

Geneva, 21 June 2019

Mr. Ignacio Packer
Executive Director | ICVA
Avenue Giuseppe-Motta 26-28
Geneva, GE CH 1202
Switzerland

Dear Ignacio,

Subject: ICVA scoping study report for UNICEF

I would like to thank you and through you ICVA, for the '*scoping study on the state of the partnerships between UNICEF and NGOs in humanitarian settings*' which findings, conclusions and recommendations were recently presented during the workshop held in New York on 30th April, meeting in which you also gratefully participated. I am pleased to note that the report from the study also now publicly available on ICVA's website.

With humanitarian assistance now regularly accounting for more than 50% of all UNICEF programme expenses, and with about 50% of UNICEF resources being transferred to NGOs and CSOs (the other half being to Governments), UNICEF and its partners must indeed maximize their collaboration in humanitarian action so as to be able to deliver the best possible results for children and their communities.

I am pleased with the report's findings on the strength of our relationship with NGOs, noticing that close to 70% of the respondents ranked it to be either "satisfying" or "very satisfying". UNICEF's investment and engagement in the field is also recognized with UNICEF being perceived as a crucial partner in emergency settings notably with its capacity to influence authorities and shape relevant issues.

However, I am also aware that some elements of the partnership remain challenging and do present plenty of room for improvement. Weaknesses identified were notably around UNICEF's:

- a) heavy administrative processes and unclear guidance;
- b) little financial support and with too many risks for the partners;
- c) top-down culture of partnership;
- d) complex/fragmented structure with absence of predictability and clear accountability; and
- e) timid engagement in child rights advocacy.

Finally, an overarching concern was the lack of standardized approaches, with the dynamic of the partnership depending mostly on the quality of staff in charge of managing the relation. This should not be the case and will need to be addressed,

As you will recall during your bilateral meeting on April 30th, UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore asked you candidly "what can we do better, where and how can we improve?" Although acknowledging that UNICEF is an agency that uses both public and private funds, ED Fore committed the organization to addressing its shortcomings and to find a way to balance risks with due process.

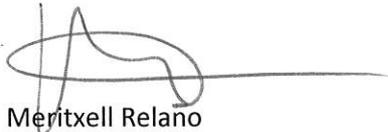
Building on this renewed engagement at the highest level, EMOPS is committed to hold – after many years -- a global consultation with NGOs before the end of this year. Its format, content, and participation will need to be defined in the coming weeks in consultation with ICVA. We did take good note of the scoping study's recommendations for such consultations, including amongst others, and the need to well-prepare and ensure follow-up. This is the first step of a new process that should be then institutionalized allowing regular updates on progress on areas of concern.

Let's meet in the coming days to kick start the preparation process.

Please rest assure that UNICEF will also ensure due follow-up to the NGO Review of five UN agencies Partnership Agreements, with a view to address the Grand Bargain commitments on reducing administrative duplication and harmonized reporting requirements.

As I did during our meeting last month, I would like to thank you and ICVA again for this study and I look forward to our continued dialogue to further improve and strengthen UNICEF-NGO partnership in humanitarian settings.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Meritxell Relano', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Meritxell Relano
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