

TC Document

I. Basic Information for TC

▪ Country/Region:	ECUADOR
▪ TC Name:	Applying innovation to support the inclusion and well-being of children with disabilities during and beyond COVID-19 through a technology-based strategy
▪ TC Number:	EC-T1449
▪ Team Leader/Members:	Guaipatin, Carlos (IFD/CTI) Team Leader; Almeida Oleas, Natalia (LEG/SGO); Estrella Contreras, Karla (IFD/CTI); Gonzalez Alzualde, Yohana Beatriz (IFD/CTI); Kelly Castillo, Emily Leticia (IFD/CTI); Vicentini, Isabel Cristina (IFD/CTI)
▪ Taxonomy:	Client Support
▪ Operation Supported by the TC:	.
▪ Date of TC Abstract authorization:	08 May 2020.
▪ Beneficiary:	Children with disabilities from Manta, Quito, Guayaquil y Santo Domingo
▪ Executing Agency and contact name:	Asociación Fé Y Alegría Ecuador
▪ Donors providing funding:	Japan Special Fund Poverty Reduction Program(JPO)
▪ IDB Funding Requested:	US\$800,000.00
▪ Local counterpart funding, if any:	US\$89,000.00 (In-Kind)
▪ Disbursement period (which includes Execution period):	24 months of disbursement and execution
▪ Required start date:	August 31, 2020
▪ Types of consultants:	Individuals; Firms
▪ Prepared by Unit:	IFD/CTI-Competitiveness, Technology and Innovation Division
▪ Unit of Disbursement Responsibility:	IFD-Institutions for Development Sector
▪ TC included in Country Strategy (y/n):	No
▪ TC included in CPD (y/n):	No
▪ Alignment to the Update to the Institutional Strategy 2010-2020:	Social inclusion and equality; Productivity and innovation

II. Objectives and Justification of the TC

- II.1 This project will seek to minimize the human consequences of the outbreak of COVID-19 for children with disabilities (CWD) and their families by providing 311 children with disabilities across four communities (Manta, Quito, Guayaquil and Santo Domingo) in Ecuador with a comprehensive technology-based intervention that will guarantee their continued education during isolation, as well as their psychological and emotional well-being in the new realities they are facing.
- II.2 The scope of the intervention and the mechanisms put in place ensure the project objectives remain relevant beyond the current crisis, supporting CWD and their families to navigate the challenges that will remain in the aftermath of COVID-19.
- II.3 COVID-19 has dealt the world at large with significant challenges. Vulnerable communities are particularly affected, such as children with disabilities (CWD) who under “normal” circumstances are among the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in the world. In Ecuador, COVID-19 has struck CWD and their families with new and complex scenarios, steeping them into a reality marked by hunger, illness,

limited or no access to education or technologies that could promote their education, neglect, and in some cases abuse. Prior to the pandemic, the National Registry of Disabilities of the Ministry of Public Health (RND) and the Social Registry (MIES) estimated that 12% of the population with disabilities in Ecuador lived in a situation of extreme poverty and 16% in a situation of poverty.

- II.4 As of July 9, 2020, Ecuador has 65,018 cases of COVID-19¹. The cities of Guayaquil and Santo Domingo particularly have been severely hit by the virus, with Guayaquil reporting a fivefold increase in the city's usual death rate, according to Ecuador's government.²
- II.5 In the cities of Santo Domingo and Guayaquil, the IDB, in partnership with Fe y Alegría Ecuador and with support from the IDB's Japan Special Fund Poverty Reduction Program has supported the social and educational inclusion of more than 200 children and youth with disabilities since 2010. These children live in some of the poorest neighborhoods in Ecuador, in communities marked by violence and a lack of education. Through two projects (ATN/IP-11953-EC and ATN/JO-15122-EC) that applied ICT technology through a social innovation methodology, the education and sense of opportunity of these children and youth with disabilities was improved, changing their perception of being a burden to society and increasing their opportunities for an education and a positive future.³ The results of the projects demonstrate the potential of ICT programs coupled with social innovation interventions as a means to increase academic aspirations and a sense of self of CWD, helping integrate them into their communities, and increasing the probability that they complete their secondary education and university.⁴
- II.6 Beyond being sources of education for CWD, the Fe y Alegría centers in Santo Domingo and Guayaquil operate as places where CWD's well-being is ensured. When changes in the childrens' behavior are detected, the matters are investigated. The Fe y Alegría project has policies, routes and protocols for the protection and restitution of the rights of its students with disabilities in cases of violence or neglect. The proximity of the teachers to the community allows for the identification of risk situations that may be affecting the students, thus activating protection measures.
- II.7 With the onslaught of COVID-19 however, the realities of CWD of the project have altered. Many of the families of the children supported by the project are complying with the social isolation measures ordered by the government, but as a result they are experiencing great difficulties in obtaining daily food, taking care of their family's health, paying for basic services, continuing with the educational activities and therapies required for their sons and daughters, etc. Another group of families evades government regulations to ensure their income, their subsistence, and the daily food for their family, which in turn puts their lives and that of their families at risk.
- II.8 56% of the children live with single mothers, grandparents or a relative that does not provide appropriate care, thus increasing the risk of abuse and negligence, which is rising worldwide.⁵ Because the children are no longer able to attend the educational

¹ <https://www.salud.gob.ec/actualizacion-de-casos-de-coronavirus-en-ecuador>

² The New York Times, April 14, 2020. "As Bodies Accumulate, So Do Fears of a High Coronavirus Toll in Ecuador."

³ Guaipatin & Humphreys. Social Innovation in Practice: The Case of the Fe y Alegría Project for Educational Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Ecuador. Inter-American Development Bank. 2014.

⁴ Data analysis. Carrillo, Ph. D., Assistant Professor of Economics and International Affairs in the Department of Economics and Elliot School of International Affairs at George Washington University.

⁵ The New York Times, April 14, 2020. "A New Covid-19 Crisis: Domestic Abuse Rises Worldwide."

Fe y Alegria (FyA) centers, the emotional and psychological accompaniment usually provided to ensure they are not neglected or suffering abuse are not currently available, leaving the children to fend for themselves – which most cannot do.

- II.9 In addition to the 200 CWD in Santo Domingo and Guayaquil, 111 Fe y Alegria students with disabilities in vulnerable communities in the cities of Manta and Quito find themselves in the same precarious situations as their colleagues in Santo Domingo and Guayaquil.
- II.10 According to UNICEF, the current pandemic will make it less likely for people with disabilities to be prioritized in resource allocation and priority setting.⁶ Virtual educational content and resources are not being implemented in a way that is inclusive for CWD. The low level of access of people with disabilities to technological resources and Internet connectivity make it even more difficult for the measures adopted to guarantee their access, participation, learning and continuity in their studies. In addition, the virtual education modality do not consider the requirements for them to be accessible to diversity (Sign Language, Braille System, easy reading or curricular adaptations).
- II.11 Nowadays, there is consensus about the benefits of technology in the educational process; however, technology can also be useful as a monitoring tool. This project will implement a social innovation technology-driven approach benefitting 311 CWD and their families in Manta, Quito, Santo Domingo and Guayaquil (an estimated total number of 4000 final beneficiaries) by tapping into technology's dual functionality as both a tool for education, but also as a means of monitoring physical and psychological well-being of CWD by keeping up a channel of communication and engagement.
- II.12 By putting in place the right technologies accompanied by an evidence-based curriculum and intervention to ensure that children with disabilities do not fall further to the periphery, this project will provide a long-term engagement platform to ensure CWD continue to learn and develop in order to pursue the opportunities that come with education: to get a job, escape poverty, support their families, and develop their communities.
- II.13 As the IDB adapts its responses and intervention mechanisms to the current COVID-19 pandemic, this project will stand as an example and provide lessons learned on how to reach and support the most vulnerable persons in times of social distancing and isolation, as well as in the aftermath of such a crisis. The project will be the first of its kind in tapping into the dual functionality of technology as both a tool to continue the education of CWD from a distance, while also serving as an emotional support by allowing CWD to connect with those persons outside their homes that can monitor their well-being and ensure they are not suffering from either neglect or abuse.
- II.14 **Strategic Alignment.** This TC is consistent with the Second Update to the Institutional Strategy (AB-3190-2) and its aligned with the development challenges of: (i) Social inclusion and equality, by facilitating access to education to children with disabilities; and (ii) Productivity and Innovation, by incorporating technology-based interventions. Additionally, the TC is aligned with the objectives of the Japan Special Fund Poverty Reduction Program (JPO) as it will support poverty reduction and social development activities that respond to the needs of socially and economically disadvantaged people.

⁶ UNICEF. COVID-19 response: Considerations for Children and Adults with Disabilities.

III. Description of components and budget

- III.1 To reach its objectives, the project will develop a comprehensive approach combining the acquisition of technologies with inclusive software, educational curriculum, connectivity with teachers and social workers to ensure that 311 CWD and their families avoid further exclusion and disadvantage during and in the aftermath of COVID-19 by providing them the means to continue their education in conjunction with providing emotional support and monitoring their well-being.
- III.2 **Component 1. Technology, Connectivity and Software to Enable Distance Education and Social-Emotional Support for CWD during COVID-19 (US\$240,000).** This component will support CWD and teachers with the technological resources necessary for at-a-distance education and emotional support during the current pandemic. The resources will be utilized for the financing of equipment, materials and internet connectivity to enable and facilitate distance education for children and adolescents with disabilities during COVID-19.
- III.3 **Component 2. Development and Implementation of Customized Virtual Education Tools for CWD (US\$220,000 (JPO); US\$29,000 (FyA)).** This component will support children with disabilities, their families, caregivers, and teachers to ensure the continuity of education through virtual education tools, including the development and implementation of a virtual education platform, training of approximately 40 teachers in the use of educational technology and methodologies for virtual education and the adaptation of existing curricula to the current situation and new demands brought about by COVID-19. In addition, teachers, caregivers and families will be trained to provide emotional support to children with disabilities as they deal with the isolation brought about by the pandemic. Fe y Alegria's in-kind contribution to this component consists in a team of five specialized educators participating in the processes of validation and implementation of the virtual at-a-distance education and curriculum methodology adapted for students with disabilities. These Fe y Alegria professionals will dedicate 32% of their monthly worktime to the project and will consist of the national coordinator of educational welfare and inclusion and the educational inclusion technicians of Santo Domingo, Guayaquil, Manta and Quito.
- III.4 **Component 3. ICT for Violence Prevention and Monitoring of Children with Disabilities (US\$230,000 (JPO); US\$60,000 (FyA)).** This component will support the well-being of CWD through the innovative application of technology, particularly focusing on the prevention of violence and abuse. The resources will hire consultants to identify cases of violence or abuse against children and adolescents with disabilities, by type and degree of vulnerability. Through virtual home visits and alert mechanisms with the use of ICTs and the education platform, conditions will be created to protect infants and adolescents with disabilities in situations of psycho-social risk that are intensified by measures of social confinement. Furthermore, professional emotional support, counseling, and therapeutic listening to families of students with disabilities at higher risk or violence during Covid-19 will be provided, as well as the management of alliances with leading institutions in the prevention of violence and protection of rights. The activity related to emotional support must be carried out by a multidisciplinary team and will not depend exclusively on external consultants, since it requires multiple professional perspectives and the exchange of different disciplines and ways to identify psychosocial and educational needs. In this sense, Fe y Alegria's in-kind contribution to this component will consist in the engagement of a psycho-pedagogical support team in each of the four center, that will also participate in the implementation of the action plan for emotional support to families of students with

disabilities. The team of professionals from the Comprehensive Educational Welfare Department of Fe y Alegria centers in which the project will be implemented has been considered for this work, with a part-time dedication of at least 50%.

- III.5 **Component 4. Impact Evaluation and Studies (US\$50,000).** This component will finance the evaluation of the effectiveness of the project activities and a study to design and potentially inform a national strategy for the inclusion and education of children with disabilities in situations of isolation. Furthermore, a documentary of the project will be developed for visibility and strategic communication purposes.
- III.6 **Component 5. Administration, Monitoring and Audits (US\$60,000).** This component will finance project execution costs, including basic services, platform for virtual meetings, internet, office supplies, office equipment, project management consultancy and external audit of the project.
- III.7 The estimated total cost of the project is US\$889.000, which will be financed with a Bank contribution of up to US\$800.000 from the resources of the Japan Special Fund Poverty Reduction Program, and a local counterpart contribution from Fe y Alegria Ecuador of US\$89.000 (in kind). Visibility and acknowledgement to the Japan Special Fund Poverty Reduction Program (JPO) will be provided in high-visibility events, publications, training programs, seminars and workshops related to the project and project results. All knowledge material developed will be made available through the Bank's website. The distribution of the project resources is presented in the indicative budget below:

Indicative Budget (US\$)

Component	Description	IDB/ JPO Funding	Counterpart Funding	Total Funding
Component 1. Technology, connectivity, and software to enable distance education and social-emotional support for CWD during COVID-19	Equipment, materials, and internet connectivity to enable and facilitate distance education for children and adolescents with disabilities	240,000	0	240,000
Component 2. Development and implementation of customized virtual education tools for CWD	Virtual at-a-distance curriculum proposal for CWD; virtual education platform; training of 40 teachers in the use of educational technology and methodologies for virtual education	220,000	29,000	249,000
Component 3. ICT for violence prevention and monitoring of CWD	At-a-distance consultancies to detect cases of violence or abuse; mechanisms of violence prevention; emotional support to families of and CWD during Covid-19.	230,000	60,000	290,000
Component 4. Impact Evaluation and Studies	Baseline; Impact evaluation; documentary development.	50,000	\$0.00	80,000

Component 5. Administration, monitoring and audits	Administration costs, financial audit, and evaluation report.	60,000	\$0.00	50,000
Total		800,000	89,000	889,000

- III.8 TC Supervision will be provided by the Inter-American Development Bank through the Competitiveness and Innovation Division (IFD/CTI). Carlos Guaipatin, CTI Specialist, will provide technical supervision of the TC on behalf of the Bank.
- III.9 The Project Manager, in addition to the general programming of the project, elaboration of terms of reference, management of acquisitions, contracting, monitoring of the project's result indicators, etc., will submit monthly progress reports to the Executing Agency and semi-annual progress reports throughout the disbursement period of the project (within 60 days of the conclusion of each semester) to the Bank. The final evaluation report will be produced by a different external consultant financed with the resources of the Bank's contribution.

IV. Executing agency and execution structure

- IV.1 The executing agency of the project will be Fe y Alegría Ecuador (FyA). FyA is a private non-profit organization that provides education services and social support to the most vulnerable sector in Ecuador. FyA has been working in Ecuador since 1964 and has since its inception provided poor and disadvantaged children with education opportunities. FyA has extensive experience executing Bank financed technical cooperation operations⁷. The most recent IDB project executed by FyA produced an ICT for education methodology that is now being implemented in 5 countries across the Region.
- IV.2 The execution of the project will be coordinated by a program manager, who will: (i) plan, coordinate, supervise the execution of the activities established in the project components; (ii) prepare annual work plans; (iii) prepare terms of reference for, and identify, select, contract, and evaluate the performance of external consultants; (iv) produce the semi-annual progress reports; and (v) coordinate the contracting of the external audit of the project. The program manager will be an external resource (not part of Fe y Alegria) and the cost of this service is included in Component 5.
- IV.3 **Procurement.** Fe y Alegria will conduct the procurement of goods and consulting services required for the execution of this TC in accordance with appendix 4 of the Policies for the Procurement of Goods and Works Financed by the IDB (document GN-2349-15) and the Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants Financed by the IDB (document GN-2350-15).
- IV.4 **Financial management.** Fe y Alegria will carry out the financial management of the project resources pursuant to the provisions of the Financial Management Guidelines for IDB-financed Projects (document OP-273-12). The executing agency will deliver the project audited financial statements within 120 days from the date of the expiration of the disbursement period or any extension thereof. The audit will be carried out by an independent audit firm acceptable to the Bank.

V. Major issues

⁷ ATN/IP-11953-EC and ATN/JO-15122-EC.

- V.1 The 2010 and 2015 “ICT for Inclusion projects” executed by Fe y Alegría Ecuador provided the groundwork and established trust between the children with disabilities, their families, and the Fe y Alegría team, teachers and social workers in the communities of Santo Domingo and Guayaquil. Working for the inclusion of children with disabilities is an undertaking that requires involvement of the final beneficiaries, their families and their community, which supports the mitigation of some of the risk associated with working with excluded groups. Nevertheless, there are some potential risks to take into consideration for this project, particularly within the context of COVID-19:
- V.2 **Risks related to the loss, damage or theft of technological equipment (tablets, iPads or laptops) delivered to families for the development of educational activities in virtual mode.** This risk will be mitigated by: (i) contracting an insurance that allows for equipment replacement (ii) installation of an application to find, block or delete the device data remotely (iii) technical support for the teams from the territorial divisions of Fe y Alegría and training for families to report on the proper use of the equipment. (iv) signed commitment and regular check-ins from families to ensure good use of equipment.
- V.3 **Risk of transmission of COVID-19 in families and members of Fe y Alegría’s support team.** All preventive measures and biosafety protocols will be applied for at-a-distance visits and delivery of equipment.
- V.4 **Increase in the dropout of students due to reduced family income and fear of the risk of infection of their children by COVID-19 for attending school.** This project will promote the continuity of education and studies for children with disabilities by establishing virtual education, training, and provision of equipment with Internet connectivity catered specifically to CWD. To promote the permanence in the education program of students from families with higher socioeconomic risk, a scholarship campaign for students with disabilities will be strengthened.
- V.5 **Teaching team members with limited training, experience, and predisposition for the use of technology for education and inclusion.** The level of knowledge and use of virtual education platforms and methodologies for virtual education will be identified in teachers. Based on this information, training processes on computer technologies, applications and tools will be developed for teachers. Incentives aimed at teachers for the use of educational technology will be created.

VI. Exceptions to Bank policy

- VI.1 No exceptions to Bank policies are required for this TC.

VII. Environmental and Social Strategy

- VII.1 Given the nature of the TC, no negative environmental impacts are foreseen. The TC will support the strengthening of processes and capacities of the tax administration, for which reason public works or infrastructure will not be financed. In accordance with the Bank’s Environment and Safeguards Compliance Policy (OP703), this operation has been classified in category “C”. See [Safeguards Policy Filter Report \(SPF\)](#) and the [Safeguard Screening Form \(SSF\)](#).

Required Annexes:

[Request from the Client_90275.pdf](#)

[Results Matrix_7978.pdf](#)

[Terms of Reference_81940.pdf](#)

[Procurement Plan_76195.pdf](#)