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Dear Members of the Independent Review Panel,

We would like to extend our thanks for your feedback on our 2022 Interim Accountability Report. We find your comments very relevant and feel they encourage us to continue striving to improve these critical aspects of our work. The recommendations made will be taken on board and addressed in our next accountability report. We would also like to thank you for the space we had to exchange on the feedback in our recent follow-up call. We have responded below to some of the specific points made.

Strategic indicators for success and how we involve our stakeholders in developing them (A2)

Additionally, the Panel suggests that it would be good to clarify how the evidence they are generating through this system is being streamlined and used at various levels (organisation, country office, project, local stakeholders).

We agree that this is an important next step to report on. At this point in the roll-out of our Social Impact Measurement System, the use of the data generated is something that we are discussing across the organisation and that is key to making sure the system is effective. This is one of the reasons why we are focusing on social impact *management*, including roles and responsibilities in data processing and use, to try to ensure that all departments are aware of the role they play in this.

How we demonstrate excellence on our strategic priorities (C1)

Going beyond the current framework, it would be useful to know more about whether and how Educo offices in the global south are playing a leadership and learning role in their contexts.

We will expand on this point in our next report. On the other hand, this observation is interesting in relation to the work we are doing on localisation – which we can also share on in our next report.

Avenues for external feedback and evidence that key external stakeholders acknowledge the organization is good and listening and acting upon what we hear (E1)

The Panel also suggests that the organisation expand in future reports about how the feedback loop is being closed (i.e., how inputs from stakeholders are shared back with them) and what happens when

feedback or inputs cannot be taken up. Another point for consideration is how can the inherent power imbalances among various partners be effectively minimised to ensure that the feedback received remains candid and forthright.

These comments are very relevant for us at the moment. As we put in place the different elements of our feedback system, we now need to focus on how feedback is managed, how we close the loop and what proportion of feedback is used to bring about improvements to our work. One of the ways in which we try to elicit actionable feedback is by ensuring that we communicate clearly and frequently about the types of feedback we can deal with and what channels are available for other types of cases. In terms of tackling the inherent power imbalance, this is an area of continuous learning and discussion for us. One of the aspects we consider crucial is ensuring transparency about the feedback process.

Evidence that confirms a high level of external stakeholder engagement in our activities from beginning to end (E3)

The Panel encourages Educo to further share the challenges that it faced [in actively engaging children] and how the organisation tackled them. This will be an important step in further solidifying Educo's leadership in how to collaborate with and work alongside children in a safe and creative manner.

We are currently working on the dissemination and roll-out of our new Child Participation Policy and a reflection on the different challenges we face is an important part of this process. We look forward to sharing our progress on this.

General considerations

Finally, two overall considerations are: firstly, about the overall intensity of consultation across mechanisms that might be able to be coordinated or streamlined to lessen the overall burden on Educo staff and stakeholders; secondly, given these commendable monitoring and consultation efforts, clarifying and emphasising uptake into decision making and sharing back to stakeholders who were consulted.

In terms of reducing the pressure from the various different consultation and data collection processes, we agree that this is a key consideration, and it is something we are discussing. We clearly need to maximise limited resources and at the same time make sure that we are able to respond to, or report back to, our stakeholders, and therefore fully meet our commitments. One of the things we are working is making sure that these processes are as integrated as possible into project planning and can be carried out within the framework of other activities, where feasible.

We look forward to providing a more detailed update on our progress in our next full report.

Yours sincerely,

Pilar Orenes
Executive Director, Educo