

TC Document

I. Basic Information for TC

▪ Country/Region:	BRAZIL
▪ TC Name:	Evaluation of two parenting programs to reduce violence and improve child development ready for school - PIÁ Trial 3-year follow-up
▪ TC Number:	BR-T1499
▪ Team Leader/Members:	Serrano Berthet, Rodrigo (IFD/ICS) Team Leader; Mac Arthur, Ian William (SCL/SPH) Alternate Team Leader; Avila, Krysia A (LEG/SGO); Cordeiro, Tiago De Barros (CSC/CBR); Katia Rivera (IFD/ICS); Lima De Moraes, Vitoria (ORP/REM); Mendoza Centellas, Mariana Beatriz (ORP/GCM); Michel Torino, Belen (SCL/EDU)
▪ Taxonomy:	Client Support
▪ Operation Supported by the TC:	N/A
▪ Date of TC Abstract authorization:	N/A
▪ Beneficiary:	Brazil
▪ Executing Agency and contact name:	Inter-American Development Bank
▪ Donors providing funding:	Brazilian Cofinancing Account(BCA); Cofinancing Special Grants(COF)Brazilian
▪ IDB Funding Requested: ¹	Brazilian Cofinancing Account (BCA): US\$58,950.00 Cofinancing Special Grants (COF): US\$29,474.00 Total: US\$88,424.00
▪ Local counterpart funding, if any:	US\$0
▪ Disbursement period (which includes Execution period):	30 months
▪ Required start date:	February 15, 2022
▪ Types of consultants:	Firms
▪ Prepared by Unit:	IFD/ICS-Innovation in Citizen Services Division
▪ Unit of Disbursement Responsibility:	CSC/CBR-Country Office Brazil
▪ TC included in Country Strategy (y/n):	No
▪ TC included in CPD (y/n):	No
▪ Alignment to the Update to the Institutional Strategy 2010-2020:	Social inclusion and equality

II. Objectives and Justification of the TC

- 2.1 The objective of this TC is to evaluate the impact of two early childhood parenting programs on child development and social adaptation at age of school entry in Brazil. The first program evaluated is called ACT: Raising Safe Kids, which is a non-profit, low-cost parenting program, consisting of 9 group-based sessions, in which parents are trained to understand child development and raise children free of violence. The second program evaluated is called *Conte Comigo*, which is a short (8-week) parent-child book-sharing program, recommended by the WHO, also delivered in small groups. It trains parents to share picture books with young children in ways that

¹ These funds will be administered by the IDB through a Project Specific Grant (PSG). Fundación FEMSA will contribute US\$29,474, and Fundação Maria Cecília Souto Vidigal (FMCSV) will contribute BRL331,075, which is equivalent to US\$58,950 at the exchange rate of 1USD = 5.6163 BRL as of November 5, 2021.

stimulate their cognitive and social development - by following a child's focus of interest, responding sensitively, and engaging in reciprocal exchanges with the child.

- 2.2 Both ACT and Conte Comigo programs, are low-cost interventions, feasible for roll-out at scale in Brazil, and are being tested, as part of a novel randomized controlled trial, the "Pelotas Trial of Parenting Interventions for Aggression (The PIÁ Trial)²³, which aims to assess the efficacy of these two brief parent-training programs.
- 2.3 As part of the Trial, both programs were implemented in 2018, with families of children aged 2-3 years, a first follow-up evaluation was developed in 2020. The trial is conducted by the Centre for Epidemiological Research at the Federal University of Pelotas, with support of the Pelotas Municipal Government, in partnership with Instituto Cidade Segura.
- 2.4 This trial also aims to address the impact of COVID-19, being that after the first Phase of the PIÁ trial in 2018-2019, in 2020 an online and telephone survey was conducted with part of the participants to understand their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The hypothesis was that the two interventions may have provided parents with resources to cope better with the strains of the pandemic, reduced risk of violence against children at home, and helped parents provide better stimulation for children while being kept at home. The expectation is that this will predict improved child outcomes at age 6-7.
- 2.5 The current project aims to re-assess families who participated in the PIÁ trial 3-years ago, as a second follow-up, to assess medium-term effects of these two interventions as children start school, on: (i) parenting practices, aggression against children, coping during the COVID-19 pandemic, and (ii) child cognition, mental health, social behavior, and biological indicators related to stress (cortisol, epigenetics).
- 2.6 Children's social and cognitive development lays critical foundations for a healthy and productive life. Early interventions helping parents to provide stimulating and safe environments for children can have major long-term benefits. In high-income countries like the USA, studies show that several intensive parenting programs can improve important child outcomes through their lives, including educational attainment, employment, and reduced crime in adulthood. However, in low- and middle-income countries like Brazil, the significant short-term costs of such intensive interventions and the need for highly trained professionals make them unfeasible. Therefore, the WHO has declared an urgent need for evaluation and wide scale implementation of low-cost parenting interventions in low- and middle-income countries to enhance child development and prevent violence. The ACT and *Conte Comigo* programs are two such low-cost interventions, feasible for roll-out at scale in Brazil, and are being tested in the PIÁ project. Both programs have been adapted for use in Brazil and they are being implemented in several regions of the country. Preliminary evidence on ACT in

² As part of PIÁ Trial, 369 families (pairs of mother-child) in a birth cohort were selected as part of a long-term birth cohort study, and randomly allocated to one of three groups (ACT, *Conte Comigo*, Control Group) in 2018. Independent assessments of parenting and child development were made through 2018 and 2020: before intervention (during gestation, at birth, and four times postnatally up to 24 months), shortly after the intervention (4 weeks), and at a follow-up 6 months later. Primary outcomes were measured concerning child aggression, and as secondary outcomes: cognitive and socio-emotional development, and harsh parenting. Long-term outcomes needed to be investigated in subsequent follow-ups, as the birth cohort gets to late childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.

³ The trial is registered in Brazilian Ministry of Health Register of Clinical Trials, ID RBR-2kwfsk. Registered on 6 June 2018.

Brazil and *Conte Comigo* in other countries points to important short-term benefits for families and children. The PIÁ trial, with its gold-standard methodology, will provide a key test of these short-term effects, and with the planned Phase 2 follow-up, the first major study of possible medium-term effects.

- 2.7 The PIÁ trial is innovative in several important ways: (i). the evidence base on effective interventions for early child development comes almost entirely from high-income country tests of expensive programs that are not feasible for a country like Brazil. The PIÁ trial assesses parenting programs that are short, low-cost, and do not require highly trained professional; (ii) the PIÁ trial uses a gold-standard randomized controlled study design, that is often lacking in evaluations of interventions in Brazil; (iii) very unusually, the trial is nested within a birth cohort study, with plans to follow the cohort (and trial participants) through childhood into adolescence and adulthood; (iv) the trial has had an outstanding retention rate of 100% one-month post-intervention (all 369 participants from baseline were assessed), and 99% at 8-months follow-up (368 were assessed); and (v) the study includes gold standard measurement procedures and innovative assessments (video recorded observational assessments of parenting as well as questionnaire measures; biological measures such as cortisol taken from hair samples).
- 2.8 This TC is consistent with the Second Update of the Institutional Strategy (AB-3190-2) and is strategically aligned with the development challenge of Social Inclusion and Equality, through its approach to strengthen the provision of early childhood development interventions. In addition, it is consistent with the Early Childhood Development Sector Framework Document (GN-2966-2) and the Social Protection and Poverty Sector Framework Document (GN-2784-12) by focusing on the measurement of the impact of family support programs. It is also consistent with the Citizen Security and Justice Sectoral Framework (GN-2771-7) by focusing on social prevention of crime, particularly with respect to children and youth. It aligns with the IDB Group's Country Strategy with Brazil 2019-2022 (GN-2973), with the aim of supporting early childhood development services and violence reduction initiatives. IDB's lending and dialogue on parenting shows the high government demand that exists for this type of intervention. SPH's ECD and ICS's violence prevention agendas include multiple engagements at federal, state, and municipal level involving funding of parenting interventions.

III. Description of activities/components and budget

- 3.1 The trial involves inviting all participants back to the research center for assessments, during 2022 when children are aged 6-7 years old, prepare and analyze data bases during 2023, and prepare and disseminate results during first half 2024.
- 3.2 The assessments to be conducted will include: (i) parenting practices, and (ii) child psychosocial development, and biological indicators – cortisol and epigenetic change.
- 3.3 Findings and outcomes will be disseminated to key government and non-government agencies responsible for promoting early child development and reducing violence in Brazil and internationally, through paper dissemination, specialized workshops, and Banks regional events, and project design teams.
- 3.4 Progress reports will be presented to report on progress in the activities and in the intermediate and final results of this TC. The results and products of the TC will be disseminated through seminars and workshops on socialization and consultation with specialists, as well as through publications and working documents, and the Bank's

institutional blogs. The project includes a strategy to disseminate findings to key government and non-government agencies responsible for promoting early child development and reducing violence in Brazil and internationally, taking full advantage of the dialogue and lending platforms created by the PROSOCIAL (BR-O0009) and PROSEGURANCA (BR-O0011) CCLIPs. The products and results of the TC will be shared with Banks Early Childhood Development (ECD) Innovation Fund

- 3.5 All donors will be adequately recognized in the knowledge products and dissemination of TC results. And an assessment of the achievements and challenges of the TC will be made at the time of its closure.
- 3.6 The executing and disbursement period will be 30 months. FEMSA and *Fundação Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal* expect to commit US\$88,424 to this project, through non-reimbursable funds. The following table details main activities, costs, and fund origin:

Indicative Budget

(In US\$)

Activity/Component	Description	PSG FMCSV	PSG FEMSA	Total Funding
Research Team and Data Gathering	Fees, per diem	56,000	19,000	75,000
Dissemination	Seminars/ videos	0	9,000	9,000
IADB Administrative Fee (5%)		2,950	1,474	4,424
Total		58,950	29,474	88,424

- 3.7 *Fundação Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal* expects to commit BRL331,075 to this project, which is equivalent to US\$58,950, based on the exchange rate 5.6162 as of November 5th, 2021; and FEMSA expects to commit US\$ 29,474. Final resources in U\$ dollars will be dependent on the exchange rate of the date when the resources are received by the Bank and converted into U\$ dollars. If a significant adverse fluctuation in the exchange rate reduces the amount of U\$ dollars in this budget, the project activities will be decreased appropriately, and the budget will be adjusted accordingly by the project team.
- 3.8 Resources of this project will be received through a Project Specific Grant (PSG). A PSG is administered by the Bank according to the “Report on COFABS, Ad-Hocs and CLFGS and a Proposal to Unify Them as Project Specific Grants (PSGs)” (Document SC-114). As contemplated in these procedures, the commitment by FEMSA and *Fundação Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal* will be established through separate Administration Agreements. Under such agreements, the resources for this project will be administered by the Bank and the Bank will charge a non-refundable administration fee of 5% of the contribution, which is identified in the budget of this project. The 5% administration fee will be charged upon the Bank’s receipt of the contribution.

IV. Executing agency and execution structure

- 4.1 This TC will be executed by the Bank, through the Innovation Division to Serve the Citizen (IFD/ICS) and the Social Protection and Health Division (SCL/SPH), in

accordance with bank policies. The operation will benefit from the Bank's execution with regards to all the hiring and procurement processes, which will be done directly and exclusively by the Bank given the comparative advantage to articulate efforts of different actors and entities involved at national, state and municipal level, both in public, civil society, and private sectors.

- 4.2 Direct Contract. The Bank will directly contract *Instituto Cidade Segura*, the research center that designed the trial and implemented the field work for the first follow in 2020. In accordance with the Policies for Selection and Contracting of Consulting Firms for Operational Work Performed by the Bank (GN-2765-4); this second follow needs to be made in the same families and is considered is a natural continuation of the previous task, therefore corresponds with clause 4.1.3 (a).
- 4.3 The project team will be responsible for: i) the preparation and submission to the donor of the project reporting, in compliance with the stipulations of the Administration Agreement, and ii) obtain Brazil's non objection letter as an eligibility condition.

V. Major issues

- 5.1 The main risk for the project is potential difficulty engaging families in the study in the planned follow-up when children are aged 6-7 years old, especially in conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic. The project has the major advantage of building on the successful implementation of a randomized controlled trial realized between 2018-2021 with 99% retention rate 8 months post-intervention. The fact that the trial is nested within a large birth cohort study also mitigates this risk, as the cohort itself is embedded in a large research infrastructure with demonstrated success in maintaining participant engagement in prospective cohort studies for decades.
- 5.2 However, the pandemic situation is a new challenge in this context and posing two main risks for data collection: (i) new waves of the pandemic could halt fieldwork at any point; (ii) participants may be less willing to participate while the pandemic is ongoing. The project involves a conservative timeline to allow for some delays to fieldwork. Other studies being run at the research center are showing reasonable engagement in the local population despite the current pandemic situation.

VI. Exceptions to Bank policy

- 6.1 None.

VII. Environmental and Social Strategy

- 7.1 This TC will not finance feasibility or pre-feasibility studies of investment projects or associated environmental and social studies; therefore, it does not have applicable requirements of the Bank's Environmental and Social Policy Framework (MPAS).

Required Annexes:

[Request from the Client - BR-T1499](#)

[Results Matrix - BR-T1499](#)

[Terms of Reference - BR-T1499](#)

[Procurement Plan - BR-T1499](#)

