Save the Children Norway

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**THE AGREED SITUATION: EQUITY/EQUALITY MUST BE ADDRESSED**

1 - The gains made towards realizing the MDGs are largely based on improvements in national **averages**. A growing concern is that progress based on national averaging can conceal broad and even widening disparities in poverty and children’s development among regions and within countries. We also know that many of the countries that are most successful are addressing child mortality are doing this in an equitable way also without much economic growth.

2 - As both SC and Unicef experience and research shows: In many countries the gap in mortality rates between the poorest quintiles and the riches is growing, and economic growth in itself does not help much among the most deprived. Thus a focus on adressing inequality and inequity is essential for future progress and for any future development goals

**REALIZING EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMUNITIES**

3 - When SC work in field with marginalised communities - such as with education for pastoralists in Africa - we aim to ensure solid partnerships with communities by building on community aspirations, reasearch and policy analysis. This together can enable communties to define what steps that needs to be taken to advance their rights to health and education. To build programs which aim to realise rights needs to involve local government and ensure a constant dynamic between service delivery which is locally appropriate and advocacy to secure financing, quallity and sustainablility in the longer term.

4 - When ensuring education for pastoralists in local language and in a culturally appropriate way, it is crucial to have a "targeted intervention" focus to ensure to build on the local situation and local aspirations to ensure quality and sustainability.

5 - However, this does not imply that "targeted interventions" should be made the cornerstone of "national strategies" as this may risk to hamper essential goals of achieveing universal coverage.

**FINANCING IS KEY: INVESTMENTS IN HUMAN RESOURCE IN SOCIAL SECTORS AND ABOLISHMENT OF USER FEES - A MUST**

6 - In most cases, making equitable progress is not simply a matter of targeting disadvantaged groups. In the countries that are off track towards MDG 4, child mortality is usually high not just among the poorest fifth of the population, but across the poorest 60-80% of the population.

7 - In these contexts, governments must adopt an explicit goal of universal access to a minimum package of good quality essential services. This includes abolishing user fees to better ensure access to health and education.

8 - Non-formal health workers and teachers have an important role to play in many contexts, but additional investments in training and deployment of formal health workers and teachers, including fair and good working conditions, is key to ensure universal access and quality. Such investments are also indeed needed to build sustainable systems in a longer perspective than 2015.

9 - National responsibility to ensure investments in social sectors in general and in human resources in social sector especially is important, But such national plans needs to be supported by donors in many country contexts if they are to be realistic both in the short-, medium- and long term.

10 - A commitment to equitable healthcare needs to be coupled with an effort to reduce inequities in he indirect causes of under five mortality, including nutrition, water and sanitation.

11 - Across all areas of policy, commitments to equity means little unless reflected in a more equitable allocation of public spending. Our experience show that public spending is more likely to be equitable where there is transparent and accountable government (civil society / popular demand).

**POST 2015:**

12 - Poor consideration of equity has been a major pitfall of the MDGs. Any new framework must be designed to tackle global inequalities and must view unequal distribution of development outcomes as neither inevitable nor acceptable. Approaches to development that measure success in terms of numbers reached, with no regard for who is reached should not be tolerated. Inequality is not good for anyone in society, nor is it good for the economy, as such it should be a key focus of international cooperation. Some commentators have argued for an equity specific MDG but equity must be at the centre of all MDGs and any future framework. The best approach, which is also consistent with human rights, would be to make all of the targets universal.