

WORKING PAPER SERIES

**END-DECADE REVIEW OF
STRATEGIC LESSONS
LEARNED FROM UNICEF'S
EXPERIENCE**

An ad hoc effort to access institutional memory

Jean S. Quesnel

**Evaluation Office, UNICEF
December 2002**

End-Decade Review of Strategic Lessons Learned from UNICEF's Experience

Copyright © 2002
United Nations Children's Fund
3 United Nations Plaza, H-4A
New York, NY 10017
USA

A publication of UNICEF
Evaluation Office
December 2002

Staff working papers are working documents. They present new ideas, innovative approaches, case studies, bibliographies, and research results, prepared either by UNICEF staff or by consultants or others supported by UNICEF. Their purpose is to facilitate the rapid exchange of knowledge and perspectives among field offices and to stimulate discussions. The contents of this working paper do not necessarily reflect the policies or the views of UNICEF.

The typescript has not been edited to official publication standards, and UNICEF accepts no responsibility for errors. The paper was prepared in the first quarter of 2001 and disseminated as a working document, but it is being reprinted for wider circulation.

The designations employed in this publication and the presentation of the material do not imply on the part of the United Nations Children's Fund the expression of any opinion whatsoever concerning the legal status of any country or territory, or of its authorities, or the delimitations of its frontiers.

For further information, please contact:
Jean S. Quesnel, Evaluation Office
UNICEF, 3 United Nations Plaza, H-2F
New York, NY 10017, USA.
Tel. (1 212) 824-6567, Fax (1 212) 824-6492

Acknowledgements

This paper benefited from the valuable input of a discussion panel that included: Georgette Aithnard, Peter Crowley, John Donohue, Joseph Foubi, Ian Hopwood, Cecilia Lotse, Jean Quesnel and Sheila Barry Tacon. In addition, valuable comments were received from Omar Abdi, Krishna Belbase, Kul Gautam, Elizabeth Gibbons, Gareth Jones, Richard Morgan, Lauchlan Munro, Reiko Niimi, André Roberfroid, Karin Sham Poo, Jan Vandemoortele and Carol Watson. Thanks are also due to Judy Beltzner for facilitating the discussions and to Rema Venu for her research assistance. This paper was prepared by Jean S. Quesnel, Director, Evaluation Office with editorial support from Rema Venu.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
Résumé analytique	v
Resumen ejecutivo	xi
I. Purpose of the Paper	1
II. Context and retrospective	2
III. Global Goals Achievement.....	4
IV. Regional Singularities.....	8
V. Changing Policy Environment	11
VI. Managing for Strategic Results	14
VII. UNICEF's Challenge: To Make a Difference.....	17
Annex A – Participant List.....	21
Annex B – Sources of Information	23

End-Decade Review of Strategic Lessons Learned from UNICEF's Experience

Executive Summary

"Nothing is new, only the arrangement."
(Pensées, Pascal)

Background and purpose

The end-decade review is envisaged as an intensive process that involves UNICEF participation at the national, regional, and international levels to take stock of the progress made by countries in fulfilling their commitments towards the achievement of the goals set by the World Summit for Children (WSC) in 1990. Results at each level will contribute to the Secretary-General's report to the Special Session on Children in September 2001, and continue to help set priorities in various mechanisms and fora.

In order to understand well the lessons drawn from UNICEF's programming efforts over the last decade, one has to view their genesis well before 1990. Every strategic trend takes roots in the past before propelling us to the future. UNICEF faces a series of strategic choices if it is to sustain the achievements of the past decade and to enhance its effectiveness as an international actor with a specific mandate for children and women. The choices and implications need be understood in the multiple dimensions within which UNICEF evolves, such as the Global Movement, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), its support to National Plans for Action (NPAs), activities in emergency and unstable situations. It is against this background that a peer review meeting was organized by the Evaluation Office at UNICEF headquarters in New York in December 2000.

Methodology

The main methodological approach which enabled the preparation of this paper was a one week intensive session held by a panel of knowledgeable persons brought together to distil main findings and lessons, on the basis of their collective institutional memory of UNICEF's performance over the years and factors that constrained or enabled the organisation in the achievement of the WSC goals. The paper intends to serve as an UNICEF contribution to the End-Decade Review process by synthesizing lessons learned at the strategic management level and highlighting those lessons which may be useful to "make a difference". The list of the panelists and contributors may be found in *Annex A*. The time frame of its production only allowed a review of key official documents produced over the decade, an examination of the reports submitted by other UN agencies referred to in *Annex B*. Reports to be submitted by National Governments by end-December 2000 were not available at the time of documentary review.

Findings and conclusions

The findings and lessons are culled from the discussions among the panelists and with key contributors on six main issues. These issues included: the context and evolution of UNICEF programming in the eighties and nineties; global goals achievement; regional singularities, the changing policy environment in UNICEF, a new management style that will better identify strategic results of UNICEF interventions, and the challenge for UNICEF to make a difference in the lives of children and women worldwide. The lessons herein reported also aim at being practical, tangible, manageable and useful during the elaboration process of UNICEF's Mid-Term Strategic Plan.

Context and Retrospective

Key Finding No. 1

In the past decade, the world around UNICEF has moved from a divided, state-centric world, to a polycentric world. Changes in UNICEF's programme approach reflect changes in the world.

Key Lesson No. 1

By far the most important strategic implication of the above finding is that UNICEF needs to expand its strategic alliances and partnerships to implement integrated multisectoral and multidisciplinary rights-based programmes. While in 1990 it was perfectly feasible to achieve the goals just by working with the State, and indeed, just by working with UNICEF's own masse critique of resources, this is simply not possible in 2000.

Global Goals Achievement

Key Finding No. 2

In September 1990, the largest gathering of world leaders in history assembled at the United Nations to attend the World Summit for Children. The Summit adopted a Declaration the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and a Plan of Action for implementation during the 1990s. In doing so, de facto, the bold universal goals were set, committed to and implemented at high, medium and low levels. The main finding is that such goal setting spurred action in favour of the improvement of children's situation making the world more children friendly.

Key Lesson No. 2

The fundamental lesson to be learned from the paradox of record achievements and formidable challenges is that efforts to combat poverty and ensure children's rights in developing countries have largely disregarded the complexity of poverty. A shift in emphasis is required, one that recognizes the full range of macro-economic, social and environmental factors that affect achievement of goals related to the well being of children. Global policies need to position children's well-being at the centre as indicator for economic and social progress. A society that has malnourished infants, subjugated girls or child soldiers cannot claim to be developing, however impressive its gross national product figures might be, for such deprivations can mean a lifetime of lost opportunity for today's children and a legacy of poverty for subsequent generations. This is the central reason why world efforts need to be focused, mobilized, monitored and evaluated to achieve social progress and end poverty. It must begin with children and the realization of their rights.

Regional Singularities

Key Finding No. 3

Humanity has seen stunning advances and has made enormous strides for children, many of them in the last decade, many others in just over the span of a generation. Children's lives have been saved and their suffering prevented. Millions have grown healthier, been better nourished and had greater access to a quality education than

ever before. Their rights as put forth in the Convention have been acknowledged and laws to protect them enacted and enforced. Polio, once a global epidemic, is on the verge of eradication, and deaths from two remorseless child killers, measles and neonatal tetanus, have been reduced over the last 10 years by 85 per cent and more than 25 percent respectively. Some 12 million children are now free from the risk of mental retardation due to iodine deficiency. Blindness from vitamin A deficiency has been significantly reduced. More children are in school today than at any previous time. Despite the many stunning steps forward, a number of the goals for children remain out of reach for hundreds of millions of children throughout the world. Their lives and futures are threatened by deeper and more intractable poverty and greater inequalities between the rich and the poor, proliferating conflict and violence, the deadly spread of HIV/AIDS and the abiding issue of discrimination against women and girls. These problems are not new, but they are more widespread and profoundly entrenched than they were a decade ago. Interwoven and reinforcing, they feed off one another and abrogate the rights of children and women in compounding ways. In some countries and regions, they threaten to undo much of what has been accomplished.

Key Lesson No. 3

While UNICEF has a unified vision based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, its programming is challenged by the complexities of development and disparities existing among and within the regions. UNICEF needs to use its research and evaluation functions to understand better the success factors which enable countries to implement effectively their National Plans of Action and optimize the benefits received from external support. UNICEF's decentralized structure positions it well to support countries to articulate a holistic and well-adapted diagnosis of the problems they face in fulfilling the rights of children.

Changing Policy Environment

Key Finding No. 4

The unprecedented prosperity that the global economy is currently enjoying has not trickled down to benefit the staggering 40 per cent of all the children in developing countries — over half a billion — who are still struggling to survive on less than \$1 per day per child. Other child indicators such as global under-five mortality, school attendance and child nutrition — which are among the most accurate measures of development — clearly suggest that progress has not kept pace with the promises made at the World Summit for Children in 1990.

Key Lesson No. 4

Patterns of poverty, violence and conflict, discrimination and disease are not unconquerable. They — like other challenges before them — can be met. Given the resources that the world has at hand, these vicious cycles can be broken within one generation. The world must now direct its effort towards those entry points where the potential will be the greatest: the best possible start for children in their early years, a quality basic education for every child and support and guidance for adolescents in navigating the sensitive transition to adulthood. UNICEF has a lead role in ensuring that the rights of all children be respected in the formulation of socio-economic reforms.

Managing for Strategic Results

Key Finding No. 5

The international conferences of the 1990s were powerful acts of strategic mobilization behind the children's cause. An important challenge for the future action of UNICEF will be the adjustment, refinement and prioritization of goals and strategies within the framework of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, thus making explicit choices in favour of child-centered approaches. The operationalization of child rights approach together with results-based management constitutes a challenge. The normative value and the ethical imperatives of human rights need to be internalized through a process of understanding, engagement and commitment. Fortunately a rights-based approach provides a clear navigation chart identifying what needs to be done. It also serves as a visible reference for the assessment of the achievements made and for the difficulties encountered. Using child rights as reference is positive for many reasons. It gives a vision to UNICEF's work (actions are meaningful in as much as they implement the Convention); it provides a precise agenda (not a simple set of general principles); it prevents UNICEF's commitment from becoming diluted in fragmented actions; it allows to set benchmarks (measures required to assess achievement, including the timeframe); and finally it provides an opportunity for self-assessment (transparent monitoring and evaluation which constitute both leverage for progress and improvement as well as tools for credible accountability.)

Key Lesson No. 5

UNICEF needs to implement its mandate more from an explicit strategic perspective and pay more attention to mainstreaming rights based programming within NPAs and CCA/UNDAF, as well as in economic and social reform processes.

UNICEF's Challenge – To Make a Difference

Key Finding No. 6

Now is the opportunity for UNICEF to synergize its know-how, determination, commitment, alliances and resources to make a difference.

Key Lesson No. 6

UNICEF must be results-based and results driven in its own management at all levels and very clear on who is accountable for achieving what result. UNICEF's role and contribution to world governance cannot be underestimated in making a difference for children.

Examen de fin de décennie des leçons stratégiques tirées de l'expérience de l'UNICEF

Résumé analytique

« Rien n'est nouveau que l'arrangement. »
(Pensées, Pascal)

Contexte et objectif

L'examen de fin de décennie est considéré comme un processus intensif mis en place avec la participation de l'UNICEF aux niveaux national, régional et international pour faire le point sur les progrès accomplis par les pays afin de respecter leurs engagements en faveur de la réalisation des objectifs adoptés lors du Sommet mondial pour les enfants de 1990. Les résultats obtenus à tous les niveaux figureront dans le rapport présenté par le Secrétaire général à l'occasion de la Session extraordinaire consacrée aux enfants en septembre 2001 et ils continuent à favoriser l'adoption de priorités dans divers mécanismes et forums.

Pour bien comprendre les enseignements tirés des initiatives de programmation mises en place par l'UNICEF au cours de la dernière décennie, il faut savoir que leur genèse est bien antérieure à 1990. Toute tendance stratégique s'ancre dans le passé avant de nous propulser vers l'avenir. L'UNICEF est confronté à une série de choix stratégiques pour conserver les acquis de la dernière décennie et redoubler d'efficacité dans son rôle d'acteur international doté d'un mandat spécifique en faveur des enfants et des femmes. Les choix et implications doivent être clairs dans les multiples dimensions dans lesquelles l'UNICEF évolue, comme le Mouvement mondial, le Plan-cadre des Nations Unies pour l'aide au développement, son appui aux plans d'action nationaux (PAN), les activités lors des situations d'urgence et des périodes instables. C'est dans ce contexte que le Bureau de l'évaluation, au siège de l'UNICEF à New York, a organisé une réunion d'évaluation critique mutuelle en décembre 2000.

Méthodologie

L'approche méthodologique principale adoptée pour rédiger ce document fut une réunion intensive d'experts qui a duré une semaine. Ils avaient pour tâche de distiller les principales conclusions et les enseignements à tirer de l'expérience de l'UNICEF en s'appuyant sur leur mémoire institutionnelle collective des résultats accomplis au fil des ans et des facteurs qui ont entravé ou, au contraire, aidé l'organisation à réaliser les objectifs du Sommet mondial pour les enfants. Ce document est la contribution de l'UNICEF au processus d'examen de fin de décennie. Il fait la synthèse des enseignements tirés au niveau de la gestion stratégique et met en lumière ceux qui pourraient contribuer à « faire bouger les choses ». La liste des participants et des intervenants figure à l'Annexe A. Un calendrier serré n'a permis d'examiner que les principaux documents officiels publiés au cours de la décennie, d'étudier les rapports présentés par les autres institutions de l'ONU cités à l'Annexe B. Les rapports que les gouvernements devaient soumettre avant la fin du mois de décembre 2000 n'étaient pas disponibles lors de cet examen.

Résultats et conclusions

Les résultats et les enseignements sont le fruit des discussions entre les participants et avec les principaux intervenants sur six thèmes principaux, à savoir : le contexte et l'évolution de la programmation au sein de l'UNICEF dans les années 1980 et 1990; la réalisation des objectifs mondiaux; les particularités régionales, l'évolution du contexte politique à l'UNICEF, un nouveau style de gestion qui identifiera mieux les résultats stratégiques des interventions de l'UNICEF et le défi que l'UNICEF doit relever pour améliorer la vie des enfants et des femmes partout dans le monde. Les enseignements consignés au présent rapport, à utiliser lors du processus d'élaboration du Plan stratégique à moyen terme de l'UNICEF, sont censés être pratiques, concrets, d'un usage facile et efficaces.

Contexte et rétrospective

Conclusion essentielle No 1

Au cours de la dernière décennie, le monde qui entoure l'UNICEF a évolué : de divisé, centré sur l'État, il est devenu polycentrique. Les modifications apportées à l'approche programmatique de l'UNICEF reflètent les changements intervenus dans le monde.

Enseignement essentiel No 1

L'implication stratégique qui est de loin la plus importante de la conclusion énoncée ci-dessus est que l'UNICEF doit élargir ses alliances et partenariats stratégiques afin de mettre en œuvre des programmes intégrés multisectoriels et pluridisciplinaires, fondés sur les droits de l'homme. Si, en 1990, il était parfaitement possible d'atteindre les objectifs visés simplement en coopérant avec l'État et en travaillant avec la masse critique de ressources de l'UNICEF, ce n'est simplement plus possible en 2000.

Réalisation des objectifs mondiaux

Conclusion essentielle No 2

En septembre 1990, un nombre sans précédent de dirigeants de la planète s'est réuni aux Nations Unies pour participer au Sommet mondial pour les enfants. Le Sommet a adopté une Déclaration sur la survie, la protection et le développement de l'enfant et un Plan d'action pour sa mise en œuvre durant les années 1990. C'est ainsi que les grands objectifs universels sont nés, que des engagements ont été pris et appliqués aux niveaux supérieur, intermédiaire et inférieur. Il s'est avéré que ces objectifs ont stimulé l'action visant à améliorer la situation des enfants en créant un monde plus hospitalier.

Enseignement essentiel No 2

La leçon fondamentale à retenir du paradoxe que représentent ces résultats records et des défis qui semblent insurmontables est que les efforts visant à combattre la pauvreté et à garantir les droits des enfants dans les pays en développement n'ont pas tenu compte de la complexité de la pauvreté. Un recentrage est nécessaire pour prendre en compte toute la gamme des facteurs macro-économiques, sociaux et environnementaux qui s'opposent à la réalisation des objectifs liés au bien-être des enfants. Les politiques mondiales doivent être axées sur le bien-être des enfants comme indicateur du progrès économique et social. Une société dont les nourrissons souffrent de malnutrition, dans laquelle les filles sont assujetties et les enfants font la

guerre ne peut pas prétendre être sur la voie du développement quand bien même son produit national brut serait très élevé car dans une telle société les enfants resteraient privés des possibilités de s'épanouir et la pauvreté s'y transmettrait de génération en génération. Voilà pourquoi les efforts déployés au niveau mondial doivent être centrés, mobilisés, suivis et évalués pour parvenir au progrès social et éliminer la pauvreté. Tout doit commencer avec les enfants et le respect de leurs droits.

Particularités régionales

Conclusion essentielle No 3

L'humanité a été témoin de développements extraordinaires et elle a fait des progrès marquants en faveur des enfants. La majorité de ces succès sont intervenus au cours de la dernière décennie, voire en à peine plus d'une génération. Des vies d'enfants ont été sauvées et des souffrances ont été évitées. Des millions d'enfants sont en meilleure santé, mieux nourris et ont un meilleur accès à une éducation de qualité que par le passé. Leurs droits, tels qu'ils sont énoncés dans la Convention, sont reconnus, des lois ont été adoptées et sont appliquées. La poliomyélite, une épidémie qui frappait l'ensemble de la planète, est sur le point d'être éradiquée et les décès provoqués par deux maladies meurtrières pour les enfants, la rougeole et le tétanos néonatal, ont reculé ces 10 dernières années de 85 % et de plus de 25 % respectivement. Près de 12 millions d'enfants ont vu s'éloigner le risque d'arriération mentale dû à la carence en iode. Le cécité provoquée par la carence en vitamine A a reculé notablement. Davantage d'enfants sont scolarisés aujourd'hui qu'à toute autre époque de notre histoire. Malgré de nombreux progrès spectaculaires, un certain nombre d'objectifs sont toujours hors de la portée de centaines de millions d'enfants de par le monde. Leur vie et leur avenir sont menacés par de graves problèmes : une pauvreté plus profonde et plus tenace, des inégalités plus marquées entre les riches et les pauvres, la prolifération des conflits et la violence, la propagation mortelle du SIDA et le problème tenace que constitue la discrimination à l'égard des femmes et des fillettes. Ces problèmes ne sont certes pas nouveaux, mais ils sont plus répandus et plus profondément enracinés qu'il y a 10 ans. Indissociables, ils s'aggravent mutuellement et portent atteinte aux droits des enfants et des femmes. Dans certains pays et dans certaines régions, ils menacent de réduire à néant une grande partie des acquis.

Enseignement essentiel No 3

Bien que l'UNICEF ait une vision unifiée qui s'inspire de la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant, sa programmation souffre de la complexité du développement et des disparités entre les régions et au sein des régions. L'UNICEF doit utiliser ses fonctions de recherche et d'évaluation pour mieux comprendre les facteurs de succès permettant aux pays de mettre en œuvre efficacement leurs plans d'action nationaux et de tirer le meilleur parti possible de l'aide extérieure. Grâce à sa structure décentralisée, l'UNICEF est bien placé pour aider les pays à établir un diagnostic global et adapté de leurs problèmes dans le domaine des droits de l'enfant.

Évolution du contexte politique

Conclusion essentielle No 4

La prospérité sans précédent dont jouit l'économie mondiale n'a pas profité aux 40 % d'enfants des pays en développement (soit plus d'un demi-milliard de jeunes) qui s'efforcent encore de survivre avec moins de 1 dollar par jour. D'autres indicateurs de l'enfance comme le taux mondial de mortalité des moins de 5 ans, la fréquentation scolaire et la nutrition infantile — qui sont au nombre des mesures les plus précises du développement — montrent que les progrès ne sont pas à la hauteur des promesses faites lors du Sommet mondial pour les enfants de 1990.

Enseignement essentiel No 4

Les problèmes que posent la pauvreté, la violence et les conflits, la discrimination et la maladie ne sont pas insurmontables. Ces défis, comme les précédents, peuvent être relevés. Compte tenu des ressources dont le monde dispose, ces cercles vicieux peuvent être brisés en une seule génération. La communauté internationale doit axer aujourd'hui son effort sur ces domaines qui offrent les meilleures garanties de succès : le meilleur départ possible pour les enfants dès leur plus jeune âge, une éducation de base de qualité pour chaque enfant, un soutien et une orientation pour aider les adolescents à faire la transition difficile vers l'âge adulte. L'UNICEF doit prendre la tête des efforts visant à assurer que les droits de tous les enfants sont respectés lors de l'élaboration des réformes socio-économiques.

Gestion pour obtenir des résultats stratégiques

Conclusion essentielle No 5

Les conférences internationales des années 1990 furent des actions vigoureuses de mobilisation stratégique au service de la cause des enfants. L'action future de l'UNICEF dépend largement de l'ajustement des objectifs et des stratégies dans le cadre de la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant, de la minutie avec laquelle on agira et de l'ordre de priorité qu'on leur accordera. Il s'agit de faire des choix explicites en faveur d'approches centrées sur les enfants. La mise en œuvre de telles démarches, parallèlement à une gestion fondée sur les résultats, représente un véritable défi. La valeur normative et les impératifs éthiques des droits de l'homme doivent être intégrés à la faveur d'un processus de compréhension, d'engagement et d'adhésion. Heureusement, l'approche reposant sur les droits donne une carte de navigation claire qui indique ce qui doit être fait. Elle sert aussi de référence visible pour évaluer les résultats accomplis et les difficultés rencontrées. La décision de prendre les droits de l'enfant pour référence est positive à plusieurs égards : elle donne une orientation aux travaux de l'UNICEF (les actions sont valables dans la mesure où elles mettent en œuvre la Convention); elle fournit un programme précis (et non pas un simple ensemble de principes généraux); elle évite à l'UNICEF de disperser ses efforts dans des actions fragmentées; elle permet de fixer des jalons (mesures requises pour évaluer les résultats, calendrier y compris); et enfin, elle favorise l'autoévaluation (suivi et évaluation transparents qui sont les leviers du progrès et de l'amélioration, ainsi que des outils de responsabilisation crédible.)

Enseignement essentiel No 5

L'UNICEF doit mettre en œuvre son mandat dans une perspective stratégique explicite et attacher davantage d'attention à l'intégration de la programmation reposant sur les droits dans les PAN et le CCA/Plan-cadre des Nations Unies pour l'aide au développement, ainsi que dans les processus de réforme économique et sociale.

Un défi pour l'UNICEF – Faire bouger les choses**Conclusion essentielle No 6**

L'occasion est venue pour l'UNICEF de coordonner son savoir-faire, sa détermination, son engagement, ses alliances et ses ressources pour faire bouger les choses.

Enseignement essentiel No 6

Dans sa gestion, l'UNICEF doit s'appuyer sur ses succès et rechercher des résultats à tous les niveaux; il doit en outre indiquer très clairement les responsabilités qui incombent à chacun. Le rôle et la contribution de l'UNICEF à la gouvernance mondiale ne peuvent pas être sous-estimés : ils permettent de faire bouger les choses en faveur des enfants.

Examen del final del decenio de las lecciones estratégicas obtenidas a partir de la experiencia del UNICEF

Resumen ejecutivo

“Nada es nuevo, salvo la disposición”.
(Pensamientos, Pascal)

Antecedentes y objetivo

El examen del final de decenio se concibe como un proceso intrínseco que implica la participación del UNICEF en los ámbitos nacional, regional e internacional, y que tiene como objetivo la evaluación de los avances que han logrado los países con relación al cumplimiento de sus compromisos de conquistar las metas fijadas en la Cumbre Mundial en favor de la Infancia de 1990. Los resultados obtenidos en cada uno de esos niveles se emplearán en la elaboración del informe que presentará el Secretario General a la Sesión especial a favor de la infancia de septiembre de 2001, y se emplearán también para fijar prioridades en diversos mecanismos y foros.

Para poder comprender las lecciones obtenidas de las labores de programación del UNICEF en el último decenio, es necesario comprender su génesis con bastante anterioridad a 1990. Cada tendencia estratégica se enraíza en el pasado antes de impulsarnos hacia el futuro. Para poder mantener los logros obtenidos en el decenio pasado y aumentar su eficacia como protagonista internacional dotado de un mandato especial en pro de la infancia y las mujeres, el UNICEF debe escoger de una serie de opciones estratégicas. Esas opciones, así como lo que conlleva la selección de cada una, deben integrarse en el marco de las dimensiones múltiples en el que evoluciona el UNICEF, como el Movimiento Mundial, el Marco de Asistencia de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (UNDAF), su respaldo a los Planes Nacionales de Acción, y su labor en las situaciones de emergencia e inestabilidad. Es en ese marco que en diciembre de 2000 la Oficina de Evaluación organizó una reunión sobre un examen entre pares en la sede del UNICEF en Nueva York.

Metodología

El principal enfoque metodológico que posibilitó la elaboración de este documento consistió en un período de sesiones intensivas de una semana de duración que realizó un grupo de expertos convocados para que extrajeran conclusiones y lecciones basándose para ello en su memoria institucional colectiva del desempeño histórico del UNICEF, y para que establecieran cuáles eran los factores que posibilitaban u obstaculizaban el logro de las metas de la Cumbre Mundial a favor de la Infancia por parte de la organización. El propósito que persigue el UNICEF mediante la preparación del documento consiste en efectuar una aportación al examen del fin de decenio mediante la realización de una síntesis de las lecciones obtenidas en el nivel de la gestión estratégica y poniendo de relieve las lecciones que puedan resultar de utilidad para lograr avances. La lista de los integrantes del equipo y de los colaboradores aparecen en el *Anexo A*. Los plazos de producción sólo permitieron la consideración de los principales documentos oficiales generados durante el decenio y un examen de los informes presentados por otros organismos de las Naciones Unidas a los que se hace mención en el *Anexo B*. Al momento de llevar a cabo la revisión de los documentos no estaban disponibles aún los informes que los gobiernos nacionales debían presentar para fines de diciembre de 2000.

Resultados y conclusiones

Los resultados y las lecciones se desprenden de los debates entre los miembros del equipo y con los principales colaboradores acerca de seis cuestiones principales. Entre ellas figuran el contexto y la evolución de la labor programática del UNICEF en los decenios de 1980 y 1990; las singularidades regionales; el cambiante ámbito político del UNICEF; un nuevo enfoque administrativo que establecerá de manera más eficaz los resultados estratégicos de las intervenciones del UNICEF, y el desafío que representa para el UNICEF el mejoramiento de las vidas de los niños y las mujeres en todo el mundo. También existe el propósito de que las lecciones que se traen a colación en este documento resulten prácticas, tangibles y útiles en el proceso de elaboración del Plan Estratégico a Mediano Plazo del UNICEF.

Contexto y retrospectiva

Primer resultado fundamental

En el decenio pasado, el mundo que rodea al UNICEF ha pasado de ser un mundo dividido y centrado en el estado a ser un mundo policéntrico. Los cambios en el enfoque programático del UNICEF reflejan los cambios que ocurren en el mundo.

Primera lección fundamental

La implicación estratégica más importante del resultado antedicho es que el UNICEF debe ampliar sus alianzas y asociaciones estratégicas para poder poner en práctica programas integrados multisectoriales y multidisciplinarios basados en los derechos humanos. Aunque en 1990 resultaba perfectamente posible lograr esa meta colaborando solamente con los Estados o con la propia masa crítica de recursos del UNICEF, esto ya no es posible 10 años más tarde.

La conquista de las metas mundiales

Segundo resultado fundamental

En septiembre de 1990, el mayor número de dirigentes mundiales de la historia se reunió en las Naciones Unidas para participar en la Cumbre Mundial en favor de la Infancia. La Cumbre aprobó la Declaración Mundial sobre la supervivencia, la protección y el desarrollo del niño y un Plan de Acción para el decenio de 1990. De esa manera se establecieron de facto las ambiciosas metas universales en los niveles bajo, medio y elevado, y se adquirió el compromiso de conquistarlas. El principal resultado es que el establecimiento de esas metas desencadenó acciones en pro del mejoramiento de la situación de los niños y de la transformación del mundo en un lugar más acogedor para la infancia.

Segunda lección fundamental

La lección fundamental que se debe extraer de la paradoja de los logros sin precedentes y los desafíos formidables es que las labores destinadas a combatir la pobreza y a salvaguardar los derechos de los niños en los países en desarrollo por lo general han hecho caso omiso de lo complejo que es el problema de la pobreza. Es necesario adoptar un nuevo enfoque, que reconozca toda la gama de factores macroeconómicos, sociales y ecológicos que afectan el logro de las metas relacionadas con el bienestar de los niños. Es necesario que el bienestar de los niños ocupe la parte central de todas las políticas mundiales y constituya un barómetro del progreso económico y social. De una sociedad en la que hay lactantes desnutridos,

niñas subyugadas y niños soldados no se puede decir que se encuentre en vías de desarrollo —independientemente de lo impresionante que resulten los guarismos correspondientes a su producto nacional bruto— porque tales privaciones pueden representar una vida íntegra de oportunidades perdidas para los niños del presente, así como un legado de pobreza para las generaciones siguientes. Esa es la razón principal por la que los esfuerzos mundiales se deben concentrar, movilizar, vigilar y evaluar, de manera que se encaminen a lograr el progreso económico y a poner fin a la pobreza. Todo debe comenzar con los niños y la vigencia de sus derechos.

Las singularidades regionales

Tercer resultado fundamental

La humanidad ha sido testigo y protagonista de asombrosos avances en pro de la niñez. Muchos de ellos ocurrieron en el último decenio, y muchos otros en el transcurso de una generación. Se han salvado las vidas de muchos niños, y se ha prevenido el sufrimiento de muchos otros. Millones de niños han crecido más saludables, mejor alimentados, y con mayor acceso a la educación de buena calidad que en cualquier otra época de la historia. Se han reconocido los derechos que se enumeran en la Convención y se han aprobado y puesto en vigor diversas normas jurídicas destinadas a protegerlos. La poliomielitis, que en el pasado fue una epidemia de proporciones mundiales, hoy está en vísperas de ser eliminada de la superficie del planeta; y las muertes debidas a dos crueles enfermedades —el sarampión y el tétanos neonatal— han disminuido en el último decenio en un 85% y en más de un 25%, respectivamente. Unos 12 millones de niños ya no corren peligro de retraso mental debido a la carencia de yodo, y se ha reducido de manera significativa la tasa de la ceguera debida a la carencia de vitamina A. En la actualidad asisten a la escuela más niños que en cualquier otra época de la historia. Pero a pesar de los muchos avances espectaculares que se han logrado, varias metas en pro de los niños aún no se han concretado para cientos de millones de niños del mundo. Las vidas y el futuro de esos niños están amenazados por el peligro de una pobreza más grave y por el aumento de las desigualdades entre los ricos y los pobres, por la proliferación de los conflictos y la violencia, por la propagación letal del VIH/SIDA, y por la discriminación de las mujeres y las niñas. Aunque estos problemas no son nuevos, en el decenio pasado se han agravado, propagado y profundizado. Se trata de problemas interdependientes que se refuerzan y agravan mutuamente, y que atentan de maneras complejas contra los derechos de los niños y las mujeres. En muchos países y regiones, esos problemas ponen en peligro mucho de lo que se ha logrado con mucho esfuerzo.

Tercera lección fundamental

Aunque el UNICEF sostiene una visión unificada que se fundamenta en la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño, su labor programática resulta afectada por las complejidades del desarrollo y por las disparidades que existen en las diversas regiones y entre ellas. El UNICEF debe apelar a sus funciones de investigación y evaluación para poder comprender mejor los factores exitosos que hacen posible que los países ejecuten de manera eficaz sus planes nacionales de acción y den el mejor uso posible a los beneficios que reciben de las fuentes de apoyo externas. Debido a su estructura descentralizada, el UNICEF se encuentra en una posición especialmente favorable para ayudar a los países a realizar un diagnóstico integral y ajustado de los problemas que confrontan al tratar de dar validez a los derechos de los niños.

La modificación del ámbito político

Cuarto resultado fundamental

La prosperidad sin precedentes de la que disfruta la economía global no ha extendido sus efectos benéficos a los más de 500 millones de niños —o un sobrecogedor 40% de la población infantil— de los países en desarrollo, que siguen luchando por sobrevivir con menos de un dólar por día y por niño. Otros indicadores de la situación de la niñez —como las tasas mundial de mortalidad de menores de cinco años, de escolaridad y de nutrición, que representaban algunas de las medidas más precisas del desarrollo— apuntan claramente a que el progreso no ha estado a la par de las promesas realizadas en la Cumbre Mundial en favor de la Infancia de 1990.

Cuarta lección fundamental

Las pautas de la pobreza, la violencia y los conflictos, la discriminación y las enfermedades no son imposibles de derrotar. Se trata de problemas que se pueden vencer, como otros desafíos anteriores. Con los recursos de los que dispone el mundo, se podrían interrumpir estos círculos viciosos en el transcurso de una generación. El mundo debe apuntar sus esfuerzos a las circunstancias y aspectos de las vidas de los niños y jóvenes en los que tales intervenciones tienen más posibilidades de lograr los mejores resultados: el mejor comienzo posible de la vida de los niños en sus primeros años de existencia; la educación básica de buena calidad para todos los niños, y el apoyo y la orientación a los adolescentes que recorren la delicada senda que conduce a la edad adulta. El UNICEF debe desempeñar un papel protagónico en lo que se refiere a garantizar que en la elaboración de las reformas socioeconómicas se respeten los derechos de los niños.

Gestión orientada a los resultados estratégicos

Quinto resultado fundamental

Las conferencias internacionales del decenio de 1990 constituyeron poderosas formas de movilización estratégica en pro de la causa de la infancia. El ajuste, el refinamiento y la adjudicación de prioridad a las metas y estrategias en el marco de la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño —lo que determina la elección explícita de enfoques centrados en la niñez— constituyen un importante desafío para el futuro accionar del UNICEF. También constituye un desafío la puesta en operaciones del enfoque basado en los derechos de los niños combinado con la gestión basada en los resultados. Es necesario incorporar el valor normativo y los imperativos éticos de los derechos humanos mediante un proceso de comprensión, compromiso e integración. Afortunadamente, el enfoque basado en los derechos humanos brinda una clara hoja de ruta donde está claramente indicado lo que se debe hacer. También constituye una referencia visible para la evaluación de los logros obtenidos y de las dificultades con que se ha tropezado. El empleo de los derechos de los niños como punto de referencia también resulta positivo por muchas otras razones. Entre ellas, porque le adjudica una visión a las labores del UNICEF (las acciones son significativas en la medida en que ponen en práctica las disposiciones de la Convención); porque establece un programa de actividades preciso (y no un simple conjunto de principios generales); porque impide que el compromiso del UNICEF se diluya en acciones fragmentadas; porque posibilita que se fijen puntos de referencia (las medidas necesarias para evaluar los logros, incluso los límites de tiempo); y porque ofrece la posibilidad de llevar a cabo autoevaluaciones (la vigilancia y la evaluación

transparentes que constituyen tanto herramientas de progreso y mejora como instrumentos para llevar una contabilidad digna de crédito).

Quinta lección fundamental

En la ejecución de su mandato, el UNICEF debe dar mayor importancia a la perspectiva estratégica explícita, y debe prestar más atención a la integración de la programación basada en los derechos en los Planes Nacionales de Acción y CCA, el Marco de Asistencia de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo, así como en los procesos de reforma económica y social.

El desafío del UNICEF: Representar una diferencia positiva

Sexto resultado fundamental

Esta es la oportunidad para que el UNICEF integre de manera sinérgica sus conocimientos, su empeño, su compromiso, sus alianzas y sus recursos para representar una diferencia positiva.

Sexta lección fundamental

La gestión interna del UNICEF en todos sus niveles debe basarse en los resultados y ser impulsada por estos, y debe tener presente quiénes son responsables de obtener los diversos resultados esperados. Cuando se trata de representar una diferencia en pro de los niños, no se debe subestimar el papel del UNICEF en la gestión pública mundial ni sus aportaciones a la misma.

I. Purpose of the Paper

This lessons learned paper is prepared as a contribution towards UNICEF's preparation for the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) of January 2001 which will review performance during the last decade, the proposed *new agenda* in favour of children and the preparation of the Secretary General's report to be submitted at the World Summit for Children in September 2001. In this context, the paper intends to serve as a UNICEF contribution to the End-Decade Review process.

The paper synthesizes lessons learned at the strategic management level, attempting to highlight those lessons which may be useful to "make a difference". The lessons herein reported also aim at being practical, tangible, manageable and useful during the elaboration process of UNICEF's Mid-Term Strategic Plan.

The scope of findings responds to the need for UNICEF to take stock of the main strategic lessons drawn from the last decade in order to renew its leadership role within the Global Movement for Children, within the system of the United Nations and as an organization supporting the delivery of National programs in favour of Children. Also there is an expectation that the paper may assist in building an explicit bridge between past experience and the new global agenda by providing a rational articulation of what in the past leads to what is being proposed for the next decade.

The mandate for the preparation of this paper was authorized in December 2000. Hence the approach taken rests essentially on a fast track consultative process supported by a cursory desk review. Therefore, the paper does not pretend to be comprehensive in its coverage, nor attempts to convey a consensus based on broad consultative processes.

The main methodological approach which enables the preparation of the paper was a one week intensive session held by a panel of knowledgeable persons brought together to distil main findings and lessons, on the basis of their collective institutional memory. The list of the panelists and contributors may be found in Annex A. The time frame of its production only allowed a review of key official documents produced over the decade, an examination of the reports submitted by other UN agencies referred to in Annex B. Reports to be submitted by National Governments by end-December 2000 were not available at the time of documentary review.

II. Context and retrospective

In order to understand well the lessons drawn from the last decade, one has to view their genesis well before 1990. Every strategic trend takes roots in the past before propelling us to the future. A narrow view may lead us to perceive that the new agenda may be an implicit acknowledgement that the former agenda failed and was abandoned. In reality, new agenda are more often a response to a changing world, reflecting a consensual view of what is doable in order to achieve results much re-engineering in light of the new realities and awareness. Many tactical interventions of the new agenda are a continuation of former effective measures reformatted within a renewed strategic scenario.

UNICEF faces a series of strategic choices if it is to sustain the achievements of the past decade and to enhance its effectiveness as an international actor with a specific mandate for children and women. The choices and implications need be understood in the multiple dimensions within which UNICEF evolves, such as the Global Movement, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), its support to National Plans for Action (NPAs), activities in emergency and unstable situations.

Over the decade of the 80s, UNICEF placed increasing emphasis on support to public service delivery, aimed at rapid achievement of global goals, in particular Universal Child Immunization (UCI) by 1990. This was logical for an agency which had its starting point in the provision of supplies in the field with hundreds of millions of marginalized beneficiaries in urgent need of basic services.

In the 80s, UNICEF also used capacity building as a second intervention strategy although it was not as prominent as the one of achieving world goals. Indeed country programming approaches have been in place within UNICEF since the mid 70s. Implementation support has been the primary concern, aimed at securing effective management of UNICEF supported operations. During the 90s, much progress has been made with the emphasis given to NPAs.

Prior to the 90s, UNICEF used empowerment as a third intervention strategy. At the time it was stronger in the form of advocacy and alliance building than in direct empowerment of children and women to address and solve their own problems through organization, access to resources and participation in decision making. In the 90s, the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) by States, the mobilization of civil society and the rights-based approach to programming have brought forth a paradigm shift in favour of child centered activities.

In 1990, the world in which UNICEF programmes were implemented was still, for all practical purposes, divided along Cold War lines, and very much organized around concepts of the "strong state" in which all policy decisions were made by the central government, often a very authoritarian government. This situation was convenient for advocacy as UNICEF only needed to convince the head of state to take action for children. Cooperation between states also obeyed very rigid rules. Governments organized their work according to sectors, and sectors were divided into vertical programmes to which several of the 1990 goals could be conveniently distributed. But with the fall of the wall, came a progressive breakdown in the kind of monolithic structures and clear divisions which the dynamics of the Cold War imposed. This produced democratization and devolution but also many chaotic conflicts in the context of

which UNICEF had to perform. At the same time, there were positive changes brought by transitions to democracy, involvement of society in political decisions, and the building of institutions to protect human rights. With the decade's political changes, breaking up or tempering state power, came economic changes brought by the forces of globalization. This global reality contributed to set the stage enabling UNICEF strategies to alter azimuth from specific global targeting to integrated development approaches fostering child rights.

Important decisions in recent years by UNICEF's constituents propelled the organization along two strategic trajectories during the 90s. On one hand, the 27 goals included in the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children (WSC) represented a substantive expansion of demands on UNICEF to support the achievement of the global goals. This was indeed an extension of the focus adopted in the 80s, as seen by the quantitative formulation of most of the WSC goals: reduction of rates; access to facilities; elimination of deficiencies; eradication of diseases; dissemination of knowledge and supporting services and expansion of activities for reduction of disparities.

On the other hand, the CRC and the WSC Declaration, as well as resolution of UNICEF Executive Board, have broadened the agenda for UNICEF activities to include child development and protection, systems development especially in primary health care, and empowerment of target groups, in particular women. In addition, international legal instruments included provisions that lead directly toward the 27 goals, and provisions on human rights that require interventions based on more structured right-based concepts.

These two strategic trajectories complemented each other. Children and women need fulfilment of their basic needs and rights as well as opportunities to participate fully in society. While UNICEF's advocacy has addressed both types of strategic trajectories, its programs have focused on selected elements of basic needs fulfilment, in-country mobilization and capacity strengthening in favour of child centered activities.

Key Finding:

In the past decade, the world around UNICEF has moved from a divided, state-centric world, to a polycentric world. Changes in UNICEF's programme approach reflect changes in the world.

Key Lesson:

By far the most important strategic implication of the above finding is that UNICEF needs to expand its strategic alliances and partnerships to implement integrated multisectoral and multidisciplinary rights-based programmes. While in 1990 it was perfectly feasible to achieve the goals just by working with the State, and indeed, just by working with UNICEF's own masse critique of resources, this is simply not possible in 2000.

III. Global Goals Achievement

The concept of goals for children was originally developed by UNICEF as an input to the Fourth United Nations Development Decade. Goals for children were intended to act both as a vanguard for the regeneration of human development activity as a whole and as a benchmark of progress towards wider socio-economic progress. Thus, progress towards their achievement is to be seen as part of a much larger global movement spearheaded by the United Nations system, which remains ongoing.

The image of the suffering child is one of the most potent images of the 20th century. The child in distress is often used as a visual symbol of far larger issues: war, famine, catastrophe, poverty, economic crisis. The evolution of UNICEF in the decades after World War II reflected the response of humanity to such issues and to many of the new versions of such issues that crowd the international agenda: environmental depletion, population growth, women's rights, urbanization, food security, health and education for all, structural adjustment and debt.

The principle of "children first" as recipients of relief in emergencies — first proposed in the wake of the First World War — has gained so much moral and intellectual ground over the century that today it is almost universally accepted. For example, UNICEF was successful in reaching agreement for days of tranquillity to cross enemy lines and breach blockade to provide relief and immunization to children. This produced concrete manifestation of the idea of "children as a zone of peace". The idea that children are above the political divide has advanced historically more often as a result of the de facto precedent than as a result of legislation of international agreement.

The high point of the 1990 World Summit for Children was the joint signing by 71 Heads of States and Government of the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the Plan of Action for implementing the declaration by year 2000. Here was the substance demanded of the Summit. Taken together with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, these documents constituted a historical landmark and an ambitious agenda to achieve measurable and time-bound improvements in children's well being by End-decade.

The Declaration included seven major goals — four related to health, two to education and one to child protection — and 27 supporting goals with specific disease control, service coverage and educational objectives. To fulfil these obligations requires major national programmes of action. The Summit presented the United Nations system with its first opportunity for a coordinated response to a major international conference making use of specific, measurable and time-bound goals.

Performance assessment in achieving the goals needs to take into account the world context in which implementation occurred during the last decade. Much happened during the last twenty years. The glow then emanating from the "new world order" soon lost its brilliance. Some problems that had long seemed intractable were to yield in the face of pressure uncluttered by the old superpower rivalries. But a rash of ethnic and nationalist conflicts was soon to erupt, or to emerge from hibernation, in Europe, Africa, the ex-USSR, and in parts of Asia. Far from succumbing to a new climate of peace, "loud emergencies" would once more intrude, edging out the "silent", and derailing longer-term development plans.

In the 1980s UNICEF used global goals and targets such as UCI-1990, IMR/USMR reduction etc, for advocacy purposes, for accelerating programme delivery and for monitoring progress and effecting course corrections. It is generally agreed that the specificity of goals supported by a strategy of social mobilization have helped instil a greater sense of management-by-objectives and accountability for results in UNICEF. Encouraged by the results achieved, UNICEF has strongly supported, and promoted the concept of measurable, time-bound, quantitative goals such as those contained in the Talloires Declaration and the WHO-UNICEF goals for health by the year 2000.

While recognizing the value of global goals and targets, some UNICEF staff and external partners have counselled caution that in such enthusiasm for goals, UNICEF does not undermine the country program approach. The pursuit of quantitative global targets should not lead to neglecting qualitative systemic considerations, the importance of participatory processes and the national capacity strengthening for sustainable development. Having faced the enormous challenge of reaching the UCI-1990 goal, they also expressed the concern that adding more quantitative global goals for the 1990s may bring an overload and strain UNICEF's capacity to mobilize partners in achieving them.

Much of the debate on the relevance and usefulness of goals and targets setting relates to global or universal goals. At the national level, the concept of setting goals as part of national development plan is generally well accepted. It is usually the paucity of reliable statistics, uncertainties of domestic economic performance and external assistance, human resources capacity limitations for planning, monitoring and evaluating that prevents national development plans from having well target-oriented programs. The desirability of goals as such is generally not questioned. The seriousness with which goals are taken also depends on the nature of the political regime in place in the country. A country with stability and well-established civil service and an active civil society is likely to take longer-term goals more seriously than one in which there is frequent changes in cabinets and civil servants and where tensions exist amongst social actors. Politicians are likely to be more committed to achieve goals if they can materialize their mandate. It is therefore important that long-term goals be phased in such a way that measurable targets can be set for intermediate time frames.

While global goals are obviously less binding, less enforceable, there is nevertheless an important place for such goals. When a major country or groups of countries succeed in achieving certain goals, they inspire other countries, often leading to the adoption of regional and global goals in a more binding fashion. This is particularly important in situations where the achievement of global goals requires a solution which transcends national boundaries and is embedded in globalization trends. Criticisms of global goal setting gravitates around a cynicism about their feasibility and realism, claiming that their achievement are supply driven ignoring community ownership, that what gets done is the measurable not necessarily the most important, that it responds to international funder-oriented programming, that it creates national priority distortions, a situation compounded in countries with meagre resources, and that it undermines the country program approach by creating punctures in the canvass of holistic programming. [check]

Advantages of global goals become self explanatory once the goals are properly adapted to country realities, and they serve as powerful rallying points for national action and international solidarity. Global goals can be used creatively in support of country programs and universal campaign. Indeed, goals may be set in such a fashion as to spur

action, generate popular empathy and support, improve management focused on results, enhance commitment in response to expectations and initiatives of UNICEF's partners and mobilize allies and resources.

The 1990s saw the recovery from the previous lost decade of development. It also witnessed a quasi universal ratification of the CRC. Nevertheless, progress for children has not kept pace with promises. Among the many reasons for the shortfall, one stands out: under-investment in basic social services. Without universal access to these services, children's rights can not be guaranteed and poverty will not be reduced. If robust economic growth in places as far apart as South Asia, Latin America and Europe cannot reduce disparities and reduce poverty, there is a strong case for public action to complement market outcomes. At present, given the distribution of income, assets, skills and capabilities, globalization is benefiting the have more than the have-not, resulting in widening disparities and deepening poverty. Public spending on social services is often iniquitous and inefficient while enough experience has been collected to formulate principles and good practices for social policy. One of the lessons learned is the importance of the synergy among services, as exemplified by the education vaccine against AIDS. Benefits of public spending disproportionately accrued to the middle and upper classes, at the expense of the poor. Numerous surveys provide as well the evidence that markets will not, on their own, yield equitable outcomes. This all points to the practicality of narrow targets as means for the poor jump the queue so that they can gain access to benefits of universal public services.

In terms of methodological tools for diagnosis of existing situation and measuring progress against global goals, there is growing awareness that world, regional, national averages can lead to misleading interpretation about the fulfilment of child rights. The fact that every child being entitled to rights and benefits, argue that analysis needs to go beyond averages. The average is nothing more than a concept, a convenience created to help us understand things. An average country or an average child, however, does not exist in reality, only in our mind. Hence the need to avoid the fallacy of the mean when describing the real world and reporting on progress.

During the 1990s, the world has achieved tremendous progress by making the issues of children central to global efforts to reduce poverty and enhance social progress. Inspired and guided by the CRC (ratified by a record of 191 States) countries have realized far-reaching victories for children and their communities. Through immunization, the lives of 3 million are saved each year. Thanks to efforts to eliminate iodine deficiency, some 12 million annually are spared the risk of mental disability. Polio is about to be eradicated and millions more children are enrolled in schools now than any other time in history. Significant successes have been achieved in efforts to improve access to sanitation and safe water. Virtually all countries that ratified the Convention now have national laws to protect and help realize the rights of children and women.

Despite the remarkable progress, children's lives remain in jeopardy and societies are deprived of vast human potential. Shackled by extreme poverty, more than 1.2 billion people in developing countries are still condemned to desperate suffering and want, and half of these people are children. In country after country, malnutrition, poor sanitation, unsafe drinking water, gender discrimination, inadequate health care, HIV/AIDS and armed conflicts are daily nightmares denying children the security and health they need to grow into productive citizens.

Key Finding:

In September 1990, the largest gathering of world leaders in history assembled at the United Nations to attend the World Summit for Children. The Summit adopted a Declaration the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and a Plan of Action for implementation during the 1990s. In doing so, de facto, the bold universal goals were set, committed to and implemented at high, medium and low levels. The main finding is that such goal setting spurred action in favour of the improvement of children's situation making the world more children friendly.

Key Lesson:

The fundamental lesson to be learned from the paradox of record achievements and formidable challenges is that efforts to combat poverty and ensure children's rights in developing countries have largely disregarded the complexity of poverty. A shift in emphasis is required, one that recognizes the full range of macro-economic, social and environmental factors that affect achievement of goals related to the well being of children. Global policies need to position children's well-being at the centre as indicator for economic and social progress. A society that has malnourished infants, subjugated girls or child soldiers cannot claim to be developing, however impressive its gross national product figures might be, for such deprivations can mean a lifetime of lost opportunity for today's children and a legacy of poverty for subsequent generations. This is the central reason why world efforts need to be focused, mobilized, monitored and evaluated to achieve social progress and end poverty. It must begin with children and the realization of their rights.

IV. Regional Singularities

At the global level, the 1990s saw substantial progress towards the end-of-decade goals. Major progress occurred in measles death reduction, increased oral rehydration therapy (ORT) coverage, eradication of guinea worm and universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Considerable progress has also been achieved in reducing the spread of immunization, the reduction of polio and measles cases, the conversion of hospital maternity routines to promote breastfeeding and salt iodisation. While some countries are making rapid progress towards adequate vitamin A intake, nearly half of the countries need to make efforts in this regard. More work is needed as well to reduce neonatal tetanus. However in water supply, major progress has been made, but only 40% of developing countries are on track to achieve the end-of-decade goal. Progress on primary education has barely kept pace with the increase in population and much remains to be done for reduction of malnutrition, maternal mortality and adult literacy, as well as on increasing access to sanitation.

The Latin American and Caribbean region has made major progress towards the goals for children. Many countries have surpassed the end-of-decade goals for immunization coverage. Polio has been certified as eradicated. Control of micronutrients deficiencies via the iodisation of salt and supplementation with vitamin A has made rapid progress. Measures were undertaken in the region to mobilize political leaders and civil society behind the Summit agenda and take concrete commitments on behalf of children. Many countries used the National Plan for Action (NPA) as exercise for mobilization and reorientation of their thinking towards measurable performance targets adapting them to the reality of each country. In 1994, 28 countries ratified their commitment to the goals for children by subscribing to the Narino Accord that called for social investment to improve productivity and equity.

While South Asia has maintained moderate economic growth, the benefits have not been equally distributed. A quarter of the world's children lives in this region containing eight countries. A third of the under five deaths occur there and it is home to half of the world's malnourished children. Despite this situation, much progress has been made through the virtual eradication of guinea worm disease, reduction of measles death and promotion of breastfeeding. Considerable progress has been made towards universal salt iodisation. Progress on immunization has been mixed and progress in reaching the goal for ORT has been slow. Since 1990, all South Asia countries have accelerated their efforts to achieve education for all with increasing political commitments to basic education. Progress towards the goal on water is marked, but there are concerns that underground water supply is decreasing rapidly. Sanitation coverage is the lowest in any region and the region has the highest level of malnutrition and illiteracy. The Colombo Resolution on Children endorsed in 1993 at the SAARC Summit strongly links the achievement of the goals for children with collective commitments to eradicate poverty.

The East Asia and Pacific regional record on the goals for children is impressive. Major progress has been achieved on all the goals with only neonatal tetanus lagging behind. Considerable progress has been made on education and water. Such changes are attributable to significant investment in basic education. While malnutrition is lower than in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, the rate of reduction is slow and sanitation needs improvement. A growing number of countries of the region face challenges in the context of child protection against commercial exploitation of children, especially girls. In the

context of the 1993 Manila Consensus, 17 countries reaffirmed their commitment to their NPAs and in 1995 countries pledged, in the Hanoi Declaration, to increase allocations for social programmes following the 20/20 concept.

Overall, progress towards the goals in Sub-Saharan Africa has been the weakest of all the regions. It is also a region where the total external debt stock exceeds gross national product and where the decline in official development assistance has not been compensated by other investment flows. Low economic growth and inadequate levels of public resources for social investment, vulnerability to drought and environmental degradation, the increasing HIV/AIDS epidemic, instability due to political transformation and armed conflicts have all played a role in inhibiting progress towards the goals. The 1993 Consensus of Dakar remains the main regional reference point for governmental commitment to translate the goals for children into national programmes of action. The ratification of the CRC by all countries in the region enables the promotion of programmes for child protection and rehabilitation as well as a wider restoration of civil society.

In the Middle East and North Africa region, major progress has been made on nearly all goals for children. Immunization rates have significantly increased; the incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases has dropped, and reported tetanus immunization levels of mothers remain low. Considerable advances have been made towards the end-of-decade goals in water supply and even sanitation coverage. School enrolments have improved although gender disparity continues to be high. It is the region that has made the most progress toward the child mortality reduction goal. Many countries have established councils or committees to pursue issues linked to child well being. Due to the ratification of the CRC, discussion of previously hidden problems such as child labour and child abuse has become possible in high-level public forum. In 1994, the Arab health ministers called for effective monitoring systems to track progress in the achievement of the goals for children.

In reviewing national progress towards the goals for children in the Central and Eastern Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States and Baltic States (CEE/CIS & Baltic States), it must be remembered that most countries in the region had high levels of child protection and social service coverage prior to the transition period of the 1990s. Social and economic indicators have deteriorated. The transition from centrally planned economic systems to market economies has led to a pronounced disruption of universal services and made social safety nets less effective. In the case of immunization, many countries have suffered setbacks, including outbreaks of polio and diphtheria. Countries faced an unusual problem compared to other regions: how to maintain and preserve their substantial previous achievements. A further outcome of the transition process is that increasing numbers of children found themselves in need of special protection, caught in war situations, abandoned in institutions, arrested because of juvenile delinquency or subject to exploitation or abuse. All countries have ratified the CRC but many now lack funds for its systematic implementation.

The industrialized countries have played an important role in the follow-up to the World Summit for Children. Each of them has completed their National Action Plan that deals with both domestic and international cooperation. Prior to the WSC, less than 10% of bilateral official development assistance was typically to basic social services. Since then, although ODA is showing a downward trend overall, there is an increase in funding social

development and a renewed commitment to development assistance in favour of poverty reduction. Endorsed in 1995 at the World Summit for Social Development, the 20/20 Initiative provides a financial framework for reaching the social goals agreed to at the world summits of the 1990s. A compact between developing and industrialized countries, the Initiative calls for allocation of an indicative 20 per cent of the national budget in developing countries and 20 per cent of donor aid to basic social services. Information published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), indicated that not more than 10 percent of total ODA is currently being allocated to basic social services. From 1992 to 1997 total aid to developing countries plummeted by a fifth in real terms and it also has become more selective. The poorest countries suffered the most severe impact of this decline. The primary source for financing universal access to basic social services should be the national budget, but restructuring a national budget is a difficult and time-consuming task. ODA can play a critical role in this transition and development cooperation can make a real difference in favour of the provision of basic social services to children.

Key Finding:

Humanity has seen stunning advances and has made enormous strides for children, many of them in the last decade, many others in just over the span of a generation. Children's lives have been saved and their suffering prevented. Millions have grown healthier, been better nourished and had greater access to a quality education than ever before. Their rights as put forth in the Convention have been acknowledged and laws to protect them enacted and enforced. Polio, once a global epidemic, is on the verge of eradication, and deaths from two remorseless child killers, measles and neonatal tetanus, have been reduced over the last 10 years by 85 per cent and more than 25 percent respectively. Some 12 million children are now free from the risk of mental retardation due to iodine deficiency. Blindness from vitamin A deficiency has been significantly reduced. More children are in school today than at any previous time.

Despite the many stunning steps forward, a number of the goals for children remain out of reach for hundreds of millions of children throughout the world. Their lives and futures are threatened by deeper and more intractable poverty and greater inequalities between the rich and the poor, proliferating conflict and violence, the deadly spread of HIV/AIDS and the abiding issue of discrimination against women and girls. These problems are not new, but they are more widespread and profoundly entrenched than they were a decade ago. Interwoven and reinforcing, they feed off one another and abrogate the rights of children and women in compounding ways. In some countries and regions, they threaten to undo much of what has been accomplished.

Key Lesson:

While UNICEF has a unified vision based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, its programming is challenged by the complexities of development and disparities existing among and within the regions. UNICEF needs to use its research and evaluation functions to understand better the success factors which enable countries to implement effectively their National Plans of Action and optimize the benefits received from external support. UNICEF's decentralized structure positions it well to support countries to articulate a holistic and well-adapted diagnosis of the problems they face in fulfilling the rights of children.

V. Changing Policy Environment

New mega-trends have emerged during the 1990s which offer both opportunities and potential setbacks for many countries. Those presenting themselves with a face of great opportunity are the advent of real time mass communication technologies, globalization and more efficient international development assistance support public sector reform in favour of good governance, including debt reduction, peace making and peacekeeping. Other mega-trends show their disruptive and ugly face bringing much suffering: the widening gaps between the haves and the have-nots, the HIV/AIDS epidemic crisis, armed conflicts, natural calamities, violence against women and children, child exploitation, hazards to children in the environment, malnutrition and illiteracy, and debt overshadowing basic social services.

Economic and social policies are seldom child-neutral. Sustainable improvements in the situation of women and children require supportive policy environment, as well as operational interventions to help develop their basic capabilities. UNICEF recognizes the importance of policy reform for poverty reduction and social inclusion. A human rights approach to poverty reduction should not be confined to eliminating discriminatory laws but should also address discrimination that originates in economic and social policy-making. UNICEF policy advocacy attracted media attention after 1987, following the publication of *Adjustment with a Human Face*. Since then, UNICEF has continued to give practical expression to child friendly reforms and to gauge the ways in which macroeconomic reforms, social sector adjustment programmes and public spending affect children.

Five principles of good social policy can be derived from the experience of countries that have reduced poverty in a rapid and sustainable manner. First, these countries integrate and simultaneously address economic and social rights; they do not give priority to achieving macroeconomic stability or economic growth first while keeping social development in abeyance. Second, they spend more on basic social services and child protection. Third, they allocate funds better in terms of integration, equity and efficiency. Fourth, during periods of austerity and adjustment they maintain the level of financial support for basic social services and the protection of children's rights. Finally, they promote community participation in managing the delivery of an integrated package of social services and in the special protection of vulnerable children.

UNICEF advocates for poverty reduction through reforms in public finance (the 20/20 Initiative), debt relief, sectoral policy reform, sector-wide approaches and targeting of social safety nets. UNICEF is the lead agency within the United Nations system for the 20/20 Initiative that calls for increased public spending on basic social services and presses for equitable and efficient use of those resources in favour of the poorest. However, evidence indicates that health and education spending often bypass them. Two thirds of the countries surveyed by the 20/20 studies spend more on debt servicing than on basic social services. Several spend three or five times more on debt and in the case of 11 countries surveyed debt payments absorb 30 per cent or more of the national budget. Launched in 1996, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative remains the best hope to solve the debt crisis of poor countries. In the communiqué of the Group of Seven following their summit meeting in Cologne in June 1999, it was said: "The central objective of this initiative is to provide a greater focus on poverty reduction by releasing resources for investment in health, education and social needs." These

investments act as a catalyst for accelerated progress towards realizing children's rights. If full potential of debt relief as a mechanism for poverty reduction is to be realized, the revised HIPC framework must be integrated into national poverty reduction strategies, and eligibility should be consistent with these strategies. This means building on what already exist, including sector-wide approaches (SWAPs) in areas such as health, education and agriculture. Above all, it means going beyond reliance on the Bretton Woods institutions and building on the partnership between national governments, civil society, the private sector and the donor community. The challenge includes improving the prospects for survival of the next generation and building the foundations for sustained economic recovery through the enlargement of opportunities. If the burden of debt can be removed, poor countries will have a better chance of achieving the broad-based growth and human development upon which their futures depend. Otherwise children's futures will be in jeopardy.

From a human rights perspective, the principle of universality has to take priority over that of selective beneficiary targeting, when it comes to public goods such as basic social services. Evidence suggest that access for the poorest of the poor to basic social services only become reality when these services are universally available. A holistic approach to poverty reduction can be overwhelming, particularly in low-income countries. Narrowly targeted programmes are increasingly prescribed for reasons of efficiency and flexibility: they claim to minimize leakage to the non-poor and offer rapid anti-poverty interventions.

However narrow targeting has important hidden cost. First, because poverty is complex and difficult to quantify, it is virtually impossible to identify those most affected, thereby, augmenting the risk of mis-targeting. Second, the non-poor seldom accept missing out on special programmes so that narrowly targeted programmes often bypass the poorest. Third, narrow targeting requires special eligibility criteria, which means that poor household must incur costs (fees and bus fares) to document their eligibility. Also, most of the time the poor are generally less informed about social safety nets but are well aware of the social stigma associated with means testing. This combination easily leads to the exclusion of the poorest of the poor. Fourth, programmes that use narrow targets are at least twice as expensive to administer as untargeted programmes. And because they can create opportunities for mismanagement and petty corruption — particularly in the context of pervasive and endemic poverty — extra outlays for oversight and control add to the cost. Last but not least, the political commitment to sustain narrow target in favour of the poorest is generally weak, if non-poor cease to have a stake in the quality and scope of the targeted programmes.

The report *Assessing Aid* published by the World Bank in 1998 brought home the fact that economic and financial management do not suffice for stable development and poverty reduction. Most importantly development money matters only in a good policy environment. Aid projects perform better when there is a sound policy framework supported by competent national institutions. It recognizes that the value of development projects is to strengthen institutions and governance so that services can be effectively and equitably delivered. Active civil society improves public services. Aid agencies need to find alternative approaches to helping highly distorted countries, since traditional methods have failed and will again. As a result of this, with the new results-based development strategies comes a broader agenda much more inclusive, inter-connected.

Key Finding:

The unprecedented prosperity that the global economy is currently enjoying has not trickled down to benefit the staggering 40 per cent of all the children in developing countries — over half a billion — who are still struggling to survive on less than \$1 per day per child. Other child indicators such as global under-five mortality, school attendance and child nutrition — which are among the most accurate measures of development — clearly suggest that progress has not kept pace with the promises made at the World Summit for Children in 1990.

Key Lesson:

Patterns of poverty, violence and conflict, discrimination and disease are not unconquerable. They, like other challenges before them, can be met. Given the resources that the world has at hand, these vicious cycles can be broken within one generation. The world must now direct its effort towards those entry points where the potential will be the greatest: the best possible start for children in their early years, a quality basic education for every child and support and guidance for adolescents in navigating the sensitive transition to adulthood. UNICEF has a lead role in ensuring that the rights of all children be respected in the formulation of socio-economic reforms.

VI. Managing for Strategic Results

In its Good Practices series published in 2000, UNICEF's Office of Internal Audit provides a **SMART** definition of objectives well suited to UNICEF. The objectives ought to be *Specific* (clearly define what will be achieved), *Measurable* (make assessment of the possible effect), *Achievable* (can be accomplished by UNICEF and Partners), *Relevant* (address issues of importance) and *Timebound* (define the expected date of accomplishment). UNICEF's reputation as an achiever is anchored on its results-based approach to management. This is because UNICEF is objective driven when it seeks the achievement of global goals at the strategic level as well as during in the delivery of its operations and during its advocacy.

The goals established at the 1990 World Summit for Children have had an extraordinary mobilizing power, generating a renewed level of activity on behalf of children around the world and creating new partnerships between Governments, NGOs, donors, the media, civil society and international organizations in pursuit of a common purpose. There is a wealth of evidence to show that the WSC Declaration and Plan of Action, together with the almost simultaneous passage into international law of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, provided the impetus and the legal framework for galvanizing global action behind the cause of children. Many factors contributed to this achievement, not least the children's cause which unites people in a unique way. The joint ownership of the children's agenda, which evolved through a process of international consultations and consensus building, was an important element of its acceptance and translation into action. Of equal importance was the follow-up process whereby the agenda was taken up by Governments, especially in the developing world, and given expression in national programmes of actions and in similar sub-national programmes of action at the state, district and municipal level in many countries.

In *Strategic Choices for UNICEF*, the multi-donor evaluation team warn that excessive focus on attaining the relatively narrow WSC goals acts as a disincentive to address the structural development and the human rights issues for children and women that are raised in both the WSC Declaration and the Convention. Because of its effectiveness to address the underlying and structural factors that keep children and women marginalized and suffering, the evaluation team concluded that under its mandate, UNICEF must pay sufficient attention to these factors in accordance with country-specific needs. In addition, as a United Nations Agency, UNICEF's key cooperation partner at country level is and must be the national government. Hence, the importance given to country programs is the key expression of explicit strategic and operational choices. When strategic choices are implicit, important programme opportunities for children and women are missed. Only through open, systematic and transparent processes within the primacy of country programming will UNICEF be able to ensure proper trade-offs that are consistent with its mandate and objectives, appropriate to the needs and capacities of each developing country, and practical within the capabilities of UNICEF to act as a catalyst with the global movement as well as direct support to the country partners.

Like UNICEF, many other United Nations bodies are becoming increasingly involved in children's rights. Following the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has renewed its interest in the area of child labour and is engaged in promoting the ratification of a new convention to eliminate the most extreme forms. The Guidelines for Refugees Children adopted by the United

Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) were informed by the general principles of the Convention, namely non-discrimination, best interests and participation.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is developing work in the field of human rights education for children using the Convention as illustration. But for UNICEF, unlike other UN bodies, children's rights are not just one concern among many. They represent the essential value of UNICEF's mandate and, in fact, of the identity of the organization itself. This identity is captured in the UNICEF Mission Statement, which mandates the organization "to advocate for the protection of children's rights and strive(s) to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children". It further stresses that UNICEF "aims through its country programmes, to promote the equal rights of women and girls and to support their full participation in the political, social and economic development of the communities."

Hence, it is essential to develop a meaningful national agenda, anchored on an accurate assessment of the reality, on the identification of areas of priority concern, on the potential role of various actors, on the opportunities to enhance national capacity and to achieve sustainable results. In all this, an important new dimension needs to be taken into consideration — the specific legal commitments made by each State to ensure and respect human rights, in particular upon ratification of human rights conventions. States' human rights obligations need to be acknowledged as an expression of State sovereignty. At the same time, they provide an opportunity for international cooperation to assist in these endeavours. UNICEF has adopted the Convention as basis for dialogue with Governments. This affects the way the situation analysis is envisaged while broadening the framework for its country programme development. Being guided by the human rights approach, the reality of all children needs to be assessed; the areas where priority interventions are required, identified; advocacy opportunities considered; situation that are insufficiently understood, studied; and partnerships widened to enhance the social support for the cause of children.

International cooperation and assistance are an expression of the international commitment made by Member States of the United Nations to take joint and separate action "to achieve the promotion of universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms." It is in this context that multilateral and bilateral cooperation become instrumental to the realization of children's rights. For the UN system, as well as for development cooperation partners, the operationalization of a human rights approach is not limited to providing assistance to State efforts. It implies the need to clarify distinct contributions, to identify the results to be achieved, the benchmarks to be reached and the process to be pursued. This includes the steps designed to create an enabling environment for human rights to be placed at the centre of the agenda, both at the institutional and national levels, through advocacy campaigns, through specific programmatic interventions, through partnerships. In this context, UNICEF promotes a child-centered approach that is based on the life cycle and targets the specific needs of three child age groups. Based on scientific knowledge about child development, priorities should aim at a good start in life in a nurturing and safe environment that enables children to survive, and be physically healthy, mentally alert, emotionally secure, socially competent and able to learn. There is also the need to foster the opportunity to allow children to complete a basic education of good quality, especially young girls. Adolescents must be given an opportunity to develop fully their individual

capacities in safe and enabling environments that empower them to participate in, and contribute to, their societies.

In the UN System, the Secretary General's Programme for Reform has provided a special opportunity to promote a child rights approach to development. This opportunity gains a special dimension in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process. UNDAF presents a meaningful occasion for the UN family to collaborate and stand for the United Nations shared human rights values, in cooperation with governments. Assessment of human rights is commended as an essential crosscutting issue within the UNDAF process. Moreover, recommendations have been made for the Common Country Assessment which defines the context in which the UN will intervene at country level, to take into account the concluding observations adopted by treaty bodies upon examination of State parties reports. Much remains to be done. But if the opportunity is used, there will be a decisive contribution to the promotion of a national process of development informed by child rights and designed to enhance their realization.

Key Finding:

The international conferences of the 1990s were powerful acts of strategic mobilization behind the children's cause. An important challenge for the future action of UNICEF will be the adjustment, refinement and prioritization of goals and strategies within the framework of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, thus making explicit choices in favour of child-centered approaches. The operationalization of child rights approach together with results-based management constitutes a challenge. The normative value and the ethical imperatives of human rights need to be internalized through a process of understanding, engagement and commitment. Fortunately a rights-based approach provides a clear navigation chart identifying what needs to be done. It also serves as a visible reference for the assessment of the achievements made and for the difficulties encountered. Using child rights as reference is positive for many reasons. It gives a vision to UNICEF's work (actions are meaningful in as much as they implement the Convention); it provides a precise agenda (not a simple set of general principles); it prevents UNICEF's commitment from becoming diluted in fragmented actions; it allows to set benchmarks (measures required to assess achievement, including the timeframe); and finally it provides an opportunity for self-assessment (transparent monitoring and evaluation which constitute both leverage for progress and improvement as well as tools for credible accountability.)

Key Lesson:

UNICEF needs to implement its mandate more from an explicit strategic perspective and pay more attention to mainstreaming rights based programming within NPAs and CCA/UNDAF, as well as in economic and social reform processes.

VII. UNICEF's Challenge: To Make a Difference

Looking at the changing world environment, building on the excellence of its partnership with governments, donors, civil society, private sector and other UN bodies, and recognizing its own niche of excellence, UNICEF is faced with many strategic options with limited resources to make a difference for the children of the world. Hence, there is a need to make explicit strategic options and gather support for their implementation.

A unique feature and asset of UNICEF is its well known, respected trade mark and track record. The strength of UNICEF comes from its international reach, reputation and expertise. Behind UNICEF is the global authority of the United Nations that opens doors and minds in many parts of the world. As an international organization it has a multi-dimensional character. It appeals to different people, with different needs and expectations, at different levels, at different times and in different places. UNICEF is truly global, being present and known everywhere. It has a focused agenda working to make a better world for children and intervening to enhance the rights of children. It is a powerful communicator with no political or religious affiliations providing intellectual leadership on children's rights. UNICEF staff has a work ethic and is motivated with a sense of purpose implementing programs and actions benefiting children. It is results minded committed to rights-based approach to ensure sustainability. Decentralization allows UNICEF to perceive and respond to diverse needs, audiences and demands emanating from local realities. Continuous in-country presence also gives UNICEF an ability to respond flexibly to local needs and quickly during emergencies situations. Over time, UNICEF has demonstrated an ability to reinvent itself to face new challenges.

UNICEF faces many challenges in the evolving context of international cooperation, world mass media instant awareness, UN systemic call for greater efficiency, increased involvement of civil society and call for philanthropic partnership with the private sector. But there are five challenges which offer great opportunities to build powerful alliances to expose disparities and discrimination, violation of children's rights, inspire solutions, force action and change in favour of children's well being. They are the following: fulfilling child rights in unstable contexts, optimizing rights-based and result-oriented programming, mainstreaming child rights-based approaches to country programming and adapting it to local realities, ensuring that the best interest of all children are incorporated when world policies are formulated, and managing its strategic governance in an explicit fashion ensuring accountability for achieving results in favour of children.

UNICEF began as an emergency relief organization. In 1980, this activity accounted for 23% of UNICEF country programmes expenditures but declined during that decade until 1990, down to 8%. In 1991, as a result of the Gulf war, UNICEF expenditures dedicated to emergency relief increased to 19%; in 2000 it was 17%. In a world that shows great changes leading to increase adjustments and conflicts compounded by a trend-increase natural calamities, UNICEF must ensure its readiness to quick interventions and muster support for the extra funding required to assist children in need. UNICEF's assets are its local presence, its alliances and its logistical ability to supply material quickly. The central role of UNICEF in unstable situations is the implementation of activities for children and women, with particular emphasis on advocacy, assessment and coordination, and care and protection of vulnerable children. In these efforts, an integrated approach has to be taken in meeting the rights and needs of children and women in crisis, based on

recognition of the complex range of factors and relationships between the physical and emotional security, social and cognitive development, and health and nutritional status. Such an integrated approach provides a wide perspective for assessing and addressing the needs of children and women in a humanitarian context. Also, the 1998 Martigny Global Consultation in Switzerland pointed to the need for UNICEF to have a more predictable and effective response to sudden changes or crises, and more flexible programming and operational procedures in order to promote preventive measures to make a difference.

In the design of UNICEF supported projects and activities, UNICEF has been result oriented. It faces the complexities of local realities, recognizes that sustainability depends on local ownership and participation. Recognizing that the shift in development thinking requires reorienting the instruments of aid, UNICEF can use its expertise to foster development projects which are testing ground for ideas or concepts that are new to the country, introducing rights-based approaches and apply programming based on comprehensive views of child development. In doing so, UNICEF must show value-for-money, the achievement of results and a sense of clear accountability through transparency. UNICEF supported activities are those of the local partners and UNICEF need be attentive to the required capacity strengthening. Monitoring and evaluation are potent tools to improve performance and to make a difference.

At the country level and sub-national level, UNICEF challenge is to support the country in designing a National Plan for Action which reflects the spirit of the Convention on the Child Rights and takes measures adapted to local realities and means. At the same time, UNICEF has to be a trusted partner and a force for social change that governments and citizens turn to in favour of children well being. UNICEF has to expose disparities, confront discrimination and take necessary measure to end violations of children's rights. In programming its own activities, UNICEF must face critical issues such as children in need of special protection, violence against women and children, equitable approaches to programming, gender and ethnic discrimination, HIV/AIDS and other epidemics, hazardous environments, the digital divide and not least poverty. In doing so, UNICEF has to challenge itself in being result oriented, accountable for defining a strategic intent together with national partners and to measure its performance against this intent. In the dimension of international collaboration, UNICEF has a unique responsibility to ensure that all external assistance actors are well aware of the NPAs and UNICEF strategic intent. UNICEF has to ensure that external grand support strategies such as UNDAF, CDF, HIPC/ESAF, SWAPs/SIPs incorporate child centered approaches to make a difference.

In a world where a proliferation of institutions advocate for their own agenda, where information overload creates indifference toward real issues and where competition is high to attract attention and raise resources, UNICEF needs to make its unified vision and voice clearer and louder. Recognizing that its resource base is eroding, UNICEF needs to accede to other organizations resources and mobilize them in favour of children's well being. In the instant communication world we are now in, it has become more relevant to manage through strategic alliances rather than attempting to ensure by oneself the grand-scaling delivery of its programmes. It must use its powerful unified approach to child rights and life cycle paradigm to ensure that in all key world debates the face of the child appeared. As in the case of the structural adjustment with a human face, the children must have a voice in all world debates of significance to child well being.

UNICEF must be vocal, forceful and convincing in world summits, governing bodies and movement. This will not happen if there is tolerance toward global weak leadership and blurred accountability. UNICEF must send a clear policy message to all, endeavour to provide consensual interpretation of the implications of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. UNICEF vision, values and core policies must be understood with ease and shared with/by UNICEF partners so they empower and muster support to make a difference.

In its own strategic governance, UNICEF has the challenge to foster an explicit demonstration of an institutional strategic intent to make a difference. While rights-based in its programmatic paradigm, UNICEF must be results based in its management at all levels and very clear on who is accountable for achieving what result. UNICEF's role and contribution to world governance cannot be underestimated in making a difference.

Key Finding:

Now is the opportunity for UNICEF to synergize its know-how, determination, commitment, alliances and resources to make a difference.

Key Lesson:

UNICEF must be rights-based and results driven in its own management at all levels and very clear on who is accountable for achieving what result. UNICEF's role and contribution to world governance cannot be underestimated in making a difference for children.

Annex A – Participant List

Panelists

John Donohue, Regional Director, CEE/CIS
Cecilia Lotse, Director Programme Funding Office
Sheila Barry Tacon, Former UNICEF Representative
Georgette Aithnard, Representative
Ian Hopwood, Representative
Peter Crowley, Deputy Director, Evaluation, Policy and Planning Division
Jean Quesnel, Chief Evaluation Office, Evaluation, Policy and Planning Division
Joseph Foubi, Senior Research Adviser, Evaluation, Policy and Planning Division

Contributors

Kul Gautam, Deputy Executive Director
André Roberfroid, Deputy Executive Director
Karin Sham Poo, Deputy Executive Director
Richard Morgan, Deputy Director, Programme Division
Omar Abdi, Deputy Director, Programme Division
Elizabeth Gibbons, Representative
Reiko Niimi, Representative
Jan Vandemoortele, Chief, Policy Analysis, Evaluation, Policy and Planning Division
Gareth Jones, Chief, Information, Evaluation, Policy and Planning Division
Lauchlan Munro, Chief Strategic Planning, Evaluation, Policy and Planning Division
Krishna Belbase, Chief Nutrition, Programme Division
Carol Watson, Planning Officer, Evaluation, Policy and Planning Division

Support

Judy Beltzner, Facilitator
Rema Venu, Research Assistant, Evaluation, Policy and Planning Division

Annex B – Sources of Information

- AIDAB, CIDA, DANIDA, SDC. Strategic Choices for UNICEF — Evaluation of UNICEF, 1992.
- Bellamy Carol, Preface of the Commemorative Reprint of First Call for Children, UNICEF, 2000.
- Black Maggie, Children First — The Story of UNICEF, Past and Present, 1996.
- Booze, Allen & Hamilton Inc. UNICEF Management Study, 1994.
- Gautam Kul, Global Goals and Country Programming — Contradictions and Complementarities, UNICEF 1989.
- Graça Machel. Impact of Armed Conflict on Children, 1996, 2000.
- OECD. Shaping the 21st Century: the Role of Development Cooperation, Report prepared by the Development Assistance Committee, 1996.
- Office of Internal Audit. Good Practices 1999-2000. UNICEF, 2000.
- Rohde, Jon. Disparity Reduction – A Strategy for Children in the 1990s. UNICEF, 1989.
- Santos Pais, Marta. A Human Rights Conceptual Framework for UNICEF, Innocenti Essays, 1999.
- UNAIDS. Report on the global HIV/AIDS epidemic, 2000.
- UNICEF. Annual Reports (1990-2000).
- UNICEF. Annual Reports of UNICEF Executive Board to ECOSOC. (1990-2000)
- UNICEF. Children and Women in Emergencies: Strategic Priorities and Operational Concerns for UNICEF, 1997.
- UNICEF. Children in Jeopardy: The challenge of freeing poor nations from the shackles of debt, 1999.
- UNICEF. Documents submitted to the Executive Board of UNICEF. (1990-2000)
- UNICEF. Positioning UNICEF for the Future, Presentation made by DOC, 2000.
- UNICEF. First Call for Children — World Declaration and Plan of Action from the World Summit for Children & Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1990.
- UNICEF. Poverty Reduction Begins with Children, 2000.
- UNICEF. Report from Mohonk 1989. Children and Development in the 1990s. Programme Goals and Operational Strategies for UNICEF, 1989.
- UNICEF. The Progress of Nations. (1990-2000).
- UNICEF. World Summit for Children Follow-up: The Secretary General's Report Mid-Decade Review, 1996.
- Vandemoortele Jan. Absorbing social shocks, protecting children and reducing poverty: the role of basic social services. UNICEF Staff Working Paper, 2000.
- Victoria, Singh and Chen, Sustainability of the World Summit for Children Goals: Concepts and Strategies, UNICEF Staff Working Paper, 1997.
- World Bank. Assessing Aid — What Works, What Doesn't and Why, 1998.