

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### *ECD Phone survey and RCT baseline and endline in El Salvador and Guatemala*

#### Regional

#### *ECD in the Northern Triangle the COVID-19 pandemic (RG-T3828)*

*[Web link to approved document]*

### **1. Background and Justification**

- 1.1 COVID-19 related school closures have revealed that distance learning is uniquely challenging for students of initial education and Early Childhood Development (ECD) services. The proposed TC will respond to this challenge by addressing two areas of ECD. The overall objective is twofold: (i) expand a regional survey and behavioral economics pilot to one additional country; and (ii) develop and pilot a model for growth mindset among caregivers and young children in vulnerable communities. The TC is regional in scope, benefitting two countries: El Salvador and Guatemala.
- 1.2 **Remote Initial Education.** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a worldwide experiment in remote learning is unfolding. Throughout the world, education systems rushed to build distance learning models. So far, the experience revealed that it is uniquely difficult to provide for ECD students. This is because cognitive development in the ECD and preschool years is built through the senses of touch, vision, hearing, taste, and smell (Butcher and Plecher, 2016). Children in virtual ECD and preschool lose interest in a lesson after 15 to 20 minutes, drastically reducing the hours per day of supported learning during COVID-19-related school closures. They also lose interest if the group of children is too large (more than three to six toddlers, and six to ten preschoolers), giving them fewer opportunities for adult-child interaction (Szente, 2020). These child-teacher ratios, required for effective virtual instruction, are often lower than those in typical classrooms, complicate the shift to virtual ECD and preschool services challenging. In addition to learning challenges, school closures leave children without the critical services that schools provide, including socioemotional support, nutritional programs, counseling services, and playgrounds. Children kept at home as part of social-distancing strategies are also left without the important social interactions so essential for their development and well-being.
- 1.3 To explore the experiences that children and parents are having with emergency remote education, the ministries of education in El Salvador (MINED), Costa Rica (MEP), and Peru (MINEDU), and the Institute of Family Well-Being in Colombia (ICBF) joined forces with Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to undertake a regional survey. Respondents from 62,837 households were asked about their experiences with emergency distance education and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic ([Näslund-Hadley et al, 2020](#)).
- 1.4 As a complement to the regional survey, MINED, MEP, MINEDU, IPA and the IDB are undertaking regional behavioral economics pilot. The pilot is based on literature which shows that parents may

fail to do the right investment in their kids due to lack of information and behavioral biases. In response to this challenge, caregivers receive a set of SMS messages with links to integrated virtual content and resources that combine parent education – about nutrition, stimulation and family health in times of the Coronavirus – with learning activities for children, to mitigate the effect of social distancing on child development outcomes.

- 1.5 Guatemala now wishes to join the regional study and behavioral economics pilot to provide a window into the crisis; how it is affecting the health of children and their caregivers and educators; the functioning of the ministry's ECD distance education model; and explore how information to parents can help in making effective decisions. The inputs from the survey and experimental pilot will provide an essential input in designing education and health policy responses.
- 1.6 **Growth Mindset.** A person's mindset is defined by individual beliefs about qualities such as intelligence, personality, and talents, as well as how these qualities contribute to a person's perspective on the world and how he or she acts in different situations. In addition, people's mindset influences motivation to do things, and how he or she faces setbacks and failures. While people with a growth mindset tend to attribute their mistakes to a lack of effort, and seek to learn from these situations, people with fixed mindsets attribute their failures to a lack of skills ([Schoder et al., 2017](#)). Examples of positive qualities linked to growth mindset include conflict resolution and propensity for problem solving when faced with a challenge ([Kammrath & Dweck 2006](#)); and greater self-regulation and social adaptability (Tamir, Srivastava & Gross, 2007). Life outcomes linked to growth mindset compared with fixed mindset include higher levels of resilience (Kammrath & Dweck, 2012), higher academic performance (Blackwell et al, 2007; Hanson et al, 2016), greater self-esteem and mental health (Tamir, Srivastava & Gross, 2007), and lower levels of risky behaviors and criminality (Gerber and O'Connell, 2012).
- 1.7 Given the importance of mindset beliefs for life outcomes, research has focused on two areas. First, influencing mindset beliefs of adolescents and adults. Even basic interventions have been found to generate considerable changes in a person's mindset (O'Rourke et al., 2014; Blackwell et al., 2007; Paunesku et al., 2015; Yeager et al., 2016). Second, influencing parental mindset beliefs to improve child outcomes and mindsets. While the literature shows that child outcomes can improve by changing parental mindset beliefs (Rowe & Leech 2018; Andersen & Nielsen 2016), research has yet to investigate if it is possible to promote the development of growth mindsets in children by influencing parental mindset beliefs.
- 1.8 In El Salvador, an IDB survey of vulnerable households with young children (ES-T1282; ES-T1295) found that most caregivers have a fixed mindset. Controlling for socioeconomic status, the study also finds that caregivers mindset is linked to the level of investment in young children, including time invested in their children (e.g., playing, reading, and singing) and types and quantities of toys. The government of El Salvador now wishes to explore if it is possible to promote a growth mindset among surveyed caregivers to improve child outcomes, behaviors, and foster growth mindset among young children.
- 1.9 Against this background, the IDB is looking to contract a consultancy firm to assist with the evaluation of the growth mindset treatment in El Salvador and behavioral pilot in Guatemala.

## 2. **Objectives**

- 2.1. *The objective of the consultancy is twofold. First, to include Guatemala in the regional survey about initial education in times of COVID-19, as well in the ongoing regional behavioral economics*

*pilot. The work includes sample design, baseline and endline by phone. Second, to evaluate an experimental evaluation of parent-child transmission of mindset attitudes in El Salvador, including the online and phone collection of caregiver's data under this objective.*

### **3. Key Activities**

3.1. The consulting firm will carry out the following activities:

- a. **Work Plan.** Create a Work Plan of the consultancy. The Plan must also include the elaboration and validation stages of the regional survey and the regional behavioral economics pilot in Guatemala, as well the experimental evaluation of Parent-child transmission of mindset attitudes in El Salvador (it must contemplate and list the required elements for the different parts of the project).
- b. **IRB.** The approval of the two trials by a certified Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human subject research.
- c. **Guatemala data for Regional survey.** The collection of survey data to include Guatemala in the regional survey of ECD in times of COVID-19.
- d. **Data collection.** The collection of quantitative data, using the already implemented phone and online survey instruments, as well the adaptation to the Children Behavior Checklist (CBCL) and the Family Care Indicators (FCI) instruments to assess the situation of children during the pandemic.
- e. **Parent-children mindset attitudes.** Develop an experimental evaluation of parent-child transmission of mindset attitudes (including the methodologies, materials, and elements for the two treatment arms under component II).
- f. **Monitoring.** The firm must work closely with the IDB to maintain a detailed record on the implementation of pilot as well as the survey. Continuously meet with the IDB, to discuss the progress of the consultancy.

### **4. Expected Outcome and Deliverables**

4.1. The firm will deliver to the IDB, the following products:

- (i) Workplan (2 weeks after the signing of the contract);
- (ii) IRB for both trials;
- (iii) Regional Survey and database about initial education in times of COVID-19 in Guatemala;
- (iv) The experimental evaluation of parent-child transmission of mindset attitudes in El Salvador;
- (v) A final report of the experimental evaluations and databases in El Salvador and Guatemala.

## **5. Project Schedule and Milestones**

- 5.1. All the products from the consultancy will belong to the IDB.
- 5.2. The firm will present, for the Bank's analysis and approval, monthly progress reports, as well as the following documentation:
  - First report: Workplan
  - Second report: Regional Survey in Guatemala on initial education in times of COVID-19's content, and IRBs
  - Third report: Report on the results of the behavioral economics pilot;
  - Fourth report: Report on the results of the experimental evaluation of parent-child transmission of mindset attitudes;
  - Fifth report: Final evaluation report and all the data base (well described and organized)

## **6. Reporting Requirements**

- 6.1. Reports must be submitted in electronic files. The databases should be submitted in Excel or STATA and must include code books.

## **7. Acceptance Criteria**

- 7.1. Acceptance of consultancy products will be based on international practices for human subject research, and experimental evaluations.

## **8. Supervision and Reporting**

- 8.1. *The consultancy firm will report to Emma Naslund-Hadley ([emman@iadb.org](mailto:emman@iadb.org)), including bimonthly meetings with the IDB during the implementation phase..*

## **9. Schedule of Payments**

- 9.1. Payment terms will be based on project milestones or deliverables. The Bank does not expect to make advance payments under consulting contracts unless a significant amount of travel is required. The Bank wishes to receive the most competitive cost proposal for the services described herein.
- 9.2. The IDB Official Exchange Rate indicated in the RFP will be applied for necessary conversions of local currency payments.

<b>Payment Schedule</b>	
<b><i>Deliverable</i></b>	<b>%</b>
1. Against the approval of the Workplan (First report)	20%
2. Against the approval of the regional survey on initial education in times of COVID-19 - results report (second report)	20%
3. Against the approval of the Regional behavioral economics pilot - results report (third report)	20%
4. Against the approval of the experimental evaluation of parent-child transmission of mindset attitudes - results report (fourth report)	20%
5. Against the receipt and approval of the final evaluation reports, including corresponding databases (Fifth report)	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### 10. Characteristics of the Consultancy Firm

- Category and Modality of the Consultancy: Firm
- Duration of the contract: From the signing of the contract, for a period of 24 months
- Workplace (s): Regional (Guatemala & El Salvador)
- Division Leaders or Coordinator: Emma Näslund-Hadley

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### Behavioral SMS Messaging in Guatemala and Mindset treatment in El Salvador

#### Regional

#### *ECD in the Northern Triangle the COVID-19 pandemic (RG-T3828)*

*[Web link to approved document]*

### **1. Background and Justification**

- 1.1. COVID-19 related school closures have revealed that distance learning is uniquely challenging for students of initial education and Early Childhood Development (ECD) services. The proposed TC will respond to this challenge by addressing two areas of ECD. The overall objective is twofold: (i) expand a regional survey and behavioral economics pilot to one additional country; and (ii) develop and pilot a model for growth mindset among caregivers and young children in vulnerable communities. The TC is regional in scope, benefitting two countries: El Salvador and Guatemala.
- 1.2. **Remote Initial Education.** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a worldwide experiment in remote learning is unfolding. Throughout the world, education systems rushed to build distance learning models. So far, the experience revealed that it is uniquely difficult to provide for ECD students. This is because cognitive development in the ECD and preschool years is built through the senses of touch, vision, hearing, taste, and smell (Butcher and Plecher, 2016). Children in virtual ECD and preschool lose interest in a lesson after 15 to 20 minutes, drastically reducing the hours per day of supported learning during COVID-19-related school closures. They also lose interest if the group of children is too large (more than three to six toddlers, and six to ten preschoolers), giving them fewer opportunities for adult-child interaction (Szente, 2020). These child-teacher ratios, required for effective virtual instruction, are often lower than those in typical classrooms, complicate the shift to virtual ECD and preschool services challenging. In addition to learning challenges, school closures leave children without the critical services that schools provide, including socioemotional support, nutritional programs, counseling services, and playgrounds. Children kept at home as part of social-distancing strategies are also left without the important social interactions so essential for their development and well-being.
- 1.3. To explore the experiences that children and parents are having with emergency remote education, the ministries of education in El Salvador (MINED), Costa Rica (MEP), and Peru (MINEDU), and the Institute of Family Well-Being in Colombia (ICBF) joined forces with Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to undertake a regional survey. Respondents from 62,837 households were asked about their experiences with emergency distance education and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic ([Näslund-Hadley et al. 2020](#)).
- 1.4. As a complement to the regional survey, MINED, MEP, MINEDU, IPA and the IDB are undertaking regional behavioral economics pilot. The pilot is based on literature which shows that parents may fail to do the right investment in their kids due to lack of information and behavioral biases. In response to this challenge, caregivers receive a set of SMS messages with links to integrated virtual content and resources that combine parent education – about nutrition, stimulation and

family health in times of the Coronavirus – with learning activities for children, to mitigate the effect of social distancing on child development outcomes.

- 1.5. Guatemala now wishes to join the regional study and behavioral economics pilot to provide a window into the crisis; how it is affecting the health of children and their caregivers and educators; the functioning of the ministry's ECD distance education model; and explore how information to parents can help in making effective decisions. The inputs from the survey and experimental pilot will provide an essential input in designing education and health policy responses.
- 1.6. **Growth Mindset.** A person's mindset is defined by individual beliefs about qualities such as intelligence, personality, and talents, as well as how these qualities contribute to a person's perspective on the world and how he or she acts in different situations. In addition, people's mindset influences motivation to do things, and how he or she faces setbacks and failures. While people with a growth mindset tend to attribute their mistakes to a lack of effort, and seek to learn from these situations, people with fixed mindsets attribute their failures to a lack of skills ([Schoder et al., 2017](#)). Examples of positive qualities linked to growth mindset include conflict resolution and propensity for problem solving when faced with a challenge ([Kammrath & Dweck 2006](#)); and greater self-regulation and social adaptability (Tamir, Srivastava & Gross, 2007). Life outcomes linked to growth mindset compared with fixed mindset include higher levels of resilience (Kammrath & Dweck, 2012), higher academic performance (Blackwell et al, 2007; Hanson et al, 2016), greater self-esteem and mental health (Tamir, Srivastava & Gross, 2007), and lower levels of risky behaviors and criminality (Gerber and O'Connell, 2012).
- 1.7. **Given** the importance of mindset beliefs for life outcomes, research has focused on two areas. First, influencing mindset beliefs of adolescents and adults. Even basic interventions have been found to generate considerable changes in a person's mindset (O'Rourke et al., 2014; Blackwell et al., 2007; Paunesku et al., 2015; Yeager et al., 2016). Second, influencing parental mindset beliefs to improve child outcomes and mindsets. While the literature shows that child outcomes can improve by changing parental mindset beliefs (Rowe & Leech 2018; Andersen & Nielsen 2016), research has yet to investigate if it is possible to promote the development of growth mindsets in children by influencing parental mindset beliefs.
- 1.8. In El Salvador, an IDB survey of vulnerable households with young children (ES-T1282; ES-T1295) found that most caregivers have a fixed mindset. Controlling for socioeconomic status, the study also finds that caregivers mindset is linked to the level of investment in young children, including time invested in their children (e.g., playing, reading, and singing) and types and quantities of toys. The government of El Salvador now wishes to explore if it is possible to promote a growth mindset among surveyed caregivers to improve child outcomes, behaviors, and foster growth mindset among young children.
- 1.9. Against this background, the IDB is looking to contract a consultancy firm to design and implement the growth mindset treatment in Guatemala and send text messages as part of the El Salvador pilot.

## 2. **Objectives**

- 2.1. *The first objective of the consultancy is twofold. First, to Implement a behavioral economics pilot in Guatemala through SMS text messages to parents. Second, to implement a parent-child transmission of mindset attitudes pilot in El Salvador.*

### **3. Key Activities**

3.1. The consulting firm will carry out the following activities:

- g. **Work Plan.** Create a Work Plan of the consultancy. The Plan must also include the elaboration and validation stages of the regional behavioral economics pilot in Guatemala, as well the experimental evaluation of Parent-child transmission of mindset attitudes in El Salvador (it must contemplate and list the required elements for the different parts of the project).
- h. **Pilot Guatemala.** Implement the regional behavioral economics pilot in Guatemala, sending 3 SMS every week to caregivers, including: (i) Messages that aim to increase the quality and frequency of parent-child interactions; (ii) Messages focusing on mental and physical health management; and (iii) Messaging program with information on coronavirus prevention strategies and communication management with children. Messages are the same as those sent in the other countries that participated in the pilot.
- i. **Pilot El Salvador.** Based on the Workplan develop the necessary content to execute the experimental evaluation of Parent-child transmission of mindset attitudes in El Salvador, including informational videos. Implement the experimental evaluation of parent-child transmission of mindset attitudes in El Salvador.
- j. **Monitoring.** The firm must work closely with the IDB to maintain a detailed record on the implementation of pilot as well as the survey. Continuously meet with the IDB, to discuss the progress of the consultancy.

### **4. Expected Outcome and Deliverables**

4.1. The firm will deliver to the IDB, the following products:

- (i) Workplan (2 weeks after the signing of the contract);
- (ii) Report on pilot implementation in El Salvador, including monitoring of intensity of treatment;
- (iii) Report on pilot implementation in Guatemala, including monitoring of intensity of treatment;

### **5. Reporting Requirements**

5.1. Reports must be submitted in electronic files. The databases should be submitted in Excel or STATA and must include code books.

### **6. Acceptance Criteria**



- 6.1. Acceptance of consultancy products will be based on international practices for human subject research, and experimental evaluations.

## 7. Supervision and Reporting

- 7.1. *The consultancy firm will report to Emma Naslund-Hadley ([emman@iadb.org](mailto:emman@iadb.org)), including bimonthly meetings with the IDB during the implementation phase..*

## 8. Schedule of Payments

- 8.1. Payment terms will be based on project milestones or deliverables. The Bank does not expect to make advance payments under consulting contracts unless a significant amount of travel is required. The Bank wishes to receive the most competitive cost proposal for the services described herein.
- 8.2. The IDB Official Exchange Rate indicated in the RFP will be applied for necessary conversions of local currency payments.

Payment Schedule	
<i>Deliverable</i>	<i>%</i>
6. Against the approval of the Workplan (First report)	20%
7. Against the approval of the report on pilot implementation of parent-child transmission of mindset attitudes in El Salvador (second report)	40%
8. Against the approval report of the Regional behavioral economics pilot (third report)	40%
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%

## 9. Characteristics of the Consultancy Firm

- Category and Modality of the Consultancy: Firm

- Duration of the contract: From the signing of the contract, for a period of 24 months
- Workplace (s): Regional (Guatemala & El Salvador)
- Division Leaders or Coordinator: Emma Näslund-Hadley