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>> CLADH Policy Statement on Children Poverty and Rights

Policy statement prepared for the UNICEF's global consultation on Social Policy, Equity, Rights and Development ("The Road to Prato")

One of the key themes for UNICEF's work in Social and Economic Policy consist on "Refocusing on equity for children in middle-income countries". This key theme involves, inter alia, poverty and malnutrition.

Malnutrition is one of the most harmful problems in middle-income countries that end to affect current child's rights, future generations and national development. In order to address this issue, it is essential to strength the family, as a basic unit of society, to guarantee that it will receive comprehensive protection and support (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 16.3) and to promote UNCRC application. Maternity and motherhood, especially among young mothers, should be protected, as well. The role of women in the upbringing of children cannot be replaced. Hence, the effective access of the mother and the child to nutrition, health services, and education it's a possible route to take in order to face this challenge.

How to bring children's priority needs front and centre into national development policies?

- By the implementation of new national laws and the formulation of national and international strategies, policies, programmes and development priorities, that seek to fulfill all human rights, especially those included in the UNCRC.
- By implementing -in every national policy and programme- analysis that seeks to protect motherhood and address its needs.
- By analyzing policies and programmes -at all relevant sectors of the economy-, with respect to their impact on poverty, especially on family well-being.
- By developing and implementing anti-poverty programmes that improve access to food for women and child (under a certain age) living in poverty.
- By developing a comprehensive national strategy for improving health, education and social services, so that families and children living in poverty have full access to such services.
- By researching the impact of poverty on pregnant woman and the unborn, especially on their health and nutrition.

How to engage in national fiscal and budget policymaking process to increase investments in children?

- By researching the long-term adverse effect on human and social development that child's malnutrition has.
- By making a "cost-benefits analysis" of national economic programmes aimed at ensuring women appropriate health services in connection with pregnancy, and adequate nutrition during pregnancy, lactation, and the upbringing of the child.

- By making a “cost-benefits analysis” of national programmes, aimed at ensuring education and training of women, as an essential key to improving health, nutrition and education in the family.
- By ensuring the participation of “mothers” in economic decision-making.
- By promoting the activities of civil society and non-governmental organizations that works against poverty, and promoting its participation on the decision-making.

How to ensure social protection initiatives are lasting and geared towards building systems?

- By enacting legislation that creates new educational and health systems, all of which acknowledges the issue of malnutrition.
- By taking positive measures to promote education and training for families on the importance of nutrition at the first stages of age.
- By implementing monitoring system (in hospitals and other institution), that follows the improvements in the application of different national programmes for child nutrition, and documents its results.
- By creating new agencies -within the Government scope- in charge of monitoring the application of child’s policies.
- By enacting government strategies that includes long-term, medium-term, and short-term stages.

How to promote economic and financial policies that are socially inclusive and promote equitable outcomes?

- By researching and supporting the best practices on nutrition, and promoting its implementation in other fields.
- By encouraging NGOs’ initiatives, and supporting and implementing measures and programmes aimed at increasing the knowledge and understanding of the causes and consequences of malnutrition.
- By ensuring the participation of woman, educators, and medical and social workers in the promotion of family policies.
- By training politicians and other persons in positions of authority, in the importance of family protection.
- By elaborating national strategies that take into account the needs of families in rural areas, as regards housing and health care, drinking water and education.

How to engage in strategic advocacy and partnerships that can promote sustainable, equitable and inclusive child and human development?

- By building a network between NGOs, private sector, civil society, governments and international community.
- By promoting that every sector has child malnutrition as a main issue of concern in its own field. NOGs could work on social programs, Universities could do researches, companies and industries could help promote nutrition through donations, governments should implement nutrition programs in all possible field (economic, social, educational, and the health field), and the international community should seek for reduce poverty and child malnutrition in every international forum.
- By promoting the following principles, suggested by Eurochild in their Policy Position on Family Policies: a) frame family policies within a children’s rights approach as defined by the UNCRC, b) create the right conditions for positive parenting to take place, c) invest in early intervention and prevention services for families, d) support parents’ empowerment and participation, e) recognize and respect diversity, f) ensure adequate and universal family benefits, g) respect children’s right to be heard and ensure that the

views and experiences of children are taken into account in the development of services and policies that affect them.

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