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**Contribution  
to  
the**

**REPORT  
of  
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## INTRODUCTION

1. This is the contribution of UNESCO to the Report of the UN Secretary General to the Extraordinary Session of the General Assembly, on the follow up to the World Summit on the Rights of the Child.
2. The aim of the document is to describe the means used for promoting the rights of the child. Concrete proposals are made for moving from the '*claiming of rights*', to the granting of them.
3. The right to education is a basic human right. Much more needs to be done if the goal of granting it to all is realized. Greater co-ordination in the provision of assistance is needed if sustainable and relevant programmes, leading to independence from outside help, are to be developed.
4. Every individual, regardless of origin, race, colour, age, sex, nationality, economic or social position, should have access to education.
5. The right to education extends from early childhood throughout life, and must be granted to all including the disabled and disadvantaged, minorities, women and girls, etc.
6. The implementation of programmes promoting the right to education is a challenge. The right to primary education for example, should ensure not only universal access to primary schools, but also to the provision of education which is relevant, and of high quality. To reach such a goal, demands that there is equity in the education services that are available.
7. Many developing countries, and many of those in Africa, have undergone major upheavals, which have resulted in political, social and economic turmoil and this, in turn, had important consequences for the development of education services. Increased democracy produced a greater awareness of the importance of education for human development, and for social and economic progress. Governments, too, increasingly recognized the need to encourage the active involvement of the people themselves in the development of educational services. Nevertheless, economic constraints and persistent poverty continue to hamper development efforts, including access to educational opportunities.
8. Although some progress has been made in the provision of basic education in developing countries, many major obstacles still stand in the way of achieving the goal of providing education for all. The main ones are:
  - Inadequate efforts to implement policies designed to increase access to, and improve the quality of, education
  - The failure to introduce the necessary reforms
  - Ineffective strategies for the implementation of programmes
  - Inadequate long-term planning
  - The lack of, or inadequacy of, the means of mobilizing national and external resources
  - The failure to respect priorities
  - Poor evaluation of progress

The following conclusions can be drawn regarding basic education for all in many countries:

- The current system of education does not benefit the majority of the people
- The education system is inefficient, with regard to relevance to economic and social progress
- The development of basic education is slow and uneven, resulting in inequality in the development of the educational system
- Internal and external productivity is low
- The education system does not consider the priority learning needs of disadvantaged groups
- Social and economic equity in education is not always ensured by the allocation of resources.

9. This report is in three parts:

- Part I: Action undertaken related to the World Summit for Children Plan of Action
- Part II: Action undertaken in the implementation of the World Summit for Children Plan of Action
- Part III: Considerations for future action.

## **PART I. ACTION UNDERTAKEN RELATING TO THE WSC PLAN OF ACTION**

### **I.1 UNESCO and the Achievement of the Goals of the WSC Plan of Action**

#### EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY EDUCATION

10. The *Education for All 2000 Assessment* shows that of the more than 800 million children under the age of six, fewer than a third benefit from any form of early childhood education. The challenge is great because of widespread demographic pressures, increased poverty and the impact of globalization. Efficient and low-cost options for early childhood education exist, and can be adapted to the needs of children, family living conditions, the local culture, and available resources. The implementation of programmes depends more on political and social will than on anything else.

11. UNESCO's programmes in early childhood and family education are designed to promote the development of children in a variety of ways, which include research and training programmes, instruction for parents, the exchange of information, and the provision of resources.

12. UNESCO launched an Early Childhood Partnership Programme in order to develop international, regional and national networks of institutions, organizations and centres, which support early childhood and family education..

13. Through its *Inter-Agency Early Childhood Communication Strategy*, UNESCO is a focal point for partners in this initiative, and promoted this strategy as an information and mobilization tool for early childhood and family education personnel in various countries. The target groups include policy makers, community leaders, trainers, child carers, families and parents. UNESCO has also continued to expand its databases on Early Childhood, and to publish more documents on the subject. UNESCO has also added to its features on early childhood on the Internet by providing access to the full text of documents in English, French, and Spanish.

#### *The Role of Women, and the Family*

14. Most of UNESCO's early childhood and family education programme activities have a direct impact on families and parents, and give special attention to mothers, since they support the improvement of early childhood care services; wish to take better care of their children; defend their rights (particularly those of girls), act as carers, serve as trainers, and disseminate information, and formulate policies related to early childhood development and education.

#### *The Alleviation of Poverty and the Revitalization of Economic Growth*

15. UNESCO, in partnership with the Fédération Internationale des CEMEA, in the promotion of early childhood education in Francophone Africa, has launched the 'Clos d'Enfants' project, which is concerned with the mobilization of women for the creation of innovative early education centres. The 'Clos d'Enfants' is a place equipped with the minimum equipment needed to look after children of 3 to 6 years of age, in the healthy conditions suitable for learning. Mothers volunteer to care for the children. The 'clos' is one of the activities of a women's association, and is designed to help disadvantaged children in a community. The women who work there are taught health, nutrition and learning approaches.

#### PRIMARY EDUCATION AND LITERACY

16. A child who is denied schooling becomes an illiterate adult. The parents of young children must, therefore, be taught to ensure that:

- 1) they value their daughters' and sons' right to education
- 2) they enrol them in school, and nurture them equally, so that they all realize their potential without distinction..

As most literacy and primary education students are women, the programmes offered need to take into account their problems, needs and aspirations, not only as workers and citizens, but also as parents. The flexible nature of non-formal basic education lends itself to dealing with issues relevant to parenthood, such as: family planning, child care and nutrition, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, domestic violence, and the exploitation of workers. While all these issues are pertinent to adult learners' lives, they also have a serious impact on children. Literacy and primary education for adults are, therefore, closely linked to children's well-being. UNESCO literacy and non-formal education programmes have covered these areas. Recently emphasis has been given to the reduction of gender stereotypes, and to stressing the need for sharing childcare and domestic responsibilities more evenly with males.

Through its project in the framework of the United Nations Literacy Decade, UNESCO emphasizes the need for a more active advocacy for *Literacy for All*, directed at both children and their parents. This includes the promotion of the use of the mass media in raising a public awareness of the importance of literacy..

#### COMBATING EXCLUSION IN EDUCATION

##### *Education for children in difficult circumstances*

17. The Jomtien Declaration, entrusted UNESCO with responsibility for ensuring that Member States eliminate disparities in education. The Dakar Framework for Action reinforced this decision by declaring that particular consideration should be given to the provision of access to education for groups, such as girls, children living in difficult circumstances, those belonging to minority groups, disabled, remote villages, HIV/AIDS, etc..

17. UNESCO, therefore, developed a special programme for the education of children who are the victims of various forms of exclusion from society. It aims at the greater involvement of public authorities in the establishment of basic education and vocational training for marginalized and excluded children, and in particular, street children, and children obliged to work. In this regard it is to be noted that the numbers of such children are rising constantly. In the 1980s the number of street children was estimated to be 30 million, and now it has risen to 140 million. NGOs and national and international institutions, along with individuals, are encouraged to participate in the struggle against the rapid rise in the numbers of street children. Support is given to advocacy work carried out by decision-makers, and others, in defence of the rights of the child, and to programmes which support national and regional projects which:

- 1) provide such children with basic education and training
- 2) take preventive action against the marginalization, or exclusion, of both urban and rural children

18. The fact that many governments neglected to make financial provision for access to education for marginalized and excluded groups has meant that, so far, this work has been carried out mainly by NGOs, social welfare organizations, religious institutions and philanthropic individuals - principally through non-formal education programmes. In view of the size of the problem it is reasonable to suppose that the major responsibility for dealing with it must now rest with governments.

Consequently, since 1995, UNESCO has encouraged Member States to implement pilot projects which will eradicate the root causes of the phenomenon. These require collaboration between ministries and other public institutions, and private sector organizations. The objectives of these projects are to promote national partnerships with local working groups, in which the government takes the lead. This co-operation is maintained in each participating country, by a national working group under the responsibility of a government institution, viz. The UNESCO National Commission, or a municipal or regional authority.

20. The following are some of the UNESCO projects and programmes which are designed to meet the priority educational needs of street children and child workers:

21. UNESCO and the UNESCO National Commission for Guinea, with financial assistance from UNAIDS, launched a project to strengthen the professional capacity to prevent drug abuse, and the spread of AIDS, among social workers, and the educators of children in difficult circumstances.

22. In 1991, the Namibian government launched a programme in the capital, Windhoek, to integrate street children into schools and the community. This programme addressed both children in difficult circumstances and their parents. Since 1995, UNESCO has contributed to the success of this programme by supplementing it with a pilot project in close co-operation with the UNESCO National Commission for Namibia. A national team was set up, consisting of representatives from various ministries (Social Affairs, Education and Culture, Home Affairs, etc.), the Municipality of Windhoek, and NGOs. They have constructed an Interim Night Shelter, that meets the basic survival needs of underprivileged children, and a Day Care Centre that provides educational and training services.

23. With financial and technical support from UNESCO, the Bucharest office in Romania of the French NGO, 'Association Equilibre Roumanie', carried out social and educational work with street children from 1993 to 1996. UNESCO also contributed to the renovation of the Gavroche Shelter in Bucharest. This centre, established in 1995, seeks to facilitate the integration of children into a family (their own or an adoptive one), in schools and in society. It helps the child rehabilitate himself or herself, know its rights, and become independent. The Romanian project also helped to develop the professional capacities of the social workers and educators working in the streets. A network of professionals and partners working in the field was also established.

24. UNESCO gave financial assistance to The Centre for Professional Training, 'Atelier Bon Conseil', (CFP/ABC), in Togo, which aims at giving professional training to destitute young people who have abandoned school, and helps them to set up their own businesses. Training is given in general mechanics, carpentry and roof-making, metal work, welding, auto mechanics, electrical skills and painting. The training also includes the recuperation and recycling of used or new tools provided by developed countries. The centre has now been rebuilt and provided with essential equipment.

The marginalization of the Roma minority is common in the countries in the region where they live. Initiatives have been taken in Slovakia, Romania, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Hungary in collaboration with UNESCO to establish education services for them. Since 1999, UNESCO has supported three institutions working with Roma children in Hungary, which try to reduce the numbers who drop out of school, improve their school results, increase their chance of further education beyond the primary school, and develop an awareness in the general public and decision-makers of the problems of Roma children.

25. In 1999/2000 UNESCO initiated a **world-wide project for the promotion of street children's rights**. Mali, Cambodia, Honduras and Romania participated in the pilot phase, which supplied the educators and social workers working with street children with the tools and resources to produce the relevant educational materials. The project aims at enabling each country to address the cycle of poverty, slave labour, street survival, and the lack of basic education skills that create street children; improve the competence of educators working with street children; and provide the opportunity for the children themselves to determine their needs..

#### Inclusive education

26. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, in Article 2 on non-discrimination, stresses the fact that discriminatory attitudes are best combated in **regular** schools, and children who are disadvantaged, or are from minority groups, should be educated there rather than taught separately in other institutions. This was reinforced by the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action, in 1994, and adopted by The World Conference on Special Needs Education. This principle has, therefore, guided UNESCO's action in the field of special needs education (see para. 31).

27. UNESCO has taken the lead in developing a framework for inclusive education, and has published a number of documents on the subject, provided training materials, and organized seminars and workshops for teacher educators. Materials are also being developed for education managers and administrators.

28. Poverty, ethnic group, religion, disability, gender, or membership of a minority group, may limit access to learning. Marginalized children may also face special problems which create learning difficulties, such as homelessness, child abuse, poor nutrition, and the use of a mother tongue which differs from that in use in the school. Educational failure may then be due to factors unrelated to academic ability, and this represents a challenge to the teachers who instruct them. Teaching children with special needs, therefore, requires modifications to the strategies, content, and approaches of instruction used in the regular school system.

29. UNESCO carried out case studies entitled '*Including the Excluded: Meeting Diversity in Education. Examples from Uganda/Romania*'. These show how two quite different education systems approached the question of dealing with special needs. UNESCO supports action research in this area.

30. The '*UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom*' was developed to assist

Member States to adopt inclusive strategies for responding to children's special learning needs in regular schools, and to include them in pre-service and in-service teacher education courses. The pack was developed in the late 80s, was field tested in the early 90s, and produced in a final form in 1993. It introduces new approaches to special needs education, and considers disabilities and learning difficulties from the point of view of interaction between the learner and the environment.

31. As a follow-up to the World Conference on Special Needs Education (Salamanca, Spain 1994), UNESCO launched a project to support action, and disseminate information, on the inclusion of marginalized children in regular schools, with special emphasis on children with disabilities and learning difficulties.. The project included policy development, teacher training, educational support services, parent education, early childhood education, awareness training, the education of the deaf, adult education, and transition to active life. The 'Inclusive Schools' initiative has been conducted in more than thirty countries.

#### TOWARDS UNIVERSAL QUALITY PRIMARY EDUCATION

32. It is the long-established goal of UNESCO to make primary education compulsory, and free for all children without exception. UNESCO has actively participated in the introduction of educational reforms by participating in international and regional meetings, and by assisting governments in their own reform efforts. In recent years special consideration has been given to the provision of greater access to learning for all, with special attention paid to the marginalized (including girls), the improvement of the quality of the teaching provided, and greater national co-ordination in the formulation of strategies.

33. UNESCO has contributed to the following in primary education:

- a) research in various aspects of education and learning,
- b) capacity building programmes for educational personnel, with special consideration given to teacher trainers, head teachers, and school supervisors, to enable them to improve learning opportunities for children, and adapt curricula to needs
- c) strengthening the national capacity to produce a sustainable supply of good quality textbooks,
- d) initiating programmes designed to reach the poorest children,
- e) developing a guidance and counselling programme for children, which builds their confidence, and makes their education more meaningful.

Recently UNESCO has encouraged increased local community involvement in educational planning, programming, and delivery. Although UNESCO has carried out programmes in all parts of the world, priority has been given in recent years to the African continent.

#### LITERACY AND YOUTH AND ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING

##### Women's and Girls' Education

34. Nearly two thirds of the world's adult illiterates are women, and the number has risen steadily during the last three decades. If efforts are not made to ensure that women are granted their right to education, 'Education for All' will be nothing more than a slogan.

UNESCO has adopted two approaches to women's and girls' education:

- Special efforts are made to reach women and girls, who form the majority of the 'unreached population', and to address the imbalance;
- A gender approach to education has been adopted, which takes into account the situation of boys and men, and attempts to provide services that are fair to learners of both sexes.

The education of girls and women is an essential part of lifelong learning, and women who have been educated are more likely to ensure that their children, and particularly their daughters, will be educated.

Through its programme for women, UNESCO considers the rights of the child as:

- to have a home free of violence, where the child feels loved, and is surrounded by adults who live in relative harmony;
- to have a fair share of food, health care, and household chores;
- to have access to education which ensures the child is on terms of equality with others; etc.

35. It is important that parents and childminders, whether women or men, are aware of any obstacles in the way of the recognition of children's rights. Non-formal basic education can be a viable alternative to formal education in certain circumstances, but it must be designed in such a way that it meets the needs of both boys and girls. Mothers need to be educated in order to develop their self-confidence, self respect, and become role models for their children.

36. Although women have long been considered the best child minders, recent experience has shown that men can be just as effective as women. Adult education programmes and materials have, therefore, been revised to improve the skills, knowledge, and attitudes of males with regard to childcare.

37. In the past decade, UNESCO has concentrated on the following:

- The training of trainers in basic education, to prepare learning materials which are gender sensitive, and appropriate for both sexes;
- The production and dissemination of training manuals on *Gender Sensitivity*, for use as a guide for planners, administrators, trainers, material developers, and media staff,
- Support for the development, production and dissemination of learning materials for women such as booklets and radio scripts, which address the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, e.g. HIV/AIDS, globalization, domestic violence, girls' exploitation as maids, child prostitution, health and income generation skills, etc;
- Preparing training frameworks for education managers, and for women to enable them to assume managerial responsibilities;
- Publicizing success stories and innovative approaches which have been successful in developing women's ability to deal with the changing needs of themselves and their children;
- UNESCO has prepared brochures, posters, and post-cards, which create an awareness in the public of the importance of women's contribution to the economy, and the need for them to be educated.
- Support for operational projects which enhance women's productive functions, and the promotion of men's greater involvement in childcare and domestic responsibilities.

#### SUPPORT TO BASIC EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REFORMS

##### *In inclusive education*

38. Basic education is the essential learning needed by all members of society in order to make human development possible, and is the learning needed by men and women, young people, boys and girls and very young children. It plays an important part in the provision of inclusive education (see para 26), though it is by no means provided only within the formal school system. UNESCO has done much to spread the concept of basic education through conferences, seminars, advisory services, technical assistance to projects in the field, inter-agency collaboration, and research.

##### *Educational governance at local level*

39. UNESCO has started a programme in support of reforms which promote the decentralization of educational administration, and which increases the involvement of local communities in the establishment and maintenance of relevant educational services. Such programmes require the active participation of administrators, teachers, parents, members of the community, the private sector, and learners. These reforms also require training programmes for national and local administrators, school staff, families, and community members, to enable them to establish educational services relevant to their needs. Three case studies which

review the practice of educational governance are presently being carried out. An international consultation on educational governance at the local level is to be held in March 2001.

#### CULTURE OF PEACE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY EDUCATION

##### Recent Pedagogical Materials

40. In 1998, UNESCO developed *The Practice of Citizenship*, a civics education kit comprising pedagogical materials on peace, human rights, including child's rights, and democracy. It was produced in English, French and Spanish and distributed to Ministers of Education in Member States, to UNESCO Field Offices, and to relevant NGOs. Due to the numerous requests received, 2,000 copies of the kit were reprinted in the three languages.

The Education Department of South Australia has ordered the kit for the training of teachers, while the Department of Education of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (Canada), has requested it for their Grade 12 courses on Global Issues and World History. The Province of Alberta (Canada) has developed a new curriculum on civics, mostly based on the information and the guidelines contained in the kit. UNESCO has co-operated with the Institute for Strategic Studies, South Africa, on a regional edition of the kit, including some locally developed materials on conflict resolution. Within the framework of a new Programme for Human Rights Education, the Minister of Education in Senegal is employing the kit in the training of teachers of geography and history.

41. UNESCO also produced '*All Human Beings... A Manual for Human Rights Education*', which was published on 10 December 1998, in English and French, as a contribution to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Contributions for the compilation of the manual were received from educators, human rights experts, research institutions, foundations and NGOs, as well as from a number of UNESCO National Commissions, Clubs, and Associated Schools in 50 countries. The manual has since been translated into Arabic, Albanian, Finnish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Turkish by interested partners.

The Ministry of Education of Monaco financed the production of the manual, for distribution to all primary and secondary schools in the Principality. The Ministry of Education and the UNESCO National Commission of Portugal arranged for the translation of the manual into Portuguese, and printed 15,000 copies which were given to all primary and secondary schools, and relevant institutions, in the country. More copies may be printed for use in Portuguese-speaking countries. ISESCO had the manual translated into Arabic, while the Arab Institute of Human Rights in Tunis will publish and disseminate the book throughout the Arab region. The Interamerican Institute for Human Rights, Costa Rica, has requested authorization to print 5,000 copies of the English version of the manual for training in the Caribbean area. The Independent Jamaican Council for Human Rights requested permission to publish the manual in English to distribute them free of charge to teachers and lecturers in secondary and tertiary educational institutions in Jamaica.

42. A '*UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision*' was developed in 1999, in co-operation with the George Eckert Institute for International Research, in order to promote textbook research and revision in the spirit of education for international understanding, peace and human rights.

##### Support to the Development of National Programmes

43. UNESCO is currently supporting a number of Member States in the implementation of national and regional projects for human rights education. Two major projects were developed in the Central American Isthmus (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama) and Southern Africa (Mozambique, Namibia, and Zimbabwe), both funded by DANIDA. In Mali, with the support of UNDP, and within the framework of the restructuring of the whole education system, a project on human rights and peace education is being developed. A project on human rights education will start this year in the Central African Republic, Niger and Chad. All projects focus on the development of materials for human rights education and the training of educators. A project on human rights education is also in operation in Albania, where the aim is to build capacities within the Ministry of Education and the Institute for Pedagogical Research, which will lead to the introduction of human rights contents and methodologies into the school curricula. UNESCO is also

participating, technically and financially, to a project for human rights and democracy training in Kosovo, funded also by other donors, and supported by the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK).

#### Co-operation with the Committee on the Rights of the Child

44. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has since its inception requested UN organizations and institutions, such as UNICEF, ILO, WHO, UNHCR, UNESCO, UNDP and the World Bank, to provide it with information on their relevant activities in Member States. UNESCO provides written reports, and participates in the Pre-Sessional Working Group meetings of the Committee. The aim of the pre-sessional meetings is to prepare in advance an agenda for discussion with the country's delegation at the following Committee's session.

### **I.2 UNESCO Working in Partnership with, and under, UN Development Frameworks for Children**

#### SOME SPECIFIC AREAS OF COLLABORATION

45. UNESCO has co-operated with the World Bank in its Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) in countries committed to take initiatives to meet education targets, and request assistance for basic education. UNESCO, the World Bank, and UNICEF, are responding to requests for assistance from countries such as Angola, Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mozambique, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, and Somalia. Sierra Leone and Burundi may be added to the list.

ESDP activities include:

- (i) taking stock and setting goals,
- (ii) the mobilization of resources ( preparation for the donors' Round Table meeting)
- (iii) collaboration in support of the refinement of plans, the development of pilot activities, capacity building, feasibility studies, and mobilization for implementation (i.e. key issues such as teachers' salaries, the use of national languages for instruction, and girls' and women's education).

46. UNESCO and UNICEF co-operation covers

- (i) early childhood and family education,
- (ii) special needs education,
- (iii) street children and working children,
- (iv) literacy and adult education,
- (v) women's and girls' education

47. UNESCO co-operates with UNDP in various fields related to:

- (i) feasibility studies,
- (ii) endogenous capacity building,
- (iii) poverty alleviation,
- (iv) strengthening capacity in analysis, planning, management, monitoring and evaluation of education, and the establishment of an effective management information system (MIS) for education.

48. UNESCO continues to co-operate with the UNFPA in environment and population education, education for a sustainable future, etc.

Since the provision of school meals plays a vital role in the development of basic education services, it is noteworthy that the World Food Programme (WFP) is now joining the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa (UNZIA), and especially in their programmes in the sixteen Least Developed Countries.

### Co-operation in the Area of Primary Education

49. UNICEF and UNESCO have worked closely together to promote early childhood education, and the two organizations have a common approach with regard to the scope of their activities, and there is a growing convergence with regard to priorities. There is a greater understanding that early childhood development is more than pre-primary education, and that it requires co-ordination with different sectors. Health, education, nutrition and water supply are all necessary for the development of the young child. The two organizations also agree that learning begins at birth, and that the early years are those when learning is essential for the full development of the child.

50. A group of experts has been invited to form an Advisory Group for the development of early childhood indicators, whose main function will be to assist in the development of the programme. In this Advisory Group, representatives from other international agencies (i.e. the Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development, OECD, UNICEF, and the World Bank) will promote inter-agency co-operation and collaboration.

51. UNESCO has been a member of the inter-agency Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development for many years. During the last biennium, the regional partners of the Consultative Group became UNESCO Early Childhood Co-operating Centres. The Consultative Group, created in 1984, is an inter-agency group dedicated to improving the conditions of young children at risk. Policy makers, funding agencies and programme developers work at several levels to *keep young children on the agenda*. The Consultative Group has a broad membership from international donor organizations, foundations, and NGOs, and an International Secretariat active in Early Childhood Care Development networks in various parts of the world. Over the years, the Consultative Group has helped to develop better communications and co-operation among those institutions and organizations involved in early childhood matters, as well as to help policy makers, funding agencies and programme developers work at several levels to *keep young children on the agenda*.

### Co-operation in the area of primary education

52. In primary education, UNESCO's main partners are the Member States, and every effort is made to collaborate in the development of national reform programmes, and to provide support for training workshops and the production of materials. The organization also collaborates technically, and financially, with various donors in its extra-budgetary programmes, and in national development programmes. Some of the major programmes funded by bilateral agencies include the Basic Learning Materials Initiative funded by DANIDA, which is designed to promote national book policies, greater co-ordination between the public and private sectors in publishing, and capacity building skills in publishing. NORAD has financed multi-grade teacher education programmes, and the training of teachers in Basic Education, in order to improve the quality of teaching. Guidance and Counselling programmes have been helped by DANIDA, FINLAND, ISESCO and other agencies. Information Technology activities funded by Russia, Kazakhstan and ISESCO used distance education for the training of teachers. Inter-cultural and human rights education programmes funded by DANIDA, Italy and UNDP, ensured that human rights education became a part of the overall education programme for children. School building programmes have been funded by Germany, Norway, Saudi Arabia and the development banks. School meals programmes were assisted by the World Food Programme, and community projects, implemented with the assistance of the UNDP, promoted local involvement in the establishment and maintenance of educational services. Emergency assistance for countries devastated by war received help from Germany and Italy. UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning also holds training workshops for educational personnel.

53. UNESCO co-operates with other organizations such as the Forum for African Women's Association (FAWE), the International Reading Association (IRA), the International Council of Associations for Science Educators (ICASE), the International Association of Counsellors (IAC), the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), and Education International (EI).

This collaboration with agencies and associations, along with UNESCO's Regular Programme budget, have substantially increased UNESCO's work in Member States. Primary education has, therefore, remained a priority in UNESCO's mid-term strategy, and in its biennial programmes over the last decade.

#### Co-operation in the area of literacy

54. UNDP supported the skills-based literacy programme for women in the Asia and Pacific region from 1990 to 1996, in which the different issues related to women as wives and parents were addressed. 700 items of learning materials, initially meant for women, were later expanded for use as supplementary reading materials in schools. The experience gained in this project resulted in the production of a series of training materials on gender sensitization and curriculum development.

55. UNESCO has collaborated with NGOs on matters related to women's education, children's rights, daughters' rights to inheritance, attitudes and prejudices towards sons and daughters, and child labour. Some of these NGOs also link this work to that supported by UNICEF, and other agencies, such as the Bunyad Foundation in Pakistan, which provides education for child labourers.

#### Co-operation in inclusive education

56. UNESCO co-operates with UN agencies such as ILO, UNICEF and WHO, in the promotion of equal opportunities for people with disabilities. Two sub-regional meetings were held one in Cote d'Ivoire for French-speaking African countries in 1995, and one in Uzbekistan, in Central Asia, in 1998. Three community-based rehabilitation projects were implemented in Ghana, Namibia and Morocco.

57. UNESCO is a member of the International Working Group on Disability and Development (IWGDD), established in 1997, for the purpose of advancing the concerns of people with disabilities. This group is composed of representatives of donor and development agencies, international organizations, and governmental and non-governmental organizations, including organizations of persons with disabilities.

#### Food aid to education

58. UNESCO and the World Food Programme work closely together through their Co-operation Unit to meet the aim of the World Summit for Children, to fight ignorance through the education of all children, especially that of girls. Education and training are now one of the five priorities of WFP's new development policy.

### **I.3 The UNESCO mandate and the support needed**

59.. UNESCO's main concern is with the right of children to have access to education. This has been reaffirmed in the various resolutions passed over the years.

60. From 21 to 27 October 1999, the French National Assembly and UNESCO hosted a 'World Parliament of Children'. Held in the Palais Bourbon, in Paris, it brought together some 400 boys and girls from secondary schools from all of UNESCO's Member States. The purpose of this joint initiative by the Speaker of the French National Assembly, Mr Laurent Fabius, and the then Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Federico Mayor, was to herald the coming of the year 2000, and offer a message of fellowship and hope to the world. Those participating in the World Parliament of Children worked on the development of a 'Youth Manifesto for the Twenty-First Century'. This manifesto was their contribution to the programme 'For a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence'. The decade 2001-2010 has been declared the 'International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World'.

Mechanisms set-up to optimize and rationalize UNESCO support to the right to education for all children include:

- (a) an inter-sectoral approach, by means of inter-sector working teams in Education, Communication and Information, Culture and Sciences
- (b) a decentralization of programmes and budget to UNESCO offices
- (c) the Participation Programme offers UNESCO's Member States the opportunity to emphasize their priority areas of action

61. Since primary education is one of the largest and most challenging sub-sectors of the education system, it has been very much researched and reported on. A world-wide review of progress is conducted each time there is an international meeting on education. It is included in UNESCO Statistics, The UNESCO World Education Report, national reports, and in reports of meetings at the International Bureau of Education, (IBE).

62. In 1994, more than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations met in Salamanca, Spain, at the 'World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality', to discuss the objectives of Education for All and the means for promoting inclusive education.. *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*, adopted the resolution that **ordinary schools should accommodate all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other conditions**. It reaffirmed the commitment to Education for All, and recognized the need to provide education for all children, young people and adults.

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action called upon UNESCO:

- To ensure that special needs education forms part of every discussion dealing with education for all
- To mobilize the support of organizations of the teaching profession in matters related to enhancing teacher education, and which provide for special educational needs
- To stimulate the academic community to strengthen research and networking, and to establish regional centres of information and documentation; and to serve as a clearing house for such activities and disseminate the specific results and progress achieved at the country level in pursuance of this statement, and
- To mobilize funds, through the creation of an expanded programme for inclusive schools and community support programmes, which enable pilot projects to be launched that publicize new approaches for dissemination, and develop indicators regarding the need for, and provision of, special needs education.

## **II. OTHER ACTION UNDERTAKEN IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WSC PLAN OF ACTION**

### **II.1 UNESCO and the United Nations Special Initiative on Africa (INSIA)**

63. The basic education programme of the United Nations Special Initiative on Africa promotes the energetic development of basic education, through more intensive efforts on the part of governments and agencies. UNESCO and The World Bank have worked together to develop a framework for the implementation of the programme in consultation with African Ministers of Education, who expressed their support for UNSIA at the Association for the Development of Africa biennial meeting, in Dakar, in October 1997, and at MINEDAF, in Durban, in April 1998. All countries are eligible for UNSIA support, but priority is given to countries with the lowest school enrolments, i.e: Angola, Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Somalia.

### **II.2 UNESCO and UNDAF/CCA Process Promoting UN Joint Programming in Favour of the Development of Basic Education for all Children**

64. UNESCO has been fully involved in UNDAF/ACC activities in Burkina Faso, Madagascar, and countries where the UN agencies do joint programming.

In Burkina Faso the \$20 million programme for Basic Education for All, from the year 2000 to 2004, aims to: (i) provide good quality basic education for all, (ii) extend and improve access, (iii) strengthen institutional capacities, (iv) promote education for girls and women, especially in rural and poor urban areas. The government contribution is \$1.13 million (5.55 per cent), (ii) local communities \$0.25 million (1.29 per cent), (iii) the UN (UNFPA, UNDP, UNESCO, WFP) \$11.03 million (54.25 per cent), (iv) other partners (CRS/CATHWEL) \$7.92 million (39 per cent).

In Madagascar the UN Agencies, FAO, ILO, UNFPA, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIDO and WHO, have committed themselves to supporting the government in the development of a \$25 million programme to promote basic education for all children. This 5-year programme, from 2000 to 2004, has nine sub-programmes.

### **II.3 Guidance and Counselling for School-Aged Girls**

65. This programme was initiated by African Ministers of Education at the Pan-African Conference on the Education of Girls in 1993, and started in 1994. It aims at the development and institutionalization of guidance and counselling services, with special attention given to the needs of girls.. Counselling services which assist girls to improve their school performance are also provided, and special emphasis is given to HIV/AIDS education. The programme is now in operation in 27 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. It is managed by the Ministers of Education through a Board of Governors, supported by a Technical Working Group that does follow-up work, and ensures the implementation of the programme.

66. Since 1996 regional training courses in Guidance and Counselling have been organized for policy-makers, teachers, teacher trainers, youth, and social workers in Malawi. The training is carried out at both regional and national levels. Sixteen training modules have been produced covering gender sensitivity, social work, and adolescent reproductive health. Additional modules will be produced on guidance and counselling for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, on enterprise education, and the promotion of racial harmony. The modules are complemented by booklets and videos. A temporary centre was established at Lilongwe, Malawi, in 1998, and the construction of the Guidance, Counselling and Youth Development Centre for Africa started in February 2000. Many countries have now established policies for Guidance and Counselling in their school programmes. New programmes deal with the problems of children, particularly girls, orphaned by AIDS, and another with the promotion of ethnic harmony.

67. The programme is funded jointly by UNESCO, DANIDA and Finland, and collaborates with UNICEF, UNFPA, the United States of America, and the Rockefeller Foundation. At the national level governments and the UNESCO National Commissions administer the programme. Germany has contributed to the construction of the Centre. ISESCO is a key partner in the French-speaking countries.

#### **Innovative Approaches Using Information Technology**

68. In collaboration with the BBC, and other UN agencies, such as UNICEF and UNHCR, UNESCO has made effective use of the radio for the provision of education to all in Afghanistan, a country where women and girls have been denied all access to learning facilities. A radio soap opera 'New Home, New Life', was started in 1994, and has been broadcast three times weekly ever since in the two main languages of the country. The programmes combine education with entertainment, and their educational content is decided by a board consisting of representatives of development agencies, NGOs and others who decide on the educational messages to be transmitted. In view of attitudes within Afghanistan the project is located in Peshawar, Pakistan, and is implemented entirely by Afghan refugees living there. Since neighbouring countries, such as Iran, Pakistan and Tadjikistan, use the same languages as those of the broadcasts, millions of listeners to the programmes are to be found in a wide area of Central Asia. Official requests have now been received from some of these countries for assistance in producing their own radio soap operas.

The project also publishes a monthly comic strip magazine in colour in the two languages used, which retells the story of the soap opera. It also contains an annexe of materials for use in the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and is so popular that even the Taliban ordered copies for use in schools. A further development by the project staff has been the establishment of a private Afghan publishing house, which produces books for new literates in two languages. All the books are printed on good paper, are written in the spoken language easily understood by the readers, and are colourfully illustrated. Among the dozens of publications there are folk tales, and books on health, the use and abuse of drugs, the preservation of the country's cultural heritage, income earning skills (e.g. carpet making and brick making), and peace and tolerance. One positive result is that a number of Afghans have now gained considerable experience in launching a private enterprise in publishing, and learnt about marketing, book distribution, etc.

69. A project formulated by UNESCO's International Institute of Educational Planning, in collaboration with UNESCO's Capacity Building Institute in Addis Ababa, and UNICEF in Nairobi, entitled 'Second Chance for Nomad Children in East Africa', has now received approval for funding by the African Development Bank. The project will make a detailed database study of nomadic communities in six countries in East Africa -

Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, which will then be used for the possible future funding of basic education projects by the Bank. The project will serve as a model for both inter-agency and regional co-operation and, if successful, will show how minority groups and the disadvantaged can be granted access to education.

### **PART III. CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION**

#### **III.1 The Need for Action-Oriented Programmes**

70. Many statements made in the last decade on the rights of the child serve as a guidance for future courses of action. Reference has already been made to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in which the importance of the right to education is stressed. In addition at a meeting at Modra-Harmonia in Slovakia, organized jointly by UNESCO and Defence for Children International, in September 1995, nine Central European countries stressed once again the child's right to education, and the need for inclusion and non-discrimination in the provision of services, and the desirability of involving both children and parents in decision-making procedures. Particular reference was made to the many, and often new, problems faced by disadvantaged children who could be girls, children living in poverty, minority groups, children in difficult circumstances, children with disabilities, children suffering sexual abuse or violence, children in conflict with the law, children addicted to drug abuse, refugee children, exploited children and street children. Other topics dealt with were the provision of access to leisure, sports and cultural activities, the need to teach children their rights in schools, the training of educators in promoting the teaching of the Convention in schools, and the promotion of peace, democracy, citizenship, tolerance and the equality of the sexes. The difficulties faced by children using a different mother tongue from the language of instruction also had to be taken into consideration, in order to avoid accusations of academic inadequacy. The importance of consultation with parents and children in the administration of the school, in the maintenance of discipline, in the teaching process, and the creation of an appropriate environment, was also highlighted. Finally it was recommended that statutory support be provided through policy decisions, legislation, and the appointment of officials responsible for ensuring the Convention is respected. This would reduce the possibility of the rights of the child being denied. Widespread use of the mass media, and of published information for advocacy purposes, addressed to both children and adults, will also increase public awareness with regard to the importance of respecting the rights of the child.

#### **III.2 Main Lines for Future Action**

71. Many developing countries have freely admitted that they have met considerable opposition in their efforts to implement basic education programmes, and that in many instances this came from the teachers, educational administrators, and university lecturers, working in the formal system, and who, perhaps, saw in the approach a threat to their own authority. The greatest support often came from the private sector and NGOs, and from local communities which had not benefited from educational services, but realized that learning opportunities more appropriate for their needs could be established in collaboration with the help of other development ministries in addition to that of the Ministry of Education. There must, therefore, be an open awareness of the difficulties to be overcome, and of the overriding need for advocacy and publicity on the part of the national authorities and the mass media.

72. An analysis of the present situation in education shows that the difficulties met by many countries, and mainly the least developed ones, in promoting basic education for all are:

- (i) the absence of a clearly defined and efficient educational policy,
- (ii) reforms, or tentative reforms, in basic education are either inadequate or not implemented,
- (iii) inefficient and costly implementation strategies are used,
- (iv) the immediate problems of daily management often take precedence over long-term action,
- (v) the absence of appropriate policies, mechanisms, or instruments for the mobilization of resources for funding, and investing in, basic education,
- (v) priorities are not always respected.

The following conclusions can be drawn regarding basic education in many countries:

- (i) the education system cannot reach a majority of the people,
- (ii) the education system is economically and socially inefficient,
- (iii) the development of basic education is limited and uneven, resulting in inequality in the development of the overall educational system,
- (iv) internal and external productivity is low,
- (v) the education system largely disregards the educational needs of disadvantaged groups,
- (vi) social and economic equity in education is not always ensured in the allocation of resources.

73. The above suggests that one means of making more significant progress in providing basic education for all, is to increase investment in the consolidation of the basic education system. Education will be developed and improved through adjustments and changes which meet the basic education and training needs of a substantial percentage of the population. Access to education and training will result in the acquisition of the necessary development skills, and in the knowledge and attitudes which enable the beneficiaries to be integrated into the working population, and thus break the cycle of poverty. Non-formal education is one of the entry points for this kind of education. It is, by nature, innovative, flexible, and more adaptable to the specific needs of the beneficiaries.

74. In view of the financial and material constraints that exist, it is necessary to use inexpensive, sustainable strategies that take both the needs, and the specific circumstances of the individual, and the country, into account. This is the challenge to be met in countries such as the least developed ones.

The role of UNESCO will be:

- To help where action has been inadequate
- To help in consolidating gains
- To help by publicizing successful experiences
- To help in the establishment and reconstruction of education systems which have failed
- To help in the achievement of the objectives recommended by the EFA World Forum in Dakar
- To support policies, reforms, initiatives and innovative action, aimed at providing good quality basic education for all
- To reassess the educational resources available, and focus on their development and use.
- To development endogenous capacities
- To reduce poverty
- To develop competence, aptitudes, attitudes, and the technical and vocational skills favourable to endogenous, self-reliant, community-based education services.

The main areas of action will continue to be the following:

- Early childhood and family education
- Universal primary education
- Literacy, post-literacy and adult education
- Technical and vocational basic skills training for young people, and adults, in both rural and poor urban areas
- Women's and girls' education, and strengthening their participation in development
- Education and the social and economic inclusion of disadvantaged groups
- Basic education, Management Information System

More specifically, UNESCO's strategies and actions will aim at:

- (a) Continuing to raise public awareness, advocate and mobilize opinion in favour of the promotion of good quality basic education for all children
- (b) Promoting access to educational resources for all
- (c) Supporting policy and programme development as well as educational reforms
- (d) Emphasizing endogenous capacity building, to enable communities to play their part in educational development, and be more accountable for their action

- (e) Establishing, and reinforcing, effective mechanisms at the national, regional and global levels, which monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- (f) Developing functional literacy programmes for young people and parents
- (g) Promoting exchanges of information, on success stories and innovations
- (h) Giving high priority to women's and girls' education with emphasis on adolescents
- (i) Reinforcing UNDAF/CCA mechanisms, and promoting UN joint programming for Basic Education for all
- (j) Mobilizing public and private personnel who will provide good quality basic education to street and working children.

UNESCO's strategic plan for early childhood and family education for 2000-2013

75. UNESCO has developed a strategic plan for its early childhood and family education programmes for the next seven biennia (2000-2013). This strategic plan was discussed with, and obtained support from, inter-agency partners. It advocates the recognition of non-formal approaches to early childhood care and education as a service which is complementary to formal pre-primary education. International resolutions on early childhood care and education have endorsed this view. In particular, efforts will be made to assist families, communities, NGOs, and local authorities to become partners in providing early childhood care and education. The value of local, non-formal resources and contributions must be recognized.

76. As a follow up to the meeting at Dakar, a concerted effort will be made to improve early childhood indicators, and collect data on early childhood learning environments.

UNESCO's main areas of technical assistance in early childhood and family education will focus on:

- Policy development
- The development of early childhood macro policies including indicators
- The development of family support policies
- Information management, advocacy and networking

In term of Universal quality primary education

77. There has been progress in the provision of quality primary education over the decade, although the extent of progress may not compare favourably with the size of the investments made. The impact of HIV/AIDS on primary education has been enormous. It has adversely affected millions of children and educational personnel, and is increasing the direct and indirect costs of education. In poor countries the environment is unfavourable for educational development, and it is a cause of grave concern that there continue to be so many illiterate children in the world. Cost effective and inexpensive means of providing access to education, and of training teachers exist, and greater effort is needed to make use of them.

Future action should give special emphasis to:

- creating a learning environment for children, by producing low cost, popular reading materials, setting up reading rooms and libraries, publishing newspapers, and developing educational broadcasting services.
- ensuring that all children who attend primary school are able to read and write, since this is basic to life-long learning
- an education service that reaches all children, offers alternative approaches and delivery systems, and is accessible to all children regardless of their cultural, geographical, social and economic situation
- strengthening guidance and counselling programmes in the training of teachers, and in the school programme
- adopting investment strategies that lead to the sustainable development of primary education, particularly with regard to reading materials and teacher education
- affordable school supervision and management
- improvement in the quality of teaching in the classroom
- the role of education in the promotion of economic development and progress and reducing poverty
- the registration of all children, in order to have reliable statistics as a basis for planning and monitoring progress
- addressing the critical problems of primary education, and carrying out reforms where necessary.
- carrying out research on learning approaches, and the ways in which local resources can be used more effectively for teaching and learning.
- a greater use of the child's cultural background for the promotion of learning

In term of inclusive education

78. Action in inclusive education will aim at:

- (i) ensuring that the concerns of marginalized and excluded groups are considered in all education activities,
- (ii) developing capacities for policy-making, and system management, in support of strategies for providing inclusive education, identifying partners for the implementation of the programme.

In term of educational governance and school based management

Priority areas are identified, and strategies developed for educational governance at the local levels

- (i) The national education policy is reviewed and revised, in accordance with local governance reforms,
- (ii) The Ministry of Education is informed of recent trends in educational governance at the local level,
- (iii) The capacity building of district and community level organizations to enable them to assume their roles and responsibilities,
- (iv) To ensure women's participation in educational decision-making at the district and community levels,
- (v) Research findings and practices in educational governance are widely disseminated

The proposed activities for educational governance at the local level are:

- (i) Situation analysis
- (ii) Consultations on educational governance
- (iii) National workshops for the policy and planning of educational governance
- (iv) Material development and the training of trainers,
- (v) Knowledge management

**Contribution of Higher Education to the rights of the child**

Teacher Education

80. A planned The 'UNESCO Guidelines for the Planning of Teacher Training Programmes' will recommend the inclusion of materials needed to make the world's 60 million teachers aware of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. as well as other UN normative instruments pertinent to teacher education. UNESCO will hold workshops in the use of these guidelines in countries given priority by the Dakar World Education Forum

Unitwin/UNESCO Chairs

81. Several UNESCO chairs are devoted to Human Rights; including the Rights of the Child.

Follow-up to the World Conference on Higher Education

82. Since the definition of a 'child' is up to the age of 18, Articles 3 and 10 of the Conference Declaration protect the right of the child with regard to access to higher education. A key element of Article 3 pertinent to the Convention is that access to "be based on the merit, capacity, efforts, perseverance and devotion showed by those seeking access to higher education..." A key element of Article 10 pertinent to the Convention is that "Guidance and counselling services should be developed in co-operation with student organizations, in order to assist student in the transition to higher education..."

Both of these articles will be promoted in key follow-up strategies to the world conference, with awareness of the needs of post-secondary applicants falling within the definition of a 'child.'