Digital Convergence
USP2030

DCI Support for Digital Reforms of Peru's Social Protection Systems



Case Study

Foreword

Digital transformation of the State acquires true meaning when it enables people to access the services they need in a simpler, more timely, and more secure manner. In the field of social protection, this purpose takes on particular relevance, because behind every piece of data, record, or procedure there is a person or a family awaiting an adequate response from the State.

At the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, we have been promoting the use of technology as a tool to improve the management of social policy and bring our services closer to citizens. This entails advancing toward systems that can exchange information securely, maintain updated data, and, above all, design solutions based on the real needs of the people.

This study captures the experience developed with the support of the Digital Convergence Initiative (DCI) around ConectaJuntos and ConsultaMiHogar. Both initiatives respond to concrete needs. ConectaJuntos seeks to strengthen the relationship between the JUNTOS Program and households through a digital channel that facilitates access to information, the updating of records, and the tracking of certain processes. ConsultaMiHogar, for its part, seeks to make it easier for citizens to consult information related to their socioeconomic classification, report inconsistencies, and track the status of their requests.

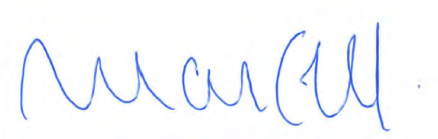
The progress made so far shows encouraging results and offers lessons that deserve our attention. This experience confirms that digital transformation involves more than developing digital tools. It requires coordination among the teams responsible for social policy, operations, and technology; institutional capacity to sustain improvements over time; and systems that can communicate with one another through common standards and appropriate information safeguards.

Interoperability holds an importance that transcends the technological dimension. Having reliable information and secure mechanisms for sharing it among institutions can help reduce paperwork, avoid duplication, and improve the State's ability to identify the needs of the population and provide more timely responses.

The experience documented in this study also reminds us that no digital solution will be sufficient unless we take into account those who face barriers related to connectivity, access to devices, language, disability, or limited digital skills. Innovation in social policy must make public services more accessible, not create new barriers. Digital transformation must therefore be accompanied by service delivery mechanisms that respond to the diversity of our population and territories.

This study provides an opportunity to review what has been achieved and learn from the experience. Its findings and recommendations can help strengthen the next stages of digital transformation in Peru's social protection system, through a broader approach that brings together technology, public administration, and a focus on people's needs.

We express our recognition to the Digital Convergence Initiative co-funded by the German Cooperation and the European Union, implemented by GIZ in Peru for the technical assistance and support provided, as well as to the teams of MIDIS, the JUNTOS Program, and OFIS that participated in this process. Joint work and the exchange of knowledge allow us to move toward social services that are more accessible, better articulated, and better able to respond to the people who need them most.



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Minister of Development and Social Inclusion
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Digital Convergence Initiative (DCI)

DCI is the global initiative for the digital transformation of social protection systems. Established as part of the USP2030 partnership, the DCI is an open and collaborative platform for governments, development partners, civil society organizations and the private sector united by a shared vision: expanding the coverage of social protection and enhancing its delivery through inclusive, interoperable digital systems.

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We would like to thank the Peruvian Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (Ministerio de Desarrollo e Inclusión Social, MIDIS) for its collaboration, and in particular the teams at JUNTOS and the Office of Targeting and Social Information (Organismo de Focalización e Información Social, OFIS), whose contributions were essential in documenting this implementation. The opinions and conclusions presented in this publication are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the participating institutions.

Contents

Acknowledgements 4

List of acronyms 6

Executive Summary 7

1 Introduction – Learning from Peru's digital transformation journey 9

2 Context – Peru's evolving digital social protection systems 11

3 The challenge – Improving the quality, accessibility and interoperability of social information 12

4 The design pathway 14

4.1 Introducing global interoperability standards 14

4.2 Design trajectory: from Mi Juntos to Conecta Juntos 17

4.3 Supporting the design process 17

4.4 Designing Conecta Juntos in a changing institutional environment 19

4.5 Consulta Mi Hogar – bringing information closer to citizens 20

5 Implementation – From trial launch towards digital transformation 21

6 Results and observed changes 23

6.1 Early quantitative results 23

6.2 Enhanced relationship between JUNTOS and citizens 24

6.3 More efficient and integrated information management 24

6.4 Contribution to wider digital transformation 25

7 Early user experience of the Conecta Juntos app 26

8 Lessons and recommendations 28

8.1 Lessons learnt 28

8.2 Recommendations 29

List of acronyms

API	Application Programming Interface
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CSE	Socioeconomic Classification
DCI	Digital Convergence Initiative
EU	European Union
FIAP	Fundación para la Internacionalización de las Administraciones Públicas
FSU	Single Socioeconomic Profile
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPF	Targeted Public Intervention
MIDIS	Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion
MIIS	Social Information Exchange Mechanism
MINEDU	Ministry of Education
MINSA	Ministry of Health
MVP	Minimum Viable Product
NSE	Socioeconomic Status
OFIS	Office of Targeting and Social Information
OGTI	General Office of Information Technology
PGH	General Household Registry
PNTD	National Policy for Digital Transformation to 2030
RENIEC	National Registry of Identification and Civil Status
RIS	Social Information Registry
RNH	National Household Registry
RNU	National User Registry
SINAFO	National Targeting System
SIS	Comprehensive Health Insurance Program (managed by MINSA)
SGTD	General Secretariat for Digital Transformation
IT	Information Technology
ULE	Local Registration Unit

Executive Summary

This case study documents the support provided by the Digital Convergence Initiative (DCI) for the digital transformation of Peru's social protection system through the Direct Support Program for the Poorest (JUNTOS), in collaboration with the Office of Targeting and Social Information (OFIS). Covering the period from April 2025 and April 2026, **it examines the development of the Conecta Juntos and Consulta Mi Hogar applications, the integration of DCI interoperability standards, the challenges encountered and the early results and lessons emerging from these processes**.

Prior to the initiative, **the JUNTOS cash transfer program faced longstanding challenges in maintaining up-to-date information on participating households**. Collecting and updating this information relied on multiple stakeholders and manual processes, while beneficiaries had few digital channels through which to update their details, make enquiries or check the status of their payments. The existing Mi Juntos app provided general information to beneficiaries but offered limited opportunities for two-way interaction with the program. At the same time, **citizens faced difficulties accessing and verifying their household's socioeconomic classification, managed by OFIS, while limited information exchange between JUNTOS and OFIS constrained the effective use of social information for targeting**.

DCI combined technical support with institutional engagement, working closely with JUNTOS and OFIS to modernise information management processes, with particular emphasis on interoperability, user experience and institutional ownership. Conecta Juntos creates a more direct digital channel between JUNTOS and citizens, while Consulta Mi Hogar will make information on household socioeconomic classification more accessible to the public. The development of the two applications, combined with the introduction of global interoperability standards, is expected to improve data quality, strengthen verification processes and enable information to be shared more easily across government programs and institutions.

The intervention took place in a complex institutional environment marked by frequent changes in leadership and technical teams at MIDIS and JUNTOS. **This led the team to adopt an iterative design approach and a configurable architecture, allowing requirements to evolve without compromising the core objectives of the project or the delivery timetable.** In this context, **DCI played an important role in maintaining continuity through sustained stakeholder engagement, facilitating coordination and consensus-building across successive teams**.

In February 2026, Conecta Juntos entered a trial phase (*marcha blanca*). As of July 2026, the app had been downloaded by more than 77,000 households and had over 100,000 individual active users receiving notifications, healthcare nudges, tips on savings and other useful information on the app. **Nearly 4,500 beneficiaries have already used the app to update their contact details online for the first time. Early user experience has been positive, while users have also identified areas for further development**, including the amount of mobile data required to download and use the app, and the desire to carry out more transactions directly through the platform.

The first version of Consulta Mi Hogar – due to launch in October 2026 – will provide a digital channel for accessing and checking household socioeconomic classification, a requirement for accessing various government social programs. Users will also be able to report inconsistencies, request data updates and track classification processes. This is expected to improve the citizen experience while reducing the administrative burden on OFIS and municipalities responsible for local registration.

The initiative is contributing to wider efforts to strengthen interoperability across Peru's social protection system. DCI interoperability standards were incorporated into the design of the two applications, and the Social Protection Conectathon, supported by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and MIDIS, provided selected government institutions with an opportunity to see how common standards and tools can support the secure exchange of sensitive information across government.

A key lesson from the initiative is that digital transformation requires more than developing technology. DCI helped bring operational, technical and decision-making teams together around a shared vision and promoted a whole-of-system approach to digital development.

1 Introduction – Learning from Peru's digital transformation journey



Digital technologies have the potential to make social protection systems more responsive, efficient and inclusive. Sustainable digital transformation requires more than new technologies; it depends on high-quality data, strong institutional coordination, interoperable systems, and digital services designed around the needs of citizens.

This case study documents the contribution of the Digital Convergence Initiative (DCI) to strengthening the digital delivery of Peru's social protection system. DCI is working with the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (Ministerio de Desarrollo e Inclusión Social, MIDIS) and its JUNTOS conditional cash transfer program,[1] as well as with the Office of Targeting and Social Information (Organismo de Focalización e Información Social, OFIS), which manages Peru's national social registries in order to target and distribute public aid efficiently to vulnerable households. The DCI's work complements the Peru Social Program, part of the SI Frontera Perú project, which is also co-financed by the European Union and German development cooperation.

The study focuses on activities undertaken between April 2025 and April 2026. During this time, DCI supported the development of two complementary digital solutions: Conecta Juntos which is an application (app) designed to strengthen communication between the JUNTOS cash transfer program and beneficiary households; and Consulta Mi Hogar, which transforms an existing web-based consultation service into a responsive digital solution, making it easier for citizens to access and verify information about their household's social classification and eligibility for benefits.

1 The JUNTOS program is the 'Programa Directo de Apoyo a los más Pobres', or National Program for Direct Support to the Poorest. It provides financial support for mothers and their children.

As part of DCI's work to strengthen Peru's wider digital ecosystem for social protection, interoperability standards were introduced in the design and the development of the two digital solutions as a priority for sharing information across platforms and to lay the foundations for the development of a more integrated and connected social protection system.

As implementation is still ongoing, this case study focuses on the development process, implementation experience, early results and emerging lessons. **Drawing on project documentation, interviews with key stakeholders and feedback from users, it identifies practical lessons to inform future digital transformation initiatives in Peru and other countries.**



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2 Context – Peru's evolving digital social protection systems

Within Peru's broader social protection system, MIDIS is responsible for social assistance programs, targeting mechanisms, health services, pensions and social inclusion policies. Its life-cycle approach seeks to improve the wellbeing of people living in poverty and vulnerability from early childhood through to old age, while helping to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

A key feature of this approach is its use of socioeconomic information to identify households eligible for social assistance through targeted public interventions (IPF). Over time, Peru has developed a range of digital systems and mechanisms to support household registration, socioeconomic classification, program targeting and information sharing across government. These include the National Targeting System (SINAFO), the Social Information Registry (RIS), the National User Registry (RNU) and the Social Information Exchange Mechanism (MIIS), under the aegis of OFIS. Together, these mechanisms underpin the allocation of benefits by programs such as JUNTOS and support coordination between government institutions. The 'Clasificación Socioeconómica' (Socioeconomic Classification, CSE), managed by MIDIS through the SINAFO Targeting System, officially categorises Peruvian households into three groups of Non-Poor, Poor, and Extreme Poor.

The developments form part of Peru's wider digital transformation agenda, supported by the National Policy for Digital Transformation to 2030 (PNTD), the Digital Government Act (2018) and the Act on the Modernization of Public Administration (2002). This agenda promotes the strategic use of digital technologies to improve public services, strengthen interoperability and enable more effective and connected use of government data.

3 The challenge – Improving the quality, accessibility and interoperability of social information



Despite this strong policy and institutional framework, there are several important operational challenges. Information held by different systems was not always up to date or easily shared, communication with beneficiaries relied on outdated contact information, and citizens had limited access both to their data and to the institutions managing their data. These constraints affected the efficiency of program delivery and underscored the need for more interoperable, user-centred digital services.

The lack of common interoperability standards between JUNTOS and OFIS is a major challenge for MIDIS. Each agency is using different data formats and structures, making interoperability and data exchange prone to errors, heightening the risk of inconsistencies and data loss, and requiring additional effort to align and transform data between systems.

Maintaining accurate and up-to-date information on participating households was an important challenge facing JUNTOS. Collecting and updating beneficiary data required significant resources, relying on multiple stakeholders and manual processes. This made it difficult to obtain timely information for program managers and limited the effective exchange of data with other institutions. At the same time, beneficiaries had few digital channels through which they could update their personal information, make enquiries or check the status of their payments. These constraints led to the development of **Conecta Juntos**, intended to establish a two-way digital channel through which households and JUNTOS could exchange and update information.

Alongside the challenges facing JUNTOS, **citizens had limited digital access** to the household information managed by OFIS that determines their socioeconomic classification and eligibility for social programs. Checking this information, requesting corrections where it was inaccurate, and following the progress of a classification could therefore be difficult. **Consulta Mi Hogar** is being developed to address this gap by transforming an existing web-based consultation service into a responsive digital solution. It will enable citizens to access their household information more easily, request corrections and and update their contact details.



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4 The design pathway

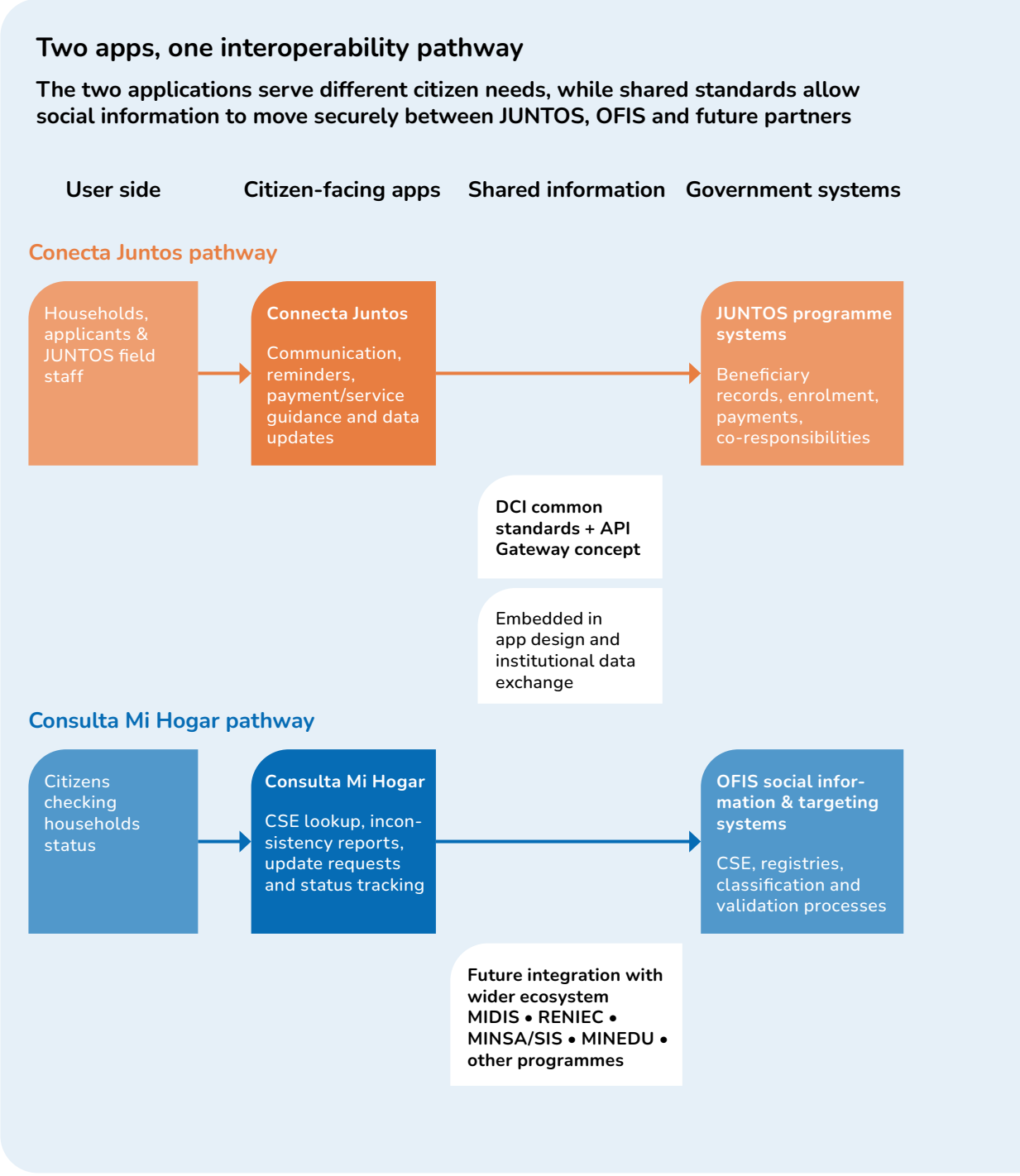
DCI supported the development of Conecta Juntos and Consulta Mi Hogar through a collaborative design process that brought together government stakeholders, technical experts and end users. Guided by principles of interoperability, user-centred design and institutional sustainability, the process sought to extend access to digital social protection services, respond to the needs of participating households and the institutions managing social protection programs, and lay the foundations for wider digital transformation.

4.1 Introducing global interoperability standards

Rather than developing stand-alone applications, DCI encouraged a systems approach in which both applications were designed to support secure information exchange across Peru's digital social protection ecosystem (▶ Figure 1). A central element of DCI's support was the introduction of global interoperability standards between the JUNTOS and OFIS information systems. In the future, this approach is intended to enable the exchange of information held by both institutions.

Through workshops and technical discussions, DCI worked with MIDIS, JUNTOS and OFIS to determine how socioeconomic information can be shared between institutions, under what conditions, and what safeguards are needed to ensure the appropriate use of sensitive citizen data. These discussions have helped to lay the foundations for more secure information exchange and stronger institutional coordination across Peru's social protection system.

Figure 1
Connecting citizen-facing services through interoperable social protection systems.



The first workshop, held in November 2025, introduced the principles of global interoperability standards and demonstrated how an Application Programming Interface (API) Gateway could enable secure information exchange between government digital systems.



Workshop on Digital Transformation and Interoperability, Peru, November 2025.

Building on the initial workshop, a second workshop, held in January 2026, brought together technical teams from JUNTOS and OFIS to develop the design of an interoperable Minimum Viable Product (MVP) for information exchange based on DCI interoperability standards.



Workshop on the design and implementation of an MVP.

4.2 Design trajectory: from Mi Juntos to Conecta Juntos

At the start of the DCI project, the Mi Juntos app was already part of MIDIS's project portfolio, providing basic information exclusively to recipients of the JUNTOS cash transfers. In discussions with DCI, the JUNTOS leadership identified Mi Juntos as an opportunity to strengthen communication between the program and both existing and potential beneficiaries.

Building on this foundation, DCI supported the design of a new application – Conecta Juntos. An important objective was to broaden the range of people who can use the app, including those interested in registering with JUNTOS and applicants whose eligibility is still being verified. The redesigned application was also intended to make service delivery more efficient by enabling JUNTOS to send targeted reminders and announcements – for example, about services and appointments – and to follow up on commitments made by participating households, such as taking children for health check-ups. Georeferencing household information would further support service delivery, while enabling users to identify the payment points closest to their homes.

4.3 Supporting the design process

DCI supported the design of the first version of Conecta Juntos through a combination of readiness assessment, stakeholder engagement, technical assistance and coordination. In a series of coordination workshops, DCI worked with JUNTOS to assess its institutional and technical readiness to develop an interoperable Minimum Viable Product, MVP. The assessment identified medium-, high- and critical-level risks, informed mitigation measures and helped establish a common technical approach to interoperability standards and application development.

DCI also conducted a stakeholder needs assessment to identify the priorities of different JUNTOS teams and ensure that the proposed solution reflected both operational requirements and institutional priorities. An analysis of beneficiary connectivity, carried out by JUNTOS, found that around 90 percent of JUNTOS users had access to a mobile phone, providing a strong rationale for developing a mobile application.

Early in the initiative, DCI also worked with the JUNTOS IT Department to develop the Terms of Reference for a technical consultant, who was contracted by DCI to support the technical development of both applications.

Miguel Avila, Head of the Investment Management Office for the Program to Strengthen the National Targeting System (PFSNF), a World Bank-supported investment program, describes DCI's pivotal role:

> *"During the design phase of Conecta Juntos, DCI organised decision-making meetings and facilitated requirements-gathering workshops. They also managed the external supplier and kept us informed of technical progress, ensuring we remained involved and could work directly with the consultancy to resolve issues as they arose."*

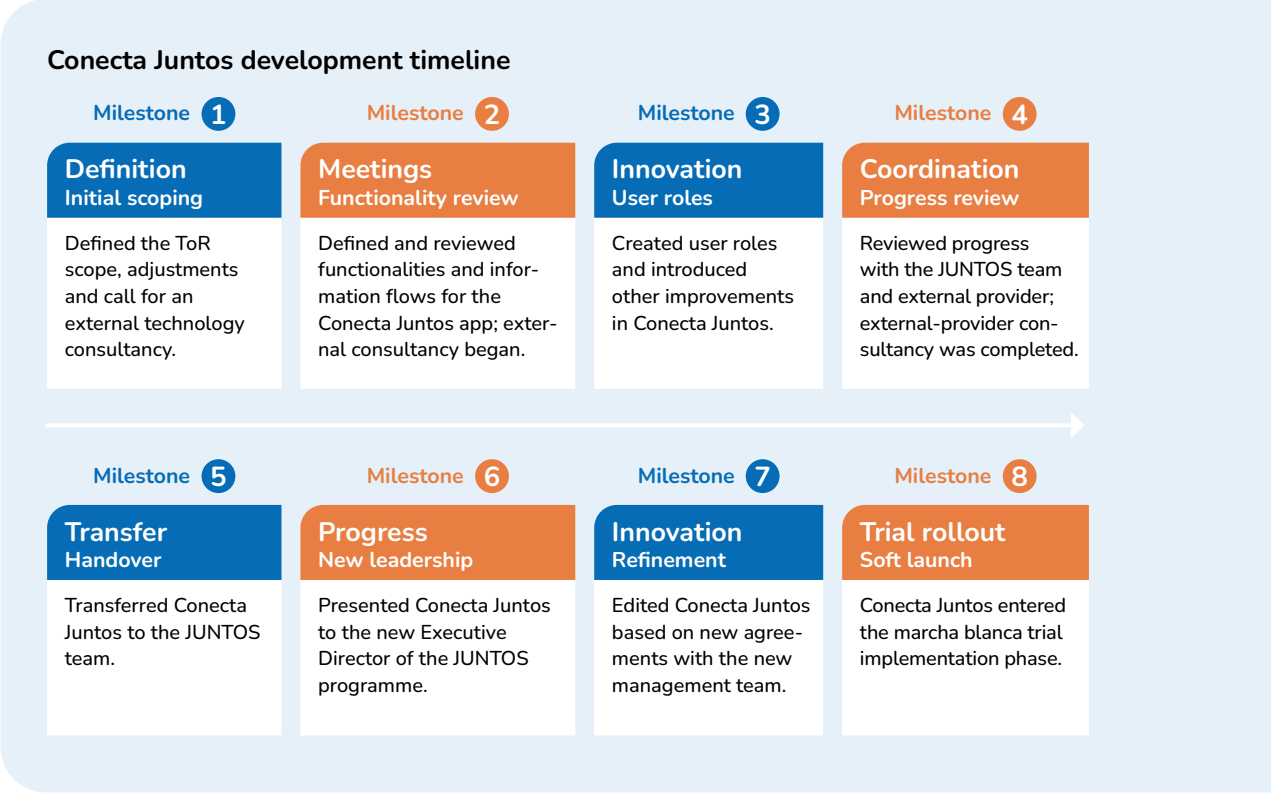


Figure 2
Conecta Juntos development timeline.

Figure 2 shows the key milestones in the development of Conecta Juntos, from the initial design process through to the trial launch and handover to JUNTOS.[2]

2 At the time of writing, the Consulta Mi Hogar application remains under development.

4.4 Designing Conecta Juntos in a changing institutional environment

The development of the apps took place in a complex institutional environment characterised by repeated changes in the leadership and technical teams of both MIDIS and JUNTOS. During the period covered by this case study (April 2025 to April 2026), MIDIS underwent four changes of minister, while JUNTOS experienced three changes of Executive Director and three changes of Head of Information Technology. With each transition, priorities were reviewed, workplans revisited and, at times, the scope of the initiative was refined.

Two appointments were particularly important for advancing the design of Conecta Juntos: **Orfelina Arpasi was appointed Executive Director of JUNTOS** in May 2025, followed by **Rónnier Meléndez as Head of Information Technology** in September 2025. Under their leadership, a shared workplan was established, delivery milestones agreed, and a consensus reached on the technical scope of the first version of Conecta Juntos. Their respective leadership also helped build wider institutional ownership of the initiative.

DCI helped maintain momentum in this changing institutional landscape by briefing new leaders, continually engaging with successive teams, and facilitating regular coordination and review meetings. This helped preserve institutional knowledge and continuity while building trust with new leadership. Throughout the process, DCI reinforced the importance of treating digital development as a whole-of-system initiative rather than a standalone IT project.

Referring to the appointment of a third JUNTOS Executive Director in November 2025, Rónnier Meléndez underlined the importance of establishing ownership of the initiative across the whole institution:

> *"Once I had the backing of the new executive management to lead the initiative, we convened an initial meeting in coordination with the DCI team. We invited the whole team, including operational and support staff. Once we were all together, I explained that this was a JUNTOS project, not an IT one."*

In response to the changing institutional environment, the design team adopted an iterative approach to the design and prioritised a configurable architecture. This approach allowed requirements to evolve and enabled the design team to accommodate changes in requirements from different stakeholders while maintaining progress towards the first version of the app.

For example, the consulting firm developed adaptable templates and forms, alongside other functional elements that could be refined as requirements change, and the app's visual identity and colour palette continued to be refined right up to the trial phase.

Reflecting an awareness of the need for an agile approach, Mr Melendez continues,

> *"I made it clear in meetings that our goal was to produce a first version of the application, that we would start with what we had, and that we would refine it as we went along."*

4.5 Consulta Mi Hogar – bringing information closer to citizens

Alongside Conecta Juntos, DCI supported the re-design of Consulta Mi Hogar, a digital solution developed as part of MIDIS's broader strategy to strengthen the management, accessibility and exchange of social information across government institutions as well as other private institutions.

The first version of Consulta Mi Hogar has been designed to provide citizens with a digital channel through which they can access information about their socioeconomic classification (CSE) as well as generate a verified digital certificate of their CSE. Whilst Targeted Public Interventions (IPF) already have direct access to these records, this tool aims to bridge the gap for those public and private entities not affiliated with the IPF, providing them with a reliable mechanism to verify the authenticity of the SES submitted by citizens. Users are further able to report inconsistencies, request updates and update their contact details. By bringing these services together in a single digital channel, the solution seeks to improve the user experience while reducing the administrative burden on OFIS and Local Registration Units (ULEs), which manage a large and growing number of enquiries and follow-up processes.

DCI facilitated workshops with MIDIS and OFIS to explore possible approaches and identify the most appropriate digital service model. Different options were considered, including a multi-channel approach combining mobile application, WhatsApp, telephone services and social media. Given the scope and resources available at this stage, partners agreed to prioritise the development of a mobile application as an initial step. This incremental approach will allow the service model to be tested and refined before considering additional media channels in the future.

The design process also examined options for identity verification, including electronic national identity cards, fingerprints, facial biometrics and voice recognition. These alternatives were assessed against technical feasibility, regulatory requirements and user accessibility. Consequently, voice recognition was not pursued due to the absence of a supporting regulatory framework. However, integration with Peru's official digital identity authentication platform, ID Perú, is being explored as a possible solution.

5 Implementation – From trial launch towards digital transformation



In February 2026, Conecta Juntos was launched, entering a 'marcha blanca' or trial implementation phase, allowing JUNTOS to test the application, gather feedback from users and address operational issues before wider deployment.

The first version of the app established the core digital capabilities needed to improve communication between JUNTOS and participating households. This includes information



The launch of Conecta Juntos, February 2026

about the cash transfer program, geolocation of households to signpost the location of nearby payment and service points, and clearer guidance on program processes and responsibilities.

The app also provides information tailored for each participating household, such as appointment reminders and other alerts, and the ability to track processes such as the payment of cash incentives.

For the first time, participating households could use the app to update their contact information, including their phone number and home address, and verify the composition of their household. The app also allows new or prospective applicants, for the first time, to digitally check requirements and track their enrolment status.

As José Villegas, GIZ-DCI Consultant, elaborates:

> *"Conecta Juntos aims to ensure that everyone – whether registered with the scheme or not – can access information on the main JUNTOS processes, such as checking their payment status, contacting their local administrator, or finding a nearby payment agency. This reduces the need to visit a physical JUNTOS centre and, furthermore, local case managers can report on household situations directly from the field."*

Rather than attempting to deliver a fully featured application from the outset, Conecta Juntos is designed to evolve over time, with future versions introducing additional functionality, such as local language capabilities. The longer-term ambition is to integrate common interoperability standards and shared digital infrastructure so that the stages of the social protection cycle are digitally connected – from household identification and targeting, through enrolment and service delivery, to monitoring and eventual graduation from program.



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6 Results and observed changes

6.1 Early quantitative results

As Consulta Mi Hogar had not yet been launched at the time of writing, the early quantitative results presented here relate to Conecta Juntos.

The Conecta Juntos app modernizes and simplifies communication between the program and more than 830,000 affiliated households. From its soft launch in February to the end of July 2026, the app had been downloaded by more than 77,000 households and had over 100,000 individual active users receiving notifications, healthcare nudges, tips on savings and other useful information on the app. Nearly 4,500 beneficiaries have already used the app to update their contact details online for the first time.

Furthermore, the app is being used by both participants in the JUNTOS program and by local administrators who can use the app to update household social information. JUNTOS aims to double the number of downloads and significantly increase active usage by the end of the year, and the observed trend in user numbers suggests continued growth in uptake.

6.2 Enhanced relationship between JUNTOS and citizens

Miguel Ávila, Head of the Investment Management Office of the Program for the Strengthening of the National Targeting System (PFSNF), explains that the app is not only strengthening communication channels with the public, but also improving the responsiveness and timely action of the relevant government institutions.

> *"This type of initiative helps to streamline the development cycles of tools and protocols by involving citizens as active agents in the solutions they need. In this way, the government can act proactively rather than reactively."*

At the same time, the launch of Conecta Juntos in February 2026 has enabled a significant shift in the relationship between the program and citizens. For the first time, people can directly participate in updating their information through a digital service, reducing reliance on time-consuming in-person processes and freeing up the time of local JUNTOS representatives.

By enabling beneficiaries to update their contact details directly from anywhere in the country and supporting field staff to capture information digitally, it is improving data quality, strengthening validation processes and generating information that can be shared more easily across programs and institutions.

Key informants also highlighted some important operational efficiencies achieved during development. For example, standardised procedures for collecting and updating beneficiary information have streamlined registration and reduced the time required to complete key administrative processes. Rónnier Meléndez explained that,

> *"The initial JUNTOS registration form consisted of many questions, which have been simplified for Conecta Juntos. It now takes just minutes to complete, down from around two hours."*

6.3 More efficient and integrated information management

A key achievement of the DCI project to date has been to demonstrate, through close working with the different JUNTOS and OFIS teams, that it is possible to move towards more integrated information management within social programs. DCI's support helped to build trust in a shared vision and strengthen appreciation of the importance of inter-operability and common standards for the secure exchange of data between institutions.

The project also helped create the conditions for greater collaboration and coordination around how social information is gathered, managed and shared across social protection programs. Interviews indicated that operations, technology and decision-making teams had begun working towards a common goal, supported by the whole-of-system approach promoted through the initiative.

6.4 Contribution to wider digital transformation

Careful planning ensured that this DCI initiative coincided with and complemented other initiatives aimed at modernizing Peru's digital social protection ecosystem. One example was the pilot 'Social Protection Conectathon', coordinated by MIDIS and supported by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), held in March 2026. This event, which brought together organisations, including MIDIS, OFIS, the National Registry of Identification and Civil Status (RENIEC), the Ministry of Health (MINSA) and its Comprehensive Health Insurance program (SIS), and the Ministry of Education (MINEDU), provided participants with an opportunity to explore the safe exchange of social data using DCI interoperability standards. The exercise helped to demonstrate the potential of these standards to enable more efficient and secure information sharing between government institutions.

Because DCI interoperability standards are integrated into the design of both the Conecta Juntos and Consulta Mi Hogar applications, other initiatives supported by the World Bank and its partners now share a common technological foundation that facilitates future integration and contribute to a more coordinated digital ecosystem for social protection in the country. **Sara Giannozzi, Senior Social Protection Specialist at the World Bank, explains**:

> *"The work on standards and interoperability carried out by DCI, together with the work undertaken by the World Bank at national level through the Investment Fund for the Improvement of MIDIS Information Services within the National Targeting System (SINAFO), is not only complementary but also necessary and relevant for the improvement of Peru's social register."*

Furthermore, as **José Mesías, MIDIS Cooperation Officer** highlights, MIDIS' participation in the DCI initiative is relevant for the process of Peru's accession to the OECD; the development of digital social protection tools demonstrates the country's efforts to bring public services closer to its citizens.

> *"In the current context of Peru's accession process to the OECD, initiatives such as the DCI, with its interoperability standards and API Gateway, represent an opportunity to strengthen the secure exchange of information between institutions and bring the State closer to its citizens through digital tools."*

7 Early user experience of the Conecta Juntos app



The early experience of Conecta Juntos provides an initial indication of how digital technologies can bring social protection services closer to citizens. The JUNTOS management can monitor application uptake through a statistical dashboard that tracks downloads and usage, including by gender. Future versions of the app are expected to strengthen the application's inclusion and gender-sensitive features.

Users inverviewed for this case study described the app as helpful and easy to use. *"I find the Conecta Juntos app a practical and user-friendly tool,"* says **Estefany G. Olortegui Carranza, a Conecta Juntos user from Cieneguilla in Lima**. She continues, *"I receive notifications, reminders and important information about the program quickly and easily."*

One of the most significant changes for beneficiaries with the advent of Conecta Juntos has been the ability to access information that previously required multiple steps and communication channels, as another Conecta Juntos user, **Arleny T. Gallo Pacora, from Paita in the Piura region**, explains:

> *"When I have queries, I log in and immediately find all the available options. What I value most is being able to see which members of my household are active in the program and who is included or excluded from the family unit. I also check the dates when I'll receive my payments, verify that my personal details are up to date, and can update my mobile number and address. I know how to do it all by myself now."*

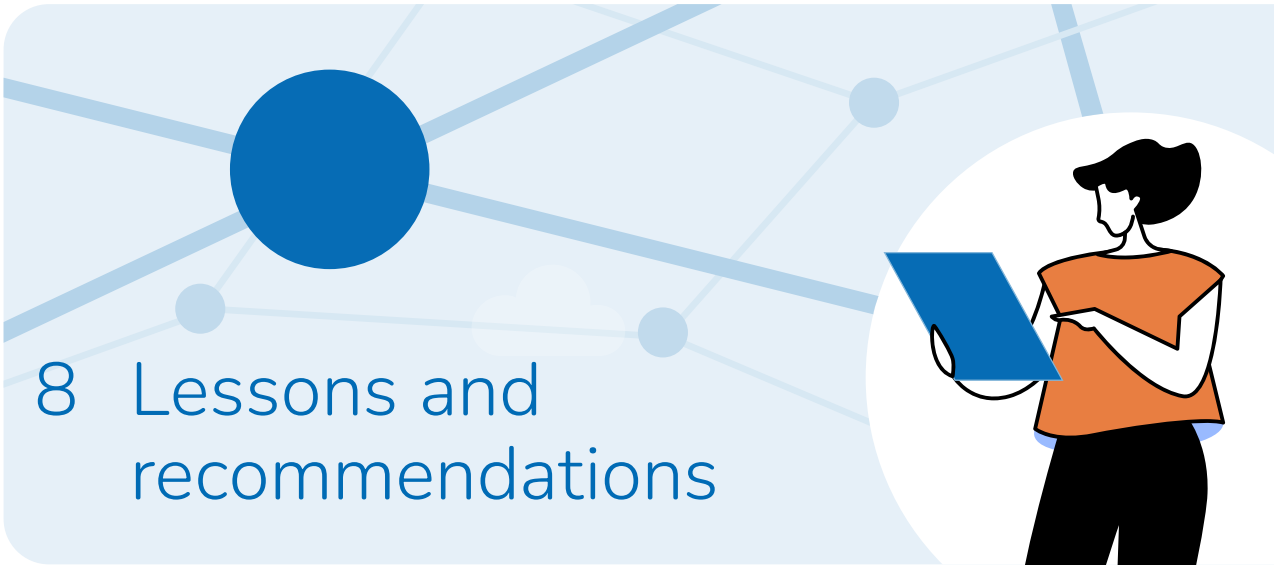
Marianela L. La Chira Vite, also from Piura, echoes Arleny's positive views of the app, highlighting its capability to track her child's health appointments, among other things:

> *"With Conecta Juntos, I can keep track of my child's health; their check-ups and whether they're attending regularly. I also stay informed about scheduled dates and can check whether my payment has been made. All from my mobile, quickly and hassle-free."*

As digital services become more widespread and familiar to citizens, the expectations of the app users also evolve. The experience of Conecta Juntos demonstrates not only growing demand for accessible information but also increasing expectations for more integrated and fully transactional digital services.

Limitations and remaining inclusion challenges: While the mobile-app approach is supported by high levels of phone access among JUNTOS users, digital inclusion challenges remain. Some households may still face barriers related to mobile-data costs, connectivity, digital confidence, language, disability or limited access to shared devices. Early feedback also suggests that desire to undertake additional tasks directly through the platform, rather than being referred to other administrative channels. Future versions should therefore continue to test usability with different user groups, reduce data requirements where possible and expand language and accessibility features. Complementary non-digital or assisted channels for households that cannot rely on the app alone should be maintained.





8 Lessons and recommendations

This chapter summarises the main lessons and recommendations from the experience of developing Conecta Juntos and Consulta Mi Hogar, and integrating DCI interoperability standards into their design.

8.1 Lessons learnt

Digital transformation requires sustained institutional engagement: The experience of designing and implementing digital applications and interoperability standards within a public institution demonstrates that digital transformation is, above all, a change management process. Technological development was only one part of the process; progress also depended on building consensus among partner institutions, coordinating diverse stakeholders and maintaining a shared vision in a context of high leadership turnover. Close support from the DCI Peru team – through technical assistance, continuous engagement, coordination and trust-building between JUNTOS, OFIS and other MIDIS teams – helped maintain momentum and resolve problems as the initiative evolved.

Stakeholder ownership is critical: The project progressed more rapidly once Conecta Juntos was positioned as an institutional priority rather than an initiative belonging to the IT department. Engaging decision-makers, operational departments, and technical teams around a common objective helped cement the ownership needed to sustain progress through changes in leadership. The work of the DCI team in assessing and understanding the priorities of different stakeholders and finding common ground early in the process was essential.

Technical capacity and knowledge transfer matter for sustainability: The experience highlighted the importance of technical capacity within the government institutions responsible for sustaining digital services. Several informants suggested that a preparatory phase to assess digital maturity and strengthen technical capabilities would have been valuable. In contexts of high staff turnover, technical documentation, knowledge transfer and mechanisms for onboarding new staff help preserve institutional knowledge and continuity.

Plan early, but design for flexibility: In contexts of political and institutional instability, early progress on structural elements, such as embedding interoperability, together with written institutional agreements, can help protect delivery against changes in leadership. At the same time, flexible and configurable solutions allow requirements to evolve without compromising core objectives, deadlines or contractual commitments.

Place citizens at the centre of digital development: The experience reinforced the importance of designing digital services around the needs of technology users. The Conecta Juntos application demonstrates that users value more timely information, but also expect services that are simple to use, accessible and increasingly integrated. Future initiatives should incorporate systematic mechanisms for gathering user feedback throughout the design and implementation processes, such as surveys, focus groups and usability testing. Public communication campaigns and outreach to support adoption of the digital tools is also important.

Interoperability can enable wider transformation: The experience demonstrated the potential of DCI interoperability standards to provide a common technological foundation for the secure exchange of information between programmes and institutions. **The value of this approach extends beyond the individual applications, creating opportunities for more coordinated and integrated social protection services.**

8.2 Recommendations

Drawing on the lessons learned, the case study suggests several recommendations for future digital social protection initiatives in Peru and elsewhere:

- **Build institutional ownership from the start**. Position digital transformation as an institutional rather than purely technological initiative, involving ministerial staff, senior management, operational departments and technical teams from the outset.
- **Establish multidisciplinary teams with clear responsibilities**. Ensure that projects have access to the technical, data governance, interoperability, software development, quality assurance and user-experience expertise needed to develop and sustain digital services, with appropriate expertise in digital inclusion and the needs of vulnerable populations.
- **Plan for staff turnover**. Establish clear documentation, knowledge-transfer processes and technical roadmaps from the outset, and provide training in DCI interoperability standards and related technical approaches to technical teams and relevant institutional leads.
- **Build flexibility into technical design**. Use configurable and adaptable solutions that can accommodate changing institutional requirements without compromising core objectives or delivery timelines.
- **Embed interoperability from the outset**. Build a broad consensus around the need for interoperable government systems and what interoperability means in practice in the early stages of digital application design. Highlight the advantages of applying interoperability standards to strengthen digital transformation over the longer term.
- **Link digital initiatives to sector strategies and programmes**. Aligning digital solutions with existing institutional priorities and programmes strengthens ownership, relevance and longer-term sustainability of digital initiatives.
- **Develop and maintain mechanisms for citizen participation**. Use co-creation, user-experience and satisfaction surveys, focus groups and usability testing before, during and after implementation to understand how people want to interact with the State and adapt services accordingly.

Taken together, these lessons and recommendations suggest that sustainable digital transformation depends on more than the development of technology. It requires institutional ownership, technical capacity, flexible design, interoperability and continued attention to the needs of citizens. As **Cecilia Chávez, Independent Consultant on External Products for the IDB**, says,

> *"Without human interoperability, there is no digital interoperability."*

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