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Member of **ChildFund** Alliance

2015 | Accountability Report
Executive Summary

Accountability from a rights-based perspective

José M. Faura // *Executive Director of Educo*

This document is the summary of the progress we have made in terms of accountability during 2015. Our next full Accountability Report, which we produce every two years, will be published in 2017. This summary has been produced in accordance with the NGO supplement from the GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) and is based on our core commitments to accountability in terms of transparency, children's rights, good governance, environmental responsibility, participation, people management, inclusion and diversity, and ethical fundraising. It forms part of our decisive plan to promote a culture of accountability and learning throughout the organization, so that we can ultimately increase and improve our impact.

CHILD RIGHTS SITUATION ANALYSIS

In 2015, one of our significant achievements has been the formulation of Child Rights Situation Analyses in all of our program countries.

These studies seek to improve our understanding of the main obstacles to children's full enjoyment of their rights in each country.

The results serve as the basis for Educo's work and help us make **well-informed, strategic decisions** and ensure that our programs and projects are **coherent with the reality** of each community.

EDUCO'S 1ST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

In 2015, we also organized our first International Congress entitled "The wellbeing and rights of children: Child Protection in debate".

The Congress brought together national and international experts to **analyze child wellbeing** in all of its dimensions and to **share good practices.**

Moreover, it gave greater visibility to the importance of Educo's work in ensuring that all actors know and assume responsibility for promoting children's wellbeing and protecting their rights.

EL BIENESTAR
DE LA INFANCIA Y SUS DERECHOS
La Protección Infantil a Debate

Accountability from a rights-based perspective

What does accountability mean to Educo?

Transparency

Participation

ACCOUNTABILITY

Evaluation

Complaint mechanisms

For Educo, accountability means fulfilling our responsibility to listen and respond to the opinions and needs of our stakeholders in the decisions we make and the activities we undertake, with the ultimate aim of increasing our impact and ensuring the responsible use of resources.

As an organization that takes a rights-based approach, it is our duty to be accountable and to respond to the rights of our stakeholders, and, in particular, those people who are affected by our activities and our collaborators.

Accountability should facilitate and foster learning and innovation, in order to contribute to positive change based on our knowledge and experience.

This process should encompass four dimensions—**transparency, participation, evaluation, and feedback and complaint mechanisms**—all of which are essential to achieving accountability in an effective and meaningful way.

Transparency

We subscribe to the principles set forth by the **INGO Accountability Charter** and apply these throughout the organization. The Charter reviews our Accountability Report and publishes it on their website.

We are in the process of formulating a new institutional **Transparency Policy,** whose objective is to ensure the dissemination of relevant and up-to-date information, making this available to our stakeholders, and to guarantee that we are acting with the utmost transparency.

Since 2015 we are an **"NGO accredited" by Fundación Lealtad,** a Spanish organization that promotes transparency and good practices among NGOs. Among other indicators, this accreditation recognizes our efficacy in our use of resources and the coherency with the foundational mission. Educo fully complies with the nine Principles of Transparency and Good Practices of Fundación Lealtad, which consist in over 40 indicators.

We are also in the process of launching **new websites for all of our program countries,** in the interest of maximizing accessibility to detailed information about our programs and projects, both at the local and global levels.

In 2015, we carried out a **Social Return on Investment Analysis** (SROI) of our Social Action Program in Spain (PAS, for its abbreviation in Spanish). The SROI, an innovative calculation method, enables us to know and communicate the real social impact of the program, that is, the direct benefits for participants and the social changes achieved, thus enhancing the level of transparency and accountability to all of the involved stakeholders. The results of the SROI have demonstrated that for every euro invested in the PAS, the **return to society** is 5.52€.

The **SROI report** has been shared with all of the entities that participated in the project and is published on our website. We hope to be able to take advantage of this methodology to analyze other projects in our program countries.

Transparency is one of the four institutional principles that guide all of our actions: "We base our work on honesty, responsibility and maximum access to information regarding the management of resources and the impact of our actions, in pursuit of the highest level social and economic accountability".

Child Rights

Our new **Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct** establishes zero tolerance for any type of violence or maltreatment against children and defines mechanisms for raising awareness, prevention and reporting.

As the policy stipulates, Educo is committed to:

- **Awareness raising,** so that all people related with organization know and understand the risks and consequences of violence and maltreatment against children.

- **Prevention,** so that all people related with the organization make an effort to minimize the risk of child rights violations.

- **Reporting,** so that all people related with the organization know what steps to take and how to report any concerns regarding child protection and safety.

- **Rapid and effective response,** to support and protect children from suspected violence or maltreatment.

In our vision of wellbeing, all children have the opportunity to be and do anything they want, thanks to exercising their rights.

As Spanish member of the ChildFund Alliance, in 2015 we participated in the campaign "Free from Violence", with the aim of including the **elimination of violence against children** as a specific target in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

free from violence

Overall, the campaign gathered over 600,000 signatures around the world and achieved the inclusion of Target 16.2: *End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture of children.*

As member of the Spanish Development Agency's (AECID) working group of child-focused NGOs, during 2015 we played a key role in the process of defining its **Strategy for Children.**

We are currently involved in monitoring the process and supporting the AECID in **implementing the strategy in the field.**

Good Governance

The Ethical Code establishes a **zero-tolerance policy toward corruption** and regulates our positioning as an institution. We have initiated the formulation of an Anti-Corruption Code and material for raising awareness on issues related to fraud and corruption. This code will be applicable to the entire organization.

Educo has an Internal Audit Department whose objective is to verify the **coherent and responsible application of resources,** verify compliance with internal policies, and confirm diligence in management processes. Throughout 2015, we conducted internal audits of our Country Offices in Cambodia, El Salvador and Benin; we also initiated the audit of our Social Action Program in Spain.

Our 2015 financial statements were audited by two auditing firms, Ernst & Young and Audalia, and are available on our website. One of the control measures we apply is that both firms must agree in their opinion about our accounts. To date, we are the only NGO in Spain that uses this **coauditing system.**

In 2015, we approved our new **Partnership Policy and Guide,** which defines the general framework for the joint efforts Educo carries out with other organizations and which establishes the bases for mutual accountability. Likewise, the policy establishes the minimum requirements that Eudco's local partner organizations should meet.

As of 2015, we are **members of the Coordinator of Spanish Development NGOs (CONGDE),** and we comply with this agency's code of conduct. Currently, we are working to obtain certification as "NGO evaluated" by CONGDE, based on its Transparency and Good Governance tool.

COORDINADORA
ONG PARA EL DESARROLLO
ESPAÑA

Educo also employs a Quality Management System which complies with the ISO **9001:2008 standards** in fundraising and the control of funds to development projects, and the Head Office holds a certificate issued by Bureau Veritas.

ISO 9001
BUREAU VERITAS
Certification
SEDE BARCELONA

For us, good governance means committing to ensuring transparent and participatory decision-making processes that guarantee the effective and responsible use of resources.

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Environmental Responsibility

We have a new **Environmental Policy,** which expresses our firm commitment to protecting the environment, both in the implementation of our programs and projects and in our day-to-day operations.

The implementation of this policy, which started in 2015, will be undertaken by a **committee for the implementation and monitoring of the Environmental Policy,** whose mission includes disseminating the policy among all Educo staff and coordinating the three-yearly action plans that are formulated in all of the organization's work centers.
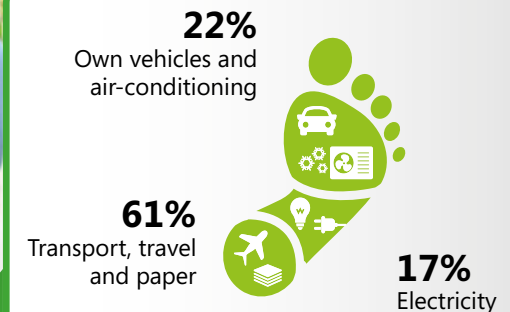
We subscribe to **Barcelona+Sostenible,** an initiative that consolidates the application of Agenda 21 in the city where our Head Office is located.

BARCELONA + SOSTENIBLE

For Educo, environmental protection is an institutional commitment that guarantees coherence with our philosophy and with our rights-based approach, particularly with respect to fulfilling our strategic goals.

Every year we publish information about our **carbon footprint,** calculated according to the internationally recognized GHG (Greenhouse Gas) Protocol.

The calculation includes both **direct emissions** (own vehicles, air conditioning and electricity) and **indirect emissions** (transport of materials, work-related travel and commuting, and paper consumption).

22%
Own vehicles and air-conditioning

61%
Transport, travel and paper

17%
Electricity

For the year 2015, our carbon footprint represented a total of 1,568 tons of CO_2e, of which 39% comes from direct emissions and 61% from indirect emissions.

Participation

We are working on the **implementation and monitoring of our Complaints and Feedback Policy,** so that all people with and for whom we work can share their opinions about our activities. In 2015 we received, through the established channels, a total of 47 complaints/ feedback which have helped to improve our work.

Our **Child Participation Standards** establish that all Educo programs and projects should include a strategy for child participation throughout the project cycle, as well as a monitoring mechanism that has been validated through a participatory process that includes children.

We are currently working on formulating the **second phase** of the **Interagency Study on Child-Friendly Feedback and Complaint Mechanisms within NGO Programs,** which we published in 2015 as fruit of a collaborative project with Plan International, World Vision, Save the Children UK and War Child UK, and which explores experiences and good practices related to child-friendly feedback and complaint mechanisms.
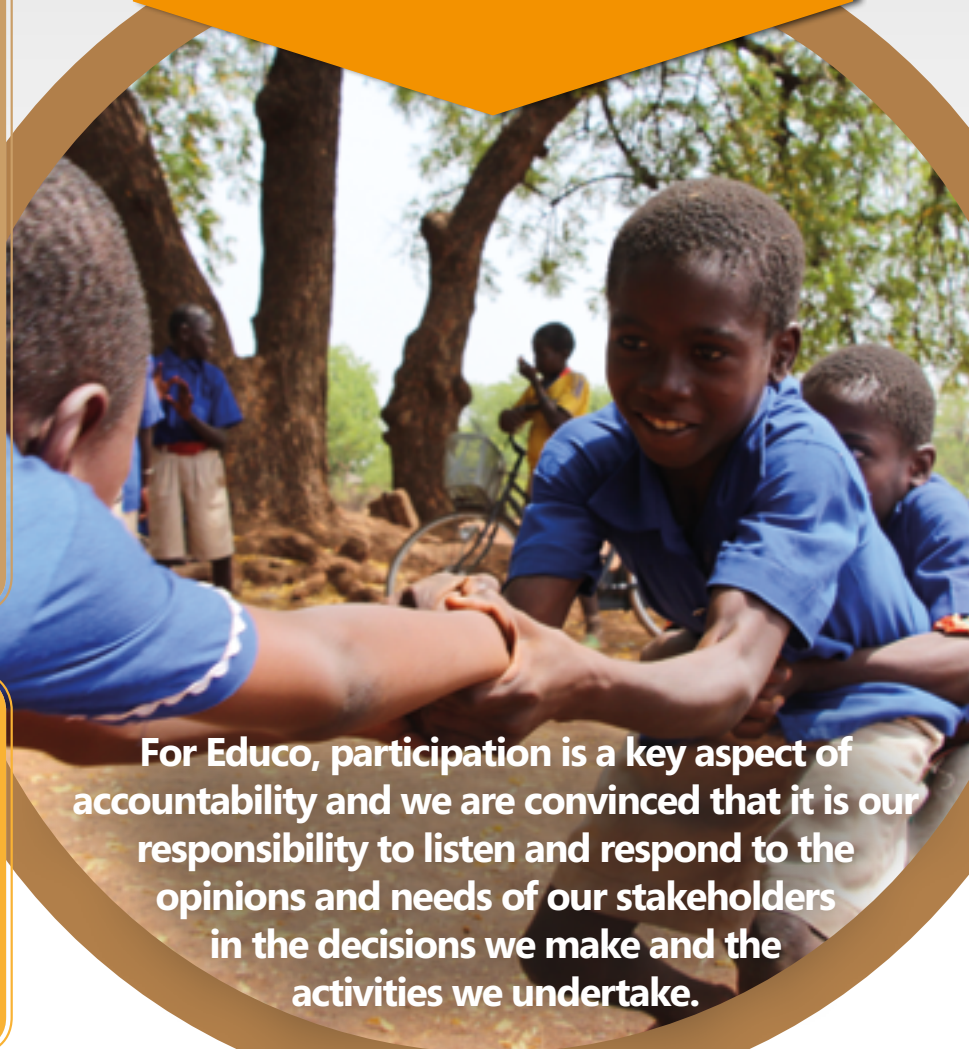
In 2015 we also initiated a process of **Theory of Change,** a collective project that seeks to identify the road we must follow to achieve the social impact implicit in our mission. The development of our Theory of Change will help to reinforce Educo's identity and improve the coherence and quality of our programs over a five-year period, while also improving internal processes to strengthen the organization. The process has been carried out through various workshops, consultations and interviews, seeking the **maximum participation and transparency** at all phases.

For Educo, participation is a key aspect of accountability and we are convinced that it is our responsibility to listen and respond to the opinions and needs of our stakeholders in the decisions we make and the activities we undertake.

In 2015, we were awarded **Quality Mark 1 certification of People in Aid** (now part of the CHS Alliance), a certification that recognizes our transparency and quality in the management of human resources.

Committed
People In Aid Code
2015

We are the first and only Spanish NGO to obtain this prestigious recognition.

Since 2015, we have participated in **compensation surveys,** carried out in all of our program countries in Asia, America and Africa by the consulting firm Birches Group.

This will enable us to define an appropriate compensation policy with respect to the sector.

We seek the utmost coherence in managing talent, and in the visualization of commitment and team engagement. That is why we are working to formalize **performance review systems** in all of our program countries. Along these lines, in 2015 we will implement performance review systems in two new countries.

We have initiated a global process of **transforming our organizational culture,** with the aim of fostering a culture that reflects and respects the principles and values established in our 2015-2018 Strategic Plan. During the first phase of this process, an anonymous survey of 114 questions regarding 13 dimensions of organizational culture was conducted with all staff.

The results of this consultation, which we shared with all staff, highlighted personal wellbeing as one of the strong points of our current organizational culture, and organizational learning and efficiency among aspects to be improved. We are currently in the process of formulating the Plan of Action that will be implemented next year in order to **align our organizational culture and mission.**

We strive for an organization that is built by and for the people who comprise it, that trusts in their capacity to achieve the established goals and that ensures that human rights are respected and promoted in all of its processes and systems.

Inclusion and Diversity

In 2015 we also initiated the review and updating of the **Gender Equity Policy.** This is being done through an in-depth process of reflection regarding gender equity throughout the organization.

This internal self-assessment served to identify areas for improvement and work priorities; these, in turn, form the basis for the corresponding plans of action. The policy will be published in 2016.

Following the publication of the Gender Equity Policy, we will continue working to develop a **Policy of Non-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion,** which will encompass all of our efforts towards being an inclusive, discrimination-free organization.

This policy will establish the guidelines for ensuring the systematic integration of an inclusive approach both within the organization and throughout all phases of the project cycle.

Our work is built on the **belief that all people,** especially children, should have the opportunity to fulfill their rights, irrespective of their or their families' national, ethnic or social origin, language, religion, political opinion, economic position, differences in ability or any other status.

In September 2015, we released the first version of our **institutional glossary,** which defines the terminology to use in order to ensure that all of our communication reflects child rights, gender and inclusive perspectives. Having our own glossary enables us to express our positioning as an institution, and to be coherent with our philosophy.

Starting in 2016, we will increase the systematic collection of data on Educo staff in order to introduce broader equity and diversity criteria. This information will enable us to **improve the monitoring of the integration of an inclusive approach** throughout the organization.

As an institutional principle, non-discrimination is an operating standard that guides our actions and its adoption and implementation is obligatory and should be demonstrable.

Ethical Fundraising

Our fundraising activities are based on transparency and respect. The images and messages that we use are **respectful of children** and aligned with both the Child Rights-Based Approach and legal standards.

We publish a list of all of the businesses that collaborate with Educo on our website.

We send a quarterly newsletter to the business sector to communicate featured collaborations with companies and to **inform about the progress of our projects.**

We also include those collaborations that have the greatest impact on our projects in our four-monthly publication, Educo Magazine.
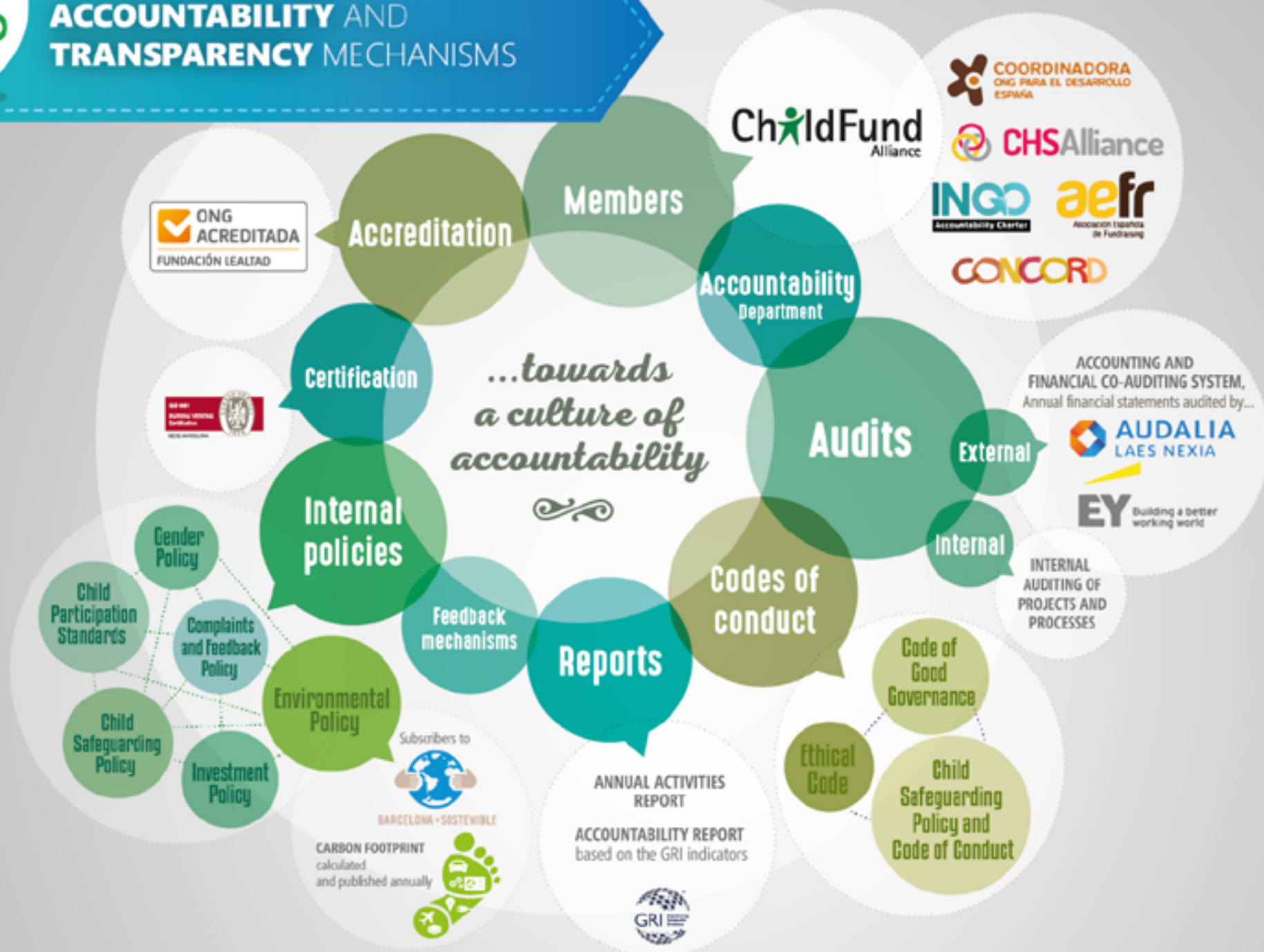
Our Policy for Collaborating with Businesses establishes the specific values and principles which should form the basis for all of our collaborations with the private sector, in all of our program countries.

Educo has been a member of the **Spanish Fundraising Association** since 2013 and complies with its ethical codes and applies its good practices in all fundraising activities.

aefundraising
Asociación Española de Fundraising

The basic principles that regulate our fundraising activities are set forth in our Ethical Code and Code of Conduct for Working with Children.

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ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY MECHANISMS

...towards a culture of accountability

Members
Accreditation
Accountability Department
Certification
Audits
External
Internal
Internal policies
Codes of conduct
Gender Policy
Child Participation Standards
Complaints and Feedback Policy
Child Safeguarding Policy
Investment Policy
Environmental Policy
Feedback mechanisms
Reports
Code of Good Governance
Ethical Code
Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct

ONG ACREDITADA
FUNDACIÓN LEALTAD

ChildFund Alliance

COORDINADORA ONG PARA EL DESARROLLO ESPAÑA
CHSAlliance
INGO Accountability Charter
aefr Asociación Española de Fundraising
CONCORD

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL CO-AUDITING SYSTEM, Annual financial statements audited by...
AUDALIA LAES NEXIA
EY Building a better working world

INTERNAL AUDITING OF PROJECTS AND PROCESSES

Subscribers to
BARCELONA + SOSTENIBLE

CARBON FOOTPRINT calculated and published annually

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT
ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT based on the GRI indicators
GRI

Additional information

For additional information about the issues addressed in this document, please consult the Accountability section of our website **here**.

For any questions or suggestions, please contact us at **accountability@educo.org**.
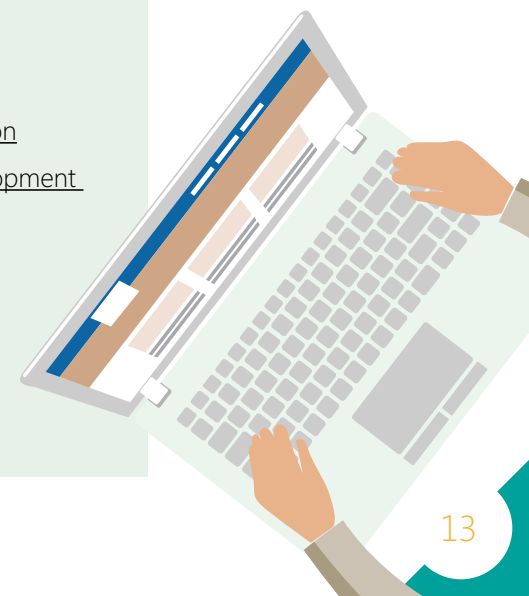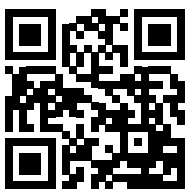
Your opinions help us to improve.

Related documents

Strategic Plan

2015 Annual Activities Report *(in Spanish)*

Feedback and Complaints Policy

Child Participation Standards

Interagency Study on Feedback Mechanisms

Ethical Code

Child Rights Situation Analysis (CRSA)

Policy for Collaborating with Businesses *(in Spanish)*

Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct

Environmental Policy

Gender Policy *(in Spanish)*

SROI Report on the Social Action Program in Spain *(in Spanish)*

Related websites

Educo website

INGO Accountability Charter

ChildFund Alliance

Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)

Bureau Veritas

Barcelona+Sostenible

CHS Alliance

Spanish Fundraising Association

Coordinator of Spanish Development NGOs (CONGDE)

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