

Inputs for the Protection of the Rights of the Child and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

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a.1) For development aid work, funding should be maintained

Recently, several countries announced their intention to reduce their contribution to cooperation, whether for political reasons or for a change of strategy focused exclusively on Africa. Development aid from richer countries is being strongly internally questioned nowadays on these countries. Even specialists as Dr. Dambisa Moyo, from the University of Oxford, an expert on development aid with several years of experience at the World Bank, defended emphatically that "development aid is bad and should disappear.", in her book "Dead Aid".

It is impossible to calculate the exact number of children living on the streets around the world, but it is estimated that there are tens of millions, perhaps up to 150 million, according to UNICEF (1). It is very possible that these numbers increase as grow the world's population and urbanization continue to advance. These are children who must face this situation because of the violence, the abuse of drugs and alcohol, the death of their father or/and mother, family crises, wars, natural disasters or simply by socioeconomic collapses.

About 67 million children of primary school age find themselves deprived of the right to education, according to statistics from UNESCO (2). Worldwide, more than one third of child deaths are attributed to malnutrition. A low birth weight (less than 2,500 grams) is a serious risk to the health of children. It is estimated that, worldwide, 15% of babies suffer from low birth weight (3). These babies have a much higher risk of dying during the first months and years. Those who survive will have worse immune function and is likely to remain malnourished throughout his life, with reduced muscle strength, suffering a higher incidence of diabetes and heart disease and tend to have a lack of cognitive abilities. This affects their performance in school and their job opportunities as adults.

Mankind achieved nowadays standards of living learning from mistakes and working on new technologies. This was only possible with continuously resources for fostering all these actions. Development aid nowadays is not perfect: it began only 60 years ago. But if we want the cooperation improvement, keep the current resources allocated on it is necessary. End development aid is simply an aberration. First, the richest countries are partly responsible for the poverty of many poor countries. Second, because the misery of these countries have become a reality in their own territory. Proof of this is the situation in european countries must face due to immigration problems, so do as the USA. And third, by a simple ethical issue: we can not stop development aid, at least until there are no more children begging on streets.

a.2) Impact investments: Can we overcome the funding gap for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals?

Impact investment have acquired increasing importance in the current economic context as an investment method. Investments should take a long-term view and allow the flourishing of new solutions. The essential meaning of investment is being lost. It has become volatile and focused on the short term, through speculation.

Now we need to face the great challenges of feeding a booming younger population, whose will deal with the global climate change consequences and live more intense migration on a large scale phenomena. Solutions exists and may be created, entrepreneurs reinvent goods and

services to make up future social and environmental demands. Supporting these solutions is the essence of impact investments.

The development of impact investment provides solutions to the inadequate distribution of wealth and consequently favors mainly the implementation of SDGs globally. Taking a look at the numbers, we have on one side about 70 billion dollars invested in impact investments, including microfinances, one of the most efficient ways to allocate resources on vulnerable young groups, as autochthonous children, for example (4). On the other hand, we have 70 trillion being traded by brokers (5), while the amount needed to achieve the SDGs is about 3 trillion dollars a year (6). If we were to invest between 3% to 5% of the values given by brokers in response to the great challenges of our time, we could quickly achieve the allocation needed to achieve Agenda 2030 goals.

Thus, funds are available, but solution channels should also become more attractive for investing. Doubtlessly skilled professionals in investment and risk management offering solid channels to create a comfort zone necessary for investors are required. This could be achieved through entities with a powerful framework of field specialists who understand value chains, such as the food production and energy efficiency; but also by the authors of the best reputation in the industry. Public-private partnerships are crucial to cover all the requirements. International organizations can play an important role in due diligence processes, increasing the range of available solutions and welfare guarantees to facilitate investments.

Refuse the adaptation to the new economic productive cycles, which preserves natural resources for the next generations and respects communities, what is crucial for a healthy environment for the children, is an extreme risk factor. It will become increasingly difficult for an entity does not operate in a sustainable way, either by social demand, either by imposed regulations. In a near future, business will must be sustainable to be profitable; but sustainability also comes with wealth creation and the ability to attract investors. These two notions - sustainability and income - are strongly connected and will soon be incorporated into any form of investment.

b.1) 385 million children still live in extreme poverty.

Children are twice as likely to live in extreme poverty than adults - about 385 million living in this condition. In 2013, 19.5% of children in developing countries lived in houses where daily family income was USD\$ 1,90 or less per person. In the same year, 767 million people worldwide were living with USD\$ 1,90 or less per day, half being under 18 years (7) (8).

Children are not only more vulnerable to extreme poverty as well as more suffer the harmful effects of this condition. The younger children are the most affected, because the deprivations they get through affect the development of their bodies and minds.

It is shocking that half of all children in sub-Saharan Africa and one in five children in developing countries are growing up in extreme poverty. This not only limits their future, but also drags down those societies. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates of children in extreme poverty: about 50% of them are in this condition in the region. South Asia concentrates the second highest rate, 36%, with the highest rates observed in India.

Governments must calculate routinely child poverty, as part of efforts to end this situation up to 2030. The improvement of social protection systems is also necessary, including the transfer of income, so that poor families can afford the food, water and education costs. The large number of children living in extreme poverty highlights a real need to invest in antenatal services for pregnant women, development programs in early childhood, quality education, clean water, adequate sanitation, and universal health care. The only way to break the cycle of poverty that is so widespread today is by improving these services and ensuring that today's children will be able to access quality employment opportunities as adults.

b.2) Extreme Poverty threatens development of 249 million children under five years.

In low and middle income countries, 43% of children under five years of age are with their cognitive potential threat because they live in poverty and have a low height for age. Improve the quality of life of these young people would cost only 50 cents per child per year (9).

In low and middle income countries, 43% of children under five years of age - or 249 million - are at high risk of having their development affected because they live in extreme poverty and have a low height for the age.

Despite the considerable contingent, improve the quality of life of these young people would cost only 50 cents per child annually, when considering investments in complementary interventions to health services that already exist.

With the current level of investment in early childhood, individuals lose about a quarter of the average annual income in adulthood, as countries reach double spending of GDP on health and education.

The infant brain develops more rapidly in the period from two to three years of age than at any other time of life. These early years are also a critical period of adaptability and response to health interventions.

The lack of nutrition, adequate stimulation and protection has adverse effects which may impact on long-term in families and communities.

Science and economy must give an special attention on investing in the first thousand days of life, starting from pregnancy. If this is not done, children join school later and suffer a lifetime of disadvantages. But if it is done, remarkable differences in their ability to fully participate in future savings as active and productive citizens can be achieved.

Historically, interventions for early childhood focus on children in preschool age. However, nowadays it is known that interventions that include the period before conception and the first two years of life can significantly reduce the adverse effects on growth and health and may support children in their full potential achievement, from the point of view of development.

It is necessary to convert the results of science in a wake-up call for the development of millions of children in danger. No country can run the risk of losing almost half of the brain potential of its youngest citizens - and especially the low and middle income countries.

In order to expand early childhood care services, communities around the world can adopt recommendations such as creating welcoming environments where families can pay attention to small children; strengthen existing services of nutrition, education and protection; and expand the monitoring and accountability of initiatives aimed at the development of young people up to five years. It is also pointed out that investments in SDGs may also increase the supply of early childhood care. Agenda 2030 may serve as a catalyst for resources.

Investing in young children is a moral, economic and social obligation. SDGs offer a promising outlook for the health of children and adolescents, but it is necessary political willings and greater investment in early childhood development to reach these ambitious goals. Interventions in favor of early childhood not only benefit children today; also have the direct effect on the future stability and prosperity of the countries.

c) Millenium Development Goals in Latin America: where many could not be a child in full-time.

Who is an educator and teaches at night knows the difficulty of holding attention of those who spent the day working, especially adolescent students. The lack of energy is revealed not only in the yawns and half-closed eyes, but also in academic performance. Double shift workers lose a quarter to a half of learning per year.

This result was reached after analyzing the performance of students in the city of São Paulo - the richest city in South America. These young people had an average of 12 years (10).

Brazilian law does not allow work under 16 years old, except when the adolescent is older than 14 years and is an apprentice - that is when they are hired by a company that offers technical training, respects school schedules and guarantees the same rights of any worker. The contract lasts from one to two years.

The measurements have not focused on apprentices, but the younger street sellers, car washers and other urban informal settlements, which require and offer a lower professional qualification. Exhausted after working hours, the boys have:

29% more likely to miss class (compared to those who do not work);
10% more likely to do homework at school (on top of the class time);
5% more likely to deliver his homework late.

Among girls, the percentages are 14%, 10% and 9% respectively. The grades in Portuguese and mathematics can be up to 7% lower than those of other students.

The difference in grades between those who work and those who study only seems small, but it is relevant. Brazil, the country where the poll was conducted, ranked 58th in the Pisa mathematics evaluation of 2012, made in 65 countries, as its critical point, which showed the deficiencies faced by these children - most of them were not able or had difficulties to operate efficiently routinely mathematical operations.

The performance of these youth tend to be worse for the rest of the academic life. These statistics shows that even when they stop working, grades do not improve. This when young people still in school: the school dropout rate in Brazil reached 24.3% in 2012 at its most critical point, according to the Brazilian Ministry of Education (11).

Child labor, in turn, reached the lowest levels in history: 2012 to 2013, a drop of 15% in the number of children 5-13 years, which is least 486,000 children working. Most of them (63.8%) toiled in rural areas, in dangerous activities such as pottery and charcoal. However, there were still 3.1 million employees in this age group.

Public policies such as "Bolsa Família", that only transfer the benefit to parents if their children attend school, are important to increase household income, take these young people from early work and encourage school attendance. But are still missing policies that facilitate and enhance the learning of these children.

Besides Brazil, other Latin American country that has managed to gradually lower early work rates is Mexico. "Oportunidades", the Mexican version of the "Bolsa Família" was able to reduce by 8% the amount of 12 to 15 year old boys who work (12).

The country's experience shows that it is essential to complement the program with specific measures to combat child labor. So much so that the country reformed its labor law in November 2012, committing to develop related initiatives. Currently, 870,000 Mexican children still work.

In Uruguay, where 90,000 children work, many parents do not even realize child labor as something harmful, especially on countryside. An analysis by Uruguayan Parliament discovered that although there are laws, society makes no requirement to implement them because the early work is still part of an integration culture in the productive adult world.

So with the support of the World Bank, the Uruguayan Parliament joined other government institutions and civil society organizations to create guides that help make the most visible issue in society (13). It is the first step to ensure that youth the right to have fun, study and be full time children and adolescents.

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