





Accountability as a driver of change

José M. Faura // Executive Director of Educo

This document compiles the progress we have made in terms of accountability during 2016. Our next full **Accountability Report**, which we produce every two years, covers the years 2015 and 2016 in depth. The report is produced in accordance with the manual provided by **Accountable Now**, which is based on the NGO supplement from the GRI (Global Reporting Initiative), and incorporates our core commitments to accountability in terms of transparency, Child Rights, good governance, participation and advocacy. 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.



THEORY OF CHANGE:

In 2016, we have consolidated our Theory of Change, a process to **determine the desired social change** and what should happen in society and our organization for this to occur. This **participatory process** involved teams from all Educo's program countries, and defined the key domains of change—at both the programming and internal organizational level—and the pathways for achieving these changes.



KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE:



In May 2016, we officially joined Keeping Children Safe, a global network that works to **keep the world's children safe from abuse and exploitation**. As members of this network, we have initiated efforts to ensure compliance with the child protection standards, which we should demonstrate within a period of three years to gain full membership.

Accountability as a driver of change

Why accountability?

To Strengthen our **governance** structures

To **minimize the risk** of a misuse of funds

To create spaces in which our stakeholders can **participate** in decision-making processes

It's an opportunity to **learn** from what we do, through monitoring and evaluation, thus making it possible to **improve** and **innovate**

To enhance our **credibility** and **legitimacy**

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**, especially those people who participate in our activities.

To improve the **quality, effectiveness and efficiency** of our projects





Child Rights

In 2016, we have taken important steps to integrate the Child Rights-Based Approach throughout the organization. We have been developing our **Organizational Child Rights Standards**, a tool that can guide our progress in integrating the approach in a systematic way, in addition to providing a general framework for internal and external learning and accountability.

We are working to implement our **Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct** in all our program countries. As an initial step, all staff has been informed of the policy's contents and implication for each position. On the other hand, each Country Office has formed its own committee, to respond rapidly and appropriately to any suspected cases of mistreatment or abuse.

As a member of the ChildFund Alliance, in 2016 we collaborated in the drafting and presentation of the **Child-Friendly Accountability** initiative. The aim of the initiative is to work with children to enable them to hold governments and local leaders accountable to their goal to eradicate all forms of violence against children, as established by Sustainable Development Goal target 16.2. Educo will implement this initiative in El Salvador.



We are members of the **Global Campaign for Education**, whose aim is to raise awareness and mobilize citizens as spokespersons and activists for the right to education, and to lobby political representatives to fulfill their commitments with respect to the right to education. Through the Spanish Coalition, we actively participate in the working groups for Advocacy, Mobilization, Education and Coordination of the Global Action Week for Education.

Campaña Mundial por la
EDUCACIÓN
www.cme-espana.org



Child Rights

STRATEGIC AREAS

EDUCATION

In 2016, we presented our **core strategy for education, *Education for human dignity, based on human rights and wellbeing***, in which we outline the following key goals:

- Recognize the fundamental responsibility of States to respect, protect and provide education;
- Apply the core principles of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)*: non-discrimination, best interest, survival and optimal development, and participation;
- Plan based on Child Rights Situation Analyses and address structural causes of rights violations;
- Integrate and promote accountability and sustainability of actions.

PROTECTION

As a member of the ChildFund Alliance, we actively participate in **The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children**. This platform aims to end all violence against children, supporting national policies and programs that make ending violence against children a priority. These measures may include:

- The implementation and enforcement of laws to prevent and penalize violence against children
- The improvement of methods for fighting and reducing the impact of violence against children
- Efforts to bring about a change in attitudes, making it clear that violence is inadmissible in our institutions, communities and homes

GOVERNANCE

We believe that good governance implies children's active and meaningful participation in society. For example, in the Philippines we work with children "community facilitators" who, through their participation in campaigns to raise awareness about children's rights and in the planning and implementation of community project, engage in **advocacy to impel the local government to make children a priority**.



Strategy and innovation

In 2016, we created four **documents that set out our position with respect to child protection**, exploring everything from the causes to protection mechanisms. The publications, which have taken children's opinions into account, are:

- *Policy Paper: Child Protection and Safeguarding in Spain*
- *Policy Paper: Violence against Children in Spain*
- *Policy Paper: Child Labor*
- *Violence against Children. Do we know how to protect our children?*



In 2016, we developed the **Policy Paper on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, which defines how, through our actions, campaigns and advocacy, we contribute to the successful implementation of these goals. In our Strategic Plan we have identified specific objectives that respond to the SDGs and are particularly relevant for Educo's work.

After publishing the **Interagency Study on Child-Friendly Feedback and Complaint Mechanisms within NGO Programs**, together with Save the Children, War Child UK, Plan International and World Vision, we prepared the tools that are being applied in the second phase of the study, in consultation with children and young people who participate in the Youth Centers project in El Salvador.



We have launched the Project Pilot in Kolda, Senegal, the first project to integrally address the three development goals established in Educo's Strategic Plan: **Education, Protection and Governance**. With this project, we will learn and unlearn processes so that we can apply these in future programs.



Advocacy



As a member of the ChildFund Alliance, we participate in the work of **CONCORD, the European Confederation of Relief and Development NGOs**, which organizes advocacy campaigns and maintains regular dialogs with European institutions and civil society organizations. Our commitment focuses on monitoring and accountability with respect to the progress made towards achieving target 16.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), on eliminating violence against children.



We are members of the **Coordinator of Spanish Development NGOs (CONGDE)** and we participate actively in the following working groups: Cooperation, Funding and Development; Development Policy; Agenda 2030; Education for Global Citizenship; and Security. The participation in these groups enables us to enrich our efforts and provide critical reflection, thus contributing to the transformation towards a culture that promotes, protects and implements rights.



As members of the **Plataforma de la Infancia** (Platform for Children), a network that coordinates organizations working to defend, promote and protect children and their rights in Spain, we participate actively in the Advocacy and Children's Pact working groups. In 2016, we collaborated on the drafting of the **2016 Complementary Report on the Application of the Convention on the Rights of the Child**, that seeks to instill an alternative perspective of the convention's application in three of our program countries: Spain, Ecuador and Benin.



In February 2016, we made a public appeal in the Congress of Deputies of Spain to demand the immediate and coordinated implementation of a **European plan to protect child refugees who are unaccompanied or separated from their families**. The action, which we carried out in collaboration with six other child-focused NGOs, aims to guarantee children's right to family reunification, prioritize the fight against child trafficking and establish mechanisms for the coordinated exchange of information between countries, among other measures.

In 2016, we published the study **Once upon a voice...what children have to say about violence**, which gathers the opinions and proposals of some 700 girls and boys regarding the elimination of violence against children. The publication of this report seeks to raise social awareness of the problem of violence against children and the importance of children's participation in those issues that affect them. Moreover, within the context of the Spanish general elections, the results of the report were presented to different political parties, urging them to include child protection in their electoral programs.



Transparency

At the end of 2016, we finished drafting and approving our new **Open Information Policy**, which forms part of our commitment to ensuring that all of the people and organizations with which we work and relate have access to all of the necessary and relevant information about our organization.

We subscribe to the ten commitments set forth by Accountable Now, a platform of international civil society organizations that are committed to becoming more transparent, improving their impact and responding more effectively to the opinions and needs of their stakeholders. **Accountable Now's** Independent Review Panel evaluates our Accountability Reports and publishes them on their website.



Accountable
Now

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.



Good internal governance

In 2016, we updated Educo's **Ethical Code** to ensure coherence with the new mission, vision, values and principles established in our Strategic Plan. Within the framework of our Theory of Change process, we will create a task force to lead our internal governance and anti-corruption efforts.

At the end of 2016, we finished drafting and approving our **Investment Policy**, which guarantees that the inversion of the foundation's resources is coherence with the institution's commitment to ethical action, transparent management and accountability.

Since 2016, Educo has been an active member of the **UN Global Compact** and the **Spanish Network for the Global Compact** (Red Española del Pacto Mundial). Members subscribe to 10 principles related to Human Rights, Labor, Environment and Anti-Corruption, which are derived from different UN declarations. We are in the process of preparing our first biannual progress report, which will be published on the platform's website.



Network Spain
WE SUPPORT



Inclusion and diversity



In 2016, we published our **Gender Equity Policy** and we prepared the necessary structure to initiate its implementation through the diverse actions contemplated in the corresponding action plan. This includes appointing a member of the team as the Gender Focal Point, supported by a working group called the Gender Committee.



In 2016, we carried out the first review of our **Institutional Glossary** in Spain, which defines the terminology to use to ensure that all our communication reflects child rights, gender and inclusive perspectives. The review was based on the contributions of Educo teams in the Spanish-speaking program countries. We have initiated the translation of the glossary to English and to French, in direct collaboration with our Country Offices in Africa and Asia.

We have improved the systematic collection of information about Educo staff to **incorporate broader diversity criteria**, as a measure that will enable us to improve monitoring of the integration of an inclusive approach in the organization. For example, we have included the systematic collection of data about people with disabilities who form a part of our team.

In the municipalities of Jesús de Machaca and San Andrés de Machaca, in Bolivia, we have implemented a project funded by the Catalan Development Agency to contribute to the right of the indigenous Aymara people to an **equitable, quality and culturally and linguistically relevant education**. The project employs an Intercultural Bilingual Education method that promotes the recognition and strengthening of the Aymara language and culture, recovering traditional knowledge and wisdom and encouraging women's participation in different educational processes.



Participation

Over the course of 2016, we have been working on implementing and monitoring our **Complaints and Feedback Policy**, to ensure that all our stakeholders can voice their opinion about our work. A significant advance in this area has been the implementation of 34 feedback boxes in the schools and 2 in children's homes in Bangladesh.

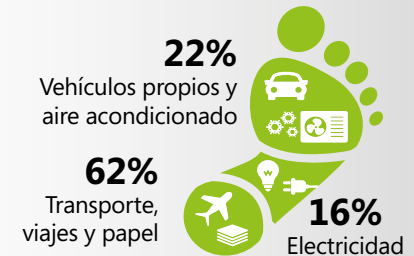
As presented in our **Annual Complaints and Feedback Report**, in 2016 we received a total of 698 complaints and recommendations via the different channels established for this purpose; this feedback helps us to improve our work and increase our impact.



Environmental responsibility

Throughout 2016, we have continued working on the progressive implementation of our **Environmental Policy**, through the committee created for this purpose which is made up of members from different areas of the organization.

We calculate and publish Educo's annual **carbon footprint**. In 2016, our carbon footprint represented a total of 1.608 tons of CO². 22% of our carbon footprint comes from **direct emissions** (owned vehicles and air conditioning) and 62% comes from **indirect emissions** (material transport, work-related travel, commuting, paper consumption and electricity).



In November 2016, we participated in the celebration of **European Week for Waste Reduction** through a series of internal informative and awareness-raising actions that we carried out with our team based in Spain.



Ethical Fundraising

Our **Policy for Collaborating with Businesses** establishes the specific values and principles which should form the basis for all our collaborations with the private sector, in all our program countries. Likewise, we also have a specific internal procedure that defines mechanisms for accountability to private entities and independent contractors with whom Educo has collaboration agreement.

In 2016, we were awarded our **first funding from the European Union** for the *Comprehensive Project for the Protection, Rescue and Reinsertion of Children Working in Traditional Goldmines*, which will be implemented in Yatenga Province (Nord Region) of Burkina Faso. This project will be jointly implemented by Educo, the local Association Tabital-Lobal and the Christian Children's Fund of Canada (also a member of the ChildFund Alliance).

We also presented our first **joint regional project with other member organizations of the ChildFund Alliance**, specifically ChildFund International and Christian Children's Fund of Canada. The project, which is for a period of four years and is funded by the Canadian Government, is entitled *Prevention of irregular migration of children in Central America*. The project will be led by Christian Children's Fund of Canada and will be implemented in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico.

In 2016, we were one of three NGOs receiving the **XXII Natura Award for Support to Social Projects** for our education and protection project for children working in the Cotonou market in Benin. The projects that aspire to this award are evaluated based on criteria such as pertinence, efficacy and results-based management, appropriation and impact, and sustainability.



Together with the magazine *Emprendedores*, Educo has organized the **Educo Award for Socially Responsible Small to Mid-Size Businesses**, one of the most prestigious awards that the magazine issues to companies and directors each year. The award recognizes the effort that small to mid-size Spanish companies have made to engage in management practices that value their businesses' ethical responsibility with respect to employees, society and the environment.



Our team



In 2016 Educo initiated the implementation of the **Birches Group human resources management system** through a pilot project carried out in Asia. The Birches Group methodology provides a framework for writing job descriptions and conducting individual performance evaluations based on the defined job requirements. The system will be implemented in all our program countries.

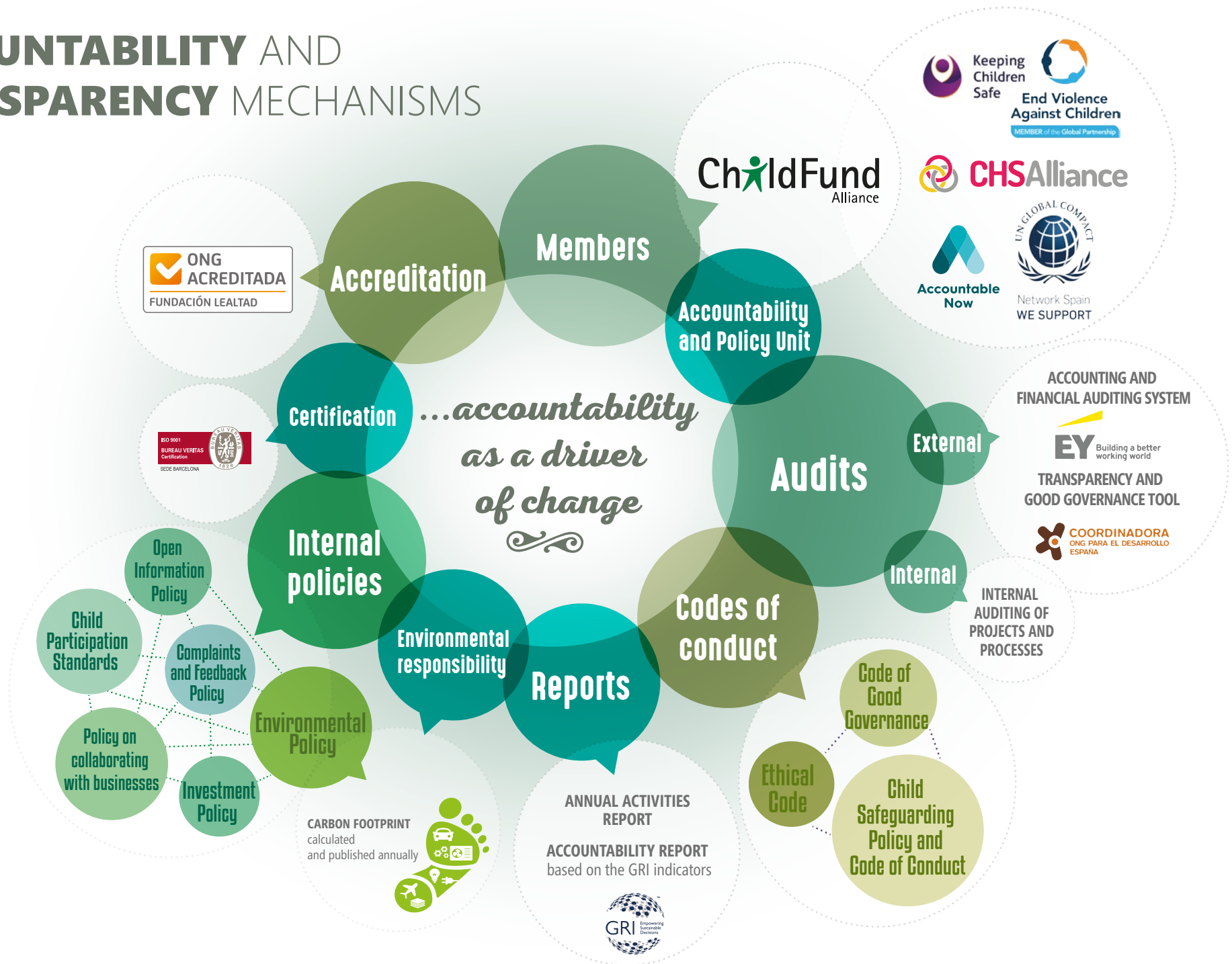
Within the framework of our Theory of Change, in 2016 we took initial steps towards developing and implementing a **project-based management methodology**. This model will enable the organization to be more flexible and adaptable to changing situations while optimizing resources, maximizing synergies between different jobs and departments, and improving processes and internal management, among other things.

As a member of **CHS Alliance's HR Europe Steering Committee**, we participate in organizing the annual European Conference on Human Resources in the Humanitarian Sector, which took place in Barcelona in June 2016.



We are active participants in the **Spanish Association for Social Intervention and Action Organizations**, which works to address different issues related to human resources and labor relations. This network strengthens the relationship between different NGOs and fosters the exchange of enriching experiences that can help participating organizations to improve and develop.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY MECHANISMS





Related documents

[Strategic Plan](#)

[2016 Annual Activities Report](#)

[Child Participation Standards](#)

[Education for human dignity based on human rights and wellbeing](#)

[Ethical Code](#)

[Policy for Collaborating with Businesses \(in Spanish only\)](#)

[Environmental Policy](#)

[Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct](#)

[Gender Equity Policy](#)

[Complaints and Feedback Policy](#)

[Financial Investment Policy \(in Spanish only\)](#)

[Policy Paper on Child Protection and Safeguarding in Spain \(in Spanish only\)](#)

[Policy Paper on Violence against Children in Spain \(in Spanish only\)](#)

[Policy Paper on Child Labor \(in Spanish only\)](#)

[Violence against Children. Do we know how to protect our children \(in Spanish only\)](#)

[Interagency Study on Child-Friendly Feedback and Complaint Mechanisms within NGO Programs](#)

[Policy Paper on Sustainable Development Goals \(in Spanish only\)](#)

[Once there was a voice... what children have to say about violence \(in Spanish only\)](#)

Webography

[Educo website](#)

[Accountable Now](#)

[Global Reporting Initiative \(GRI\)](#)

[Campaña Mundial por la Educación](#)

[The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children](#)

[Coordinator of Spanish Development NGOs \(CONGDE\)](#)

[Fundación Lealtad](#)

[Birches Group](#)

[Spanish Association of Social Action and Intervention Organizations](#)

[Alianza ChildFund](#)

[Keeping Children Safe](#)

[Iniciativa de Rendición de Cuentas Amigable hacia la Infancia \(Alianza ChildFund\)](#)

[CHS Alliance](#)

[Emprendedores Magazine](#)

[United Nations Global Compact](#)

[European Week for Waste Reduction](#)

[European Confederation of Relief and Development NGOs \(CONCORD\)](#)





Additional information

For additional information about the issues addressed in this document, please [click here](#) to access the Accountability section of our website.

For any questions or suggestions, please contact us at renpol@educó.org. Your feedback helps us to improve.

Tus opiniones nos ayudan a mejorar



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