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## Ecuador exchanges experiences on inclusive education in Spain

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In Ecuador, Bridging the Gap is developed in close cooperation with the Ecuadorian organizations of persons with disabilities with the aim of strengthening their capacity to influence and participate in the elaboration of the country's Education Policy, as well as promoting the improvement of the coverage and of the quality of the education services.

As part of this action, **several organizations of Ecuador, as well as representatives of the national Ministry of Education, visited Spain in late November to exchange experiences with Spanish peers** within public institutions and organizations of persons with disabilities. **Joaquín Rodríguez, Coordinator of the National Federation of Blind Persons of Ecuador's (FENCE (<http://fenceecuador.org>)) project "Promoting the educational inclusion of children with visual disabilities", tell us his experience.**

Coordinated by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) (<http://www.aecid.es/EN>) and within the framework of Bridging the Gap project, delegations of the different Organisations of Persons with Disabilities, officials of the Ministry of Education

≡≡≡ (<https://educacion.gob.ec/>) and of the National Commission for the Rights of Persons with disabilities (CONADIS)

(<https://www.consejodiscapacidades.gob.ec>) visited Spain last November, in order to acquire new knowledge in the field of inclusive education.

As coordinator of the FENCE project “Promoting the educational inclusion of children with visual disabilities”, I had the opportunity to participate in the development of the activities scheduled from 19th to 23rd November, accompanied by the President of FENCE Diana Banchón.

They were five intensive days to learn first-hand experience about great progress in education and assistive technology addressed at persons with disabilities.

The National Committee of Blind Persons of Spain (ONCE) (<https://www.once.es/otras-webs/english/what-is-once>), alongside its ILUNION (<https://www.ilunion.com/en>) group’s companies and Educational Resource Centers, is a world’s unique model of educational, labor and social inclusion, demonstrating that people with disabilities, especially visual, are able to lead positive changes in society. Some good examples are the didactic resources and adapted educational materials that they have developed, indispensable to facilitate the learning of students with visual disabilities.

Having shared experiences and knowledge about the new model of educational inclusion in Spain will allow education in Ecuador to adapt to the reality of students with visual disabilities.

Since 2005, the Ministry of Education, as the governing body of inclusive education in the country, coordinates, executes, monitors and evaluates educational activities jointly with FENCE, and has obtained important achievements for the benefit of our peers, allowing them to move from segregation to social inclusion.

We thank AECID and the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIIAPP) for bringing us closer to this model of inclusive education to improve the quality of life of people with visual disabilities in our country.

**Joaquín Rodríguez, Coordinator of the National Federation of Blind Persons of Ecuador’s (FENCE) project “Promoting the educational**



**inclusion of children with visual disabilities**



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