

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM FOR THE BLIND

(TC-98-06-26-9-RG)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executing agencies:	Federación Argentina de Instituciones de Ciegos y Amblíopes [Argentine Federation of Institutions for the Blind and Visually Impaired] (FAICA); Unión Nacional de Instituciones Tiflológicas de Chile [National Union of Typhology ¹ Institutions of Chile] (UNITCH); and Fundación Braille del Uruguay [Braille Foundation of Uruguay] (FBU).	
Objectives:	The general objective of this program is to help the blind in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay to find jobs. The specific objective is to improve their employability and productivity by offering them training and by strengthening the participating organizations of the blind.	
Financing:	MIF:	US\$1,400,000
	FOAL: ²	US\$ 750,000
	National organizations:	<u>US\$ 210,000</u>
	Total:	US\$2,360,000
Beneficiaries:	Unemployed blind people in search of work in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay. ³	
Exceptions to Bank policy:	None.	
Program preparation status and duration:	The program was designed with technical support from Fundación de la Organización Nacional de Ciegos Españoles para América Latina [Foundation for Latin America of the National Organization of Blind Spaniards] (FOAL), which is currently helping to establish the steering committees and identify candidates for the positions of executive coordinator. The program will last for three years and the disbursement period is 40 months.	

¹ Typhology is the scientific study of blindness and how to cure it.

² Fundación de la Organización Nacional de los Ciegos Españoles para América Latina [Foundation for Latin America of the National Organization of Blind Spaniards] (FOAL).

³ For the purposes of this program the blind are defined as people who are sightless or who have serious visual impairment or residual vision (field limitation of under 10 degrees).

**Special
contractual
clauses:**

Only the conditions precedent to the first disbursement constitute special contractual clauses: (i) establishment of the steering committees; (ii) placing the implementation manual in effect; and (iii) signature of agreements between the executing agencies and government agencies (see paragraph 9.1).

I. COUNTRY AND PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

- 1.1 The Donors Committee declared Argentina eligible for all types of financing from the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) on November 30, 1993, Chile on October 6, 1995, and Uruguay on October 6, 1993. This program is eligible for financing from the Human Resources Facility, the purpose of which is to develop new methods and products to promote training and technology in Latin America. This project, which is designed to raise the employment levels of the blind in three countries in the region, is compatible with the facility's goal of developing human resources to increase the flow of investments and enlarge the private sector, specifically by stepping up job training.

II. BACKGROUND

A. General considerations

- 2.1 The Unión Latinoamericana de Ciegos [Latin American Union of the Blind] (ULAC), which is headquartered in Uruguay, asked the Bank for support in carrying out a project in that country to improve working conditions for the blind. ULAC is an international nongovernmental organization established in 1985, whose members are organizations of and for blind people in Brazil and 18 Spanish-speaking countries. Its objective is to prevent blindness and improve living conditions for the blind in Latin America. For reasons of economies of scale and in order to compare and optimize learning experiences, two other countries from the Southern Cone belonging to ULAC – Chile and Argentina – were included in the project. ULAC named the three organizations that will be responsible for program execution.
- 2.2 There is awareness in the participating countries that the blind have serious difficulties in finding employment. Recently, some governments in the region have begun to realize that although the type of welfare strategy they use to assist the disabled helps them to survive, it makes them chronically dependent and makes it difficult for them to develop as individuals and contribute economically to society. In other words, governments have recognized that from the economic and social standpoints alike, it is preferable for the disabled to work rather than to subsist on government handouts.
- 2.3 As a result, the social policies of the participating countries reflect a change in attitude and promote efforts to help these people to become independent. However, jobs for the disabled have been greatly altered by changes in the productive system and technological progress. Therefore, to improve the employability of the visually impaired, they must be offered specialized training to prepare them to participate in emerging areas such as teleservices and telemarketing.

B. FOAL

- 2.4 The attitude of solidarity that the Organización Nacional de los Ciegos Españoles [National Organization of Blind Spaniards] (ONCE) has always demonstrated toward Latin America has taken the form of donations of books in Braille, talking books and specialized literature, cooperation to enable experts and professionals to attend important world congresses or conferences, and even blindness prevention campaigns. "To give continuity to and systemize" that cooperation, in October 1984, ONCE's General Council resolved to "establish a fund to help finance cooperation programs in the field of welfare and assistance for the visually impaired". That was the seed of a mechanism that grew and evolved with experience and contact with Latin American realities.
- 2.5 FOAL was established in July 1998 with the purpose of helping to create instruments to improve mainstreaming of the blind in Latin America. FOAL's annual budget is some US\$1 million and it finances projects and interventions in the 19 member countries of ULAC and has provided occasional support for Puerto Rico and Haiti. FOAL is directed and managed by a 15-member board of trustees, including representatives of organizations of the blind and entities and individuals who are distinguished for their support of the disabled and for cooperation between Spain and the Ibero-American community.
- 2.6 FOAL considers that employment programs are a true instrument for mainstreaming the disabled, which has been demonstrated through ONCE's actions in Spain. The greatest demand for training in Spain is for company services, including telephone operators, receptionists, computer operators, administrative and accounting employees and salespeople. The theoretical training received by students is complemented with practical training in companies and subsidies for employers, as well as activities to increase awareness in the business community. Some 58% of the people who receive training find jobs through a placement office that specializes in the disabled, with over 5,000 people finding work between 1997 and 1998. FOAL also attaches great importance to public information and publicizing its successes.

C. Situation in the participating countries

- 2.7 The participating countries were selected on account of their political will and their initiatives to improve the situation of the disabled in general (see Table II-1). However, none of them is executing job training programs targeted specifically to the visually impaired, their programs being mainly directed to the mentally and physically disabled.
- 2.8 Organizations of the blind in the three countries are marked by extreme institutional weakness and lack the resources to promote employment for their members. They have limited capacity to establish links with the productive sector on the one hand

and, on the other, they are unable to bring political pressure to bear or to tap government funds. This largely explains why existing resources tend to focus on projects to benefit people with other types of disabilities.

2.9 FOAL has financed approximately 40 training courses for blind small entrepreneurs in certain countries in the region to enable them to better manage and sustain their microenterprises. The courses also support the creation of new businesses by the blind and strengthen those that are at risk of failing owing to technological limitations or changes in the market. Courses of this kind are very important because there are significant numbers of microentrepreneurs and small businesspeople among the visually impaired in the participating countries. The courses and support provided have led to the creation of new jobs and productive enterprises and improved existing procedures and products.

2.10 The experience and achievements of FOAL suggest that to improve the living conditions of the visually impaired it is indispensable to offer opportunities for specialized training and demonstration effects for employers on the potential and capacity of the blind to perform well. There is no awareness as yet in the participating countries of the potential and value added that can be contributed by the blind, since a considerable number of them are either supported by their families, work as street vendors or are often reduced to begging. Training for the blind requires greater specialization and more sophisticated equipment than for other types of disabilities. Courses need to be longer and training must be virtually individual, particularly for computer skills. For example, a computer instructor can teach a maximum of four blind students simultaneously, while the figure for the sighted is 12. For this reason alone, the costs per beneficiary are three times higher than training for the sighted.

Table II-1

PUBLIC SECTOR RESPONSE

In Argentina, the Ministry of Labor coordinates an employment program for the disabled and a bill is being considered that would give their employers the right to an income tax deduction of 70% of the salaries they pay to disabled employees.

Chile has the Fondo Nacional de la Discapacidad [National Disability Fund] which finances initiatives and projects for the disabled, as well as a revolving fund for small entrepreneurs and businesspeople with disabilities, which is administered by three cooperatives. The Disabled Persons Mainstreaming Act contains guidelines on training and employment for this group and requires government agencies to carry out employment programs for the disabled.

Uruguay has an affirmative action program which requires that persons with disabilities make up 4% of the employees hired by government agencies. In addition, the National Employment Directorate of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security finances job training programs for placement of the disabled under an agreement with the Christian Youth Association. The country has passed a law on equal opportunities for the disabled, but has not regulated Article VIII, which deals with employment and stipulates that incentives and benefits will be given to quasi-governmental and private-sector agencies that hire disabled persons.

- 2.11 To conclude, job placement of the visually impaired will be possible if there is a change in attitude by potential employers and the community at large and by people living with this disability. The visually impaired must surmount obstacles to employment by demonstrating their specific capacities and skills and therefore it is important for them to compete in areas or niches in the labor market where they have comparative advantages over the sighted. Also, they require specific training to develop their skills and need technological support to permit them to work competitively and more independently.

III. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The general objective of this program is to help the blind in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay to find jobs.¹ The specific objective is to improve their employability and productivity by offering them training and by strengthening the participating organizations of the blind.
- 3.2 The program will have three subprograms, one in Argentina, one in Chile and one in Uruguay. Owing to its regional nature, they should be carried out in coordination and therefore a regional technical advisor will work out of FOAL's head office in Argentina. This will permit communications and exchanges of information among the three coordinating units. Annual workshops will also be held to share ideas and discuss problems and progress. The first workshop will be a meeting to launch the program and the other two will coincide with the mid-term and final evaluation reports to examine progress and results. A technical advisor appointed by FOAL will participate in the meetings and will review the design and results of the evaluations.
- 3.3 The program will have three components: (i) institutional strengthening; (ii) training courses and job placement; and (iii) a communications and dissemination strategy. All the training activities will be geared toward employment opportunities that will be identified during the program by placement officers who will be trained to find employment opportunities for the blind in each country. This component also includes internships for about 300 trainees to be arranged with potential employers. The internships will be an opportunity to demonstrate the skills learned by the program beneficiaries.
- 3.4 ***Institutional strengthening***² (US\$240,000 with MIF financing of US\$90,000). The purpose of this component is to bolster the institutional capacity of organizations of the blind affiliated with the three executing agencies, to enable them to work toward improving the situation of the blind community. Some 160 representatives

¹ For the purposes of this program the blind are defined as people who are sightless or who have serious visual impairment or residual vision (field limitation of under 10 degrees).

² The contents of the institutional strengthening courses can be consulted in the technical files.

of affiliated organizations in the three countries with leadership skills will be trained and provided with working tools. Each course will last for 200 hours in five-hour daily sessions. The contents will be presented in four subject blocks: (a) "leadership skills" which includes strategic management, management styles, information management, how to run meetings, decision making, motivation, negotiation and conflict resolution; (b) "organizational skills" which includes planning, organization, team work and corporate image; (c) "basic management skills" which approaches the topic from the financial standpoint, including the financial structure of the agencies, public and private fund raising and financial oversight and, from the legal/labor relations standpoint, legislation on associations, foundations and other entities, examining their creation, configuration and operation, and the tax, accounting and labor obligations of not-for-profit organizations; and (d) "basic project management" which will deal with technical responses to social problems, looking at projects as technical tools, knowledge of project origination, design and analysis, preparation of technical documents and budgets for project presentation, technical management of projects and project monitoring, oversight and final evaluation. The outcome of this component will be to provide organizations of the blind with the capacity to lobby governments and companies to take action to improve the employment and social situation of the blind.

- 3.5 ***Training courses and job placement*** (US\$1,310,500 with MIF financing of US\$970,000). The purpose of this component is to train the blind in trades and to provide them with access to jobs. It includes: (a) "training for computer trainers" which will provide training in Spain for six facilitators who, in turn, will train other facilitators in their countries of origin in how to handle applications for the blind and computer adaptations (voice synthesis and Braille) to enable them to teach computer skills to the blind; (b) "computer courses" to be offered to about 280 blind people in groups with a maximum of four participants and sessions lasting no longer than four hours teaching applications for the blind, Windows, Word, Excel, Access and Internet use; (c) "preemployment training courses" to be taught by labor psychologists, which will consist of workshops to develop the beneficiaries' social and labor skills to facilitate their entering and remaining in the work force, for an estimated 500 beneficiaries; (d) "specific training courses" which will include training for teleoperators and in other specialties in demand on the market to facilitate jobs placement³ An estimated 500 people will be trained and the specialties in greatest demand are telephone and radio services, physical therapy, receptionists and administration and accounting jobs. As part of this component, training and advisory services will also be offered to blind microentrepreneurs to

³ In Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, telephone and teleservice companies are growing quickly and require well-trained human resources who are able to meet company needs. The proposed program can train people to suit their requirements, considering that the blind have comparative advantages in this kind of work, since they have no visual distractions and have greater facility in developing their hearing and verbal capabilities than sighted persons.

improve their ability to manage and sustain their enterprises. Generally, the training to be offered will be "a la carte", in other words, people will be trained for given jobs and employer requirements. Accordingly, the role of placement officers is crucial since they will identify jobs that can be held by the beneficiaries and will arrange to have them hired. An estimated 150 blind people who have been trained are expected to join the work force by project completion.

- 3.6 ***Communications and dissemination strategy*** (US\$39,500 financed by FOAL). The purpose of this component is to increase public awareness, especially among employers, about the labor potential of the blind. The component will also carry out activities to inform the community about the program, particularly the blind interested in receiving training. A communications strategy will be designed, including a web page and brochures. The program will not use charitable arguments to convince employers and society that the blind can hold down jobs and be productive. On the contrary, it will demonstrate the skills, aptitudes and abilities of people living with this type of disability, by publicizing successful experiences. The program will also carry out direct actions from time to time to whet employers' interest in hiring the blind.

IV. EXECUTION

- 4.1 The program will be executed in three years, in accordance with the implementation manual.⁴ The three subprograms will be executed in parallel to prevent the different realities and institutional situations in each country from having a negative effect on overall execution. The disbursement period will be 40 months from the effective date of the agreement with the Bank.
- 4.2 As mentioned above (paragraph 3.2), the program will have a regional technical advisor to ensure coherence and synergy among the three subprograms and to monitor the program at the regional level. The subprograms will be executed by not-for-profit organizations. In Argentina, the executing agency will be the Federación Argentina de Instituciones de Ciegos y Amblíopes [Argentine Federation of Institutions for the Blind and Visually Impaired] (FAICA), which has 38 member organizations of and for the blind, and the coordinating unit will be in the Ministry of Labor. In Chile, the executing agency will be the Unión Nacional de Instituciones Tiflológicas de Chile [National Union of Typhology Institutions of Chile] (UNITCH), and the coordinating unit will be in the Ministry of Planning and Cooperation (MIDEPLAN). In Uruguay, the Fundación Braille del Uruguay [Braille Foundation of Uruguay] (FBU) will be in charge, and the coordinating unit will be located in its headquarters. Each subprogram will establish a coordinating unit composed of an executive coordinator, a placement officer, an accounting

⁴ The implementation manual can be consulted in the technical files.

assistant and an administrative assistant. Temporary maintenance and computer support services will also be contracted.

- 4.3 In each country, the program's institutional and organizational structure includes a steering committee as the senior body. In Argentina, it will be composed of one representative from FAICA and one from the Disabled Persons and Vulnerable Groups Unit of the Ministry of Labor. In Chile, it will be composed of one representative from UNITCH, one from the Corporación de Ayuda al Limitado Visual [Corporation for Assistance for the Visually Impaired] (COALVI) and one from MIDEPLAN. In Uruguay, it will have one representative from the FBU and one from the National Employment Directorate (DINAE) of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security.
- 4.4 Each steering committee will support program execution and will meet monthly, although it may decide to convene more often, to keep abreast of progress in the program. Some of the committees' specific functions will be to: (i) approve the program implementation manual; (ii) appoint and dismiss the executive coordinator; (iii) appoint and dismiss the employees of the executing unit on the proposal of the executive coordinator; (iv) approve the operating plans and other periodic reports submitted to it by the executive coordinator; and (v) require the executive coordinator to provide pertinent information on program status and progress. The executive coordinator will act as secretary of the committee, with the right to speak but not to vote, and will prepare the minutes of all its meetings.
- 4.5 **Pilot project.** Given the innovative nature of this project and since it is the first operation with MIF financing specifically targeted to the blind, this is an opportunity for the Bank and the governments to test the interventions envisaged in the project and learn whether they are effective in helping the blind to enter the work force. Therefore, regardless of the final outcome, the program will be a very valuable learning experience.
- 4.6 **Sustainability.** The participation and backing of public sector agencies is indispensable during the program so that when the donations from the Bank and FOAL end, the governments will support organizations of the blind in continuing their training and assuring employment for their members. When the program was being designed, talks were held with government officials who expressed their interest in sitting on the steering committees in order to be involved from the outset and to assist the executing agencies in solving any problems that may arise during execution. Therefore, in the event that the program is a success, continuity will be assured since the public sector in the participating countries is highly interested in supporting a program of this kind, once its effectiveness has been demonstrated. The program will offer institutional strengthening to provide organizations of the blind with the capacity to lobby and organize activities to promote employment for the blind. It also allows for the possibility of outsourcing courses in future to training institutions in the public and private sectors.

- 4.7 **Status of project preparation.** The design of the program, which has culminated in this document and its annexes, was a joint task carried out by the Bank team, with technical support from FOAL. FOAL has expressed interest in beginning execution as soon as the Bank approves the operation and has started to establish the steering committees and identify candidates for the posts of executive coordinator.

V. PROGRAM COST AND FINANCING

- 5.1 The total cost of the program will be an estimated US\$2,360,000. MIF will provide US\$1.4 million in the form of nonreimbursable funding under the Human Resources Facility (II), FOAL will provide US\$750,000 and US\$210,000 will be provided by national organizations in the participating countries.⁵ Over half the counterpart contribution will be in cash.

CONSOLIDATED BUDGET BY SUBPROGRAM AND COMPONENT (in US\$)

BUDGET CATEGORY	IDB/MIF	FOAL	NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS	TOTAL
I. Subprogram, Argentina	626,900	348,000	73,400	1,048,300
1. Coordination	148,000	39,000	59,000	246,000
2. Institutional strengthening	45,000	75,000		120,000
3. Training/ placement	418,900	126,000	13,400	558,300
4. Communications/dissemination		23,000		23,000
5. Evaluation	15,000	85,000	1,000	101,000
II. Subprogram, Chile	500,700	255,500	73,400	829,600
1. Coordination	112,000	39,000	59,000	210,000
2. Institutional strengthening	34,000	56,000	13,400	90,000
3. Training/ placement	344,700	126,000		484,100
4. Communications/dissemination		10,500		10,500
5. Evaluation	10,000	24,000	1,000	35,000
III. Subprogram, Uruguay	272,400	146,500	63,200	482,100
1. Coordination	45,000	39,000	59,000	143,000
2. Institutional strengthening	11,000	19,000		30,000
3. Training/ placement	206,400	58,500	3,200	268,100
4. Communications/dissemination		6,000		6,000
5. Evaluation	10,000	24,000	1,000	35,000
TOTAL	1,400,000	750,000	210,000	2,360,000
Percentage	59%	32%	9%	100%

- 5.2 A revolving fund of up to 10% of the MIF donation will be established for each subprogram.

⁵ The detailed budget can be consulted in the technical files.

- 5.3 A large part of the costs are for consulting services.
- 5.4 The executing agencies will sign agreements with government agencies that will make a contribution in kind to the program

VI. PROGRAM BENEFITS AND RISKS

- 6.1 This program will assist the blind, who have traditionally faced cultural barriers to entering the work force under conditions similar to those applying to other workers, by improving their skills and demonstrating to employers their abilities, capacity and qualifications to function as good workers. Therefore, in addition to improving their quality of life, it will raise public awareness that visual impairment is not a limitation for joining the work force.
- 6.2 The program is a pilot program, since it will be implemented in just three countries, with a view to transmitting and replicating it in others. Therefore, special stress will be placed on monitoring the program and evaluating its results at the national and regional levels.
- 6.3 The greatest risk of the operation is the institutional weakness of organizations of the blind. The program will minimize that risk by strengthening the capacity of these organizations in administration, management and communications and by establishing steering committees whose members will be representatives of organizations of and for the blind and of government agencies. The public sector will be closely involved in the program and executing units will be established with managerial capacity and the ability to attract clients, which will assure that many visually impaired people participate in the program. Public sector involvement and support will also be important for ensuring program continuity and sustainability.
- 6.4 There is also the risk that companies may not be willing to offer job opportunities to the beneficiaries of the training. The risk will be mitigated through labor practices that demonstrate the capacity and discipline of the beneficiaries on the one hand and, on the other, through the negotiations and awareness activities performed by the coordinators and the placement officers. Many of the communications and dissemination activities will also be designed to demonstrate the benefits of hiring program beneficiaries.

VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 7.1 The logical framework and performance indicators for the program are presented in Annex VII-1 and will be used to monitor activities. The coordinating unit of each subprogram will be in charge of monitoring and will keep the regional technical advisor, who will monitor the program at the regional level, abreast of

developments. The coordinating units will keep complete and orderly files which will be made available to the Bank. An initial report will be submitted to the Bank, containing the plan of action, the timetable for contracting consultants, a description of activities, the implementation schedule and expected outcomes, which will be used to monitor progress. Progress reports will also be submitted within 30 days after the end of each six-month period and financial reports will be submitted 90 days after the end of each year of the program. Last, a final report will be submitted within 60 days after program completion and will describe the activities carried out, the products obtained and results as compared to objectives.

- 7.2 In addition, mid-term and final evaluations will be designed and prepared by an external consultant who is an expert in project evaluation. The reports will focus on measuring the following results: (i) the number of beneficiaries trained; (ii) the quality of the courses offered; (iii) beneficiary satisfaction; (iv) employer satisfaction; (v) the number of beneficiaries working in the areas in which they were trained; (vi) the social benefits of the courses; (vii) the extent to which the blind and potential employers are aware of the program; and (viii) the capacity of the executing agencies to promote and execute the program. Surveys and other instruments will be used to compile data. The program's technical advisor will review the design and results of the evaluations.

VIII. EXCEPTIONS TO BANK POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 8.1 No exceptions to Bank policies or procedures are envisaged.

IX. SPECIAL CONTRACTUAL CLAUSES

- 9.1 Only the conditions precedent to the first disbursement constitute special contractual clauses: (i) establishment of the steering committees; (ii) placing the implementation manual in effect; and (iii) signature of agreements between the executing agencies and government agencies.

X. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT

- 10.1 The Committee on Environment and Social Impact (CESI) considered the summary of this operation and the respective eligibility memorandum on June 8, 1999, and did not issue any comments or recommendations.

**LOGICAL FRAMEWORK
REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM FOR THE BLIND**

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<p>The general objective of the program is to help the blind in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay find jobs. The specific objective is to improve the employability and self-reliance of the blind by offering them training and strengthening the capacity of the coordinating organizations of the program.</p>		<p>40% of the beneficiaries find productive jobs.</p> <p>60% of the SMEs that benefit from the program improve their productive capacity.</p>	<p>Baseline data on employment status of the beneficiaries when they enter the program.</p> <p>Mid-term evaluation reports.</p> <p>Final evaluation reports.</p> <p>Semiannual and final reports by the coordinating units.</p>	<p>The target population of blind people interested in participating in the program.</p> <p>Organizations of and for the blind in the participating countries support the program by attracting demand.</p> <p>Companies and superintending authorities support the beneficiaries as employers.</p>
<p>Institutional Capacity Building: To improve the capacity of the coordinating organizations of the program toward improving the employability of the blind.</p>	<p>Eight 200-hours courses, 5 hours per session, for 20 to 25 people.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership skills 2. Organizational skills 3. Basic management skills 4. Basic project management 	<p>160 leaders and managers trained.</p> <p>70% of leaders and managers apply the knowledge acquired.</p> <p>100% of participating institutions are able to pinpoint the target population and keep records on progress in the labor market.</p> <p>80% of the beneficiaries improve their skills in fund raising, strategic planning, preparation of proposals and project management.</p>	<p>Reports by consultants responsible for institutional strengthening.</p> <p>Semiannual and final reports by the coordinating units.</p> <p>Mid-term and final evaluation reports.</p>	<p>Blind people with leadership capacity can be found in the participating organizations of the blind.</p> <p>The countries maintain the necessary funds to finance the program and benefit the disabled.</p>
<p>Training and Job Placement: To provide training in trades and crafts and access to jobs.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training for trainers in computer skills 2. Computer courses (72 courses) 3. Pre-job training (50 workshops) 4. Specific training 	<p>Each of the six trainers train at least another two facilitators in their countries to teach courses in computer skills for the blind.</p> <p>80% of the beneficiaries complete the courses.</p>	<p>Comparative analysis of the employment status of the beneficiaries, using data on their situation before the program.</p> <p>Survey of employers on the performance of the beneficiaries.</p>	<p>Beneficiaries are willing to compete under equal conditions with the rest of the workforce.</p> <p>The companies do not discriminate against hiring the beneficiaries of the program.</p>

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
		<p>The program offers additional or different courses to respond to changes in the labor market.</p> <p>50% of the beneficiaries who carry out internships are hired.</p> <p>80% of beneficiaries improve their SMEs as a result of the training and advisory services.</p> <p>80% of the beneficiaries benefit from job placement services.</p>	<p>Analysis of job turnover among the beneficiaries.</p> <p>Semiannual and final reports by the coordinating units.</p> <p>Mid-term and final evaluation reports.</p> <p>Monthly reports by the placement officer.</p>	<p>Technological support provided to enable the beneficiaries to perform work more independently.</p>
<p>II: Communication</p> <p>Increase public awareness, especially among the visually impaired and the blind.</p>	<p>Design and implementation of the communications strategy.</p> <p>Production of publicity materials and brochures.</p> <p>Design of a web page.</p>	<p>70% of the visually impaired are aware of the program and know how to gain access to it.</p> <p>70% of telemarketing/teleservices companies are aware of the program and the training received by beneficiaries in this field.</p> <p>Communications strategies implemented in accordance with the agreed criteria and action plans.</p> <p>Communications materials produced and disseminated based on the needs identified by the strategy.</p> <p>Awareness-raising events held as planned.</p> <p>Web page kept up to date.</p>	<p>Semiannual and final reports by the coordinating units.</p> <p>Mid-term and final evaluation reports.</p> <p>Reports by the consultants who designed the strategy.</p> <p>Survey.</p>	<p>Awareness-raising activities effective in promoting a positive attitude among the coordinators, entrepreneurs, personnel managers, supervisors and coworkers.</p>

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

REGIONAL. NONREIMBURSABLE TECHNICAL COOPERATION FOR THE LABOR INSERTION OF THE BLIND COMMUNITY REGIONAL PROGRAM

The Donors Committee of the Multilateral Investment Fund

RESOLVES:

1. That the President of the Inter-American Development Bank, or such representative as he shall designate, is authorized, on behalf of the Multilateral Investment Fund, to enter into such agreements as may be necessary with the Federación Argentina de Instituciones de Ciegos y Amblíopes (FAICA), la Unión Nacional de Instituciones Tiflológicas de Chile (UNITCH), y la Fundación Braille del Uruguay (FBU) and to adopt such other measures as may be pertinent for the execution of the plan of operations incorporated in Document MIF/AT- _____ with respect to a technical cooperation, the purpose of which is the regional program for the labor insertion of the blind community.

2. That up to the amount of US\$ 1,400,000, or its equivalent in other convertible currencies, is authorized for the purpose of this resolution, chargeable to the Human Resources Facility of the Multilateral Investment Fund.

3. That the above-mentioned sum is to be provided on a nonreimbursable basis.