Social Registries Assessment Tool

Platform of Integrated Registry for Social Programs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia (PREGIPS)

Summary

This summary presents a brief history and the current situation of PREGIPS, the Platform of Integrated Registry for Social Programs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia. The complete evaluation of PREGIPS was done according to the Social Registries Assessment Tool developed by Leite et. al. (2017) in the paper "Social registries for social assistance and beyond: a guidance note and assessment tool".

The PREGIPS Platform originated in 2011 with a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Initially it was called PRUB (Program of Unique Registry of Beneficiaries) and it was conceived as a Platform with two independent registries, without communication or perspective of feedback between them. On the one hand, the Beneficiary Registry aimed to gather data from the social programs of Bolivia and make a socioeconomic characterization of the existing beneficiaries. On the other hand, the Social Registry would gather information about potential beneficiaries through en masse registration such as the one carried out in 2015.

In 2016, Law No. 777 on the Comprehensive State Planning System (SPIE) created the Platform for the Integrated Registry of Social Programs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia (PREGIPS), whose objective is "the integrated registry of social and economic programs and of its beneficiaries, identification of future beneficiaries and an informed planning and coordination instrument of poverty reduction policies and programs ". The Technical Coordination Unit of PREGIPS was created under the Ministry of Development Planning, and the Supreme Decree no. 2783 of 2016 defined the PREGIPS Regulation.

The PREGIPS was consolidated, then, as a Social Registry and as a Beneficiary Registry of Bolivia (the databases of the Social Registry and the Beneficiary Registry, although integrate the same Platform, do not exchange information). Regarding the Social Registry, PREGIPS has organized an en masse registration in 2015 where complete data of 250 thousand households were recorded (less than 10% of the total number of households in the country - 3,346,800). The next en masse registration on a smaller scale than the previous one is scheduled for 2019, with the support of UNDP. Regarding the Beneficiary Registry, until November 2018, PREGIPS received data on 88,000 beneficiaries of four social programs (Employment Generation Plan, State Housing Agency, Disability Bono and Early Childhood Development). Of the four, PREGIPS has interoperability with two programs (Employment Generation Plan and State Housing Agency) and two others send data that are manually incorporated by ETL (Early Childhood Development and Disability Bono).

There is a vision that PREGIPS could be an analysis platform for the programs in the future, through the Beneficiary Registry, but the idea that it can serve as a gateway to the

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1 In the Government of Bolivia there is no institution responsible for the administration of all social programs. The social policy is directed by each sectorial Ministry. However, the Ministry of Development Planning (MPD) has the role of generating information for public policy and leads the Social Cabinet, which has the function of generating articulated strategies to promote social development.
programs is not clear (that is, there is no a vision of being made through PREGIPS the processes of registration, verification of eligibility, admission and registration of beneficiaries, functioning as a single window for the programs). The data management structure for the PREGIPS Beneficiary Registry information system is as follows:

By regulation, for the development of the Beneficiary Registry, social programs must report consensual information to the Platform for purposes of analysis and generation of public policy, as well as for analysis of the status of social programs. The normative instruments include:

• Agreements (Convenios) to be signed between PREGIPS and the social programs, as established in Supreme Decree n.2783, with protocols and formats to follow for the exchange of databases.

• Socioeconomic Characterization Card (FCS), also established in Supreme Decree n.2783, to be implemented in a mandatory and progressive manner by the executing agencies of social programs. The FCS was designed in 2014 by the Ministry of Development Planning in conjunction with the National Institute of Statistics (INE), the Social and Economic Policy Analysis Unit (UDAPE) and the IDB.

• Operational Manual, prepared by the PREGIPS Team in 2019, which must be validated with social programs for an orderly management of information remission and processing, with the aim of facilitating agreement between formats and facilitating the composition of an integrated database, which still does not exist for the Beneficiary Registry. A first version of the Manual was presented at the workshop carried out by the Technical Assistance with PREGIPS and social programs. After discussions with social programs, the Manual should be finalized and implemented.

2 After the reception of the data of beneficiaries from the programs or after the realization of the en masse registration, PREGIPS sends the databases for validation by the SERECI (Civil Registry Service). The SERECI validates the data and returns them to PREGIPS with markers (validated or not validated).
Despite all the regulations, PREGIPS has not advanced much in the exchange of information with the social programs. Currently only six programs have signed the Agreement with PREGIPS (Bono Juana Azurduy, Universal Prenatal Subsidy for Life, Disability Bono, State Housing Agency, Employment Generation Plan and Early Childhood Development — discontinued in 2018), only four sent data to PREGIPS, each in its own periodicity and with variable data quality (Early Childhood Development and Disability Bono, State Housing Agency and Youth Employability Project, part of the Employment Generation Plan), and only two programs use the FCS (State Agency of Housing and Project of Employability for Youth).

Some difficulties pointed out by the programs for sending the information of beneficiaries to PREGIPS are: they do not have specialized personnel; their systems are not computerized, and they have difficulties in generating the necessary data formats. In addition, it is possible to notice a resistance on the part of the programs in the use of FCS. They affirm that they do not have trained personnel to fill it because it is extensive, with very specific questions and different from those that the programs need to know about their beneficiaries. Another problem is that the FCS and the program registration forms do not have the same data collection unit. While PREGIPS registers the household, all programs register information about beneficiaries specifically.

Despite the mandatory use of the FCS, there is no single registration form amongst the programs. Each of the programs has its own form and its own point of contact with the citizens, and registers beneficiaries separately (which incurs many costs for citizens and Government due to the number of offices and personnel involved). PREGIPS does not have any citizen interface, currently it is just a back-office system. The citizen interface varies according to the programs because the access to programs has not been integrated: registration forms, concepts and information that must be collected. There is no single window nor a culture of data sharing. This presents a challenge for the consolidation of an integrated database of beneficiaries that allows to see who receives what.

Currently the data of the Beneficiary Registry are not available for consultation or any other type of use. There is only a 2018 report on the data sent by four social programs, which includes data on beneficiaries, sex, affiliates by department, by occupation, by marital status and by age group. Once PREGIPS identified problems in some databases reported by social programs, these are in the process of qualification for the constitution of an integrated database.

As for the Social Registry, the idea is to carry out en masse registrations to have an overview of the possible future beneficiaries of social programs. An en masse registration was made in 2015 using the FCS, which collected information on the characterization of housing, access to basic services and perceptions related to food insecurity. Information was also gathered for the sociodemographic characterization of household members, as well as aspects of health, disability, education, occupation and access to social programs. Based on this information, the calculation of the poverty targeting index was determined, using the methodology of Unsatisfied Basic Needs (NBI), a direct method to identify critical deficiencies in a population and calculate the degree of poverty at the level of each household.

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3 A workshop was held in May 2019 to present the results of the Inventory of social programs and to discuss the concepts and possible alternatives for the development of the PREGIPS Platform. During the Workshop a brief evaluation was made by the representatives of the social programs in relation to PREGIPS.
In the en masse registration of 2015, the FCS was completed for 251,347 homes in the peri-urban centers of the main cities of Bolivia: Sucre, La Paz, Cochabamba, Oruro, Potosí, Tarija, Santa Cruz, Trinidad, Cobija and El Alto (which means there is no data for the rural population⁴). According to estimates from the 2017 Household Survey conducted by INE, 36.4% of the population lives in poverty (55.1% in the rural areas and 28.2% in the urban areas). This represented, in 2017, a total of 4 million poor people. Considering that the last en masse registration of 2015 collected information from 941,961 people, it can be said that the coverage of the Social Registry is currently of approximately 23.6% of the poor population of Bolivia.

A final report of the en masse registration was made with analysis of the data and characteristics of the households, but later these data were not used for the elaboration of diagnoses, implementation of public policies or expansion of social programs for poverty reduction, due to problems with the Data Center and data viewer. The systems of the PREGIPS Platform were developed by a company contracted with resources from the IDB loan agreement, and with the end of the loan in 2016 the Data Center ran out of contract for its maintenance. Due to the risk of losing all the data of the 2015 en masse registration, another company was hired in 2018, with resources from FAO, to stabilize the functioning of the system. Only in 2019 the data viewer came back into operation, and with the restored access to the data it is possible to do the analyzes again. Given the relative out datedness of the information, a new en masse registration will be carried out in 2019.

Data from the en masse registrations should serve to support the expansion of social programs and evaluate eligibility criteria (poor, not poor or extreme poor). PREGIPS already acts as a verifier of the eligibility criteria of two programs that have interoperability with their systems (Housing programs and Project of Employability for Youth). PREGIPS receives data from these programs and sends it back with an assessment of the degree of poverty of the beneficiaries.

There are no goals to expand the coverage of the Social Registry, but it is believed that mapping the needs of the total poor population would be very important for the government of Bolivia to design programs and adapt existing ones in order to close gaps to improve quality of life of the population. The forecast is to make en masse registrations every 3 to 4 years, depending on the availability of resources for the operation. In the last year an android application was developed to collect information from a minimum file from the FCS⁵, which allows to assess poverty. The application can be managed from cell phones or tablets, by trained personnel. In the last en masse registration of 2015 paper forms were used, but in the next 2019 the tablets will be used with the application.

Currently, the situation of PREGIPS needs attention due to the reduction of budget and team, which shows a lack of prioritization or of a clear strategy for the future of PREGIPS. Initially with the PRUB during the IDB loan (from 2011 to 2016), the team had a more consolidated structure and had a strong institutional structure in the Ministry of Development Planning. The IDB financing made possible a structure with seven qualified people in the area of IT, social and economic. Since the creation of the Coordination Unit of PREGIPS, only four people remained in the team: two external consultants, hired by international institutions, and two IT employees that are shared with the IT area of the

⁴ According to the National Population and Housing Census of 2012, 67.5% of the population lives in the urban areas of the country and the remaining 32.5% in the rural areas.

⁵ The application for FCS data collection by tablets was developed by a developer of the Ministry, who works with the PREGIPS team.
Ministry of Development Planning. In addition, the Data Center went through a serious technical problem due to lack of financing, as already mentioned. It is possible to say that, while PREGIPS has gained more institutional relevance than the PRUB due to its creation by Law n.777, it has also lost resources and instruments for its support and development.

For the development of the Beneficiary Registry, it would be interesting to define clear strategies, supporting the action of PREGIPS with the other programs. Likewise, for the Social Registry, if the Government believes that the realization of the en masse registrations can support the improvement of the social protection system, it is important to support them in the achievement of en masse registrations and mainly in the use of the collected data for policy analysis on poverty reduction.