

TC Document

I. Basic Information for TC

▪ Country/Region:	REGIONAL
▪ TC Name:	Children Affected by Migration in the Northern Triangle
▪ TC Number:	RG-T3966
▪ Team Leader/Members:	Elias Gonzalez, Alison (SCL/MIG) Team Leader; Naslund-Hadley, Emma Ingrid (SCL/EDU) Alternate Team Leader; Adela Davalos (SCL/MIG); Blasco, Ivana (SCL/EDU); Emilio Laguillo (SCL/EDU); Hincapie Ordonez, Diana Patricia (SCL/EDU); Michel Torino, Belen (SCL/EDU); Sanmartin Baez, Alvaro Luis (LEG/SGO); Sobral De Elia, Mariana (SCL/MIG); Us Alvarez, Hugo Amador (SCL/GDI) Laguillo (SCL/EDU); Hincapie Ordonez, Diana Patricia (SCL/EDU); Michel Torino, Belen (SCL/EDU); Sanmartin Baez, Alvaro Luis (LEG/SGO); Sobral De Elia, Mariana (SCL/MIG); Us Alvarez, Hugo Amador (SCL/GDI)
▪ Taxonomy:	Research and Dissemination
▪ Operation Supported by the TC:	.
▪ Date of TC Abstract authorization:	23 Sep 2021.
▪ Beneficiary:	Guatemala and Honduras
▪ Executing Agency and contact name:	Inter-American Development Bank
▪ Donors providing funding:	Early Childhood Development Innovation Multidonor Fund(ECD)
▪ IDB Funding Requested:	US\$251,283.00
▪ Local counterpart funding, if any:	US\$0
▪ Disbursement period (which includes Execution period):	24 months
▪ Required start date:	December 2021
▪ Types of consultants:	Firms or individuals
▪ Prepared by Unit:	SCL/MIG-Migration Unit
▪ Unit of Disbursement Responsibility:	SCL/MIG-Migration Unit
▪ 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

II. Objectives and Justification of the TC

- 2.1 The long history of political turmoil, violence, and uneven and unstable economic development continues to fuel emigration from Central America. Every day, children are either left behind by their parents or leave with them from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras to set off on the perilous journey northward, compromising their wellbeing and experiencing emotional and psychological processes that pose a threat to their long-term development. A recent study by [Näslund-Hadley et al. \(2020\)](#) shows that only in El Salvador, more than 100,000 children are raised without their parents, being migration the main reason for their absence. The results from this study have highlighted the development challenges

and effects (cognitive and behavioral) of left-behind- children and the urgent need to support this group of children and their caregivers. Expanding this study to Guatemala and Honduras, two countries whose migrants represent 7.3% and 8.2% of the total population, respectively, and that have similar socioeconomic characteristics and prevalence of left behind children is of great importance to improve policy design.

- 2.2 The overall objective of this TC is to analyze the effect on social and emotional development of children affected by migration, the care services accessible to relatives or caregivers raising these children, and parenting practices in households affected by migration in Honduras and Guatemala. The specific objectives are to generate data that will allow: (1) identifying households with children aged 2-6 years whose parents have migrated, and (2) estimating the effect of migration on the social and emotional development of these children. Additionally, using qualitative and quantitative methodologies will allow describing the phenomenon of accompanied or unaccompanied migrant minors, and the potential effects it may have on their development. In contrast with the previous study in El Salvador, we aim to reduce the scope to households whose parents are absent only due to migration because it is a phenomenon that will potentially continue to expand as natural disasters, droughts, violence, and changes in US migration policy push migrants out of these Central American countries.
- 2.3 **Migration drivers.** Many interrelated factors are driving people from the Northern Triangle, including lack of economic opportunity, poverty, food insecurity, and chronic violence. An estimated 311,000 people, on average, left Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador annually from 2014 to 2020 with the majority bound for the United States, leaving their families and children behind to look for better opportunities. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of hurricanes Eta and Iota in November 2020 and changes in migration policy in the US have sparked new migration flows from these countries. Between October 2018 and 2021 there have been several waves of migrant caravans and it has become common to see women and unaccompanied children. Children may be apprehended in transit or upon reaching their destinations, only to be separated from their families, detained and returned to their countries of origin.
- 2.4 Rural and indigenous populations in Guatemala and Honduras are increasingly on the move, either internally displaced or migrating to other countries. Although migration authorities do not classify migrants according to their mother tongue, deportees from Guatemala were from many departments with high percentages of indigenous populations such as Quetzaltenango, Huehuetenango, Totonicapán. In the case of Honduras, migrants were from Cortés, Francisco Morazán, Yoro and Olancho, which have very low indigenous populations.
- 2.5 **Effect of migration on children's development.** The impact on development outcomes for migrant or left-behind-children is an understudied topic in Latin America and the factors affecting these children have not previously been

systematically documented. The available evidence on the effect of parental migration on the human capital of children who stay at home is mixed. On one hand, some studies carried out in Egypt and Peru find that remittances sent by parents have a positive effect on the probability of children enrolling in private schools ([Koska et al., 2013](#); [Salas et al., 2014](#)), and on the delay in children's entry into the labor market ([Koska et al., 2013](#)). On the other hand, studies in Peru find negative effects of parental migration on the continuity of children's education ([Oropesa and Frisancho Robles, 2011](#)), while another study in Ethiopia, India, Vietnam, and also Peru, suggests that the effect of parental migration on children's cognitive skills may vary by country and by reason for migration ([Nguyen, 2016](#)).

- 2.6 In general, the literature on the effect of migration on early childhood development (ECD) is very limited, and in the case of the Northern Triangle, a region with a high level of migration and high prevalence of children whose parents migrate ([Näslund-Hadley et al., 2020](#)), it is practically nonexistent. Household survey data indicate that between a fifth and a quarter of children in the 3 to 6-year age-group are raised by grandparents in the Northern Triangle; and that a proportion of these households are skipped-generation households, that is, households in which children are raised by their grandparents. In contrast to three-generation households – that often have a positive effect on child development ([DeLeire & Kalil, 2002](#); [Pong & Chen, 2010](#)) – children in skipped-generation households more often display developmental and cognitive delays. Näslund-Hadley et al. (2020) found that children in skipped-generation households in El Salvador reach fewer developmental milestones and have significantly lower levels of overall development than children who grow up with their parents. The gap is wider for socioemotional than cognitive skills, highlighting the need for policy responses to help caregivers create home environments that promote children's social and emotional development. Additionally, when considering the effect of remittances in reducing financial hardship and impact on children's education in Salvadoran households, Rubio (2020) found that these do not fully compensate for the adverse consequences of parental absence due to migration.
- 2.7 The cognitive and behavioral impact on left-behind-children by migrating parents may have widened as the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced the access and quality of the educational services, tutoring, and counseling support, particularly for most vulnerable groups. Also, there is little evidence on the effect that the migration process has on the child when migrating accompanied or alone. The events that can occur during the migration process can be traumatic, causing long-term psychological damage to children. On the other hand, children lose the opportunity to continue their education and other routine processes such as medical care, which can have important effects on their cognitive and socio-emotional development. There are also no clear policies on how to prevent, protect and assist in the reintegration of these minors after their return, so a deeper understanding of the phenomenon would allow the design of intervention strategies.

- 2.8 **IDB Regional Survey of ECD in Times of COVID-19.** The IDB has partnered with Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) and Ministries of Education in El Salvador, Colombia, Costa Rica, Belize, and Nicaragua (BL-T1130, ES-T1295, RG-T3828), conducting surveys of households with young children. This regional survey of tens of thousands of households includes questions about migration of household members. The proposed TC will complement and draw on this already existing survey data in the analysis.
- 2.9 **Strategic Alignment.** At an institutional level, the operation is aligned with the Bank's prioritization of early childhood development as laid out in the Strategy on Social Policy for Equity and Productivity (GN-2588-4). The operation addresses the inequalities in early childhood that tend to persist into adulthood and amplify into persistent social exclusion and inequalities. The operation also addresses how the COVID-19 pandemic impacts vulnerable populations to identify how different groups of children should be targeted by policies and programs to improve care and education that could prevent them from being left behind. This focus on social inclusion and equity aligns the operation with the IDB Group's Second Update to the Institutional Strategy (UIS) 2020-2023 (GN-2933-5). It is also aligned with the priorities of the country strategies with Guatemala 2017-2020 (GN-2899) and Honduras 2019-2022 (GN-2944) to increase access to quality education, including preschool education. The TC is also aligned with the Early Childhood Development Sector Framework Document (GN-2966-2) and the Skills Development Sector Framework Document (GN-3012-3), which promotes quality early childhood development services, and aims to ensure that infants and young children develop the cognitive, language, motor, and socioemotional skills that will allow them to enter school ready to learn. Investment in education and child development are also prioritized in the Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle, which was developed jointly by the governments of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Lastly, this TC is aligned with the ECD Innovation Fund in data generation, studies and learning in the ECD field.

III. Description of activities/components and budget

- 3.1 To achieve its objective, the TC will finance data collection and analysis through surveying households with children who are 2 to 6 years of age in municipalities with high levels of poverty and share of emigrants. The project will work with primary data that will be collected through the application of surveys to caregivers and children. The information will allow the characterization of these households and the profiles of returned or left-behind-children, identifying early childhood development needs and challenges, cognitive skills, quality time allocated by caregivers to children and types of activities done in the household that promote socioemotional development, the care services accessible to relatives or caregivers raising these children, and access to educational materials for early learning, impact from pandemic, within others. Additionally, this data collection exercise will contribute to understanding the problematic and developing strategies

and activities supporting training for caregivers and promotion of socioemotional development.

- 3.2 **Component I. Study of Children Affected by Migration (US\$246,000).** The component will finance the implementation of a series of instruments to collect information and data analytics:

a) Household census survey: This survey aims to identify households with children of eligible age whose parents have migrated or been affected by migration, as well as to obtain information on outcome indicators and household conditions. The instruments developed for the study of El Salvador (ES-T1295) to survey households with children in municipalities with high share of emigrants to collect the baseline will be adjusted accordingly to fit this project. In order to identify the maximum number of households with children of eligible age and whose parents or them have migrated, a massive survey strategy will be carried out. Surveys will be self-administered and online, and since they are programmed in Kobo¹, it could be easily shared through a Whatsapp link. With the support of the Ministries of Education, this link will be sent to teachers who will be instructed to share it with caregivers through the WhatsApp groups they have and will help following up with them to increase response rate. The data collection and management will be conducted following the [IDB Data Privacy Policy](#).

To obtain as much representation of all populations affected by migration as possible, ethnic and language diversity will be considered during design and the project team will explore the possibility of conducting surveys in different indigenous languages.

b) Cognitive skills test: Once households with migrant parents have been identified, a cognitive test will be conducted with the children to measure mathematics and language skills. This test will be administered directly to the children by telephone, once the caregivers have given their consent. Tentatively the survey will cover a sample of more than 5,000 children and more than 5,000 caregivers across the two countries.

- 3.3 A major challenge in data collection will be finding unaccompanied minors who migrate. To address this challenge governmental and non-governmental organizations will be reached to access administrative data on migrant children that is allowed by national regulations. These data will be used to describe the phenomenon of unaccompanied child migration. Additionally, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies will be used to study the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors, including demographics and general profile, risks, challenges and motivations during their migration process, and effects in their development and learning. These methodologies may include focus groups, semi-

¹ KoBoToolbox is a suite of tools for field data collection for use in challenging environments. The software is free and open source.

structured interviews, life stories, surveys and cognitive tests. Also, the way unaccompanied minors are received, processed, held, returned, or integrated by these organizations will be examined.

- 3.4 After all the information is gathered, it will be processed and analyzed to identify socioemotional and early learning challenges, needs and performance of migrant or left-behind-children, as well as expectations/aspirations of caregivers, their characteristics, their attitudes and beliefs, and other services or support required by these children and their caregivers.
- 3.5 **Component II. Dissemination (US\$5,283).** Resources from this component will be used to finance the dissemination of the results in the Northern Triangle, including a regional and a national workshop. The Project Team will also draft a technical note about Children Left Behind due to Migration with the analysis of the challenges and needs of these children affected by migration, policy recommendations and opportunities where the Bank can support.
- 3.6 **Budget.** The total cost of this TC is US\$251,283 of which will be financed with resources from the Early Childhood Development Fund.

Indicative Budget

Activity/Component	Description	IDB/Fund Funding	Total Funding
Component I. Study of Children Affected by Migration	Firms	\$246,000.00	\$246,000.00
Component II. Dissemination	Consultants	\$5,283.00	\$5,283.00
Total		\$251,283.00	\$251,283.00

- 3.7 **Monitoring.** The Project Team will be responsible for the review of all technical and financial reporting. The Team Leader will be responsible for annual monitoring of activities in the field, and continuous progress meetings with the counterparts and consultants.

IV. Executing agency and execution structure

- 4.1 This operation will be executed by the Bank's Migration Unit from the Social Sector Department (SCL/MIG) in line with Annex 2 of the Operational Guidelines for Technical Cooperation Products (GN-619-4). Bank execution of the TC is justified in that this TC represents an initiative promoted by the Bank, and the products and activities envisaged will generate knowledge and strengthen the technical capacity of the Bank and its member countries. It is also justified as there is no entity in Guatemala and Honduras that could assume the execution of the regional operation. Non-objection from the beneficiary countries will be requested to carry

out the activities described above. As the executing agency of the TC, the Bank will be responsible for: (i) coordinating the actors involved in the activities; (ii) identify the studies and technical work necessary to carry out the TC; (iii) select and contract consultants to provide the necessary services; (iv) supervise the consulting services to which the beneficiary provides technical inputs; and (v) manage the execution and provision of consulting services.

4.2 It is estimated that the project will have a duration of 24 months for execution and disbursements counted from the date of approval of this TC.

4.3 **Procurement.** The activities to be executed are included in the Procurement Plan (Annex) and the Bank will contract the services of individual consultants and consulting firms in accordance with current Bank procurement policies and procedures. The Bank will contract the services of individual consultants in accordance with Section AM-650 of the Administrative Manual “Complementary Workforce”, and consulting firms for services of intellectual nature in accordance with the Policy for the Selection and Contracting of Consulting Firms for Bank-Executed Operational Work (GN- 27654) and its Operational Guidelines (OP-1155-4). For logistic services and other related services, the Corporate Procurement Policy (GN-2303-28) will apply.

4.4 **Single-source selection.** Direct contracting of Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) in the amount of approximately US\$246,000 is foreseen for the implementation of surveys, cognitive tests and data analysis that explores the experiences that migrant and left-behind-children and caregivers are having and the effect on social and emotional development of children affected by migration or being left behind by migrating parents (Component I). IPA is qualified and considered an agency with exceptional worth for the assignment in accordance with 4.1.3(d) of the Policy for the Selection and Contracting of Consulting Firms for Bank-executed Operational Work (GN-2765-4). Following a competitive bidding process, IPA successfully conducted the data collection and analysis related to ES-T1282 and ES-T1295 (see paragraph 2.7 above). The single source selection is also in line with 4.1.3(a) of the same policy, which allows for the continuation of previous work carried out by the firm. This recommendation is based on the need to ensure comparability and continuity with the previously explained data collection.

V. Major issues

5.1 Data collection in a context such as low-income areas in Guatemala and Honduras presents logistical challenges, particularly in times of COVID-19. Any risks associated to this are managed through the implementation of online instruments and phone interviews as described in Component I.

5.2 Additionally, the Bank’s extensive experience in carrying out data collection on the ground in the education sector; the successful implementation of household census in El Salvador and other similar contexts; and contracting a firm that

provided high quality services in other Bank projects make the Team confident that the proposed design and implementation is feasible.

VI. Environmental and Social Strategy

- 6.1 The TC will not finance feasibility or pre-feasibility studies of investment projects or associated environmental and social studies and therefore does not have applicable requirements of the Bank's Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF).

Required Annexes:

[Results Matrix - RG-T3966](#)

[Terms of Reference - RG-T3966](#)

[Procurement Plan - RG-T3966](#)