

## **Cover letter to the MSF OCB Association Members to become an OCB Board Members**

Over the past 30 years of professional experience, of which more than half with the Operational Centre of MSF in Brussels, I have had the chance to lend my skills to organizations with a variety of profiles and missions, all contributing to who I am today: someone committed and determined to make things happen for a better world. Over the course of these years, I was able to observe from different perspectives both the quality of the humanitarian response provided in acute crisis situations, and those based on more structural, long term, perspectives. Gradually, the aid stakeholders have managed to evolve with the objective to improve the response expected by victims of violence, those excluded from housing, or the ones left behind when it comes to access to essential care, despite sometimes hard-to-reach environments or high-risk operating conditions.

Today, the movement of Doctors Without Borders has become a worldwide reference as a key health emergency operator, and the Brussels Centre has contributed a lot to this result. Field or HQ collaborators, local, regional, or international actors, operating at the heart of the operations or being part of a support function, as associative members or playing an executive role...all of them have been somehow the builders of this collective achievement, in their own way. It appears to me that this acknowledgement has little to do with any centralization vs decentralization, localization vs delocalization, or nationalization vs internationalization issues. Therefore, first and foremost, it would be an honor for me to be able to bring my own contribution to this indiscriminate effort.

However, this international acknowledgement that translates in large-scale private donations, has also had its downside. It has been acquired through a dynamic of strong growth, high professionalization, unavoidable bureaucracy, and silo working dynamics, where teams are increasingly struggling to talk to one another, to understand one another. Ultimately, this success has been reached at the expense of our founding principles and spirit. Working within an operating environment where the genuine objectives of our missions often save us from being exposed to external criticism, it is essential to fuel an internal dynamic of regular questioning of our medical operations and the way they are conducted by the OCB, on decision-making processes and governance mechanisms, and the expected levels of accountability and transparency in arbitrating platforms, sometimes dealing with very sensitive issues. It is crucial that each collaborator who is actively contributing to MSF's development knows her/his voice is heard, weighed, and respected, regardless of grade or position on the organizational chessboard.

Above all, the associative platforms should be at the heart of the debates, and I would be happy to contribute to that beating heart as Board member of the Operational Centre of MSF in Brussels.

I believe those associative pulses, to be a real engine for positive change, should meet two essential requirements: the first one would be to dedicate enough time to the association to bring light to inevitable blind spots. The second requirement seeks to feel this heart beating in MSF fields of operations. Because I am able today to meet those two requirements, I am submitting to you my application as MSF OCB Administrator.

Sincerely,

Pierre BD, Brussels May 13th 2022