



Regional Conference
on Social Development
in Latin America and the Caribbean
Santiago, 3–5 October 2023



SIDE EVENT

“The future of social protection in Latin America: opportunities to move towards universal social protection systems”

Fifth Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

October 5th, 2023

13:00 to 14:30 hrs. (Chile time, -3 UTC)

Enrique V. Iglesias Auditorium

1. Introduction

The devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the centrality of social protection systems in resuming the path of inclusive social development in Latin America and the Caribbean. This centrality is accentuated in the face of a changing risk landscape, given the challenges posed by the increase in disasters and the climate crisis, unprecedented changes in the labour market, the demographic transition and the ongoing technological revolution. In this context, social protection systems are one of the most important tools governments must use to safeguard the well-being of their population and promote recovery with reactivation. To achieve this, it is essential to strengthen the social institutional framework of these systems and to address their current gaps in coverage and adequacy to move towards universal, comprehensive, resilient and sustainable social protection systems.

As part of the 5th Meeting of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean and the project ECLAC-BMZ/GIZ "Transformative Reactivation: Overcoming the Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean", this parallel event aims to contribute to the reflection on how these challenges will shape the future of social protection and what strategies countries need to mobilise to address them. In particular, the event will focus on the challenges arising from the current context for the design of cash transfer programmes, one of the most important components of non-contributory social protection systems in the region. Specifically, it will address the opportunities to strengthen the design of these transfers and consolidate guaranteed levels of well-being, taking into account their role in emergencies and disasters, in ongoing transformations, and in promoting the labour inclusion.

The debate on the implementation of income guarantees as a permanent and universal policy in social protection systems has become highly relevant in public, regional and international discourses. It represents a significant shift in the orientation of welfare regimes in the region. The transition from targeted mechanisms to universal and more adequate policies is the main driving force behind these debates, which have gained momentum in the face of new challenges. There are various options for moving forward along this path, promoting greater coordination between contributory and non-



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contributory components and addressing the significant challenges the region faces in terms of coverage, adequacy and financial sustainability.

2. Objective

As part of the 5th Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean and the activities of the ECLAC/BMZ-GIZ project "Transformative Reactivation: Overcoming the Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean", the event aims to strengthen the exchange of experiences and lessons learned on the strategies being discussed and implemented by countries to strengthen their social protection systems in the face of crises and prospects, with a special focus on their cash transfer systems. The aim is to identify common challenges and evidence-based solutions to strengthen universal, comprehensive, resilient and sustainable social protection systems. In particular, the event aims to create a space to address the challenges of designing and redesigning cash transfer systems in the region. This will include debates on the prioritisation of transfer schemes for households with children and youth, as well as other population groups; options for implementing minimum income policies; adaptations of these policies in emergency contexts; and their potential integration with work inclusion programmes in the context of a just transition. Mechanisms to address challenges related to coverage, adequacy and financial sustainability will also be discussed.

3. Methodology

Following an initial presentation on the key messages of the document "The Future of Social Protection in the Face of Prolonged Social Crisis in Latin America: Key Steps towards Universal, Comprehensive, Resilient, and Sustainable Systems," prepared within the framework of the ECLAC-BMZ/GIZ Project "Transformative Reactivation: Overcoming the Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean", a first round of interventions by the panelists will take place through a roundtable dynamic. Each panelist will have a 10-minute speaking slot. At the end of this first round, if time allows, a second round of closing interventions will take place, and some questions from the audience will be addressed.

Panelists are encouraged to focus their interventions on some of the following questions: In the context of recurrent crises and in light of the lessons learned from the pandemic, what are the main instruments and adjustments that have been considered or implemented in different countries concerning cash transfer schemes and non-contributory social protection systems? What are the main mechanisms and changes that could be implemented in emergencies and recurrent crises? How much scope is there within countries to discuss expanding the coverage and adequacy of these entitlements, particularly focusing on households with children, youth and other population segments? Is implementing a minimum income policy feasible, and how could it be linked to labour market integration programmes within a just transition framework?



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4. **Date and Time**

October 5th, 2023, from 13:00 to 14:30 hrs. (Chile time, -3 UTC).

5. **Participation**

The event is targeted towards government representatives, members of civil society, and academics in the region. Limited spots are available.

6. **Languages**

Spanish and English (event with simultaneous translation).

7. Preliminary program

Thursday, October 5th, 2023	
Moderator: Raquel Santos Garcia, Social Affairs Officer, Social Development Division, ECLAC	
Inaugural Session: Welcoming Remarks	
13:00-13:05	Welcoming Remarks Alberto Arenas de Mesa, Director of the Social Development Division, ECLAC
Presentation of the document "The future of social protection in the face of the protracted crisis in Latin America: keys to move towards universal, comprehensive, resilient and sustainable systems"	
13:05-13:20	Presentation of the document Claudia Robles , Social Affairs Officer, ECLAC
Round Table Cash transfer systems and the future of social protection: lessons learned, challenges and opportunities	
13:20-14:10	Interventions José Carlos Cardona , Secretary of State in the Office of the Secretary of Social Development (SEDESOL), Honduras Yorleny León Marchena , Minister of Human Development and Social Inclusion, Costa Rica Francisca Gallegos , Social Services Undersecretary, Social Development and Family Ministry, Chile Laís Abramo , National Secretary of Care and Family Policy, Ministry of Social Development and Assistance, Family and Fight Against Hunger, Brazil Camila Arza , Senior Researcher, Interdisciplinary Centre for the Study of Public Policies, Argentina
14:10-14:25	Space for dialogue and questions from the public
14:25-14:30	Closing remarks Raquel Santos Garcia, Social Affairs Officer, Social Development Division, ECLAC