**TC Document**

1. **Basic Information for TC**

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| * Country/Region: | REGIONAL |
| * TC Name: | Accelerating learning outcomes for vulnerable youths through tutoring and mentoring programs. |
| * TC Number: | RG-T4136 |
| * Team Leader/Members: | Zoido Lobaton, Pablo (SCL/EDU) Team Leader; Castro De Souza Marotta, Luana (SCL/EDU) Alternate Team Leader; Blasco, Ivana (SCL/EDU); Carolina Hernandez (SCL/EDU); Emilio Laguillo Gutierrez (SCL/EDU); Gonzalo Almeyda (SCL/EDU); Jimenez Mosquera, Javier I. (LEG/SGO); Molina De Dardon, Gabriela Maria (CID/CES); Tamagnan, Marie Evane (SCL/EDU) Team Leader; Castro De Souza Marotta, Luana (SCL/EDU) Alternate Team Leader; Thompson, Jennelle (SCL/EDU) Alternate Team Leader; Blasco, Ivana (SCL/EDU); Carolina Hernandez (SCL/EDU); Emilio Laguillo Gutierrez (SCL/EDU); Felipe Fernando Sarmiento Caldas (SCL/EDU); Gonzalo Almeyda (SCL/EDU); Molina De Dardon, Gabriela Maria (CID/CES); Natalia Almeida (LEG/SGO) |
| * Taxonomy: | Client Support |
| * Operation Supported by the TC: | . |
| * Date of TC Abstract authorization: | 14 Jul 2022. |
| * Beneficiary: | Ministries of Education of Ecuador and the Dominican Republic |
| * Executing Agency and contact name: | Inter-American Development Bank |
| * Donors providing funding: | Japan Special Fund(JSF) |
| * IDB Funding Requested: | US$500,000.00 |
| * Local counterpart funding, if any: | US$55,000.00 (Cash) |
| * Disbursement period (which includes Execution period): | 24 months |
| * Required start date: | 01/02/2023 |
| * Types of consultants: | Firms and individual consultants |
| * Prepared by Unit: | SCL/EDU-Education |
| * Unit of Disbursement Responsibility: | SCL/EDU-Education |
| * 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; Gender equality |

1. **Objectives and Justification of the TC**
   1. **Objective.** The Project seeks to support the protection of education trajectories of vulnerable youths between 9-14 years old from Ecuador and the Dominican Republic by accelerating the recovery of learning outcomes that were lost due to school closure to mitigate exposure to COVID-19. The target population will be further defined in close coordination with the education authorities of each country. This goal will be achieved through the provision of personalized tutoring and mentoring sessions that help increase academic performance in fundamental cognitive skills such as mathematics and language, as well as socioemotional skills, reducing inter-annual drop-out rates and promoting progression rates.
   2. **Justification.** The COVID-19 crisis affected the education systems in Latin America and the Caribbean, which during 2020 kept their schools closed for approximately 231 days impacting on education trajectories of almost 158 million students in the region (UNICEF, 2021). In the case of Ecuador and the Dominican Republic the number of students affected by school closures were 5.1 million and 3 million, respectively. Policies of school closure had negative impacts on students. Estimations show that around 3.5 million youths will drop-out from school, a reduction of 1.7% on the assistance rate (Szekely et al., 2022). Moreover, the World Bank (2021) estimated that the proportion of youths with low academic performance could increase by 19 p.p. for Ecuador and 11 p.p. for the Dominican Republic.
   3. Given this context, the TC will support the efforts of the Ministries of Education in Ecuador and Dominican Republic to recover from COVID-19. These countries were selected due to their learning recovery needs and the priorities identified through political dialogue with government authorities during the Regional Public Good with “Educación Mesoamérica” and the Regional Policy Dialogue. Moreover, in the Dominican Republic they are finishing a pilot study on tutoring and this TC would help enlarge the pilot to evaluate the possibility of institutionalization and scalability. In Ecuador, the national government has largely invested in hybrid and flexible models and has directly asked the Bank to be part of the study. These two countries will benefit from the same project for tutoring as evidence has shown that it is a cost-efficient mechanism to accelerate learning and recover what was lost during the pandemic.
   4. This TC will use diverse models of tutoring mechanisms – using phone SMS and calls, videocalls; one to one and in small groups – as they are shown to be an opportunity for accelerating learning outcomes at scale (Carvalho et al, 2020). These types of programs had great results at international levels, achieving impacts as high as 0.37 standard deviations in learning outcomes of students if they are implemented with small groups, and with tutors that may be professionals or volunteers, depending on the preferences expressed by the education authorities, trained with highly structured guidelines (Angrist et al., 2020a). Moreover, in LAC, tutoring programs have been found to motivate students to remain at school, promote attendance and academic performance, especially in those youths that have high risk of dropping-out (Barrera –Osorio et al., 2018).
   5. The TC leverages lessons learnt from tutoring programs implemented in El Salvador, México, Guatemala,[[1]](#footnote-2) and Argentina[[2]](#footnote-3), where tutors are selected among volunteers from universities, and who provided 20 minutes phone calls once a week and sent SMS reminders for a period of 8 weeks. First results show that there was an increase of children and youth that can solve division problems of around 42 p.p. This is positive as it shows that there is an impact on learning coming from tutoring and thus, can be replicated to other settings such as Ecuador and Dominican Republic in which we expect similar results.
   6. **Strategic Alignment**. This TC is a priority for the SCL and EDU as it is aligned to the Skills Development Sector Framework (OP-2002). It promotes technology usage to increase access to skills development, strengthen the efficiency of the education systems and develop evidence to be used on decision-making. The products of the TC would be of great value to determine the scaling capacity of the remote tutoring interventions, vital to create or pursue new operations. Finally, this TC is consistent with the Second Update of the Institutional Strategy (AB-3190-2) as it is aligned with the strategic area that promotes the use of technology and innovation and the transversal axis of gender equality, diversity, and inclusion.
2. **Description of activities/components and budget** 
   1. **Component I: Strengthening capabilities of tutors.** This component has the objective of designing and implementing the training programs each tutor will follow in order for them to provide adequate tutoring and mentoring to vulnerable youths by phone. This component will finance: i) Development of the training plan, manual, and agenda for each country, and the ii) provision of the actual Training activities (e.g., training webinars, practice pilots, trainers). The component will hire a specialized firm to design the strategy and methodology of the tutor training program, develop the training plan and materials (including agenda, manual, etc.), and implement the training program for tutors. In all cases, the identification of tutors will be done with the help and intermediation of local institutions and with the approval of the Ministry of Education of each participating country.
   2. **Component II: Implementation of tutoring and mentoring pilots.** This component has the objective to provide vulnerable youths with extra-curricular activities with the goal of increasing their learning outcomes on cognitive and socioemotional skills. This component will finance: i) Design of the tutoring and mentoring contents for a diversity of disciplines based on the principle of “teaching at the right level”, ii) Resources needed for the implementation and monitoring of the program such as data collection software, disbursement services, etc. iii) Tutor’s stipend or monetary incentives for their participation in the program
   3. **Component III: Monitoring, evaluation, and knowledge products.** This component has the objective to supervise the adequate implementation of the tutoring and mentoring programs and timely correct any issues hindering the implementation. This component will finance technical assistance to develop the impact evaluation including: i) Impact evaluation strategy, ii) Design, pilot and analysis of the tools and instruments needed to evaluate the program, and iii) developing the reports and knowledge products related to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the program. The evaluation will rely on specialized firms for the data collection and analysis of the results.
   4. **Component IV: Communications and results dissemination strategy.** This component has the objective to develop and implement a communication strategy and all its activities in order to disseminate the results and products that the program will produce. This component will finance: i) Dissemination spaces with different stakeholders to discuss lessons learnt (e.g., webinars, conferences), and ii) Communication products (e.g., videos, podcasts, photos, infographics). The component will be implemented by specialized firms who will participate in the design of the communication strategy, its implementation and the development of communication products and dissemination spaces.
   5. **Expected results.** As a result of the execution of this TC it is expected that, with the goal of protecting the education trajectories of vulnerable youths, the students that receive the tutorials will increase their academic performance in mathematics, the inter-annual drop-out rates will reduce, and the progression rates will be promoted.
   6. **Budget**. The total cost of this TC will be US$ 555,000, of which $500,000 will be provided by the Japan Special Fund (JSF), and US$ 55,000 by counterpart financing. This counterpart financing will be provided by each beneficiary by time dedicated by technical officials to the implementation of the operation. The total execution and disbursement period will be 24 months for all activities, including six months for evaluation.

**Indicative Budget in US$**

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| **Component** | **IDB/JSF Fund** | **Local CT** | **Total** |
| **Component 1:** Strengthening capabilities of tutors | 40,000 | - | 40,000 |
| **Component 2:** implementation of tutoring and mentoring pilots | 220,000 | 55,000 | 275,000 |
| **Component 3:** Monitoring, evaluation and knowledge products | 140,000 | - | 140,000 |
| **Component 4:** Communications and results dissemination strategy | 100,000 | - | 100,000 |
| **TOTAL** | **500,000** | **55,000** | **555,000** |

1. **Executing agency and execution structure** 
   1. The Inter-American Development Bank will be the executing agency of the Technical Cooperation as requested by the beneficiary countries through their letters requesting for support. In this capacity, the IDB Team will work directly through periodic meetings with the Ministries of Education and the relevant implementing partners to determine the target population, operational structure, and adaptations to the basic intervention to meet the beneficiaries’ specific needs.
   2. Given the regional scope of this Technical Cooperation and the difficulty of identifying a regional body to implement the project, the Bank will be the executing agency in conformity with the criteria laid out in Annex II of OP-619-4. Additionally, the Bank counts on a great amount of experience in implementing cost-effective interventions that seek to accelerate and recover learning outcomes using technology. The Bank has led a strategy in Honduras to promote and support distant learning to more than 3,000 youths by using the digital platform Kolibri (RG-T3742). Additionally, the Bank is currently implementing tutoring programs to support mathematics learning by phone calls in El Salvador, Mexico, Guatemala and Argentina, which is benefitting around 1,800 youths per country (RG-T3766, BK-A1625, RG-E1743). This experience from the Bank guarantees and adequate a strong implementation of the TC and assures that results serve as inputs for decision making on whether the programs are scalable and for the design of future operations of the Bank, also it helps to strengthen the political dialogue with the countries as well as developing technical capabilities of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.
   3. The IDB is a multilateral organization with extensive expertise in Mesoamerica through its country offices, allowing agile coordination between countries and actors on the ground. Additionally, it enjoys regional recognition as a technical cooperation executing agency in education. The IDB has experience in the coordination of international donors, the monitoring of funds and has quick disbursement and spending mechanisms. Finally, it is appropriate for IDB to assume the responsibility of selecting and hiring consulting services considering that it would contribute to the sustainability of the implementation of the TC and no other regional entity with legal capacity to execute Components 1, 2, 3, 4 has been identified.
   4. **Procurement.** The activities to be executed in all components will be contracted in accordance with the Bank’s policies as follow: (a) AM-650, Complementary Workforce, for individual consultants; (b) Policy for the Selection and Contracting of Consulting Firms for Bank-executed Operational Work (GN-2765-4) and its Operational Guidelines (OP-1155-4) for consulting firms; and (c) GN-2303-20, Corporate Procurement, for logistic and other related services.
   5. All deliverables and any other material prepared under this TC are the sole and exclusive property of the Bank, and as such, the Bank has title, rights (including copyrights) and exclusive interests in the ownership of said works.
   6. **Visibility of JSF.** In keeping with Annex 1 of the April 2016 Operating Guidance for the JSF, once the TC is approved, a joint press release will be issued by the Bank and the Government of Japan through the Japanese Embassy in each participating country. The press release will include the financial contribution from the Government of Japan and provide a summary of the project objective and activities of the TC that will address COVID-19 in the participating countries. Additionally, component IV of the TC will allow the organization of a launch event where the Japanese ambassadors to the benefiting countries can participate. Also, this component allows for the organization of international meetings presenting the results of the tutoring programs to other countries in the region for which we would provide visibility to Japan through the participation of their authorities in the country (e.g. ambassador) if available. Moreover, all communication and knowledge products will always have the logo of the Japan Special Fund to recognize their support to the program. Finally, the team will remain in touch with representatives of JICA in the beneficiary countries in order to find additional opportunities to increase the visibility of the JSF during the execution of this project.
2. **Project Risks and Major issues**
   1. Given that tutoring and mentoring programs will be implemented through virtual or hybrid mechanisms, it is important to consider the technological gaps that exist in the targeted countries and population. To solve this issue, the programs will be implemented through phone calls and SMS texting. Both technologies have high levels of coverage and penetration in Ecuador and Dominican Republic.
   2. Considering that the Bank, as executor of the operation, will hire services to deploy the tutoring and mentoring programs, past experiences have shown that families of the target population could have high levels of suspicion on the real goal of the program, leading participants to drop-out or rejection from the program. To account for this issue, the Bank will build a strong relationship with the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders from the education sector in the participating countries, which allows it to provide legitimacy and trust to the program and the implementation team.
   3. The tutoring program relies on a one-to-one mechanism to provide academic support through phone. Thus, there is the risk that tutors – if not selected correctly – could pose a threat to children’s wellbeing. To solve this, volunteered tutors will be selected from a pool of university students that were enrolled in the pedagogic department, and will be required to follow a thorough selection process by interview and those who pass will have to participate in a rigorous training workshop. Additionally, during the implementation tutoring lessons by phone, the children should be accompanied always by an adult and the phone must be on speaker phone so there is transparency on everything the tutor communicates to the child.
3. **Exceptions to Bank policy**

6.1 No exceptions have been identified to applicable Bank's policies.

1. **Environmental and Social Strategy** 
   1. This Technical Cooperation is not intended to finance pre-feasibility or feasibility studies of specific investment projects or environmental and social studies associated with them; therefore, this TC does not have applicable requirements of Bank´s Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF).

**Required Annexes:**

[Request from the Client - RG-T4136](https://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getDocument.aspx?DOCNUM=EZSHARE-613711249-3)

[Results Matrix - RG-T4136](https://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getDocument.aspx?DOCNUM=EZSHARE-613711249-6)

[Terms of Reference - RG-T4136](https://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getDocument.aspx?DOCNUM=EZSHARE-613711249-5)

[Procurement Plan - RG-T4136](https://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getDocument.aspx?DOCNUM=EZSHARE-613711249-4)

1. RG-T3766 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. BK-A1625 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)