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Record Item Title

Comments on GAC - Reference Book: Preparatory & Reference Documentation on the World Summit for Children (1990: July); Special Session for Children

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Primary Contact **Rijuta Tooker (Temp Assist)**
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Notes

[Archives: CF/NYH/SP/SUM; Folder: S0355.] Contents: Section 1: Members of the Planning Committee - Schedule of (remaining) meetings and activities; Section 2: Schedule and Programme of the World Summit for Children; Section 3: Draft Declaration of the World Summit for Children - Draft Plan of Action; Section 4: Report of Meetings: - 1st, 2nd, 3rd Meetings of the Planning Committee - Meetings of the Working Group on Format - ~~Meetings of the Working Group on the Declaration - Statement of Agreement of the six Initiating Governments -~~

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Terry Harrison

Date: 4/20/98

Sender: Thomas Franklin

To: Maria Calivis

Priority: Urgent

Receipt requested

Subject: Fwd: Agenda for Children beyond the year 2000

As per your request this morning. A. Chang (secretary to T. Franklin)

Forward Header

Subject: Agenda for Children beyond the year 2000

Author: Thomas Franklin

Date: 4/6/98 12:20 PM



Vision.wpd

Attached are some summary comments on the document Agenda for Children Beyond the Year 2000

If you need further inputs, please don't hesitate to let me know

Tom Franklin.

Comments on A Global Agenda for Children beyond Year 2000

Tom Franklin.

1. The document would benefit from a more rigorous review of achievements in the 1990s. The first paragraph of the document treats women and children as objects of development and overlooks the distinction between advocacy, service delivery, capacity building and empowerment. Indeed, the first paragraph does little to show any progress where it really counts: in capacity-building and empowerment of the poor.
2. It is a pity that the document does not take the position of the poor from the outset: repeated global commitments have amounted to little concrete benefit for poor people. The document should acknowledge this. We are good at making global pronouncements, less good at making life more manageable for poor children and women.
3. The document would benefit from an objective, quantified comparison between what we set out to do at the outset of the last decade and what we actually achieved. This should be followed by an analysis of lessons learned, an identification of best practices, and an assessment of future needs. In the absence of such a methodical approach, it would be all too easy to see the analysis of the present document as an attempt to shift the goalposts. We had an agenda for the last decade, we don't analyse our performance, and we then glibly propose a 'new agenda'.
4. The document appears to ignore UNICEF's own approach to rights-based programming. The paragraph on unfinished business and the challenge ahead makes no mention of rights. Instead, the CRC is mentioned only in connection with 'the street, sweatshops, factories and armed conflict'. Surely of greater importance, in terms of numbers of children and women affected, is the fact that the standards laid out in articles 6, 24 and 28, for instance, are daily breached with impunity.
5. The justification for a 'new agenda for children' is much too weak and incoherently argued. The document needs to explain what was wrong with the agenda set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the World Summit for Children, before it can assume that readers will go along with what becomes a merely rhetorical argument.
6. Nobody will quarrel with the "Vision for Children in the 21st Century", but the key question is how to realise this vision and what will UNICEF's role in that development be. Instead of addressing these vital questions, the document turns in on itself and repeats, verbatim, wording that has already occurred a mere two pages earlier.
7. The document does not link the 'key transformations for the realization on children's rights' with what went before. The reader is suddenly confronted with list of priorities that do not seem to flow from previous analysis and argument. For instance, strengthened families do not feature as part of the 'vision' presented earlier in the document. And it is hard to see why the end of discrimination against women is not part

- of the key transformations proposed.
8. There is considerable verbatim repetition in sections 4 and 5 and this demonstrates the fact that the document does not *develop an argument*.
 9. The document needs to be much clearer about the distinction between the Global Agenda for Children and UNICEF's agenda. Of course, UNICEF cannot do everything on the Global Agenda, but nobody would expect it to.
 10. Many would question whether UNICEF has developed comparative advantage in taking a cross-sectoral and holistic view of children and of the development process. The progress cited in the opening paragraph of the document suggests, rather, that our comparative advantage lies in well-defined, focussed interventions aimed at specific problems, such as immunization, salt iodization, micronutrient deficiencies, safe water and schooling. Significantly, the first paragraph makes no mention of holistic approaches like health sector reform. Even more critically, the list of our comparative advantages overlooks our strengths in mobilising decision-makers and others to solve specific problems
 11. It is to be noted that key strategic priorities, such as sustainability, capacity building and empowerment of the poor have been removed from section 7. The document seems to argue that integration and the much discredited notion of 'participation' are more important than sustainability and empowerment. This is a very superficial attitude towards development.
 12. It is difficult to understand why the priority themes for UNICEF advocacy and action are not more closely linked to any situation analysis, our comparative advantage and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The least one would expect is an identification of articles in the convention which will be given immediate and priority attention. For many in UNICEF, articles 6, 24 and 28 are where we have a cutting edge. We should not forget this or we will spread ourselves too thinly.

April 5, 1998 TF A:\VISION.WPD