

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Preschool Center quality measurement : application of the ECERS instrument in preschool centers in Uruguay

UR-T1194

Attendance and quality in preschool education: Empowering parents through information

1. Background and Justification

- 1.1 Established in 1959, the Inter-American Development Bank ("IDB " or "Bank ") is the main source of funding for economic, social and institutional development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The IDB provides loans, grants, guarantees, policy advice and technical assistance to the public and private sectors of the borrowing countries.
- 1.2 Uruguay's education system is divided into four levels: initial ECD, primary, secondary and tertiary education. Public education is free, and the system seeks to ensure access to education for all citizens. An offering of public ECD is jointly provided by the Ministry of Education, the Counsel for Initial and Primary Education, and the National Institute for Children and Adolescence. There are also private institutions which offer these services. The Coordinating Council for Education in ECD, comprised of the above-mentioned institutions, aims to promote quality ECD education and the professionalization of its personnel. The council advise the MEC on supervision and quality monitoring and coordination of ECD national educational projects and policies. With this intervention, IADB promotes the coverage and quality of initial education in Uruguay working together with the Coordinating Council at MEC.
- 1.3 Chronic absence prevents children benefiting from programs designed to enhance their development ([Chang and Romero, 2008](#)). Several researchers have attempted to influence attendance by providing parents with information about how their child's attendance rate fares in comparison with its peers ([Rogers et al. 2017](#); [Kraft & Rogers, 2014](#); [Behavioral Insights for Parenting, 2018](#)). The fact that attendance improves quite dramatically between preschool and kindergarten, and increasingly into primary school ([Ehrlich et al., 2013](#); [Dubay and Niihil 2016](#)), suggests that logistical difficulties may not be the binding constraints to preschool attendance. Survey data indicates parents undervaluing preschool could be a key factor. Therefore, programs that change parents' mindsets by emphasizing the benefits of preschool attendance could be impactful.
- 1.4 Addressing low center quality improves child development through a two-staged process. A first, direct channel benefiting children is that contents and methodologies are enhanced and second, indirect channel is that attendance is boosted by enhancing parents' trust in centers. The benefits of ECD programs are an increasing function of preschool quality, which directly impacts cognitive and socio-emotional development ([Cunningham, 2009](#); [Votruba-Drzal et al., 2004](#); [Loeb et al., 2004](#); [Peisner-Feinberg et al., 2001](#)). Quality of preschool facility is positively correlated with attendance. [Ehrlich et al., \(2013\)](#) found that

attendance was one to one and a half percentage point higher in schools that were either safer, in which trust between teacher and parents was strong, where parents are involved in school, or where school commitment is high among teachers.

- 1.5 Uruguay is making efforts to strengthen its quality assurance system for the early childhood services by changing the role of supervisors from one of policing to one of quality enhancement ([MIDES, 2011](#)). Supervisors spend a great deal of time monitoring compliance with rules and regulations and focus less on supporting centers to implement actions to improve the quality of services. This project intends to develop an early detection system of pre-school center perceived quality by using information provided by parents at a low cost, thus allowing supervisors to identify red flags and act in a timely manner to suggest actions to raise the quality of services ([Dansereau et al., 2015](#); [Haddad et al., 2000](#)).
- 1.6 In 2015, Uruguay made preschool mandatory from age 4. However, low attendance for this age group has been persistent as compared to higher levels. Absenteeism in public centers of 3-5 year-old children was approximately 30% in 2016, while it was only 10% in primary education. The [Encuesta Continua de Hogares \(2017\)](#) suggest that parents of 3 to 5 year olds have not internalized the importance of consistent preschool attendance. Indeed, other than health reasons (26.6%), the factors given for absence are ones that would not be considered excused absence in the formal school system - 51.2% of absences were due to vacation and 11.3% to bad weather.
- 1.7 In response to these challenges, the IDB launched an intervention to enhance preschool centers' quality in 2018 and increase children's attendance. This project produced significantly positive results, which involve: (i) an innovative and cost-efficient warning alarm system to monitor preschool centers' quality (ii) the possibility to make parents feel like relevant actors in the educational process of their children between 3 to 5 years, (iii) promote innovative strategies to positively impact parents' mindset and conception of the importance of preschool and (iv) increase children attendance in their early school life years.
- 1.8 Against this backdrop the IDB is looking to hire a firm to coordinate the community meetings to explain the mobile application.

2. Objectives

- 2.1. The objective of this consultancy is to hold community meetings to explain and promote the use of a mobile application to parents of preschool attending children from 3 to 5 years old: ParentIN.

3. Scope of Services

- 3.1. Hold community meetings for parents in 194 preschool centers. The average number of students is 15, so by centers there would be approximately 15-20 parents.

4. Key Activities

The Firm will undertake the following activities:

- 4.1. Develop and submit a first draft of a detailed work plan for the consultancy, including the description of the activities to be carried out and its products, a schedule of activities and deliverables.
- 4.2. Coordination with preschool centers: The Firm will be charged with contacting each center and preparing the fieldwork in collaboration with preschool centers, MEC and IADB. Further, the Firm will prepare the detailed workshop plan and activities to be carried out for community meetings. The Firm will also be charged with training enumerators on ParentIN application, and how to run the focus groups. Members of the IADB team will be present at the training.
- 4.3. Conducting community meetings with parents of 3 to 5 year-old children attending the 194 centers in Uruguay, to explain the ParentIN application and promote its usage.

5. Expected Outcome and Deliverables

The Firm will deliver to the IADB:

- 5.1. Product 1: A complete report of the organization of the field work including time and responsible for each activity proposed.
- 5.2. Product 2: Selected Firm will provide a contact checklist with each of the chosen centers, which will include the number of speakers and the roadmap to cover all chosen preschools.
- 5.3. Product 3: Weekly reports on Community meetings status.
- 5.4. Product 4: A Final Fieldwork management report describing the obstacles, successes and any other details of the community meetings.

6. Project Schedule and Milestones

- 6.1. Product 1: Report of fieldwork activities
- 6.2. Product 2: Contact checklist with each of the chosen centers
- 6.3. Product 3: Fieldwork management report.
- 6.4. Product 4: Final fieldwork report

7. Reporting Requirements

- 7.1. The Firm will be required to provide weekly written updates on the progress of the work (Product 3).
- 7.2. All materials produced during and for this consultancy will:
 - (i) be delivered in electronic copies
 - (ii) be owned by the IADB (copyright), including the right to produce, distribute, disseminate and publish, notwithstanding the termination of the consultancy.

8. Acceptance Criteria

- 8.1. The training and coaching should be subject to revisions and random checks by the firm in order to ensure consistent high quality implementation. The IADB will conduct random checks to ensure high quality implementation of the meetings.

9. Other Requirements

- 9.1. Demonstrated experience in organizing mass events and talks to large audiences.

10. Supervision and Reporting

- 10.1. The consultancy will be coordinated by Mercedes Mateo-Berganza Diaz, Lead Education Specialist (SCL/EDU)

11. Schedule of Payments

Payment Schedule	
Deliverable	Percent
1. Product 1: Report of fieldwork activities	25%
2. Product 2: Contact checklist with each of the chosen centers	25%
3. Product 3: Fieldwork management report.	25%
4. Product 4: Final fieldwork report	25%
TOTAL	100%

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Dissemination of results from information campaign RCT in Uruguay and ParentIN application

UR-T1194

Attendance and quality in preschool education: Empowering parents through information

1. Background and Justification

- 1.1 Established in 1959, the Inter-American Development Bank ("IDB " or "Bank ") is the main source of funding for economic, social and institutional development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The IDB provides loans, grants, guarantees, policy advice and technical assistance to the public and private sectors of the borrowing countries.
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- 1.3 Chronic absence prevents children benefiting from programs designed to enhance their development ([Chang and Romero, 2008](#)). Several researchers have attempted to influence attendance by providing parents with information about how their child's attendance rate fares in comparison with its peers ([Rogers et al. 2017](#); [Kraft & Rogers, 2014](#); [Behavioral Insights for Parenting, 2018](#)). The fact that attendance improves quite dramatically between preschool and kindergarten, and increasingly into primary school ([Ehrlich et al., 2013](#); [Dubay and Niikhil 2016](#)), suggests that logistical difficulties may not be the binding constraints to preschool attendance. Survey data indicates parents undervaluing preschool could be a key factor. Therefore, programs that change parents' mindsets by emphasizing the benefits of preschool attendance could be impactful.
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- 1.5 Uruguay is making efforts to strengthen its quality assurance system for the early childhood services by changing the role of supervisors from one of policing to one of quality enhancement ([MIDES, 2011](#)). Supervisors spend a great deal of time monitoring compliance with rules and regulations and focus less on supporting centers to implement actions to improve the quality of services. This project intends to develop an early detection system of pre-school center perceived quality by using information provided by parents at a low cost, thus allowing supervisors to identify red flags and act in a timely manner to suggest actions to raise the quality of services ([Dansereau et al., 2015](#); [Haddad et al., 2000](#)).
- 1.6 In 2015, Uruguay made preschool mandatory from age 4. However, low attendance for this age group has been persistent as compared to higher levels. Absenteeism in public centers of 3-5 year-old children was approximately 30% in 2016, while it was only 10% in primary education. The [Encuesta Continua de Hogares \(2017\)](#) suggest that parents of 3 to 5 year olds have not internalized the importance of consistent preschool attendance. Indeed, other than health reasons (26.6%), the factors given for absence are ones that would not be considered excused absence in the formal school system - 51.2% of absences were due to vacation and 11.3% to bad weather.
- 1.7 In response to these challenges, the IDB launched an intervention to enhance preschool centers' quality in 2018 and increase children's attendance. This project produced significantly positive results, which involve: (i) an innovative and cost-efficient warning alarm system to monitor preschool centers' quality (ii) the possibility to make parents feel like relevant actors in the educational process of their children between 3 to 5 years, (iii) promote innovative strategies to positively impact parents' mindset and conception of the importance of preschool and (iv) increase children attendance in their early school life years.
- 1.8 Against this backdrop the IDB is looking to hire a firm to coordinate the dissemination of RCT results and ParentIN intervention results.

2. Objectives

- 2.1. In collaboration with the IDB coordinate the dissemination of RCT results and ParentIN intervention results.

3. Scope of Services

- 3.1. The consultant will coordinate a dissemination event in Uruguay to share lessons learnt from the project, and results, with government ministers as well as other interested stakeholders. The consultant will also coordinate a dissemination event in Washington DC.

4. Key Activities

- 4.1. The key activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Develop and submit a first draft of a detailed work plan for the consultancy, including the description of the activities to be carried out and its products, a schedule of activities and deliverables.
- Contact all ministers and stakeholders to invite them to the event
- Coordinate with the venue to organize event
- Create the promotional materials including physical and online material

5. Expected Outcome and Deliverables

5.1. The consultancy will deliver the following documents and reports:

- (i) Inception report, including work plan (Product 1);
- (ii) A list of all the stakeholders and ministers contacted for each event, along with their response (Product 2);
- (iii) Promotional materials, including physical and online material (Product 3);

6. Project Schedule and Milestones

6.1. Product #1: workplan of the consultancy, including the theoretical and methodological approach to the project implementation and describing the tests and instruments to be used.

6.2. Product #2: A list of all the stakeholders and ministers contacted for each event

6.3. Product #3: Promotional materials, including physical and online material

7. Reporting Requirements

7.1. The firm will be required to provide biweekly written updates on the progress of the work.

7.2. All materials produced during and for this consultancy will:

- (i) be delivered in electronic copies (Zip files won't be accepted as final reports);
- (ii) be owned by the IDB (copyright), including the right to produce, distribute, disseminate and publish, notwithstanding the termination of the consultancy.

8. Other Requirements

8.1. Experience:

- Extensive experience running research dissemination events
- Fluent in English and Spanish

9. Supervision and Reporting

9.1. The consultancy will be coordinated by Mercedes Mateo-Berganza Diaz, Lead Education Specialist (SCL/EDU)

10. Schedule of Payments

Payment Schedule	
<i>Deliverable</i>	Percent
5. Product 1	20%
6. Product 2	20%
7. Product 3	60%
TOTAL	100%

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy to run focus groups in Uruguay

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Established in 1959, the Inter-American Development Bank ("IDB " or "Bank ") is the main source of funding for economic, social and institutional development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The IDB provides loans, grants, guarantees, policy advice and technical assistance to the public and private sectors of the borrowing countries.
- 1.2 Uruguay's education system is divided into four levels: initial ECD, primary, secondary and tertiary education. Public education is free, and the system seeks to ensure access to education for all citizens. An offering of public ECD is jointly provided by the Ministry of Education, the Counsel for Initial and Primary Education, and the National Institute for Children and Adolescence. There are also private institutions which offer these services. The Coordinating Council for Education in ECD, comprised of the above-mentioned institutions, aims to promote quality ECD education and the professionalization of its personnel. The council advise the MEC on supervision and quality monitoring and coordination of ECD national educational projects and policies. With this intervention, IADB promotes the coverage and quality of initial education in Uruguay working together with the Coordinating Council at MEC.
- 1.3 Chronic absence prevents children benefiting from programs designed to enhance their development ([Chang and Romero, 2008](#)). Several researchers have attempted to influence attendance by providing parents with information about how their child's attendance rate fares in comparison with its peers ([Rogers et al. 2017](#); [Kraft & Rogers, 2014](#); [Behavioral Insights for Parenting, 2018](#)). The fact that attendance improves quite dramatically between preschool and kindergarten, and increasingly into primary school ([Ehrlich et al., 2013](#); [Dubay and Niikhil 2016](#)), suggests that logistical difficulties may not be the binding constraints to preschool attendance. Survey data indicates parents undervaluing preschool could be a key factor. Therefore, programs that change parents' mindsets by emphasizing the benefits of preschool attendance could be impactful.
- 1.4 Addressing low center quality improves child development through a two-staged process. A first, direct channel benefiting children is that contents and methodologies are enhanced and second, indirect channel is that attendance is boosted by enhancing parents' trust in

centers. The benefits of ECD programs are an increasing function of preschool quality, which directly impacts cognitive and socio-emotional development ([Cunningham, 2009](#); [Votruba-Drzal et al., 2004](#); [Loeb et al., 2004](#); [Peisner-Feinberg et al., 2001](#)). Quality of preschool facility is positively correlated with attendance. [Ehrlich et al., \(2013\)](#) found that attendance was one to one and a half percentage point higher in schools that were either safer, in which trust between teacher and parents was strong, where parents are involved in school, or where school commitment is high among teachers.

- 1.5 Uruguay is making efforts to strengthen its quality assurance system for the early childhood services by changing the role of supervisors from one of policing to one of quality enhancement ([MIDES, 2011](#)). Supervisors spend a great deal of time monitoring compliance with rules and regulations and focus less on supporting centers to implement actions to improve the quality of services. This project intends to develop an early detection system of pre-school center perceived quality by using information provided by parents at a low cost, thus allowing supervisors to identify red flags and act in a timely manner to suggest actions to raise the quality of services ([Dansereau et al., 2015](#); [Haddad et al., 2000](#)).
- 1.6 In 2015, Uruguay made preschool mandatory from age 4. However, low attendance for this age group has been persistent as compared to higher levels. Absenteeism in public centers of 3-5 year-old children was approximately 30% in 2016, while it was only 10% in primary education. The [Encuesta Continua de Hogares \(2017\)](#) suggest that parents of 3 to 5 year olds have not internalized the importance of consistent preschool attendance. Indeed, other than health reasons (26.6%), the factors given for absence are ones that would not be considered excused absence in the formal school system - 51.2% of absences were due to vacation and 11.3% to bad weather.
- 1.7 In response to these challenges, the IDB launched an intervention to enhance preschool centers' quality in 2018 and increase children's attendance. This project produced significantly positive results, which involve: (i) an innovative and cost-efficient warning alarm system to monitor preschool centers' quality (ii) the possibility to make parents feel like relevant actors in the educational process of their children between 3 to 5 years, (iii) promote innovative strategies to positively impact parents' mindset and conception of the importance of preschool and (iv) increase children attendance in their early school life years.
- 1.8 Against this backdrop the IDB is looking to hire a firm to organize and run a set of focus groups with parents of children enrolled in preschools across Uruguay.

2. OBJECTIVE

- 2.1. The objective of the consultancy is that the firm organize and run a set of 20 focus groups with parents of children enrolled in preschools across Uruguay. The focus groups will attempt to understand the reasons parents do not bring their children to preschool, both the logistical barriers and the cognitive ones.

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

- 3.1. We aim to meet 10-12 parents in ten focus groups across Uruguay, defined based on the concentration of schools and population density. The consultancy will be expected to have prepared all materials to the bank's satisfaction prior to the focus groups.

4. KEY ACTIVITIES

The selected firm will do the following tasks:

- 4.1 Develop and submit a first draft of a detailed work plan for the consultancy, including the description of the activities to be carried out and its products, a schedule of activities and deliverables.
- 4.2 Work in partnership with the ten preschools specified by the IDB team to obtain the contact details of parents and invite them to the focus group
- 4.3 In collaboration with the IDB develop the material to be used to run the focus groups
- 4.4 Record the audio of the focus group and transcribe it
- 4.5 Write a report of the main themes that came out from each of the 10 focus groups

5. REPORTS/OUTPUTS

The firm will deliver the following products to the IDB:

- 5.1. A report of the detailed workplan for the consultancy, including the description of the activities to be carried out and its products, a schedule of activities and deliverables.
- 5.2. Excel document detailing the contact details of parents to be contacted to invite to focus group, and confirmation of which parents agreed.
- 5.3. Materials to run the focus groups.
- 5.4. Audio and transcribed focus group content.
- 5.5. Report of the main themes which came out in the 20 focus groups.

6. Project Schedule and Milestones

- 6.1. Product #1: Report of detailed workplan
- 6.2. Product #2: Material for focus groups and excel of parent contact detail, and confirmation status
- 6.3. Product #3: Audio and transcribed focus group content
- 6.4. Product #4: Report of main themes which came out of the 20 focus groups.

7. Reporting Requirements

- 7.1. The firm will be required to provide biweekly written updates on the progress of the work.
- 7.2. All materials produced during and for this consultancy will:
 - (i) be delivered in electronic copies

(ii) be owned by the IDB (copyright), including the right to produce, distribute, disseminate and publish, notwithstanding the termination of the consultancy.

8. ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

8.1. The training and coaching should be subject to revisions and random checks by the firm in order to ensure consistent high quality implementation. The IADB will attend each focus group to ensure high quality implementation.

9. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- 9.1 Demonstrated ability to run focus groups with low literacy participants.
- 9.2 Ideally experience conducted focus group related to education.
- 9.3 The firm must have access to a good network of experienced focus group administrators and supervisors. The names of the focus group administrators and supervisor, and their specific responsibilities must be mentioned in the firm's offer.
- 9.4 The proposal should highlight that the consultancy firm is well versed in focus group bias and mention the ways it will mitigate the biases during the focus groups.
- 9.5 Strong references & feedback from three recent clients with focus groups completed in Latin America.

10. SUPERVISION AND REPORTING

10.1 The consultancy will be coordinated by Mercedes Mateo-Berganza Diaz, Lead Education Specialist (SCL/EDU)

11. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

Payment Schedule	
<i>Deliverable</i>	Percent
Product #1: workplan	5%
Product #1: Material to run focus group and document detailing contacted parents and location of each focus group	30%
Product #3: Transcription of each focus group and audio tapes	30%
Product #4: Written report on the main themes mentioned in each individual focus group	35%
TOTAL	100%

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Preschool Center quality measurement : development and implementation of ParentIN mobile application

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Established in 1959, the Inter-American Development Bank ("IDB " or "Bank ") is the main source of funding for economic, social and institutional development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The IDB provides loans, grants, guarantees, policy advice and technical assistance to the public and private sectors of the borrowing countries.
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1.8 Against this backdrop the IDB is looking to hire a firm to design, implement and run the ParentIN mobile application and platform.

2. OBJECTIVE

2.1. The objective of this consultancy is to design, implement and run the ParentIN mobile application and platform. This will include conducting community meetings to teach parents how to use the application.

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

3.1. ParentIN will be implemented in 194 preschool centers across Uruguay.

4. KEY ACTIVITIES

The Firm work will consist of the following activities:

- Develop and submit a first draft of a detailed work plan for the consultancy, including the description of the activities to be carried out and its products, a schedule of activities and deliverables.
- Create a mobile application following guidelines of content and user interface from IDB team.

- Create data visualization platform populated by information mobile application collected.
- Run community meetings to explain to parents how to use the mobile application.
- Provide assistance and technical support to parents regarding issues that arise during the implementation period.
- Written manual explaining how to navigate the online data visualization platform.
- Written manual explaining how to use the mobile application.
- Implementation report delivered to IDB team at pre-agreed intervals in the run-up to roll-out and during intervention.

5. REPORTS/OUTPUTS

The firm will deliver the following products to the IDB:

- A report of the detailed workplan for the consultancy, including the description of the activities to be carried out and its products, a schedule of activities and deliverables.
- Mobile application ParentIN
- Data visualisation platform of ParentIN.
- Material for community meetings explaining how to use the ParentIN application in Spanish
- Report on the assistance and technical support required by the centers and resolution.
- Written manual explaining how to navigate the online data visualization platform.
- Written manual explaining how to use the mobile application.
- Final implementation recap report

6. Project Schedule and Milestones

- 6.1. Product #1: Report of detailed workplan
- 6.2. Product #2: Mobile application ParentIN and
- 6.3. Product #3: Data visualization platform of ParentIN
- 6.4. Product #4: Material for community meetings
- 6.5. Product #5: Report on technical assistance requests
- 6.6. Product #6: Manual to navigate the online data visualization platform
- 6.7. Product #7: Manual to use the mobile application
- 6.8. Product #8: Final implementation recap report

7. Reporting Requirements

- The firm will be required to provide biweekly written updates on the progress of the work.
- All materials produced during and for this consultancy will:

(i) be delivered in electronic copies

(ii) be owned by the IDB (copyright), including the right to produce, distribute, disseminate and publish, notwithstanding the termination of the consultancy.

8. **ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA**

8.1 The user interface of the application should be subject to random checks by the Firm in the conception stage and throughout implementation in order to ensure the highest data integrity. The quality control standards will be the standard protocols employed and required by the IDB and data collection firms.

9. **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- Demonstrated experience in creation of mobile applications
- Demonstrated experience in creation of online platforms and real-time data visualization
- Demonstrated experience in teaching low-education/low-literacy participants to use their mobile application tool
- The firm must have access to a good network of experienced software developers, supervisors and data managers. The names of the data managers and software developers, and supervisors, and their specific responsibility must be mentioned in the Firm's offer
- Strong references & feedback from three recently completed mobile applications in Latin America

10. **SUPERVISION AND REPORTING**

The consultancy will be coordinated by Mercedes Mateo-Berganza Diaz, Lead Education Specialist (SCL/EDU)

11. **SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS**

Product	Deliverable	(%) of contract
Product #1	Detailed workplan	10%
Product #2	Mobile application ParentIN for parents	25%
Product #3	Data visualization platform for Gvt officials	25%
Product #4	Material for community meetings explaining how to use the ParentIN	10%
Product #5	Report on technical assistance requests	5%
Product #6	Written manual explaining how to navigate the online data visualization platform	5%

Product #7	Written manual explaining how to use the mobile application	5%
Product #8	Final implementation recap report	15%

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Implementation of an informational intervention with text messages for parents in Uruguay

1. Background and Justification

- 1.1 Established in 1959, the Inter-American Development Bank ("IDB " or "Bank ") is the main source of funding for economic, social and institutional development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The IDB provides loans, grants, guarantees, policy advice and technical assistance to the public and private sectors of the borrowing countries.
- 1.2 Uruguay's education system is divided into four levels: initial ECD, primary, secondary and tertiary education. Public education is free, and the system seeks to ensure access to education for all citizens. An offering of public ECD is jointly provided by the Ministry of Education, the Counsel for Initial and Primary Education, and the National Institute for Children and Adolescence. There are also private institutions which offer these services. The Coordinating Council for Education in ECD, comprised of the above-mentioned institutions, aims to promote quality ECD education and the professionalization of its personnel. The council advise the MEC on supervision and quality monitoring and coordination of ECD national educational projects and policies. With this intervention, IADB promotes the coverage and quality of initial education in Uruguay working together with the Coordinating Council at MEC.
- 1.3 Chronic absence prevents children benefiting from programs designed to enhance their development ([Chang and Romero, 2008](#)). Several researchers have attempted to influence attendance by providing parents with information about how their child's attendance rate fares in comparison with its peers ([Rogers et al. 2017](#); [Kraft & Rogers, 2014](#); [Behavioral Insights for Parenting, 2018](#)). The fact that attendance improves quite dramatically between preschool and kindergarten, and increasingly into primary school ([Ehrlich et al., 2013](#); [Dubay and Niikhil 2016](#)), suggests that logistical difficulties may not be the binding constraints to preschool attendance. Survey data indicates parents undervaluing preschool could be a key factor. Therefore, programs that change parents' mindsets by emphasizing the benefits of preschool attendance could be impactful.
- 1.4 Addressing low center quality improves child development through a two-staged process. A first, direct channel benefiting children is that contents and methodologies are enhanced and second, indirect channel is that attendance is boosted by enhancing parents' trust in centers. The benefits of ECD programs are an increasing function of preschool quality, which directly impacts cognitive and socio-emotional development ([Cunningham, 2009](#); [Votruba-Drzal et al., 2004](#); [Loeb et al., 2004](#); [Peisner-Feinberg et al., 2001](#)). Quality of preschool facility is positively correlated with attendance. [Ehrlich et al., \(2013\)](#) found that

attendance was one to one and a half percentage point higher in schools that were either safer, in which trust between teacher and parents was strong, where parents are involved in school, or where school commitment is high among teachers.

- 1.5 Uruguay is making efforts to strengthen its quality assurance system for the early childhood services by changing the role of supervisors from one of policing to one of quality enhancement ([MIDES, 2011](#)). Supervisors spend a great deal of time monitoring compliance with rules and regulations and focus less on supporting centers to implement actions to improve the quality of services. This project intends to develop an early detection system of pre-school center perceived quality by using information provided by parents at a low cost, thus allowing supervisors to identify red flags and act in a timely manner to suggest actions to raise the quality of services ([Dansereau et al., 2015](#); [Haddad et al., 2000](#)).
- 1.6 In 2015, Uruguay made preschool mandatory from age 4. However, low attendance for this age group has been persistent as compared to higher levels. Absenteeism in public centers of 3-5 year-old children was approximately 30% in 2016, while it was only 10% in primary education. The [Encuesta Continua de Hogares \(2017\)](#) suggest that parents of 3 to 5 year olds have not internalized the importance of consistent preschool attendance. Indeed, other than health reasons (26.6%), the factors given for absence are ones that would not be considered excused absence in the formal school system - 51.2% of absences were due to vacation and 11.3% to bad weather.
- 1.7 In response to these challenges, the IDB launched an intervention to enhance preschool centers' quality in 2018 and increase children's attendance. This project produced significantly positive results, which involve: (i) an innovative and cost-efficient warning alarm system to monitor preschool centers' quality (ii) the possibility to make parents feel like relevant actors in the educational process of their children between 3 to 5 years, (iii) promote innovative strategies to positively impact parents' mindset and conception of the importance of preschool and (iv) increase children attendance in their early school life years.
- 1.8 Against this backdrop the IDB is looking to hire a firm to implement the SMS information intervention with parents of preschoolers in Uruguay.

2. Objectives

- 2.1. Implement the SMS information intervention with parents of preschoolers in Uruguay.

3. Scope of Services

- 3.1. The firm will contact parents in 97 preschool centers with an average of 15-17 children per center

4. Key Activities

The Firm work will consist of the following activities:

- 4.1. Work with the IDB team to develop the SMS content.
- 4.2. Collect student data for the intervention. These data include parents' cell phone number, children's and parents' names, information on student allocation, and other information relevant for the intervention.
- 4.3. Send weekly text messages to parents and allow them to reply to these text messages free of charge.
- 4.4. Collect weekly information of students to include in the SMS content. These data include student attendance and other information relevant for the content used in the intervention.
- 4.5. Provide data on compliance and issues that may affect the intervention. These data include information on whether parents received text messages, parents' text messages to the firm, date and time when text messages are sent to parents, eventual problems that may occur (e.g. when a message could not be sent to parents), and other information relevant for the intervention.
- 4.6. Conduct a pilot prior to the actual intervention.

5. Expected Outcome and Deliverables

The firm will deliver to the IDB:

- 5.1. A report with the work plan for the full deployment of activities, including dates and responsibilities for each actor, which will be agreed with the IDB and the MEC.
- 5.2. A report with the SMS contents developed in collaboration with the IDB team.
- 5.3. A report describing compliance and issues that may have affected the pilot (see item 4.5 above).
- 5.4. The student data collected
- 5.5. A report describing compliance and issues that may have affected the intervention (see item 4.5 above).
- 5.6. Student data used in the text messages (see item 4.4 above).

6. Project Schedule and Milestones

- 6.1. *Product #1: Report timeline for activities.*
- 6.2. *Product #2: Report with the SMS contents.*
- 6.3. *Product #3: Data from the pilot.*
- 6.4. *Product #4: Student data for intervention.*
- 6.5. *Product #5: Data from the intervention.*
- 6.6. *Product #6: Student data collected for text messages.*

7. Reporting Requirements

- The firm will be required to provide biweekly written updates on the progress of the work.
- All materials produced during and for this consultancy will:

- (i) be delivered in electronic copies
- (ii) be owned by the IDB (copyright), including the right to produce, distribute, disseminate and publish, notwithstanding the termination of the consultancy.

8. Acceptance Criteria

- 8.1. The firm is expected to deliver high-quality outputs from the collection of information to the delivery of text messages to parents. It is also expected the firm has the necessary infrastructure to fully comply with the activities proposed.

9. Other Requirements

- 9.1. Technological platform capable of sending mass text messages simultaneously.
- 9.2. Extensive experience in implementing informational tools (SMS) as social policies.
- 9.3. Demonstrated capacity and experience in planning and organizing survey logistics.
- 9.4. The firm must have access to a good network of experienced enumerators, supervisors and data managers. The names of the data managers and survey manager, and their specific responsibility must be mentioned in the Firm's offer
- 9.5. Strong references & feedback from three recently completed surveys in Latin America
- 9.6. Strong system for data quality control checks that can be accessible by the research team without any restriction.

10. Supervision and Reporting

- 10.1. The consultancy will be coordinated by Mercedes Mateo-Berganza Diaz, Lead Education Specialist (SCL/EDU)

11. Schedule of Payments

Payment Schedule	
<i>Deliverable</i>	Percent
<i>Product #1: Report timeline for activities.</i>	10%
<i>Product #2: Report with the SMS contents.</i>	10%
<i>Product #3: Data from the pilot.</i>	20%
<i>Product #4: Student data for intervention.</i>	10%
<i>Product #5: Data from the intervention.</i>	20%
<i>Product #6: Student data collected for text messages.</i>	20%
TOTAL	100%