

## TC ABSTRACT

### I. Basic Project Data

▪ Country/Region:	NICARAGUA/CID - Isthmus & DR
▪ TC Name:	School Committee Training in Nutrition
▪ TC Number:	NI-T1318
▪ Team Leader/Members:	NASLUND-HADLEY, EMMA INGRID (SCL/EDU) Team Leader; GONZALEZ ACERO, CAROLINA (SCL/SPH) Alternate Team Leader; SELVA DELGADO, ALMA REYNA (CID/CNI); TAMAGNAN, MARIE EVANE (SCL/EDU); HERNANDEZ ALVARADO, HEYDI (CID/CNI); LUGO MORENO, MONICA BIBIANA (LEG/SGO); ALEJANDRA FORERO PEREZ (SCL/EDU); GRETA OLIVARES (SCL/EDU); TAKEUCHI, HAJIME (SCL/SCL); BLASCO, IVANA (SCL/EDU)
▪ Taxonomy:	Client Support
▪ Number and name of operation supported by the TC:	N/A
▪ Date of TC Abstract:	08 Mar 2023
▪ Beneficiary:	MINED
▪ Executing Agency:	INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
▪ IDB funding requested:	US\$700,000.00
▪ Local counterpart funding:	US\$78,000.00 (In Kind)
▪ Disbursement period:	36 months
▪ Types of consultants:	Firms; Individuals
▪ Prepared by Unit:	SCL/EDU - Education
▪ Unit of Disbursement Responsibility:	SCL/EDU - Education
▪ TC included in Country Strategy (y/n):	Yes
▪ TC included in CPD (y/n):	Yes
▪ Alignment to the Update to the Institutional Strategy 2010-2020:	Social inclusion and equality ; Gender equality; Diversity

### II. Objective and Justification

- 2.1 The proposed pilot project aims to develop an evidence-based model for improving children's nutrition, learning and attendance by training school committees in healthy eating, including sensitization to change gendered norms about the nutritional needs of boys and girls. This overall objective will be achieved by raising awareness among parents about children's nutrition and healthy eating practices. An estimated 2,000 households will be included in the pilot. The parental training will employ the Japanese philosophy of Shokuiku to train parents. Shokuiku translates to “food education” in Japanese and promotes balanced and intuitive eating. Introduced into the Japanese education system by law, Shokuiku is the foundation of nutrition education within the Japanese school system for the development of healthy eating habits. The philosophy takes a more holistic approach to nutrition education beyond basic nutrition intake to encourage healthy and sustainable habits and understanding and attitudes towards food. Intuitive eating centers around recognizing body cues to meet nutritional needs, while the idea of balanced eating supports the acquisition of food and nutrition knowledge alongside the ability to make appropriate food choices, understanding of the food environment, and supporting socioemotional wellbeing.
- 2.2 The IDB and the Ministry of Education have conducted a study of the nutritional status of primary school students in the Caribbean Coast and the Dry Corridor of Nicaragua.

Based on representative samples from both geographic areas, it was determined that lack of and poor nutrition can aggravate existing health problems among students. The prevalence of anemia in children aged 6-14 years is high in the Dry Corridor (20.1%) and even higher in the Caribbean Coast (42.7%) compared to levels in other countries in the region. The study indicates that nutrition problems in students tend to be related to lack of knowledge about healthy eating. The probability of being obese is 27% higher and of being acutely malnourished is 68% higher in households where parents lack understanding of healthy eating.

- 2.3 In addition, the study found that gendered stereotypes about children's nutrition that exist within the household also affect the nutritional status of girls in both the Dry Corridor and the Caribbean Coast. In the Dry Corridor, 2 out of 5 rural households still think that they should give more food to their sons than to their daughters, while in the Caribbean Coast the same is true within urban households. A girl between 6 and 9 years old who lives in a household that believes in the village custom of giving more food to boys than to girls is 42% more likely to be chronically malnourished. A girl between 6 and 9 years old who lives in a household that gives more food to boys than girls is 107% more likely to be chronically malnourished.
- 2.4 Evaluation Methodology. The evaluation of the proposed project will seek to estimate the impact of raising awareness among parents regarding the nutritional needs by gender and healthy eating practices of children from 6 to 14 years of age. IDB will follow an experimental approach in which program participants are students whose parents were shown in a previous study to hold gender stereotypes about nutritional needs and/or to be unaware of healthy eating practices. Students and their families will be randomly assigned to treatment and control groups. This will allow for comparison of results between the two groups of parents at the end of the program and, based on this, to conclude about the effectiveness of the intervention. The evaluation scheme will analyze nutritional outcomes, school outcomes, and parental knowledge about nutrition, contrasting those with a counterfactual scenario involving the absence of the program.
- 2.5 Instruments. The evaluation design proposes the following instruments for quantitative measurements: (1) Nutritional diagnosis: Measurement protocols for weight, height, body mass index, cortisol and hemoglobin. (2) Self-administered survey to teachers: The survey will contain information on classroom (e.g., enrollment, attendance, performance of students) and teacher characteristics (e.g., contact information gender, age, education, experience, work history, etc.). (3) Self-administered parent survey: The survey will collect information about the child (date of birth) and parent contact information (e.g., to facilitate follow-up in subsequent rounds), household characteristics (income, composition, etc.), perceptions of children's nutritional needs and feeding practices. All instruments will have unique indicators that will allow linking the different databases.

### III. Description of Activities and Outputs

- 3.1 **Component I: Component 1. Contextualization of Shokuiku.** Resources will be used to finance consultancy work to contextualize the Shokuiku model to Nicaragua, including how to read national food labels, what constitutes seasonal eating in Nicaragua and how foods are produced locally.
- 3.2 **Component II: Component 2. Piloting of the Shokuiku Program .** TC will also finance the pilot program of Shokuiku to teach caregivers about healthy nutrition and eating habits. The pilot will be implemented in the Dry Corridor and the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua. Tentatively, the experimental pilot will include some 200 schools in these regions and about 2,000 households.

- 3.3 **Component III: Component 3. Experimental evaluation of Shokuiku** . Resources will be used to evaluate the impact of the pilot on parental knowledge of healthy eating habits children’s nutritional values and levels of anemia, among others.
- 3.4 **Component IV: Component 4. Dissemination.** Resources will finance the dissemination of study results.
- 3.5 **Component V: Component 5. IDB Supervision and Technical Assistance.** The component will finance travel for supervision and technical assistance of IDB specialists.

#### IV. Budget

##### Indicative Budget

Activity/Component	IDB/Fund Funding	Counterpart Funding	Total Funding
Component 1. Contextualization of Shokuiku	US\$200,000.00	US\$50,000.00	US\$250,000.00
Component 2. Piloting of the Shokuiku Program	US\$315,000.00	US\$20,000.00	US\$335,000.00
Component 3. Experimental evaluation of Shokuiku	US\$120,000.00	US\$8,000.00	US\$128,000.00
Component 4. Dissemination	US\$30,000.00	US\$0.00	US\$30,000.00
Component 5. IDB Supervision and Technical Assistance	US\$35,000.00	US\$0.00	US\$35,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>US\$700,000.00</b>	<b>US\$78,000.00</b>	<b>US\$778,000.00</b>

#### V. Executing Agency and Execution Structure

- 5.1 The executing agency will be the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) through the Education Division (SCL/EDU), which will also serve as the UDR. The IDB will work in coordination with JICA, who will serve as advisory assistance (no funding is foreseen). JICA has been promoting the Shokuiku model internationally to foster children’s nutrition. In this context, the IDB team is in coordination with JICA to determine how JICA can collaborate in the proposed project, including in guidance for the development of a Shokuiku model contextualized to Nicaragua.
- 5.2 The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) through the Education Division (SCL/EDU) in collaboration with the country office (CID/CNI) and the Connectivity, Markets and Finance Division (IFD/CMF) will execute this program. The Government has requested that the IDB execute the TC due to its long trajectory in education technology. This is consistent with Appendix 10 in the Operational Guidelines for Technical Cooperations (as modified Annex 2 of OP-619-4), which identifies the need of a strong institutional, operational and technical capacity for the execution of the contemplated activities in technical cooperations.

#### VI. Project Risks and Issues

- 6.1 The risks to project execution are reduced by being directly executed by the IDB. Although the execution of a pilot based on an experimental design in a context such as Nicaragua always presents certain logistical challenges, the IDB has years of experience working with schools in remote areas, including service delivery in rural and urban marginalized schools. A risk is connected to the loss of interest by the participating caregivers. In response to this risk, the design contemplates tutor contact with families.

## **VII. Environmental and Social Classification**

7.1 The ESG classification for this operation is "undefined".