

RFI

Bimonthly Bulletin



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER

2020



Microempresas de Colombia has embraced digital tools to improve its operations.

Microempresas de Colombia Launches a Voluntary Insurance Product for Rural Population

Microempresas de Colombia launched a new voluntary digital insurance product, designed with the United States Agency for International Development (**USAID**), through the Rural Finance Initiative (**RFI**). The product allows small business owners and the rural population to access an insurance product easily and in real time for themselves and their family's protection.

The voluntary digital insurance, designed with insurance company Grupo de Inversiones Suramericana (South American Investments Group – **SURA**), can be acquired through Microempresas de Colombia's mobile application, and has three levels of coverage: microsolidario, microclásico and microplús. These products protect the person who acquires the policy and their family for up to US\$2,941 with the largest coverage plan. The cost of the one-year policy is US\$12 for microsolidario, US\$14 for microclásico, and US\$18 for microplús.

Customers received the product enthusiastically and the cooperative sold 200 policies in just ten days. Patricia Pérez Guerra, General Manager of Microempresas, highlighted the fact that "the voluntary insurance is an innovative product starting with its accessibility online". These digital developments promote and strengthen financial inclusion of vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas where the cooperative operates, while expanding the offer of financial services that meet the needs of rural producers and micro, small and medium-sized business owners.

More Efficient Banks Encourage an Influx of New Customers

Banco de Bogotá launched a new system that enables the entity to quickly and easily engage customers on-site. The online event for this new system was held on November 6, and participants included Diego Montoya –Network and Premium National Director–, branch office coordinators, and sales team advisors.

With **267** new devices ready for use in the field, Banco de Bogotá's sales team will be able to open products like savings accounts in five minutes and capture information in the field in real time. The technology not only streamlines and strengthens customer service, but also benefits rural populations who will not need to go to a branch office to acquire products.

The bank acquired the devices with **USAID's** support, through **RFI**, and will now be able to connect to Colombia's National Registry System in real time. This means that advisors no longer need to request physical documentation, take it to their branch office, and validate it there. Instead, they can connect to the National Registry System immediately, scan the customers' fingerprints, and validate the barcode in their identification document. This is an important step to promote banking in rural and isolated areas.



The device used by Banco de Bogotá can scan people's fingerprints.

Working with Our Communities to Promote Savings



Procrear, and every other organization, has implemented biosecurity protocols to continue carrying out their activities safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To promote and facilitate financial inclusion of vulnerable populations in PDET municipalities, as well as Venezuelan migrants, **USAID** approved five grant agreements with civil society organizations to implement local savings groups. The organizations are Asociación Salto Ángel in the department of La Guajira; Fundación Colombo-venezolana Nueva Ilusión in Norte de Santander; Asociación de Mujeres Sembrando Vida in Bolívar; Fundación Procrear in Bogotá; and Corporación de Emprendedores Colombo-venezolana (Emprecolven) in Antioquia.

With these grants, organizations hope to create 81 savings groups with approximately 650 people who will be able to access a formal savings account and build their financial history through the e-wallet app with RFI partner financial intermediary, Movii. Organizations have already started creating the groups and training in this savings methodology.