

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
28TH SESSION, 12TH MARCH 2015
ANNUAL FULL-DAY MEETING ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

ORAL STATEMENT:

INVESTMENT IN CHILDREN – CHILDREN AND THEIR RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BUDGET CYCLE

Mr President,

This statement is delivered on behalf of Plan International and 9 NGOs¹.

We welcome today's debate and the space provided to discuss the right of children to participate in and influence budgeting decisions.

The Working Group on Investment in Children of the Groupe des ONG pour la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant² consulted over 2500 children from over 70 countries on their views and recommendations on investment in the realization of their rights. One important message was that realizing their civil rights - "having their views taken seriously" - was an area of critical under-investment.

Budget planning, allocation, spending and monitoring are crucial processes during which children's views should be given due weight, in compliance with Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.³ Evidence across regions shows that initiatives to include children in budgeting, particularly at local levels, have led to important budget shifts in favour of their rights⁴.

¹ African Child Policy Forum, ATD Fourth World, Child Rights Coalition Asia, Groupe des ONG pour la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant, Defence for Children Costa Rica, Eurochild, International Baby Food Action Network, Redlamyc, Plan International and Save the Children.

² The Working Group includes African Child Policy Forum, Child Rights Coalition Asia, Groupe des ONG pour la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant, Defence for Children Costa Rica, Eurochild, International Baby Food Action Network, Redlamyc, Plan International, Save the Children and UNICEF.

³ UN Convention on the Right of the Child, Article 12. CRC General Comment No. 5 on General Measures of implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, (2003), para 57.

⁴ Some examples for child participatory budget planning, allocation and expenditure monitoring with children are: Action Aid: "*Democracy Watchdogs – Youth-driven participatory monitoring and accountability in the Post-2015 development agenda*" (2015): [http://www.actionaid.org/publications/democracy-watchdogs-youth-driven-participatory-monitoring-and-accountability-post-2015-;](http://www.actionaid.org/publications/democracy-watchdogs-youth-driven-participatory-monitoring-and-accountability-post-2015-) Plan International: Plan International's submission for the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights report for the March 2015 session of the Human Rights Council on the theme "Towards a Better Investment in the Rights of the Child" (2014). <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Children/TowardsInvestment/Plan3.pdf>; "Recife Participatory Budgeting with Children" http://www.vitalizing-democracy.org/site/downloads/1324_303_Case_Study_Recife.pdf; Save the Children: **Save the Children's** submission for the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights report for the March 2015 session of

Children should participate in all steps of the budget cycle in a manner that is meaningful, inclusive, collaborative and enabling.

“Meaningful” implies that the process is open, transparent, accountable, and easily accessible to children, providing child-friendly information and opportunities for participation according to their evolving capacities.⁵

“Inclusive” means that all girls and boys should have equal opportunities to be involved to ensure that budgets and spending are equitable. Issues affecting children of all ages need to be taken into account.

“Collaborative” requires efforts to bring children, civil society and governments together to jointly seek solutions for better budgets and spending.

“Enabling” allows children to speak their mind without fear. It means that their right to associate and organize is legally protected and that formal spaces for their participation are created.

Children’s involvement in budgeting processes helps put their civil rights into practice and can contribute to budgets that are fair and just, while making public decision-making more transparent and responsive to children.

Thank you Mr. President.



the Human Rights Council on the theme “Towards a Better Investment in the Rights of the Child”
<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Children/TowardsInvestment/SaveTheChildrenInternational.pdf>

⁵Children Parliaments, municipal child and youth councils, student councils and similar public accountability mechanisms represent important investments taken by state parties to facilitate children’s participation and should be assessed as possible mechanisms for engaging children in budgeting processes.