

EDUCO

ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

2019 INTERIM REPORT

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STATEMENT FROM EDUCO'S ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

We are pleased to present Educo's 2019 Interim Accountability Report. This report presents a progress update for the five areas of improvement that we identified in our response letter to the Independent Review Panel's feedback on our 2018 report: Indicators for measuring impact, Learning tools, Feedback and complaints mechanisms, Staff training and development, and Financial analytics.

2019 has been a year of transition from our 2015-2018 Strategic Plan to our new 2020-2030 Global Impact Framework. During this period, we have reflected on what we have learnt throughout the implementation of our 2015-2018 Strategic Plan and drawn on this to collectively define the path we will follow during the next strategic cycle. Accountability is a key element of the new Global Impact Strategic Framework; it is one of the four supporting approaches that must be integrated into all aspects of our work in order for us to achieve the Social Impact Outcomes that we have identified. We believe that promoting a culture of accountability, where the voices of our stakeholders guide our actions and decision-making processes, represents an opportunity for mutual learning and to foster trust and responsibility, which is crucial to improving our work and, therefore, our impact.

Accountability is also one of the five fundamental aspects that we have prioritized as minimum Programme Quality Criteria (PQC) that all our projects must integrate. The new PQC provide the basis for managing program quality across the organization. This will not only reinforce the quality, coherence and relevance of the projects that Educo supports, which are focused on improving children's lives and prospects by promoting and protecting their human rights, but also the alignment to the priorities established by international donors. These criteria must be applied to all the projects delivered by Educo and its partners and will be described in depth in a separate guide, along with the tools available in Educo to integrate them effectively in our programs.

Whilst we see accountability as an approach that must be integrated into all aspects of our work, we are currently focusing on the following three key areas:

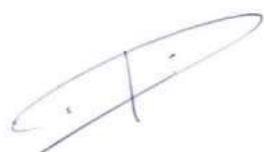
- Strengthening our safeguarding practices, especially our child safeguarding practices. We have made important progress in the implementation of child safeguarding procedures and practices over the past year, in the framework of our Child Safeguarding Policy. This policy underwent an extensive review process last year, including the creation of a child-friendly version of the policy (published in 2020), and all staff received training on the new version of the policy during 2019. We have strengthened our partnership with the Keeping Children Safe (KCS) network, with all safeguarding teams completing training from KCS, which has in turn supported the development of specific action plans and budgets for the implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy in each Country Office and informed the recruitment of a new dedicated Child Safeguarding Policy Consultant. We now need to ensure that efforts to reinforce the implementation of this policy and the associated procedures are constantly supported and coordinated. We are currently working on designing specific safeguarding procedures for adults, within the framework of a new PSEAH Policy, aimed at all the stakeholders we engage with, but especially adults participating in our programs and surrounding communities.

- Becoming an impact-driven organization. The focus on the social impact of our work, as defined in our 2020-2030 Global Impact Framework, is the first crucial step towards making this shift. We are now working to put in place systems and practices for impact measurement and impact-informed learning, based on this framework, including the definition of more focused global indicators which will allow us to work with a results-orientated approach and to promote accountability both internally and externally. This will enable us to demonstrate the relevance of our work and make evidence-based decisions for continuous improvement and optimization of our social impact.
- Streamlining our Code of Conduct and whistleblowing systems and practices. Over the past few years, we have made considerable progress in the implementation of Feedback and Complaints mechanisms and in setting up an internal whistleblowing channel for reporting breaches of our Code of Conduct. We now need to focus on integrating our reporting mechanisms, with the incorporation of our Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and upcoming PSEAH Policy, to ensure that concerns, complaints and incidents, including those related to safeguarding, are handled with the maximum coordination and efficiency.

We now move into our new strategic cycle with optimism and enthusiasm, but in a climate of unprecedented challenges and uncertainty, in which our ability to listen, respond, adapt, and build trust amongst our stakeholders is more crucial than ever.

Pau Aragay,

Impact and Organisational Improvement Director



Jordi Cardona,

People and Culture Director



SIGNIFICANT ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

The following is a summary of the most significant organisational changes that have taken place during the reporting period:

- 2019 was a transition year, following the completion of our 2015-2018 Institutional Strategic Plan. As such, we made important progress towards putting Educo's new **Institutional Planning Cycle (IPC)** into action. The IPC is a fundamental piece of Educo's new Results-based Internal Management Model, and replaces the methodology used in the last 5 years for the generation of the Institutional Strategic Plan 2015-2018 and corresponding Country Plans 2016-2019. The IPC is built on results-based management, and it places impact measurement at the heart of what drives our social action.
- The cornerstone of the IPC is the **2020-2030 Global Impact Framework (GIF)**, which we have developed during 2019. The key purpose of the framework is to define Educo's Theory of Social Change, which outlines the Social Impact Outcomes that we will strive to achieve globally over the next decade. Thus, the framework also describes the role we want Educo to play to achieve these social impact outcomes. At the same time, it articulates Educo's alignment with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.
- In 2019 we also began work on the other key elements of the IPC: The **Global Programmatic Framework** (2020-2025) and the **Global Organisational Development Plan** (2020-2023). These documents, along with each Country Office's Country Programmatic Framework (2020-2025) and Country Organisational Development Plans (2020-2023), are currently being developed.
- In terms of our **geographical focus**, in 2019 we completed the process of disassociation from our Peru and Ecuador Country Offices. Towards the end of 2019, we began work towards evaluating the possibility of initiating work in Niger.
- In December 2019, there were **changes to the membership of our Board of Trustees**: Antoni Isaac Agilar replaced Julio Molinario Valls as President of the Board of Trustees. There were additional changes to some of the other members of the Board. All the information relating to the members of the Board can be found [here](#) on our website.
- Although not within the reporting period of this report, it is important to note that in May 2020 there were **changes at Executive Management level** when Educo's former CEO, José Faura, left the organisation. For the interim period, Pau Aragay and Jordi Cardona, Impact and Organisational Improvement Director and People and Culture Director respectively, have taken on the role of Co-Acting Executive Directors. Given that the recruitment process for a new CEO is already on its way, we are confident that before the end of 2020 we will have welcomed and onboarded our new CEO.

UPDATE ON IDENTIFIED IMPROVEMENT AREAS

INDICATORS FOR MEASURING IMPACT (A2)

Over the past year we have taken the first steps towards putting our new Social Impact Measurement System into action through the development of our Global Impact Framework 2020-2030 (GIF), in which we define the social impact we will work to generate over the next 10 years and specify clear, global indicators to measure progress against this social impact. As part of the GIF, we have identified three Social Impact Outcomes (SIO), with corresponding indicators, which we will work to achieve globally over the next ten years in order to contribute to our desired social impact: *Children and adolescents fully enjoy their wellbeing, rights, and the opportunity to develop their abilities on a shared planet.*

The three SIO outcomes and corresponding indicators are detailed below:

SIO 1. Children and adolescents fully develop their personality and abilities.

- 1.1. Children and adolescents develop their life project and their ability to aspire, thus fulfilling their life expectations.
- 1.2. Children and adolescents enjoy a relevant, equitable, safe, and inclusive education.
- 1.3. Children and adolescents enjoy a critical, collaborative, and creative education aimed at social transformation.

SIO 2. Children and adolescents live free from violence in safe and positive treatment environments.

- 2.1. C&A enjoy positive, empathic relationships based on respect for their attachment figures, adult role models and peers.
- 2.2. C&A fully confide in the people in their surroundings and feel safe and secure in their community and school environment.
- 2.3. C&A enjoy effective child protection systems that prevent and eradicate all forms of violence and protect them from extreme vulnerability, crises, and disasters.

SIO 3. Children and adolescents drive social change in their social and natural environment.

- 3.1. C&A organize themselves and act as agents of social change.
- 3.2. C&A promote awareness about sustainable development in their communities and local environment.
- 3.3. C&A promote changes in values, beliefs and social norms in their communities and social environments.

As mentioned above, during the second half of 2019 and first half of 2020 we have also been drafting the first version of our Global Programmatic Framework 2020-2025 (GPF), which is made up of four programmatic areas with their corresponding goals, results and indicators. The indicator framework is child-centred and draws on international standards relating to the different programmatic areas.

Below is an example from Programmatic Area 1, to demonstrate the framework's logic:

Programme Area 1: Children and adolescents exercise and enjoy their right to a safe, equitable and quality education

Programme Area 1, Result 1: Children and adolescents participate in relevant and inclusive educational processes.

Programme Area 1, Result 1, Indicator 1: The educational process is sensitive to gender, promotes education for girls (including secondary education) and promotes coeducation.

A team of 42 ambassadors, made up of members of the Educo team from across the countries and regions we work in, has been key to ensuring the participation of different members of staff at all levels of the organization in the drafting of the GISF. This has included a global survey to collect feedback. Likewise, the Global Programmatic Framework has also included strategies and opportunities for all staff to give their feedback and has included consultations with focus groups of children and adolescents, linked to the Programmatic Areas. During the development of the GPF, we will also consult with external stakeholders from other child focused agencies, development agencies, public and private donors etc. This participation will continue to be deepened during the development of the country programmatic frameworks.

LEARNING TOOLS (B2)

In 2019 we carried out the evaluation of our 2015-2018 Strategic Plan and the corresponding Country Plans that have guided the work of each Country Office over the past four years. The evaluation was carried out through a participative process with the aim of identifying learnings to consider and incorporate in the design of our new Strategic Framework. We analysed both the strategic goals we had set and the strategies for their implementation. The evaluation was finalized in 2020 and is currently being shared internally. It will also be published on our website for external stakeholders. The following are two examples of the learnings generated through the evaluation of the Strategic Plan and two examples of learnings from the evaluations of the Country Plans:

- The focus on the areas of Education, Protection and Governance has been mostly successful, as it has allowed us to focus our programmatic strategy, generate expertise and be recognized in these areas in the sector. However, the organization's ability to generate impact in all three areas has been uneven; the fact that each area was often addressed separately has diminished Educo's ability to achieve greater impact. Therefore, in this next strategic cycle, we must make progress in integrating the three areas.
- We need a more long-term and impact-oriented perspective, which means we need a greater ability to measure the impact we generate, and the progress made towards the identified results. Therefore, we need to be able to have common and global indicators that are better focused, to work with a results-orientated approach, to promote accountability both internally and externally, in order to improve our performance and continuous learning. This will allow us to make evidence-based decisions, in order to improve our social impact.
- PHILIPPINES: Gains from governance projects in the past, which were flagship initiatives, have not been fully exploited to engage the Local Government Units in delivering their mandates better for fulfilling child rights. Educo must fully understand the added value we can bring from past experiences and use this in engagement with partners.
- NICARAGUA: The application of the rights approach requires the definition of specific strategies for each of the title holders, since the effective fulfilment of children's rights is negatively affected when one of the groups is unable to assume the role that corresponds to them; on the other hand, we need

to work on better linking the sponsorship and program areas, in order to ensure that more sponsored children are incorporated into the direct target groups served.

In January 2019 we set up a new institutional monitoring and reporting system with the aim of promoting transparency and accountability on the work we have done towards meeting our objectives and the challenges faced, identifying learnings and areas for improvement and strengthening internal communication and coordination. The system is based on the preparation of bimonthly reports, as well as a final, end of year report, which bring together responses from head office, regions and country offices to a series of indicators and assessment questions which indicate progress made and challenges encountered. The reports are shared internally with all staff throughout the year, allowing for activities and resources to be adapted accordingly. We now need to ensure that we complete the cycle, monitoring whether the changes made lead to improvements in our work. This is something we will now be focusing on.

At a programme level, over the past year we have completed our new Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Manual, which guides Educo and partner staff on the use of the MEAL tools that we have developed, and details how to integrate these concepts into the programme cycle. The section on learning sets out Educo's approach to institutional learning, defines the learning cycle in Educo, indicates which learnings we will systematize, and defines the different roles involved in the learning process, as well as giving guidance on how to apply the tools in different contexts. The Manual was finalized at the beginning of 2020 and has since been shared internally, as well as with local partners and within ChildFund Alliance.

Other ways in which we share learnings with different external stakeholders include our Open Days, during which we share our progress and lessons learnt in adapted formats with all those involved in our projects, including children and adolescents; and our Joint Commissions' meetings, which bring together the different actors implicated in our activities, such as local partners, community members and local authorities to monitor progress, identify challenges and possible improvements, and make the necessary adjustments to our projects. Finally, our project evaluations, which we will be able to start publishing on our new website this year for the first time, also include a section on lessons learnt and good practice.

FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS MECHANISMS (J3, J4)

During 2019, we identified the collection of tools that will be developed to support our teams in the implementation of feedback and complaints mechanisms. These tools are described in detail in our new Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Manual, which has recently been shared with our MEAL teams in Country Offices. In 2019, one of the tools we have made important progress on is our *Guide for designing and implementing feedback and complaints mechanisms*, which includes information and practical tips on how to set up mechanisms for internal and external stakeholders, especially children, as well as examples of different possible mechanisms that could be used, and the advantages and disadvantages of their use in different contexts and for different stakeholder groups. The guide will be completed and disseminated internally within the next few months.

During the year we also completed and disseminated the *Guide for Open Days*, which aims to support teams in setting up and conducting institutional Open Days for sharing information, promoting participation and getting feedback from the diverse stakeholders involved in our work. The guide has a

particular emphasis on adapting this accountability mechanism to childrens' needs and includes specific guidance for the preparation and carrying out of Open Days for children, including child-friendly methodologies for sharing information and getting feedback.

As our engagement with stakeholders via social media continues to increase, we have also worked on a new protocol for dealing with the feedback that is sent in through this channel. As identified in our 2018 Feedback Report, we want to make sure that the feedback via social media can be registered and analysed in a standardized way across the organization. This tool has been finalized and shared with staff working on feedback and communications during 2019.

In terms of the feedback and complaints mechanisms that are available for internal stakeholders, Educo staff are encouraged to use the internal feedback mechanisms to give their feedback in a confidential way. These mechanisms vary according to the context of the country office, but often include an email address and a suggestions box. Parallel to these channels, we have a specific whistleblowing mechanism available for all staff to report possible breaches of Educo's Code of Conduct. The cases that are presented via the whistleblowing mechanism are dealt with by an external service provider. At the same time, a Compliance Committee, made up of members of Educo's Board of Trustees and management, oversees the correct functioning of the whistleblowing mechanism, as well as its dissemination to staff. We are currently working on disseminating this mechanism to staff in all of our country offices.

2019 was the first year that we published our Annual Feedback Report on our website, making it accessible to external stakeholders. We are currently completing this years' report, which will be available on our website in English, French and Spanish in the next few weeks. The report describes the lessons learnt and challenges encountered over the year, as well as examples of changes implemented in response to the feedback received. In terms of lessons learnt and areas for improvement, the report highlights the need to strengthen the framework of the Feedback and Complaints Committees in country offices, to ensure that organisational changes do not affect the continuity of their work. In some cases, structural changes during 2019 led to delays in Committees reaching targets set out in their 2019 action plan. We have also highlighted the need to make sure that all the Feedback and Complaints Committees have the recognition, visibility, and resources they need for their work to be effective and to promote learning and improvement across the organization.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT (H2)

During the past year we have been working on a new Learning, Training and Development Policy, within the framework of our new Global Organisational Development Plan. The policy outlines Educo's overall approach to learning and development, dealing specifically with the types of learning and development opportunities that should be promoted, the types of learning spaces available, our commitments in terms of access to training and development, the resources that will be made available, and how we will evaluate training activities, amongst other things. The policy is currently being finalized.

One of the key elements of our approach to staff training and development is the 'Development Room', our global online learning platform. During 2019 we have been working to widen the scope of the Development Room, increasing the training courses that are available to staff and promoting the use of this tool. In general, we are looking to increase the amount of virtual training and learning opportunities open to our teams, as a flexible, accessible option for professional development. Whilst we had hoped

that all staff would be registered on the Development Room by the beginning of 2020, this has been delayed and will now be completed by the end of the year.

One of the things that we would like to strengthen, via the Development Room, is the use of internal specialists as trainers for other staff, in combination with the online courses available on the virtual platform, to support staff and follow up on progress achieved. We are currently using this modality as part of our drive to strengthen organizational capacities in the sectors of Education and Protection in emergencies, in response to the growth of humanitarian needs in our areas of intervention in recent years. This is a way of working that we would like to strengthen and promote in the future.

In terms of our performance evaluation system, we have now completed global staff training to initiate all of our teams on the functioning of this process. This will allow all staff to participate in formal performance appraisals using the new system, which includes an assessment of how the individual inspires, empowers and includes their colleagues and other interested parties in the work they are doing. The performance appraisals for 2019 will be carried out later than planned, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

FINANCIAL ANALYTICS (I2)

In terms of our financial analytics, we have been working towards the development of a financial monitoring system that gives us an up-to-date, global view of Educo's financial situation, in order to ensure access to relevant information in real time that can be exploited in decision-making. In 2019, we designed and implemented a new cost centre structure, which formed the basis of the work that we have done over the past few months towards standardizing and strengthening our global financial tools and practices. This includes setting up a Financial Information system that uses the Budget/Forecast tool to generate a series of quarterly reports on budget execution and planned execution. These reports allow for a closer and more effective budget monitoring and follow-up on the efficiency of each Country Office, facilitating the analysis and timely reallocation of resources.

We are now working on a new financial monitoring dashboard to present the information in the reports in a more accessible format, which should be operational by the end of 2020. We are also currently taking steps to improve the reporting and management tools for the follow-up of income received via institutional donors.

Moving forward, the focus now is on improving the financial management of resources to achieve our goals of deficit reduction and a correct balance between reserves and operations to assure Educo's sustainability. Over the next three years, the main elements of this will be: reinforcement of the capacities of the Finance teams in Educo; close monitoring of the operations in the field, both in Country Offices and Head Office; set up of clear and shared KPIs for financial management, and mid-term financial planning and overview.