access to financial resources and reduction of barriers to current financial resources for select groups.

Mexico

MEXICO

In Mexico one of the most relevant national instruments is the Sustainable Rural Development Law, whose purpose is to coordinate the actions of the different agencies operating in rural areas, reduce duplication, give consistency to interventions and create synergies between public and private entities. This law, established in 2001, focuses on improving the living conditions of the rural population through an approach that complements the promotion of productive activities and social development actions with a sustainable vision of the use of natural resources.
Specific articles of the Sustainable Rural Development Law are as follows:

- Article 5: Indicates that the State, through the Federal Government and in coordination with the governments of the federal and municipal entities, will be responsible for promoting policies, actions and programs in rural areas of the national territory.
- Article 14: The Special Concurrent Program for Sustainable Rural Development, which includes public policies aimed at generating and diversifying employment and guaranteeing the farmer population well-being and their participation and incorporation into national development, giving priority to areas of high and very high marginalization and economically and socially weak populations.

To achieve these goals, the Special Concurrent Program for Sustainable Rural Development (PEC) was designed, which brings together in a single budget the resources that eight secretariats (including the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development, or SADER) and comprises programs for the sector and is operated by the secretariats, other non-sectorized entities, states and municipalities. From 2010, the budget has taken on a social orientation to combat poverty in the rural areas of Mexico.

An example of a supply policy is the Rural Supply Program (PAR) that aims to serve vulnerable populations located in rural and semi-rural areas. Run by Diconsa, a government agency, the program facilitates physical and economic access to food.

Other programs that Mexico relies upon to improve food security in the country are the following:

**PROSPERA Program**

Starting in 1997, PROSPERA has been carried out in all of Mexico’s 32 State Delegations and 232 Regional Care Units. The objectives include coordinating the institutional offer of social policy programs and actions, particularly those related to productive development, income generation, economic well-being, financial and labor inclusion, education and health, aimed at the population in poverty, and food, under co-responsibility schemes that allow families to improve their living conditions and ensure the enjoyment of their social rights and access to social development with equal opportunities.

The types of support that PROSPERA provides Mexican families regarding food are:

- **Food Support**: Provides monthly monetary support to the families benefiting to help improve the quantity, quality and diversity of their diet.
- **Complementary Food Support**: Additionally, the program grants a monthly monetary support that aims to compensate beneficiary families for the effect of the international rise in food prices.
• **Child Support:** Beneficiary families with family members from 0 to 9 years of age may receive monthly monetary support for each child in this age range to strengthen their development.

• **Food Support Without Hunger:** The beneficiary families of the Support Scheme without Co-responsibility will be able to receive the monthly monetary support with the purpose of improving their purchasing power for food.

The Council overseeing PROSPERA is composed of the following entities: heads of the Secretariats of Social Development who will preside over it; Finance and Public Credit; of Economy; Public Education; Health; agriculture, livestock, rural development, fisheries and food, and work and social welfare. The heads of the units will appoint their respective alternates, who must have a hierarchical level not lower than that of the Undersecretariat.

Since 1997, PROSPERA has assisted 300 thousand families in rural areas. It currently provides resources to almost 7 million families. However, over the course of the program's implementation, certain challenges arose, including:

- Lack of linkage between the actions of education, health, food, income generation and access to the social rights established in PROSPERA.
- Achieving and facilitating the link of the target population with the institutional offer, programs and actions of social, productive, labor and financial inclusion to improve the income of the beneficiary families.
- Developing mechanisms to facilitate the linking of young beneficiaries with programs and actions that provide benefits for access to higher education, higher technical education, non-formalities and training for work.
- Establishing coordination with the levels of government with private institutions and organized civil society to strengthen PROSPERA's actions.
- Contributing to the development of programs with supervision and evaluation in accordance with the approved budget and the gradual incorporation of families in extreme poverty into PROSPERA.
- Establishing and consolidating the criteria for identifying families benefiting from PROSPERA, and developing, implementing and coordinating the systems for collecting, processing, analyzing, supervising and evaluating information from the families benefiting from said program.
- Executing, in accordance with the budget and the Rules of Operation of PROSPERA, the amounts and mechanisms to grant support in accordance with the fulfillment of the co-responsibilities of the beneficiary families.
- Consolidating the delivery of support referred to in the previous section.
- Promoting modifications to PROSPERA within the framework of the social development policies and strategies provided for in the National Development Plan.
Structuring the draft of the Operating Rules of PROSPERA and its modifications to submit for consideration and, where appropriate, approval of the Technical Committee.

**Institutional Program 2020-2024 of Mexican Food Security (SEGALMEX)**

Since 2019, SEGALMEX has focused on improving the income and quality of life of small and medium-sized rural producers who contribute to the production of basic grains and milk, strengthening the system of social food supply with emphasis on quality products and high nutritional value, considering regional preferences and customs with the lowest prices and its availability in the most marginalized and impoverished localities of the country, and lastly promoting the family economy and healthy and nutritious food through the supply of quality milk at a preferential price for its beneficiaries, especially children and the elderly. From SEGALMEX, other programs have been established including the Guarantee Price Program for Basic Food Product, the Rural Supply Program and the Social Supply Program.

Yet, certain circumstances have proven to be difficult, such as:

- Improving the conditions of small and medium-sized producers of basic grains (corn and beans) and milk, as well as bread and crystalline producers.
- The concurrence of factors such as insufficient physical availability and economic access to food limits the effective exercise of the right to food, especially in the highly marginalized parts of the country.
- The conditions of isolation associated with the most marginalized rural territories may in turn suggest a higher rate of food shortages and development lags.
- Lack of staff on the premises due to COVID-19.

For more information, please visit the following link:
https://www.gob.mx/segalmex

**National Fisheries and Aquaculture Program (PNPA) 2020-2024**

The priority objectives of the PNPA are to: (1) contribute to fishing and aquaculture activity to mark food security as a priority for the population located in rural areas; (2) improve the income and reduce poverty of fishing and aquaculture communities; and (3) guarantee the sustainable use of fisheries and aquaculture resources of commercial interest. Nonetheless, the promotion of sustainable practices for the conservation of water, soil, and agro-diversity, increasing the productivity of the countryside, and the promotion of industrialization, commercialization, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises associated with the marketing of food products, and the development of scientific research and technological have been difficult.

For more information, please visit the following link:
In Panama there are different laws, programs and projects to understand the food and nutritional needs of the population aimed at providing school feeding, strengthening food production and food security for the most vulnerable population, particularly in rural and indigenous communities.

Legal instruments are in place to meet the needs of family farmers, strengthen their capacities to produce food for family sustenance and increase their production so that they are integrated into local, provincial and national markets to meet the food needs of the Panamanian population. The entity responsible for this is the Ministry of Agricultural Development, Directorate of Rural Development, under the Ministry of Agricultural Development.

Specific policy tools include the following:

- **National Plan for Family Farming (PNAF- 2018 -2021):** From 2018 to 2021 the objectives of this plan were to improve the livelihoods of family farmers through increased production and productivity, access to rural services, markets and basic services, income improvement, poverty reduction and food and nutrition sovereignty and security (FNS). In partnership with the National Committee of Dialogue of Family Farming of Panama CONADAF, strategic actions were identified to meet the demands of family farmers. Panama is currently in the process of forming the PANAF for 2022 to 2025.

- **Study without Hunger (Law 115, December 5, 2019):** This program was created in partnership between the Ministry of Education and Directors of educational centers to offer healthy food and adequate nutrition to students in official educational centers through the purchase of quality national food products, thus contributing to the biopsychosocial development of learning, school performance and the formation of healthy eating habit. In 2021, the National Government implemented the Study without Hunger as a pilot plan in the Llano Tugrí educational center located at the head of the Ngäbe Buglé region. The project includes the 300 most vulnerable subdistricts (corregimientos) in the country. However, this initiative was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic that paralyzed the country’s schools.

- **Family Farming Law (No. 127, March 3, 2020):** This law formed the basis for the definition of policies and strategies to guarantee, as a national priority and on a permanent basis, the preservation, promotion and development of family farming in Panama. In this manner, family farmers have a legal instrument aimed at meeting their demands (socio-economic, technical and productive). It is an instrument that is in the process of being implemented through its Operational Regulations through Executive Decree No. 112 of July 9, 2021.
Family Gardens Program (2020 to 2021): To strengthen the active participation of families for the improvement of their nutritional and health statuses. In 2021, 500 family gardens were established in 300 subdivisions of the National Government’s Beehive Plan in the most vulnerable areas of the country.

Agroecologic Gardens – Families United (2007 to present): To contribute to increasing food production in the productive systems of families in situations of poverty and extreme poverty in rural and indigenous areas. In 2021, the purchase of agricultural equipment was processed to support family farmers in the improvement of their production systems. The main challenge facing family farmers is to shift the paradigm from their conventional form of production to the use of minor agricultural equipment.

Transfer of Opportunities in Rural Areas (2007 to present): To reduce poverty levels and lack of opportunities in rural areas through the development of initiatives of agricultural and non-agricultural productive projects, which generate jobs and income in families in their rural communities.

Program Agrovida (2019 to present): To improve food production by family farmers located in subdivisions of the Colmena Plan. In 2021, 2,441 families were served in the poverty subdivisions prioritized in the Colmena Plan, providing tools and various grain seeds, roots and tubers to improve food production. It also includes fertilizer, organic fungicide and organic insecticide. Participants will be supported with training and technical assistance so that they can develop their crops in their family gardens.

Crop Development Project in Rural and Indigenous Communities (2006 to present): To contribute to the reduction of poverty through the increase of employment and self-employment. This project has helped family farmers value the potential they have in their communities to produce in strategic areas such as coffee and cocoa, among others.

Nevertheless, there are still challenges that the Panamanian State faces to guarantee food security to its population including the continued support of family farmers, strengthening the processes of commercialization of production, enhancing the value chains of agricultural products, and investing in infrastructure, such as improving roads.

PERU

Peru’s Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (MIDIS) General Directorate of Design and Articulation of Social Benefits oversees the Qali Warma National School Feeding Program which is responsible for providing national food services to students of the preschool, primary, and secondary levels to support improving class care, school permanence and appropriate eating habits, by working with the local community.
Prior to COVID-19, school food service was only provided to students from public institutions within the framework of the program’s care. During the health emergency, MIDIS, within the framework of Law 31011, opened the program to serve the most vulnerable population, including persons living in poverty, women, older adults, persons with disabilities, and persons in prisons and juvenile centers. So far, this program has benefited more than 3 million Peruvians with 47 thousand tons of food delivered in 2020. In 2021, 1.3 million people received 10 thousand tons of food. The main challenge to this program has been budget needs.

MIDIS has also created the temporary intervention “Zero Hunger” through Ministerial Resolution No. 013-2021-MIDIS to contribute to the reduction of food insecurity gaps in a focused, differentiated and gradual manner, for the urban and rural populations in situations of vulnerability due to the spread of COVID-19. This temporary intervention is conducted in close coordination with the different competent sectors and levels of government during the year 2021. Zero Hunger has three strategic objectives:

- I. Increase the productive and food supply capacities of the most vulnerable household populations at the national level.
- II. Improve access to food for populations in the most vulnerable households at the national level.
- III. Achieve effective territorial management of interventions for the reduction of extreme poverty and food insecurity.

Also in Peru, the Directorate of Complementary Social Benefits oversees the Food Supplementation Program (PCA) through Ministerial Resolution No. 167-2016-MIDIS, which is executed in a decentralized manner through 238 local governments, 195 provinces in the interior of the country and 43 districts in Metropolitan Lima within the framework of the legal provisions established by MIDIS. For the operation of the PCA, the local governments executing the program sign a management agreement with MIDIS allowing for the distribution of food baskets to care centers.

Peru has also passed other laws and resolutions regarding food security in the country, particularly:

- **Law on Food and Nutrition Security (Law No. 31315):** Establishes the legal framework for the development of public policies on food and nutrition security, taking into consideration that the right to food is a fundamental right of the people, recognized by the international agreements that Peru has signed.
- **Program to Support the Food Work of Grassroots Social Organizations (Law No. 25307).**
- **Supreme Decree No. 006-2016-MIDIS:** Establishes functions that correspond to the National Government, Local Governments and organizations that participate in the PCA, modified Supreme Decree No. 004-2019-MIDIS.
- **Resolution Ministerial No. 087-2020-MIDIS:** To prevent the spread of COVID-19 in food preparation in the PCA.
Part of the mandate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Marine Resources of St. Kitts and Nevis is to enhance food and nutrition security by focusing on priority areas, for example:

- Resilience to climate change and shocks, and sustainable natural resource management.
- Sharing prosperity and economic resilience.
- Equality, well-being and leaving no one behind.

At the national level, the country has installed the FAO Country programming framework for St. Kitts & Nevis.

To achieve increased food security, St. Kitts and Nevis has implemented the following programs:

**Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan**

Since 2012, this dual policy and action plan addresses food and nutrition security directly through enhancing food availability and access, production and trade, social welfare and equity, food utilization at nutritional adequacy, stability of supply, institutions, and infrastructure, and response and management of changes in natural resources and the environment. Challenges to both this policy and action plan include the lack of relevant data, financial resources, shift in national focus, and poor administration and execution of relevant activities. In this manner, institutional strengthening is critical. Assistance was given by the intergovernmental organization Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

**St. Kitts Strategy & Action Plan for Agriculture**

From 2017 to 2021, this plan focused on overcoming key economic, institutional, environmental and social challenges that the country was facing. Expected results of the plan include improving food and nutrition security, production trade (value) chains, sustainable development of natural resources, rural modernization and youth programs, establishing a modern agriculture knowledge and information system. However, the lack of data, financial resources, shift in national focus, poor administration and execution of relevant activities, low human capacity for science based and market driven agriculture, poor institutional arrangements among sectors and key actors, and climate change impacts have all been challenges to the plan. Again, institutional strengthening has been learned as a necessity for achieving the objectives of this plan and shifting to climate smart agriculture.
Revised OECS Regional Plan of Action for Agriculture 2012-2022

The Revised Regional Plan encourages the private sector to lead strategies on transforming the agricultural sector of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and enhancing responses to national and regional food and nutrition security and new trends in non-traditional agricultural exports, among others. Results are anticipated to reduce import bills, increase food safety, reduce gluts, enhance non-traditional agricultural exports, support viable private sector initiatives, reduce vulnerability, promote agriourism services, and improve water security. Along with the previously mentioned challenges, the issues of harmonious data analysis, coordination to share technologies, enhancing value chains, declining and aging farming population, capacity for agro-processing, and insufficient technology to support the development of a market information system have all been problematic.

For more information, please visit the following link:

St. Kitts and Nevis has also created specific projects aimed at improving the production capabilities of their farmers. All the projects have recently been established (the oldest since 2019) and costs range from 0.45 million to 1.5 million Eastern Caribbean dollars:

- **Pest Control Program National Project** (2019 to present): To mitigate crop losses due to attacks from feral animals.
- **Expansion of Basseterre Abattoir and Market National Project** (2019 to present): To provide safe and hygienic conditions for the slaughtering, storage and transportation of meat products.
- **Renovation and Upgrade of Agro-processing Building National Project** (2019 to present): To promote commercially viable agro-processing.
- **Bayfords Livestock Center of Excellence National Project** (2021 to present): To transform Bayford's into a self-economic investment that will enhance livestock production and ultimately food security.

Overall, the main challenges that St. Kitts and Nevis face in guaranteeing food security for its population include water, access to finance (for farmers, fishers, and the country overall), technology know-how, climate change, low human capacity for science bases leading towards market driven agriculture, access to markets, and its vulnerability to external shocks.
The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is tasked with overseeing programs that serve as nutrition safety nets, ensuring that no eligible American goes hungry. These programs are authorized by the United States Congress. The mission of the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) at USDA is to increase food security and reduce hunger by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthy diet, and nutrition education in a way that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence. There are 15 nutrition assistance programs that touch the lives of one in four Americans each year, from infants to the elderly, year-round. These programs are federally funded, state operated and reauthorized periodically by Congress. These nutrition assistance programs support American agriculture, from farm to table – including but not limited to enterprises in production, processing, packaging, transportation, among others. The annual budget for all nutrition assistance programs is around $165 billion in the fiscal year 2022.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Serves 42.7 million people per month by providing funds for authorized individuals to purchase food and health items.

Child Nutrition Program
Provides food to about 34 million children at schools, childcare centers, summer programs and other away from home settings.

Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infant and Children
Meets the nutrition and health needs of about 6.2 million at risk pregnant women, infants and young children.

Most U.S. households have consistent, dependable access to enough food for active and healthy living, meaning they are food secure. However, some households experience food insecurity at various times during the year, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to limited resources. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the first line of defense against hunger. Rigorous evaluation studies have shown strong associations between FNS programs and increased food security. As a leader in nutrition, FNS has made nutrition security a strategic priority and will develop a Nutrition Security Promotion Plan in 2022 to enhance nutrition efforts across FNS programs.
For more information, please visit the following links:
https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program
https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn
https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic

URUGUAY

In Uruguay, the policies and programs that address food insecurity are implemented, monitored, and evaluated mainly through the Ministry of Social Development (MIDES) specifically by the National Food Institute (INDA). The Institute has the mission of protecting and promoting the exercise of the Human Right to Adequate Food, Security, and Food Sovereignty of all national territory’s inhabitants, with special emphasis and attention to the social and biologically vulnerable populations. Hence, the Uruguayan State has been implementing a series of policies, programs, and initiatives to address food security and to support the needs of its population concerning the topic. Some of them are detailed below:

Family Assignment of the Equity Plan (AFAM-PE)

The AFAM-PE is a non-contributory monthly monetary transaction co-managed by the MIDES and the Social Security Bank (BPS) of Uruguay, with high coverage on a national level, destined for pregnant women, children, and adolescents under 18 years old or persons with disabilities that integrate households in a situation of socioeconomic vulnerability or that are in places and institutions convened with the Institute for Children and Adolescents of Uruguay (INAU). The mentioned benefit was implemented in 2008 to ameliorate the situation of people in vulnerable households, as well as incentivizing the permanency of children and adolescents in the educational system and promoting health periodic control in minors and pregnant women.

With February 2022 as a reference, the average amount transferred per beneficiary was US$44, with the average transfer per household being US$81. To understand more about it and get more information, please visit the following link:
Uruguay Social Card (MIDES)

Implemented in 2008, is a monetary transfer that is granted to those households in a situation of extreme socioeconomic vulnerability, and its principal goal is to assist and support the households and families that have more difficulties accessing a basic level of consumption of food and first-need items (food, house cleaning, and hygiene products). It counts with a huge network of “Solidarity Trades” where the beneficiaries can shop anywhere in the country, establishments that are discharged of the Value Added Tax (IVA). Furthermore, additional amounts are provided for the basic transfer for pregnant women, children under three years old, and residents at a distance greater than 10km from the closest “Solidarity Trade”. The transferred amount depends on the number of people under 18 years old that integrate the household (for example, 1 minor, US$67, 4 minors, US$179). Additionally, the program also contemplates a special benefit for trans persons (travestis, transexuals, and transgender), considering the disproportional vulnerabilities that this group faces.

To understand more about it and get more information, please visit the following link: [https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-desarrollo-social/node/9812](https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-desarrollo-social/node/9812)

“Bono Crianza” (breeding voucher)

The mentioned support voucher began to be executed in 2022, through a monthly monetary transaction which is paid through the Uruguay Social Card (TUS), aiming to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in child poverty and to reduce its severity and magnitude in the country’s vulnerable households. The current transferred amounts are estimated at US$49 per child in the family, being paid every month.

To understand more about it and get more information, please visit the following link: [https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-desarrollo-social/comunicacion/comunicados/medidas-2022](https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-desarrollo-social/comunicacion/comunicados/medidas-2022)

National Dining System

The system was created in 1932 and is currently being co-executed by the MIDES and the Departmental Governments. The service pretends to provide food assistance to people in vulnerable situations and/or the general public through a paid or free service directed to the population in extreme poverty. During the sanitary emergency, the food assistance was triplicated, and for the year 2021, an annual public investment of US$6,545,098 was registered.

To understand more about it and get more information, please visit the following link: [https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-desarrollo-social/node/9810](https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-desarrollo-social/node/9810)
Support Program for highly vulnerable populations assisted in shelters and other institutions (MIDES)

The mentioned program emerged in 2008, to provide food assistance to highly vulnerable populations assisted by the MIDES’ dispositions, among them, shelters for people in a street situation (homeless).

Support for Institutions “Feeding Rights” (MIDES)

The Feeding Rights Program has the goal of contributing to promoting the Human Right to Adequate Food for the socially vulnerable population by strengthening the institutions that integrate the program through nutritional education, technical advice, and food complementation. In 2021, one of the main achievements was the significant increase in the number of services that receive vegetables and fruits by direct shopping from local family farmers.

To understand more about it and get more information, please visit the following link: https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-desarrollo-social/node/9765

“Emergency Basket” (MIDES)

The mentioned basket was implemented in 2020, aiming to assist, in an emergency, unemployed people and those who are informally inserted in the labor market that does not access monetary benefits (contributory or non-contributory). It is made possible through a money transfer or its equivalent in food and alimentation items.

To understand more about it and get more information, please visit the following link: https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-desarrollo-social/node/9776

Plan CAIF (INAU - INDA/MIDES)

The PLAN CAIF is an intersectoral public policy of alliance between the Civil Society Organizations, the State, Local Governments, and INDA as responsible for the alimentary compliments. The main objective is to guarantee the protection and promote the rights of children from 0 to 3 years old, prioritizing the access of those who belong to families in poverty or social vulnerability situations. Being available in urban and rural areas, in addition to the educational space and psychomotor stimulation, nutritive foods are offered daily and supervised by a nutritionist. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the aim was to minimize its impact on the nutritional condition of children due to the non-physical attendance, promote adequate food in homes despite the more limited connection with families, and offer food and meal baskets to requiring households.
School Feeding Program (National Public Education Administration)

The program has been executed since 1920, with the main goal being to contribute to the adequate school population's nutritional condition as an essential one to the learning process, considering also risk situations. Within this program, all public schools in the country offer daily nutritious food and meals to their students, and in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the attention was maintained including during the period when the physical attendance in educative centers was suspended.

To understand more about it and get more information, please visit the following link: https://www.dgeip.edu.uy/finalidad-del-pae/

Canteen Scholarships (University of the Republic)

Implemented in 1956, the scholarship program pretends to offer a balanced and supervised nutritional food service to undergraduate and graduate students of the public and free University in the country.

To understand more about it and get more information, please visit the following link: https://bedelias.udelar.edu.uy/

Food Basket for Celiacs (MIDES)

This program aims to offer an alimentary compliment to celiacs in a situation of socioeconomic vulnerability, ensuring the specific food supply to the pathology, as well as preventing aftermaths, balancing the access difficulties that the beneficiary may experience because of the items' special conditions not always available in mass consumption stores. Monthly, a food basket completely free of gluten is delivered to the beneficiary.

To understand more about it and get more information, please visit the following link: https://www.gub.uy/ministerio-desarrollo-social/node/9778

Despite the significant progress made by the Uruguayan State in terms of food security, the following challenges to continue addressing are identified:

- Improve the food coverage to the population in extreme food insecurity in the country's metropolitan region (in the South, close to the Montevideo capital city)
- To promote measures and statistics that allow the egress of the food assistance to their progressive autonomy
- Recently, a module of food security was inserted in the Continuous Household Survey of the National Institute of Statistics (INE), which will allow to have official numbers on food insecurity in the country for the first time and will enable the monitoring of the target 2.1. 2 of the Sustainable Development Goal No. 2.
Advance to the creation of a national policy of food and nutritional security that contributes to a healthy, sustainable, fair and equitable nutrition. This requires progressing and consolidating the interaction between the various organizations that deal with food towards a food system perspective.
Conclusion and recommendations provided in this section have been created in collaboration with the World Food Programme, leading experts in global food security. The following information presents a general overview of lessons learned and recommendations for improving food security in the Americas during the COVID-19 pandemic.

LESSONS LEARNED—GENERAL TRENDS

The COVID-19 crisis highlighted the role of social protection as an emergency preparedness and response tool. Social protection systems were used by all countries in the region to mitigate the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic and health measures on an unprecedented scale (more than 340 social protection measures implemented in the region, ECLAC 2021).

The crisis showed that some fundamental problems of social protection remain unresolved. For example, although many of the national social protection programs and systems are legally constituted as rights-based, in practice they exclude large segments of the population, do not meet all needs, and offer unequal treatment (e.g., between the contributory and non-contributory system). In this way, the crisis exposed the exclusion of segments of the population such as informal workers, migrants, indigenous and Afro-descendant populations, rural bias, and the lack of programs designed with a gender perspective.

Both the readiness of the systems and their pre-existing capacity are key factors in responding. Preparedness includes the development of systems, processes and capacities for the regular implementation of programs, as well as the ability to meet the additional demand that arises in times of crisis and to ensure the continuity of programs. Thus, for example, many of the difficulties faced during the response to the pandemic were mainly due to the need to design new policies, to develop systems, mechanisms and protocols, modify regulations, among others. In terms of pre-existing capacity,
several countries in the region were among the fastest responders precisely because they had social registries and mechanisms for the exchange of information at least partially established, as well as almost universal coverage of national identity cards, financial systems with a large territorial scope, and relatively high access to the internet and mobile telephone services.

In addition to preparedness and pre-existing capacity, the pandemic confirmed that political leadership is a critical element during an emergency. The scale of the crisis and the types of responses implemented at the global level created an adequate environment for bold social protection policies, prioritizing speed over the verification of eligibility conditions, and in some countries even with responses aimed at universalization. Previous experience in social protection responses to natural disasters shows that such leadership can be challenging.

The response to the pandemic fostered collaboration between social protection systems and external actors such as humanitarian agencies, aid workers, IFIs, NGOs and the private sector. Even in some cases of mature social protection systems, cooperation with external actors was key. For example, WFP played a key role in assisting Venezuelan migrants and Colombian returnees in Arauca, Colombia, and registering migrants in the Social Protection Information System (SISBEN) to facilitate their access to the cash transfer program in response to the pandemic (Solidarity Income).

LESSONS LEARNED AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL

The logistical challenges resulting from the crisis led to many operational innovations, some of which are likely to have long-term effects on the implementation of social protection, both in normal times and in response to emergencies. However, there were also numerous difficulties in the provision of assistance, from the crowding of people at payment points and the difficulties of some beneficiaries to use new technologies, to the temporary collapse of web platforms and call centers, and the lack of staff.

School feeding programs showed their ability to reconvernt and maintain service even with schools closed, as well as to respond to multiple simultaneous crises. The closure of schools in 32 countries in the region meant that programs should adjust their implementation. Most of the programs (17 in total) provided rations of raw or industrialized food instead of school feeding; usually these rations had to be collected in schools or other distribution points. In a few cases, such as Bolivia, it was decided to give cash transfers to compensate for the lack of school feeding. In Colombia, for example, a mixed strategy was chosen, where the corresponding entities could choose between three options: industrialized rations, rations to prepare at home or a food voucher. To enable the new food delivery mechanisms, some countries had to regulate decrees and make regulatory adjustments, as well as review contracts with suppliers.
The use of data and pre-existing information systems made it possible to implement rapid and far-reaching responses. Many countries took advantage of beneficiary registries, social registries and other sources of information, such as civil registration and vital statistics, among many others. Before the pandemic, there were very few experiences of this globally. Using pre-existing information to report responses, instead of waiting for impact assessments, allows for faster responses, although this information cannot, of course, reflect the situation of households after the crash.

The need to maintain social distancing and mobility restrictions led to the creation of innovative mechanisms to register new beneficiaries quickly, from online platforms to helplines. Innovation in this regard was very important, allowing some programs to register millions of potential beneficiaries in a few days.

There were also important innovations in the delivery of temporary cash transfers. From the creation of new bank accounts in a simple way, usually remote, making the eligibility and access requirements more flexible (Know-Your-Customer), to bank transfers without the need for a bank account or debit card, which allows money to be withdrawn at ATMs and bank branches (cardless transactions). There were also experiences of transfers through mobile phone applications (with or without accounts) and transfers that are accessed in pre-established shops only with the identity card, without the need for a prepaid or debit card.

It is essential to continue investing in national social protection systems and towards the construction of inclusive systems, which allow adequate assistance to always be provided and guarantee fundamental rights. The crisis revealed structural problems of coverage and relevance of the programs, which must be resolved.

It is important to defend the budgets allocated to social protection, in a regional context of crisis and fragility, with limited fiscal spaces. Although social protection now occupies an important level in public agendas, because of its role during the pandemic, economic and fiscal crises often put at risk the budget allocated to this sector. In addition to implementing strategies to defend social protection budgets, showing the short- and long-term effects on poverty reduction, but also as an economic engine, it will be important to seek alternative financing mechanisms. From contingent insurances, such as the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility, to the role of cooperation and IFIs to support incremental budgets.
It is recommended that countries implement strategies for the inclusion of migrants, in a context marked by Venezuelan emigration. The first measure must consist of permanence permits, which then give access to the social offer. In several countries where the flow of migrants has been very high, this will involve reforms in social protection programs and systems, to provide adequate assistance to this vulnerable population. Colombia’s experience with the Temporary Protection Permit, the efforts to register this population in the SISBEN, and its inclusion in the main cash transfer program in response to the pandemic (Solidarity Income) is an experience to consider. It is also important that migrant inclusion strategies are combined with increases in coverage of the host population in vulnerable conditions.

In a region so exposed to different types of shocks, it will be important to prepare social protection systems to respond to future crises, building on the advances generated by responses to the pandemic. Such preparedness should consist of a combination of commitments, plans and strategies to respond to recurrent shocks, as is the case in the Dominican Republic, where Supérate is developing an Emergency Bond to respond to hurricanes and floods. The design of that bonus includes defining in advance how to respond, when, to whom, for how long, among others. However, it is also important to invest in providing social protection systems and programs with flexibility, to respond to unforeseen shocks or those whose scale exceeds what is planned.

It is recommended to prepare social protection systems through financial and legal commitments. The existence of contingent financing and legal bases for the role of social protection entities during emergencies are the pillars on which response capacity must be prepared.

At the operational level, it is important to incorporate and expand the innovations made during the pandemic, especially in terms of digital identification, registration, payments, communication and monitoring mechanisms. These and other innovations must be adapted and incorporated by social protection programs with different objectives and implementation modalities than those created to respond to the pandemic. It is also recommended to implement strategies to ensure that digital mechanisms do not lead to the exclusion of vulnerable people; programs may need to implement hybrid mechanisms, which fit the different needs of the population. It is also necessary to strengthen analysis and monitoring and evaluation tools, and feedback and complaint mechanisms, to understand the barriers faced by users and to improve the design and implementation of programs (e.g., to have more gender-sensitive approaches that better address intersectional inequalities).

Social protection responses must be comprehensive, including the right mix of services and assistance. While cash transfers play a critical role, it is important to include other strategies such as school feeding programs – given their coverage and importance in the region—involving local organizations, employment programs, among others.

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A multisectoral and multi-stakeholder approach is recommended in the development of responsiveness through social protection. In addition to the social protection sector, this initiative should include risk management (civil protection), finance, humanitarian assistance, and different levels of government. The response to the pandemic also showed the importance of partnerships with humanitarian actors, NGOs, and even the private sector. This multi-sectoral collaboration can range from joint or coordinated preparedness and response actions, to data sharing, for example.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the region faces a context of aggravated risks with different crises converging, which have exacerbated vulnerabilities and structural inequalities and created new vulnerabilities. The challenge in the Americas is twofold: an increase in food insecurity and hunger, and on the other hand an acceleration of the double burden of malnutrition.

Therefore, in addition to a short-term response, medium- and long-term strategies are required to address structural inequities through a system-strengthening approach, linking social protection systems with food and health systems.
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VII. ANNEX
1. Name of the country and Department/Unit/Agency:

___________________________________

Name of the Secretariat or other body to which you belong:

___________________________________

If it is an autonomous and decentralized agency, indicate the name:

___________________________________

2. Does your Secretariat/Department/Unit/Agency have a mandate and/or Policy and/or Government Program at a National level to meet the food and nutritional needs of its population? If the answer is yes, please explain it briefly. If not, indicate the main reason(s). Use the necessary space in your answer and include the links, websites, etc. that you consider pertinent as an additional reference to the information provided.

a) Yes

___________________________________________________________________________

b) No

___________________________________________________________________________

3. Indicate in which institutional form this public policy has been established: Constitution of the Nation, Law, Decree, etc.

4. Please use the following box to include all the policies, programs, projects, initiatives that are developed at the government level with a national scope that were being implemented prior to the pandemic and those that have been originated to meet specific food security needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Provide in each case (whether it is a policy, program and/or project), name, objective, start date and duration, most important achievements/results, main challenges in implementation, alliances and participating entities, amount of financial resources allocated, etc. For more than one case, add the necessary rows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy / Program / Project Name</th>
<th>Start date and duration</th>
<th>Goals/ Objective(s)</th>
<th>Relevant results</th>
<th>Key implementation challenges</th>
<th>Lessons learned</th>
<th>Partnerships and participating entities</th>
<th>Amount of financial resources *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

* If possible, include the equivalent amount in US dollars and an estimated percentage of the amount assigned in relation to the national budget.
5. Does any or all of these policies, programs, or projects have disaggregated information according to sex/gender, age, race/ethnicity, disability, rural/urban area, migratory or refugee status? If it is just one or a few, mention which ones and what type of disaggregated information they offer.

6. Do the policies, programs, projects implement differential approaches on sex/gender, age, race/ethnicity, disability, rural/urban, immigration status or refugee status? If your answer is yes, please describe them:

7. Do the policies, programs, projects promote and/or support national small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), family farming?
   a) Yes, all _____ If this is your answer, please indicate how it is carried out
   b) Yes, some
   c) No, none _____ If this is your answer, please indicate the reason(s)

8. What are the main challenges that the State is facing to guarantee food security for its population? And what type of support do you consider necessary to achieve this?

9. Please provide any other additional information related to this questionnaire:

Thank you for your participation.
Severe food insecurity trend in the region (countries where WFP has a presence excluding Venezuela and Cuba):

Graphic 1. Severe food insecurity trend in the region

- Number of severe food insecure (in millions)

Source: World Food Program

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26 The following annex with information and data about the regional context regarding food security was prepared by Rossella Bottone and Espedito Nastro of the World Food Program, WFP.
For more information, please visit the following link:
https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/5a97a239d68f4579ab2a30e28fb5be90

Source: World Food Program
To access to the RAM Information Hub of the WFP for Latin America and the Caribbean that contains the results of the food security assessments of the last two years, please visit the following link: https://rbp-covid-unwfp.hub.arcgis.com/pages/impact-assessments

Source: World Food Program
Food Security Data Trend 2021 - telephone interviews assisted by CATI computer

Source: World Food Program
How the household income change due to applying several consumption strategies as a result of economic vulnerability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Income Change</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal or remittances</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular informal</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one works</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicators collected throughout the CATI survey.

- Severely food insecure
- Moderately food insecure
- Severe nutritional risk
- Poor

- United nations agencies
- Private companies
- My family and other relatives
- My family and other people who are not part of my household
- Bi-parental household without children
- Village or rural area
- Medium
- Small
- Adults (35 to 59)
- 11-20
- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 61-70
- 71-80
- 81-90
- 91-100

The household income change in the past year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My family and other relatives</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family and other people who are not part of my household</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>22.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>17.5</td>
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</table>
ANNEX 6

Food Security Data Trend 2021 - Web Surveys

Source: World Food Program

30 The following annex with information and data about the regional context regarding food security was prepared by Rossella Bottone and Espedito Nastro of the World Food Program, WFP.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Round 1</th>
<th>Round 2</th>
<th>Round 3</th>
<th>Round 4</th>
<th>Round 5</th>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: The table above shows the distribution of responses across different rounds for various categories. The data indicates a high level of consistency across rounds, with minimal variation in the percentages for each category.
ANNEX 7

Data from Migration Study Guatemala, Honduras and Salvador April 2021 (4998 Households)

Source: World Food Program

31 The following annex with information and data about the regional context regarding food security was prepared by Rossella Bottone and Espedito Nastro of the World Food Program, WFP.
Data from Migration Study Guatemala-Honduras-Salvador April 2021- 4998 Households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Monthly Expenditure in USD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>303.30</td>
<td>254.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>115.88</td>
<td>104.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drinking Water</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>4.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>7.58</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>18.76</td>
<td>16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>16.81</td>
<td>15.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>16.21</td>
<td>15.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
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<td>Legal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
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<td>20.20</td>
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<td>House repairs</td>
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Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.3 Country</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>273.80</td>
<td>251.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>305.50</td>
<td>254.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>331.25</td>
<td>254.71</td>
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</table>

Total 303.30

Case Summaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total percapita MONTHLY_EXP</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
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<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>357.03</td>
<td>104.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Comparison of HH with migrants versus HH without migrants

Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4483</td>
<td>200.00</td>
<td>410.00</td>
<td>26.83</td>
<td>27.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4483</td>
<td>200.00</td>
<td>410.00</td>
<td>26.83</td>
<td>27.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONFRONTING FOOD INSECURITY IN THE AMERICAS: BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Department of Social Inclusion
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