

Technical Cooperation Document

I. Basic Information for TC

▪ Country/Region:	REGIONAL
▪ TC Name:	Gender and Diversity Lab
▪ TC Number:	RG-T3729
▪ Team Leader/Members:	Bustelo, Monserrat (SCL/GDI) Team Leader; Frisancho, Veronica (RES/RES) Alternate Team Leader; Ashton, Cristina (SCL/GDI); Blandin Andino, Lourdes Gabriela (SCL/GDI); Negret Garrido, Cesar Andres (LEG/SGO); Parra, Aglae Elizabeth (RES/RES); Sarrazin, Tom (RES/RES); Urquiola Ralero, Montserrat (RES/RES) Team Leader; Frisancho, Veronica (RES/RES) Alternate Team Leader; Blandin Andino, Lourdes Gabriela (SCL/GDI); Parra, Aglae Elizabeth (RES/RES); Urquiola Ralero, Montserrat (RES/RES), Negret Garrido, Cesar Andres (LEG/SGO)
▪ Taxonomy:	Research and Dissemination
▪ Operation Supported by the TC:	
▪ Date of TC Abstract authorization:	11 Aug 2020
▪ Beneficiary:	LAC
▪ Executing Agency and contact name:	Inter-American Development Bank
▪ Donors providing funding:	OC Strategic Development Program for Social Development(SOC)
▪ IDB Funding Requested:	US\$175,532.00
▪ Local counterpart funding, if any:	US\$0
▪ Disbursement period (which includes Execution period):	36 months
▪ Required start date:	November 1, 2020
▪ Types of consultants:	Individual consultants and/or firms
▪ Prepared by Unit:	SCL/GDI-Gender and Diversity
▪ Unit of Disbursement Responsibility:	SCL-Social Sector
▪ 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:	Gender equality; Diversity

II. Objective and Justification

2.1. This Technical Cooperation (TC) will fund the implementation of the GDLab: Knowledge Initiative on Gender and Diversity. The GDLab seeks to produce and disseminate cutting-edge applied research that informs policy design to reduce inequalities, both in terms of opportunities and economic development, for vulnerable population. Specifically, the knowledge generated under this TC will focus in identifying ways to advance women, people with disabilities, afro descendants, indigenous peoples, and the LGBTQ+ community¹. The knowledge agenda will contribute to generating data on these vulnerable populations and evidence on what works to best address their priorities and needs. The evidence developed under this TC will be used to guide the design or reform of programs and policies implemented by LAC governments and the design of IDB's operations in the region.

¹ LGBTQ+ is an initialism that mean lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning, as well as other communities such as transsexual, intersex, asexual, pansexual, bigender, gender variant, among others.

- 2.2. Inequality is commonly understood in terms of the economic living conditions of individuals or households. In fact, vertical inequality has been at the center of policy reform in the region, attracting major investments in poverty-alleviation strategies. Horizontal inequalities, in turn, are defined as those present across groups with a common, defined (or constructed) identity. These are not based on inherent individual traits, effort, or skills, yet they unjustly determine access to economic resources and opportunities. Horizontal inequalities—stemming from cultural origin, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religion—are hard to overcome as they tend to be deeply rooted in history and social norms and intertwined with, and often reinforced by, income inequality.
- 2.3. Despite important improvements in recent decades, Latin America, and the Caribbean (LAC) still faces challenges regarding inequalities based on group identities.
- 2.4. On one hand, women in the region struggle with explicit and implicit barriers that permeate their private and public spheres of action, limiting the achievement of their full potential. Women are usually viewed as better suited than men to meet family needs and are thus expected to forego earnings and professional development to care for others. In fact, women in the region dedicate three times the number of hours per week to unpaid work activities than men. Considering both paid jobs and household chores, women in the region end up working almost 18 more hours per week than men (Bando, Berlinski, and Martinez Carrasco 2019). While female labor force participation in LAC is above that recorded in other regions, there are considerable gaps relative to men. Moreover, occupational segregation and gender pay gaps persist and women are overrepresented in the informal sector, characterized by variable pay and job insecurity (Scott et al., 2016; Marchionni et al., 2019a; Marchionni et al., 2019b, Bustelo et al., 2019). Furthermore, many women still lack access to reproductive technology. Maternal mortality in LAC was 67 deaths per 100,000 women in 2015 (ECLAC), and pregnancy rates among adolescents (15 - 19 years old) was 20 points above the world average and more than 40 points above the rate in OECD countries (UNICEF). Gender-based violence is widespread in the region: one in three women in LAC experiences physical and/or sexual violence at some point in her life (Bott et al., 2014), and this has a detrimental impact (physical and psychological) on survivors' health. It also increases the likelihood that children will suffer mistreatment, such as physical punishment or negligent/ dysfunctional care (Bott et al., 2014; Holt, Buckley, and Whelan, 2008; Gage and Silvestre, 2010).
- 2.5. The region also has a long history of exclusion and discrimination based on ethnicity and other identities, that deter the development of several minority groups. Although there is some degree of variation across groups and countries, indigenous peoples, African descendants, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ individuals all tend to experience higher poverty rates, unemployment and risk of abuse or violence; lower educational attainment; limited access to public services; and underrepresentation in decision-making bodies (DAP, 2019). The limited statistics available on these vulnerable groups reflect economic and social gaps on several fronts. Indigenous and Afro-descendant people have lower job results in relation to the rest of the population. In 2017, the monthly salary gaps for indigenous and Afro-descendant populations with respect to the rest of the population were of the order of 27% and 17%, respectively. Furthermore, Afro-descendant, and indigenous populations present high rates of poverty that, in most countries of the region, are higher than for the rest of the population (Freire et al, 2018). The LGBTQ+ population have significant disadvantages throughout their life cycle. For example, 75% of LGBTQ+ students in

Colombia receive homophobic comments at school (Wills Cuellar et al, 2016), 58% of LGBTQ+ employees in Costa Rica believe that revealing their sexual orientation in the workplace could mean their dismissal (Brenes Morales 2019), and 50% of LGBTQ+ patients in Mexico indicate that health workers are not trained to meet their needs (CEAV et al, 2018). On the other hand, people with disabilities obtain lower academic results, participate less in the economy, and have higher poverty rates compared to the population without disabilities. The probability that a child with a disability attends school in the region is 10% lower than that of a child without a disability.

- 2.6 In addition to the important tangible and intangible costs they impose on vulnerable (and non-vulnerable) populations, horizontal inequalities may also slow down growth and development in the region, as they generate costly distortions in human capital investments and the allocation of talent across economic activities. For instance, policies that foster the participation of women in the labor force by making childcare available are estimated to lead by 4 to 4-6.5 percentage gains in GDP per capita (Bustelo et al., 2019).
- 2.7 In a rapidly changing globalized economy that tends to penalize those who do not adapt, inequalities of opportunities quickly expand and become more visible. On one hand, the digital revolution radically transformed productive processes and is leaving behind those who started off at a disadvantage. On the other hand, the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic has further exposed the fragility of our national economies and the vulnerability of traditionally disadvantaged groups. At a time of pandemic and upheaval in the region, when citizens demand more than action on grave income disparities, it is urgent to analyze both the consequences and causes of horizontal inequalities, evaluate current policy efforts against them, and propose alternative and complementary lines of action.
- 2.8 The analytical work produced under the GDLab will prioritize the strategic areas in which the knowledge gaps are larger given the current knowledge and capacity of the region. Final beneficiaries of the knowledge and evidence produced under the GDLab will be vulnerable populations including women, people with disabilities, afro descendants, indigenous peoples, and the LGBTQ+ community. Non-governmental actors are fundamental for innovation, experimentation, and learning. Because of limited resources, governments in the region do not have the capacity to invest in developing and testing new, promising, and more effective solutions to address their priorities and needs. The GDLab will promote and support knowledge generation related to the IDB's borrowing member countries in LAC.
- 2.9 The TC is consistent with the Update to the Institutional Strategy 2010-2020 ([AB-3008-2](#)) and it is directly aligned with the development challenge of "Social Inclusion and Equality". The TC is also consistent with the cross-cutting theme of: Gender equality and diversity, by promoting the generation of evidence on how to reduce gaps based on horizontal inequalities. The TC is also aligned with the IDB Group's Corporate Results Framework ([CRF 2020-2023, GN-2727-12](#)), which complements the UIS, is the Bank's highest-level tool for monitoring performance and achievement of its strategic objectives, including those associated with Gender Equality and Diversity. Additionally, this TC is aligned with the Sector Framework Document of Gender and Diversity ([GN-2800-8](#)). The activities funded by this TC are also aligned with the Update to the Gender Action Plan for Operations 2020-2021,

which already mentions the GDLab as the main component in the Knowledge Agenda (see section V of the Updated GAP). It is also aligned with the Diversity Action Plan (DAP) for Operations 2019-2021. The DAP defines lines of action and sets targets for the Bank to ensure the development with identity of indigenous peoples (IP) and the inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWD), African descendants (AD) and LGBTQ+ individuals in its analytical work. Finally, the TC commitments to addressing gender equality and diversity are clearly articulated in the Bank's 2010 Operational Policy on Gender Equality in Development ([OP-761](#)) and the Bank's 2006 Operational Policy on Indigenous Peoples ([OP-765](#)). Finally, the focus of this TC on contributing to the reduction of gender and diversity gaps is consistent with the objective of fostering gender equality and social inclusion included in the Ordinary Capital Strategic Development Program for Social Development (GN-2819-1).

III. Description of Activities and Outputs

- 3.1. This TC involves the implementation of three components:
- 3.2. **Component I: Production and dissemination of knowledge.** The GDLab will foster both the systematization of existing knowledge within the Bank as well as the generation of new rigorous evidence on areas in which we still have limited expertise and knowledge to inform operations. In recent years, the Bank has fostered both gender mainstreaming and the incorporation of a focus on diversity in a large share of its operations. Today, the Bank faces challenging times in which resources will be limited and countries will increasingly demand them. To be able to ration resources effectively while fostering policies and actions that contribute the most to human development and equality, the Bank, more than ever, needs to strengthen the link and feedback channels between research and operations. The GDLab will provide that space both to experiment, produce knowledge, and take stock of the rigorous evidence to effectively inform programs throughout the region that can contribute to reduce gender and diversity gaps.
- 3.3. On one hand, the GDLab will develop policy briefs that summarize the main lessons on specific areas of action. As part of the initial activities of the GDLab, we have started to put together an inventory of the knowledge generated by the Bank between 2017 and 2020². Based on the results of this inventory, we will be able to identify the areas in which the Bank has been able to generate comparatively more effective evidence. We will then use the studies in these areas to extract the main lessons to guide policy. These policy briefs will aim at bridging the gap between research outputs and Bank's operations as well as policy makers in the region.
- 3.4. On the other hand, the GDLab will fill the need to generate rigorous knowledge to develop more effective operations that can tackle gender and diversity gaps. The inventory described in 3.3 has preliminarily identified 95 and 23 gender and diversity related studies, respectively. Among these, only 31 and 2 represent gender and diversity studies that go beyond the diagnose and provide rigorous evidence on the existence of gaps and/or strategies to reduce them. Within gender, we have identified that the Bank has been producing top-notch research mostly in areas such as labor markets, education, health, and social protection. However, financial inclusion and entrepreneurship, leadership and political participation, and STEM & TIC and domestic violence are some of the areas in which the generation of evidence has been much more limited. These results expose the knowledge gaps that the Bank needs to fill to

² The inventory includes studies published as IDB discussion papers, technical notes, and working papers.

continue to advance evidence-based operations. For instance, in a region with low levels of financial development that are worsened among vulnerable populations, it is crucial that we advance a research agenda that can support operations tackling financial gaps. Similarly, given the Bank's interest in promoting the development of operations tackling diversity issues, the GDLab will become a crucial partner that can inform current and future actions.

- 3.5. To produce knowledge, the second activity under this component will be the management and launch of annual external calls for proposals with targeted advertisement to identify technically rigorous projects that contribute to fill existing knowledge gaps (see 3.4.). The selection of proposals will be determined by a technical committee conformed by GDI, RES and other sectors of the Bank. The GDLab will focus both on gender and diversity projects on the following thematic areas: labor markets, social assistance and social insurance, education (including STEM), health, migration, financial markets, entrepreneurship, violence against women and children, political representation, and the analysis of external shocks and crisis (such as COVID-19). In each call, technical committee will choose strategic topics that require a higher attention, providing flexibility to adapt to the current conditions in the region and the demands during the recovery phases post COVID-19.
- 3.6. The criteria under which the proposals will be evaluated are the following (i) quality of the data and the methodology (identification strategy, estimation strategy, etc.); (ii) policy relevance; (iii) credential of the research members; (iv) contribute to fill the knowledge gaps on strategic priority topics set by the technical committee in each call, (v) have the potential to be scalable, and (vi) can be completed during a maximum of 24 months including the production of a working paper.
- 3.7. The first call for proposals will be funded by this TC with the aim to support projects that can add on an high-quality research on topics related to COVID-19. TC will only finance contracts of individual / firms outside the bank that can develop the studies. Bank employees could still participate in the implementation and development of the selected projects as part of the research team or as technical advisers.
- 3.8. In future calls, SCL and RES, in coordination with ORP, are designing a strategy to engage donors to contribute towards the financing of projects under this initiative. Grant contributions will be administered by the Bank, that will also lead the selection of research proposals. Grant contributions will be managed through Project Specific Grants (PSG). This financing modality will follow the Bank's applicable policies and procedures.
- 3.9. The Bank will put together a team that will: (i) oversee the activities of the GDLab; (ii) provide technical and operational support for the call of proposals; and (iii) support regional network activities, as well as provide reporting and partner engagement support. The Bank will follow applicable procedures for the design, supervision, and evaluation of the proposals.
- 3.10. The target audience for the GDLab website and knowledge products is diverse and includes operational units of the Bank, IDB Invest, IDB Lab, policymakers in the region, NGOs, and academia. First, the outputs of this TC should inform the current dialogue with the region and the design of operations aimed at reducing existing gaps among vulnerable groups. Second, the research developed should also be appealing to policymakers and regulators who are in the search of effective interventions aimed at advancing women and other vulnerable groups. Third, the research developed under this TC should contribute to several strands of the academic literature, which will

contribute to further position the Bank as an important generator of knowledge on gender and diversity issues in the region.

- 3.11. The research produced under this TC will be disseminated mainly in three ways. First, internal seminars and brown bags will be organized to present the results of the studies conducted to our peers from operational units. Second, the team will organize roundtables with government officials to present the results of the studies funded, discuss any potential improvements and adjustments, and summarize lessons learned that will be important for scale up. Third, the website will allow us to reach a broader audience and the civil society.
- 3.12. To enable a network of researchers working on the issues of gender and diversity, the GDLab will develop a mailing list that will be managed through the GDLab's newly created email account.
- 3.13. **Component II: Implementation of the GDLab's website.** This component will finance the creation and maintenance of a website³. The creation of the GDLab and the launch of the website will help strengthen the Bank's position in the efforts to alleviate horizontal inequalities related to gender and other identities. First, the website will contain information on IDB existing knowledge on gender and diversity issues, centralizing all studies on these topics. The website will feature a filter by subtopic and type of study that will aid both specialists within the Bank and external audience in the region navigate the knowledge produced by the Bank on gender and diversity issues. New policy briefs will also be uploaded to the website as we continue to produce knowledge in new thematic areas. We are in the process of finalizing five briefs, three of which summarize the evidence on gender produced by the bank on diverse topics (labor markets, education and health, and domestic violence) and two related to diversity issues (measurement and inequalities in opportunities of diverse populations). Second, the website will also become an important channel to disseminate calls for papers, events, new relevant evidence available generated by the IDB, and other products the initiative may fund and support (e.g., policy briefs, videos, past events and webinars, blogs, etc.). As we continue to fund research on gender and diversity through component I, we will develop further briefs and additional content such as videos and MOOCs that help share the knowledge generated with policy makers, academics, donors, and the general public. Third, the website will also list strategic partners of the initiative and will be a contact portal for entities interested in the GDLab and potential donors, helping to promote a knowledge network on Gender and Diversity knowledge and exchanging ideas with other global or regional networks.
- 3.14. **Component III: Launch event of the GDLab.** This component will finance a virtual launch event that will contribute to give visibility and positioning to the Bank on the subject. The event will present the Bank's work through the products developed in Component 1 and 2 and will showcase the proposed agenda of the GDLab for the coming years. One of the main objectives of the event is to explain the rationale behind the creation of the GDLab, its comparative advantage relative to similar initiatives, and its goals for the coming years. The event will be led by the managers supporting the initiative from RES, SCL, and GDI/SCL and will also gather external academic and/or policy experts on the topics of gender and diversity. The conversation between the managers and the experts will discuss the agenda of the GDLab for the region. The

³ We are currently coordinating with KIC the development of the website. We coordinating toward developing an external portal linked to the IDB's main website (following the example set by the Migration Initiative, for instance) as it may have advantages both to generate the filter of studies (see component I) and to facilitate the periodical update of the site.

virtual event will seek to attract the participation of potential donors that we have identified as supportive of gender and diversity topics (European countries and Canada) to try to attract their interest in supporting the initiative.

- 3.15. **Expected results:** With the achievement of the objectives of the TC, it is expected to obtain the following results: (i) serving as a greenhouse for knowledge generation in gender and diversity topics, (ii) generating a network of practitioners across the region who exchange best practices and brainstorm on innovative approaches to persisting challenges for female and diverse population, (iii) improve the Bank's operational response based on rigorous evidence-based knowledge; and (iv) the Bank's progressive positioning as a benchmark in the field.

IV. Budget

- 4.1. The total amount of resources assigned to this TC are US\$ 175,532. The resources are derived from the Ordinary Capital Strategic Development Program for Social Development.

Indicative Budget

Activity/Component	IDB/Fund Funding	Total Funding
Production and dissemination of knowledge	US\$160,532.00	US\$160,532.00
Implementation of the GDLab's website	US\$10,000.00	US\$10,000.00
Launch event of the GDLab	US\$5,000.00	US\$5,000.00
Total	US\$175,532.00	US\$175,532.00

V. Executing Agency and Execution Structure

- 5.1. The IDB will be the executing agency through SCL/GDI and RES/RES. The execution of this project by the Bank is justified by the regional scope of the project, which involves the coordination of public sector and relevant private sector participants from countries across the region. The Bank is ideally situated to serve as a regional coordinator. This TC is an initiative of the Bank, which is one of the justifications set out in Annex 10 of GN-2629.
- 5.2. The activities to be carried out under this TC have been included in the Procurement Plan (Annex III) and will be executed in accordance with the Bank's procurement policies and procedures, namely: (a) Hiring of individual consultants, as established in the regulations AM-650; (b) Contracting of consulting firms according to [GN-2765-4](#) and its associated operating guides ([OP-1155-4](#)) and (c) Contracting of logistics services and other services other than consulting, according to the [GN-2303-28](#).
- 5.3. The co-leaders of this TC, Monserrat Bustelo (SCL/GDI) and Veronica Frisancho (RES/RES), will be responsible for execution and supervision of the TC.
- 5.4. ORP and the GDLab will develop a fundraising strategy targeting external donors and private trust funds to ensure a sustained flow of resources into the initiative.

VI. Project Risks and Issues

- 6.1 The main risk we envision is the sustainability of the GDLab after the initial resources of the TC are exhausted. To address and minimize this risk, SCL/GDI, RES/RES and ORP are coordinating a strategy to approach donors and gather their interest in specific sub-topic related to gender and diversity and fine-tune the calls for proposals factoring in their preferences, the existing knowledge gaps, and the current demands during the recovery phase post COVID-19.
- 6.2 Another risk that may menace the successful and timely execution of the project is related to lack of qualified researchers that might be able to perform the analysis and work required by the call for papers. In its early stages, while the GDLab's production of knowledge relies solely in the funds of this TC, the team will launch the first call for proposals internally, leveraging on the expertise within the Bank on these topics. For successive rounds, we plan to conduct an aggressive campaign through the website, social media, and direct emails. Access to RES/RES's and SCL/GDI's databases of contacts will secure large support for the initiative.
- 6.3 All publications emanating from this TC will follow the Bank's Publication Protocol. All reports, manuals, studies, plans, drawings, data, databases, software and any other material prepared by or worked upon by consultants for the Bank under this technical cooperation (the "Works") are the sole and exclusive property of the Bank. As such the Bank has exclusive title, rights and interest in all such Works including the right of dissemination, reproduction and publication, which may carried out pursuant to the Creative Commons IGO 3.0 licenses, in accordance with Bank regulations AM-331.
- 6.4 The proposed project is expected not to have any social risks. In addition, all the randomized control trials (RCT) will have Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval before starting and throughout their executions. An IRB is a committee that applies research ethics by reviewing the methods proposed for a given study to guarantee that the implementation activities encompass minimal ethical risks when dealing with human subjects. Part of budget allocated to each funded study undertaking an RCT will be destined to cover IRB expenses.

VII. Environmental and Social Classification

- 7.1 The proposed project will not create environmental or social risks. According to the Environment and Safeguards Compliance Report (OP-703) this operation is classified as "C".

Required Annexes:

[Results Matrix - RG-T3729](#)

[Terms of Reference - RG-T3729](#)

[Procurement Plan - RG-T3729](#)