

El Enlace – An international collaboration to address the needs of an under-resourced community in Colombia using mobile phones.



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Information Access • Social Isolation • Digital Poverty • Disability • Participation

This presentation outlines the development of a collaborative research project between the University of Alberta (UofA) in Edmonton, Canada and the Universidad del Rosario (UR) in Bogota, Colombia. Through careful examination of contextual factors facing people with disabilities (PWD) in Colombia, the UofA and the UR developed a prototype solution entitled *El Enlace* (Spanish for *The Link*). In Colombia, poverty, geographic isolation, lack of access to computers, and low rates of Internet use result in a community of PWD who have limited access to information and are socially isolated. *El Enlace* will be implemented in the community of El Codito, an under-resourced community nestled in a mountainous region of northern Bogota.

An approach that uses mobile phones to assist in international development is often referred to as *mobile for development* or *M4D*. *El Enlace* is a M4D project, but it also relies heavily on the community-based approach already being implemented by the Universidad del Rosario in the community of El Codito. Through their presentation, Tim and Juan David will give an overview of *El Enlace* as a community-centered project and as an international collaboration between the University of Alberta and the Universidad del Rosario.