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ChildFund Alliance, Plan International, Save the Children, SOS Children's Villages, UNICEF and World Vision

Response to the Final Draft of the Outcome Document for the UN Summit to Adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Background

We welcome the latest draft of the Outcome Document for the UN Summit to Adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and highly commend the efforts of the co-facilitators for making a number of positive changes in the new text. In particular, we welcome: the stronger references to children throughout the document, as well as the references to human rights and reaching “the furthest behind first” (para 4, preamble), as these are key for achieving the commitment to leave no one behind. We further welcome the inclusion of age as a factor for non-discrimination in paragraphs 18 and 23.

Below are suggested textual edits organized by key themes for children in order to strengthen the language of the final Outcome Document from a child perspective:

1. Children and young people are agents of change and investing in children and young people is critical

We strongly welcome the addition of para 46, which recognizes young people as critical agents of change. Indeed, this paragraph takes some of its inspiration from a global consultation with children and young people on the Outcome Document zero draft, which makes it all the more powerful. However, para 46 should make a *reference to children*, recognizing their current role as agents of change and acknowledge the *current role of children and youth* and avoid the impression that they will only contribute to change only when they become older. If children and young people are to fulfill their full potential as agents of change, this needs to be accompanied by *investment in all children and young people of today*, so that change can be realized by 2030 and provide a better world and further positive momentum for future generations.

Para 46: What we are announcing today – an agenda for global action for the next fifteen years – is a charter for people and planet in the twenty-first century. **Children and young people, in particular, are critical agents for change and will find in the new Goals a stronger platform to enable them to become positive agents for change and the from which to channel their infinite capacities for activism into the creation of a better world. Children's and young people's ability to be positive agents of change depends on the investments we are willing to make in their health, nutrition, education, safety, protection and well-being starting in early childhood and through adolescence and young adulthood, and thus ensuring that no child is left behind.**

2. All people, including children, should live free from violence

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2015 presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to ensure that children's right to protection from all forms of violence and exploitation is fully realized in all settings. Unless the protection of children from violence is clearly prioritized not only through a standalone target, but also throughout the entire post-2015 development agenda, the committed and immediate action that is needed will not come to fruition; development gains of the past fifteen years will be lost; and other emerging priorities will not be addressed.

Para. 11: We are meeting at a time of immense challenges to sustainable development. There are rising inequalities within and between states. There are enormous disparities of opportunity, wealth and power. Unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, is a major concern. Spiralling conflict, violent extremism and humanitarian crises, **a growing migration challenge, including violence against women and children**, threaten to reverse much of the development progress made in recent decades. Natural resource depletion and adverse impacts of environmental degradation, including desertification, drought and land degradation and the prospect of irreversible climate change, add to the list of challenges which humanity faces. The survival of many societies, and of the planet itself, is at risk.

Para. 23: We commit to providing quality education at all levels – early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary – **in safe learning environments free from violence**. All people irrespective of gender, age, race or ethnicity, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, children and youth in vulnerable situations, should have equitable access to **quality education and achieve good learning outcomes** that helps them acquire the knowledge and skills needed to exploit opportunities and to participate fully in society. We will strive to provide children and youth with a **safe** nurturing environment for the full realization of their rights and capabilities, including through supportive families, schools and stronger communities.

Para 24: To **ensure healthy lives** for all, we must achieve universal health coverage **and provide quality health care for all, without financial hardship, aiming to reach those furthest behind first**. No one must be left behind. We commit to accelerating the progress made to date in reducing **newborn**, child and maternal mortality by ending all preventable deaths of **newborns infants**, children, and pregnant women **and adolescent girls** by 2030. We are committed to ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, including for family planning, information and education. We will equally accelerate the pace of progress made in fighting malaria, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, hepatitis and other communicable diseases and epidemics. At the same time we are committed to devoting greater effort to tackling non-communicable diseases **and accelerating progress in reaching the World Health Assembly targets on maternal, infant and young child nutrition**.

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Para. 24bis: We commit to eliminate hunger and all forms of malnutrition and ensure food security for all people, especially children. We will adopt policies that assure sustainable access to nutritious food for the most vulnerable people, especially those living in conflict and disaster prone settings.

Para. 25: We will seek to build strong economic foundations for all our countries. Sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth is essential for prosperity. This will only be possible if wealth is shared through progressive policies aimed at redistribution. We will work to build dynamic, sustainable and people-centred economies, promoting youth employment in particular and decent work for all, and end child labour in all its forms. All countries stand to benefit from having a healthy and well-educated workforce with the knowledge and skills needed for productive and fulfilling work and full participation in society. We will therefore adopt policies which increase productivity and productive employment, financial inclusion, agricultural and industrial development, sustainable transport systems and modern energy provision and which build resilient infrastructure.

Para. 30: ... We must redouble our efforts to end all forms of abuse, exploitation, and violence against children, as well as to resolve or prevent conflict and to support countries emerging from conflict situations.

3. Strengthening positive social movements through increased public awareness

Public awareness is the first step towards inspiring the positive action by individuals and other stakeholders across the world needed to achieve better results. All people, starting with children and youth, should know about the principles and values expressed through the SDGs to be both empowered and inspired to take action.

Para 47: "We the Peoples" are the celebrated opening words of the UN Charter. It is "We the Peoples" who are embarking today on the road to 2030. Our journey will involve Governments, Parliaments, the UN system and other international institutions, local authorities, business and the private sector, the scientific and academic community, civil society – and ordinary people. Millions have already engaged with, and will own, this agenda. It is an agenda of the people, by the people and for the people – and this, we believe, will ensure its success. Successful implementation will depend on increasing public awareness of the SDGs, starting with children and young people.

4. Migrant, refugee and displaced children are one of the most vulnerable population groups

The SDGs have fallen short in addressing the rights and concerns of migrant, refugee and displaced children. Being this one of the most vulnerable populations, we believe they need to be included in the text, in order to ensure that the most vulnerable are not left behind.

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Para 37: We recognize that international migration is a multi-dimensional reality of major relevance for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, and that coherent and comprehensive responses are required. We will cooperate internationally to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration involving full respect for human rights and **dignity** of migrants, refugees and displaced persons, **including migrant children**.

Para. 38: We recognize the role of **families, in all its forms, as contributors** to sustainable development; one measure of success of the new Agenda will be its ability to strengthen **all families and protect all children**.

5. Participatory monitoring practices are essential for the implementation of the agenda

A hallmark of the SDG Agenda has been the focus on a participatory and inclusive process for developing the Agenda. These principles of inclusivity and participation should be carried through to the implementation of the SDGs, particularly in follow-up and review activities. Supporting people's participation in real-time monitoring initiatives will ensure that our path towards sustainable development is inclusive and owned by the peoples of the world. This will also allow for timely feedback on the SDG process, especially from the local level. It is for these reasons that we suggest the following language in the section on "Follow-up and Review"

Para 43: Indicators are being developed to assist this work. Quality disaggregated data will be needed to help with the measurement of progress beyond GDP and to **monitor progress for the social and economic groups that are the furthest** behind. We agree to intensify our efforts to strengthen statistical capacities in developing countries, particularly least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing states and other countries in special situations. **We further agree to ensure collaboration with civil society organizations in identifying the most marginalized and vulnerable people and issues of their concern that have not yet been analysed, yet, vital for not leaving anyone behind**

Para 57a: They will be voluntary and country-owned, will take into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and will respect national policies and priorities. As national ownership **and people's** engagement are key to achieving sustainable development, outcomes from national-level processes will be the foundation for reviews at regional and global levels.

Para 57 d: They will be open, inclusive, **participatory, gender and age-responsive**, and transparent, and support the **meaningful** participation of all people and all stakeholders, **including children and youth, women, persons with disabilities, and the most marginalized groups**.

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Para 57 f: They will be rigorous and based on evidence, informed by data which is timely, reliable and disaggregated by characteristics relevant in national contexts including income, **gender**, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location, for which capacity building support to developing countries will be necessary.

Para 57g: They will focus on progress for the social and economic groups that are the furthest behind, and monitor inequalities within and between countries.

Para 61: We also encourage member states to conduct regular reviews of progress at the national level and sub-national levels. Such reviews can benefit from contributions by civil society, the private sector and other actors **utilizing real-time monitoring initiatives and participatory and people-led feedback mechanisms** in line with national circumstances, policies and priorities. National parliaments as well as other institutions can also support these processes. **We encourage Member States to set national interim or mid-term targets across all goals, in order to accelerate progress for disadvantaged groups, and to ensure that all goals are on track to be achieved by 2030. The UN system, at the request of Member States, will provide support for integrating the SDGs into national development plans, as well as monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the agenda.**

Para 70: The HLPF will **ensure the necessary support for meaningful participation** in follow up and review processes by the major groups, **other stakeholders and the private sector** and in line with Resolution 67/290, **in follow up and review processes. The HLPF should regularly review engagement mechanisms, encourage and create opportunities for all stakeholders.** We encourage **these actors** to report on their contribution to the implementation of this Agenda.

6. Thematic reviews should occur on the progress of the social and economic groups that are the furthest behind

In order to ensure that the progress being made by the agenda is reaching the furthest behind, we suggest that the thematic reviews taking place at the HLPF include a segment on the progress for the social and economic groups that are the furthest behind.

Para 67: Thematic reviews of progress may also take place at the HLPF **including on progress for the social and economic groups that are the furthest behind.** These will be supported by reviews by the ECOSOC functional commissions and other intergovernmental forums which will engage relevant stakeholders and, where possible, feed into and be aligned with the cycle of the HLPF.