

TC Document

I. Basic Information for TC

▪ Country/Region:	COLOMBIA
▪ TC Name:	Heal to Grow: Scaling Impact in Colombia
▪ TC Number:	CO-T1781
▪ Team Leader/Members:	Naslund-Hadley, Emma Ingrid (SCL/EDU) Team Leader; Mendez Vargas, Carolina Patricia (SCL/EDU) Alternate Team Leader; Lopez Gelb Loren Viviana (SCL/EDU); Jimenez Mosquera, Javier I. (LEG/SGO); Tamagnan, Marie Evane (SCL/EDU); Olivares Greta (SCL/EDU); Blasco, Ivana (SCL/EDU)
▪ Taxonomy:	Research and Dissemination
▪ Operation Supported by the TC:	n/a
▪ Date of TC Abstract authorization:	03 Sep 2024.
▪ Beneficiary:	Colombian Institute of Family Welfare (ICBF)
▪ Executing Agency and contact name:	Inter-American Development Bank
▪ Donors providing funding:	OC SDP Window 2 - Social Development(W2E)
▪ IDB Funding Requested:	US\$225,000.00
▪ Local counterpart funding, if any:	US\$0
▪ Disbursement period (which includes Execution period):	24 months
▪ Required start date:	January 15, 2025
▪ Types of consultants:	Individuals and firm
▪ 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):	No
▪ Alignment to the IDB Group's Institutional Strategy 2024-2030:	Diversity; Gender equality; Persons with Disabilities

II. Objectives and Justification of the TC

2.1 Decades of research have produced a wide spectrum of evidence-based education models and programs for use in schools globally. This evidence is often generated through pilot models that demonstrate significant impact in controlled, small-scale environments. However, limited evidence is available on what happens to impact when these models are brought to scale. What works in a pilot may not work on a larger scale due to differences in context and resources. To bridge this gap between small-scale pilots and broader educational practice, it is essential to identify the core elements for successfully scaling education models and programs. One key aspect to explore is how to ensure process quality when scaling an education model, as training for example 200 teachers differs vastly from training 20,000. Another critical element to study is how to maintain the structural quality of a model during scaling, including equipment, infrastructure, and educational materials. Equally important is figuring out how to maintain implementation fidelity to ensure the model's core components are consistently applied. Developing a comprehensive understanding of these elements is vital for the successful and impactful scaling of educational interventions.

- 2.2 **Heal to Grow (HtG).** Initial education teachers are critical in ensuring the integral development of young children, including their socio-emotional development. However, evidence suggests that educators of young children experience high levels of stress and job dissatisfaction¹, which can spill over into their work with caregivers and children². A regional study led by the IDB found that initial education teachers in Colombia are presenting significantly stress levels and multiple symptoms of emotional burnout.³
- 2.3 In response to the study, the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare (ICBF) designed and launched the Heal to Grow (HtG) Program to improve early childhood educators' social-emotional well-being. In the program, educators attend weekly group training and practice sessions, with content focusing on their social-emotional well-being, social-emotional strengthening of children, and socio-emotional strengthening in the family environment. HtG was piloted through a boutique design using trainers hired directly and trained by ICBF. The IDB and the non-governmental organization Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) supported the ICBF in the evaluation of HtG through a randomized design. The piloting was done in Bogota, Cali, Medellín, Bello, and Soacha. A total of 1,232 early educators in 632 units (an initial education and care setting) were randomly assigned to either participate in HtG or serve as the comparison group. The 2023 impact evaluation of the pilot shows that HtG improves the social-emotional and mindfulness skills of ECD teachers and strengthens their interactions and strategies to foster socioemotional skills in children.
- 2.4 While the 2023 piloting of HtG was implemented by ICBF staff, the institute typically outsources the scaling of programs. In a similar vein, the ICBF aims to scale HtG through an outsourced model that contracts civil society organizations for the training of educators. Aware of the challenges in maintaining impact when going to scale, the ICBF is interested in developing and experimentally testing a scalable implementation model of HtG. The questions that the ICBF wishes to answer include: How can they maintain process quality when scaling? How can they maintain the fidelity of the model? How can they adapt key features of the model to maintain quality when scaled? The proposed TC is of strategic importance for the IDB and the ICBF as there is a very limited body of evidence on how to maintain impact when scaling education sector interventions. The key elements for maintaining quality of processes, structures and the fidelity of a scalable HtG model will provide insights for the scaling of impacts from other pilots.

¹ Quinn, Emilee L., Bert Stover, Jennifer J. Otten, and Noah Seixas. "Early care and education workers' experience and stress during the COVID-19 pandemic." *International journal of environmental research and public health* 19, no. 5 (2022): 2670.

Ntim, Seth Yeboah, Jinliang Qin, Collins Opoku Antwi, Michael Osei Aboagye, Siyuan Chen, and Elijah Takyi Mensah. "Early childhood educators' emotional labor and burnout in an emerging economy: The mediating roles of affective states." *Heliyon* 9, no. 3 (2023).

² [Näslund-Hadley, Emma and Arias, Elena \(2022\). "How Should Schools Respond to the COVID-19 Mental Health Crisis?"](#)

³ [Arias, et al. How to Reboot Education Post-Pandemic: Delivering on the Promise of a Better Future for Youth. \(2022\): 178-238.](#)

- 2.5 **Research Question.** How can the HtG model maintain its impact on early childhood educators' socio-emotional well-being and mindfulness skills when scaled through outsourced implementation?
- 2.6 **Objectives.** The proposed TC aims to develop and experimentally evaluate a highly scripted HtG outsourced early educator training model. The TC will contribute to understanding the linkage between key execution issues and the effectiveness of education programs.
- 2.7 **Theory of Change.** The theory of change for the scaled the HtG model posits that by providing highly scripted training resources, the ICBF contracts can effectively conduct large-scale training sessions for early childhood educators through outsourced civil society organizations. This process will be supported by robust monitoring and evaluation systems and adaptive modifications for different contexts, particularly rural areas with limited connectivity. The expected outcomes include improved socio-emotional and mindfulness skills among educators, leading to better interactions and strategies for fostering children's socio-emotional development. Ultimately, this is expected to result in sustained improvements in the well-being and developmental outcomes of young children, maintaining the HtG program's effectiveness at scale.
- 2.8 **Evaluation Methodology.** The proposed evaluation is an experimental impact design with an intervention group and a control group. Hence, the successful randomization ensures a clean identification strategy of the treatment impact. The treatment will be designed in close consultation with ICBF and using diagnostic information from the implementation pilot, the sustainability of the scaling up, and current evidence on implementation science. Administrative data provided by ICBF will be used to perform the randomization strategy, and to test balance afterwards. Baseline data will also be collected, which will allow for added controls in the analysis.
- 2.9 **Strategic Alignment.** The TC is consistent with the IDB Group Institutional Strategy: Transforming for Scale and Impact ([CA-631](#)) and is aligned with the objective of reducing poverty and inequality by evaluating an operation that seeks to close learning gaps for vulnerable students. The program is aligned with the operational focus area of gender equality and inclusion of diverse population groups such as persons with disabilities ([GN-2800-13](#)) as HtG includes modules that address mental health challenges and how mental health issues may manifest differently in boys and girls, considering socialization patterns, expectations, and biological differences.
- 2.10 It is consistent with the IDB Group Impact Framework's ([GN-3195-8](#)) performance targets by evaluating the number of people benefiting from early childhood development. Also, it is consistent with the Sector Framework Document for Skills Development ([GN-3012-4](#)) by measuring high-quality learning opportunities. The project is aligned with the IDB Group Strategy in Colombia 2024-2027 ([GN-3238-1](#)) under the strategic objectives of increasing access to and quality of education and health services, through actions aimed at training teachers in mental health and socioemotional learning; and promoting the social inclusion of diverse population groups and to reduce gender-based violence, by supporting the reduction of gender social gaps and promote mental health of teachers and students with disabilities, respectively. The proposed TC is also aligned with the *Development Effectiveness Intelligence Fund (DEI Fund)* in that it seeks to contribute to the reduction of strategic

knowledge gaps in our understanding of the scaling of development effectiveness. Finally, the TC is also aligned with the Ordinary Capital Strategic Development Program's ([GN-2819-14](#)) priority area of inclusive social development by strengthening the service delivery of quality education, investing in human capital, and promoting gender equality.

III. Description of activities/components and budget

- 3.1 To develop and test an outsourced scalable implementation design of the HtG program, the proposed TC is structured around two components:
- 3.2 **Component I – Design of a Scalable HtG Model (US\$10,000).** Resources from the Component will be used to finance the contracting of a consultancy firm that provides technical advice in the development and validation of an HtG model that is scalable through outsourcing by the ICBF. The model will continue to be based on the original HtG curriculum and modular design, but highly scripted training manuals will be developed for both trainers and early childhood educators, outlining each session's objectives, activities, and expected outcomes. While scripted, the training sessions will continue to use the original interactive methods with role-playing, group discussions, and hands-on activities to enhance engagement and learning. Specific products of the Component include: (i) a Train-the-Trainer Program: An intensive program to prepare third-party trainers, ensuring they understand the HtG methodology and can deliver the content effectively; (ii) a training guide with scripted sessions: Each training session will be highly scripted, with clear instructions for activities, discussions, and evaluations to maintain consistency across different training cohorts; (iii) Structured feedback mechanisms for trainers and educators to provide insights on the training process and content effectiveness; (iv) a system for tracking key outcomes related to early educators' socio-emotional and mindfulness skills, as well as their application in the classroom; and (v) Guidelines for adapting the training content and delivery methods to suit different contexts, particularly rural areas and environments with limited connectivity. The materials will be validated in a limited number of units that are similar to those where the experimental pilot will be conducted. As part of the validation protocol, the materials will be updated. The expected result of this component is an adaptable and flexible training program that can serve as a model to scale HtG within the country and across the region.
- 3.3 **Component II – Experimental Evaluation of the Scalable HtG Model (US\$215,000).** Through an outsourced HtG model, the ICBF can receive 1,000 new early educators per year in the remaining two years of government. Thus, over a two-year period, the staggered experimental evaluation can draw a representative sample from approximate 4,000 educators, as well as from the 40,000 children that are served by these educators. With resources from the component, a consultancy firm will be contracted to collect data from a representative sample of approximately 350 teachers and 4,000 children. Teachers will respond to questionnaires, and their teaching practices will be coded, using the same instruments from the pilot. Direct measures of socio-emotional wellbeing will be applied to children, including the same instruments used in the original HtG pilot, the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and the International Development and Early Learning assessment (IDELA). While ICBF provides services across the country, the geographic locations of the scaling will be determined jointly with the ICBF as part of the evaluation design. In terms of timing, the ICBF has set aside the resources for the scaling and indicates that they are ready

to start the evaluation. Resources from the component will also finance research support to conduct the data analysis. The expected result of this component is evidence on the impact of the HtG model.

- 3.4 **Funding.** The total cost of the TC is US\$225,000, to be financed by the OC SDP Window 2 - Social Development (W2E). This will finance technical assistance to the ICBF in the development of a scalable HtG model as well as the experimental impact evaluation, staggered over two academic years. The ICBF will finance the scaling itself to benefit an estimated 40,000 children. The value of this parallel funding is US\$602,000, calculated based on the cost-effectiveness analysis of the HtG pilot, which estimated a per educator cost of US\$301 per academic year (IPA, 2023).

Indicative Budget

Activity/Component	Description	IDB W2E Funding	Total Funding
Component I – Design of a Scalable HtG Model	This component will finance the contracting of a firm to assist with the model design and validation.	10,000	10,000
Component II – Experimental Evaluation of the Scalable HtG Model	This component will finance the contracting of a firm to assist with data collection; and an individual consultant to assist with research support.	215,000	215,000
Total		225,000	225,000

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

IV. Executing agency and execution structure

- 4.1 The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) through the Education Division (SCL/EDU) in collaboration with the country office (CAN/CCO) will execute this TC. The Government has informally requested that the IDB execute the TC due to its long trajectory in education evaluations and history with the program (a formal request is forthcoming). 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.
- 4.2 **Execution and disbursement period.** The TC will be executed through the UDR SCL/EDU over a period of 24 months and disbursed over a period of 24 months as of the date of approval.
- 4.3 **Procurement.** All procurement to be executed under this Technical Cooperation have been included in the Procurement Plan (Annex IV) and will be hired in compliance with the applicable Bank policies and regulations as follows: (a) Hiring of individual consultants, as established in the regulation on Complementary Workforce (AM-650) and (b) Contracting of services provided by consulting firms in accordance with the Corporate procurement Policy (GN-2303-33) and its Guidelines.

- 4.4 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 products.

V. Major issues

- 5.1 The risks to project execution are reduced by being directly executed by the IDB. Although the evaluation and validation of education tools in a context such as Latin America 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. This risk will be mitigated through measures that have been effectively used in the past when conducting education sector evaluations in Colombia. Firstly, pilot testing data collection procedures will be implemented as was done with previous evaluations of socioemotional health and learning at the initial education level (CO-T1678; CO-T1524). This involves conducting small-scale trials of data collection methods and tools to identify and address any potential issues before at-scale application. By testing data collection procedures in a controlled environment, the project team can refine the processes and ensure they are efficient and effective. Secondly, communication strategies will be employed to facilitate effective collaboration and coordination among stakeholders. By fostering open and transparent communication, the evaluation team can build trust.
- 5.2 The risks associated with the survey of teachers and students will be managed through the processing of an Institutional Review Board (IRB) application of Human Subjects Research. The IRB will ensure that the research meets ethical standards. By reviewing the survey protocol, the IRB will assess potential risks to participants and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to protect their rights, privacy, and confidentiality. This will include obtaining informed consent from caregivers, children and teachers and safeguarding their personal information. By scrutinizing the survey design, sampling procedures, and data collection methods, the IRB will identify any potential flaws or biases that may compromise the integrity of the research findings. This helps to ensure that the survey yields reliable and valid data that can effectively inform decision-making processes. Through the IRB review process, potential risks associated with the survey of teachers and children will be identified and mitigated in advance. This proactive approach to risk management helps to minimize the likelihood of adverse events or unintended consequences during the research process, protecting both participants and researchers. Obtaining IRB approval signals to stakeholders, including participants, funding agencies, and collaborating institutions, that the research has undergone rigorous ethical and scientific review. This also aligns with the IDB Personal Data Privacy Policy ([GN-3030-5](#)) which looks for evaluation design and instruments to be approved by a certified IRB to ensure that they meet commonly accepted ethical standards.

VI. Exceptions to Bank policy

- 6.1 There are no exceptions to Bank policies.

VII. Environmental and Social Aspects

- 7.1 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 the Bank's Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF).

Required Annexes:

[Request from the Client_8326.pdf](#)

[Results Matrix_72263.pdf](#)

[Terms of Reference_31290.pdf](#)

[Procurement Plan_59678.pdf](#)