CF Item = Barcode Top - Note at Bottom =
CF_Item_One_BC5-Top-Sign

Page 3
Dat 8/1/2002
Time 4:55:23 PM
Login wbq

CF/RAI/NYHQ/SP/SSC/2002-01059

Full Item Register Number [auto] **CF/RAI/NYHQ/SP/SSC/2002-01059**

Ext Ref: Doc Series/Year/Number **SP/SSC/WSC-000.21**

Record Item Title

Towards An Agenda For Children - Reference Book: Preparatory & Reference Documentation on the World Summit for Children (1990: July); Special Session for Children

Date Created / on Correspondence	*Date Registered*	*Date Closed*
7/1/1990	12/28/2001	

Primary Contact	Rijuta Tooker (Temp Assist)
Owner Location	Special Session & Global Movement For Chil =
Home Location	Special Session & Global Movement For Chil =
Current Location	Special Session & Global Movement For Chil =

Fd1: Type: IN, OUT, INTERNAL
Fd2: Sender Ref or Cross Ref Field

File Container Record ID	**CF/RAF/USAA/DB01/2001-06648**
File Container Record (Title)	**Background Documents (WSC)**

N1: Number of pages	*N2: Doc Year*	*N3: Document Number*
0	0	0

Full GCG Code Plan Number
Record GCG File Plan

Da1: Date Published	*Da2: Date Received*	*Date 3*	*Priority*

Record Type **A01ed Item Corr - CF/RAI/NYHQ/SP/SSC**

DOS File Name

Electronic Details **No Document**

Alt Bar code = RAMP-TRIM Record Number **CF/RAI/NYHQ/SP/SSC/2002-01059**

Notes

[Archives: CF/NYH/SP/SUM; Folder: S0355.] Contents: Section 1: Members of the Planning Committee - Schedule of (remaining) meetings and activities; Section 2: Schedule and Programme of the World Summit for Children; Section 3: Draft Declaration of the World Summit for Children - Draft Plan of Action; Section 4: Report of Meetings: - 1st, 2nd, 3rd Meetings of the Planning Committee - Meetings of the Working Group on Format - Meetings of the Working Group on the Declaration - Statement of Agreement of the six Initiating Governments -

Print Name of Person Submit Images	**Signature of Person Submit**	Number of images without cover
EDWIN RAMIREZ		4

BLANK

UNICEF WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA
ABIDJAN

TOWARDS AN AGENDA FOR CHILDREN BEYOND YEAR 2000

COMMENTS BY THE WCAR REGIONAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

11-13 MAY 1998

General

1. The RMT emphasizes the value of a forward-looking vision to guide UNICEF into the next century and expresses its appreciation of the work done by the " Tarrytown group". The RMT also endorses most of the elements of the draft vision: "A Global Agenda for Children Beyond Year 2000", but for the follow-up of the vision it is important not only to describe what is desirable, but also to relate the desirable to what is doable - and this will depend strongly on the local context. Indeed, to guide a realistic agenda for action, a global vision must among others deal with the regional differences which exist, and the inequalities between amd within countries.

2. The countries in West and Central Africa are generally far from achieving the World Summit for Children goals. Important efforts have been made during recent years and progress has been made, though it in most cases has been very slow. In the area of protection, no specific objectives have been identified at global level, but there are great numbers of children in the region in need of special protection measures. The "unfinished business" therefore remains a daunting challenge and will require very comprehensive and sustained efforts in most countries. In this connection reference is made in particular to the document "1998-2000 Programme priorities" (PRO/98-00).

3. The revised text of the vision should, according to the RMT,

   a) Adequately capture the variations in social and economic developments around the world and analyse the underlying causes.
   b) Recognize the need for the consolidation of past gains and foresee the addition of new challenges to the agenda for action only sequentially.
   c) Clearly link the rights of children to the promotion of human rights in general and the global development agenda and support initiatives to address structural obstacles.
   d) Include in sections 1,5 and 6 the need for a thorough analysis of structural and other causes for the slow progress, on the basis of which a new global agenda for children in the 21st Century can be built.
   e) Include in sections 2 and 7 texts relating more specifically to women's and girls' needs.
   f) Identify operational tools and strategies to implement the global vision, including those required for advocacy to mobilise support for the vision.

4.   Overall, five issues are and will remain critical in West and Central Africa for the efforts to build a child rights based world, as outlined in the vision.

These are

-   Poverty - which is not only widespread, but also increasing more rapidly in Sub-Sahara Africa than in the rest of the world, with relatively more people are living in extreme poverty. Further, experience indicates that economic growth has less impact on poverty in West and Central Africa than in other regions.
-   Survival - infantile and under five mortality is still very high in most countries and it is not yet decreasing dramatically, despite the efforts resulting in increased access to basic health services.
-   Peace - recurrent armed conflicts and acute emergencies not only undermine progress achieved, but lead to major setbacks and distress in considerable segments of the population.
-   Governance - most of the countries in WCAR are endowed with natural resources and are in this meaning not poor, but suffer from unfavorable macroeconomic conditions, inappropriate public policies and poor resource management.
-   Gender equity - the contribution of women is vital for the well-being of children and the development of society, but the status of women is generally very low, they have little access to resources and they rarely participate in important decision-making processes.

5.   Four "strategic axes" appear to be particularly relevant for the promotion of the status of women and children in the context of WCAR countries and societies:

-   Support of the complementary functions of the public sector, the private sector and civil society, ensuring that each can play its proper role. In many WCAR countries all three areas are weak and need strengthening.
-   Reinforcement of the role of the family, given its fundamental importance for the well-being of children, and the difficult conditions often surrounding it.
-   Stronger emphasis on social mobilisation and community participation in connection with development efforts, not only in rural areas, but also in the context of rapid urbanization.
-   Continued promotion of low cost basic interventions and easily doable actions to ensure replicability and sustainability.

The questions of the Executive Director:

6.   Regarding the three questions raised by the Executive Director in her memorandum (CF/EXD/MEM/1998-20) of 23 of March 1998, the RMT suggests the following comments:

7.   Question 1 -   Have the conditions and trends in your region been taken into account?

<u>Answer</u>

A global vision cannot, by definition, take into account all the conditions and developments in each region. Nevertheless, some important aspects of the situation prevailing in WCAR, need to be given more emphasis.

These include in particular

-    The rising incidence of poverty,
-    The burden of debt and limited economic growth,
-    The adverse demographic and environmental trends,
-    The rapid urbanization and growth of the informal sector,
-    The deteriorating infrastructure in social as well as other areas,
-    The recurrent armed conflicts and emergencies, political instability and poor governance,
-    The high rates of infantile, under five and maternal mortality,
-    The rapid spread of HIV/AIDS,
-    The disintegration of the extended family, and
-    The huge efforts needed to complete the "unfinished business".

8.   Question 2 -   Are the priority themes informed by the lessons learned from the 1990s?

<u>Answer</u>

While the priority themes are well informed by the universal ratification, the spirit and the philosophy of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the movement of human rights, some key lessons from the UNICEF experience in WCAR do not seem to have been taken sufficiently into account.

These include:

-    The necessity of ensuring sustained progress and the difficulties in achieving this. In this connection, the lesson learned in WCAR, is that specific well defined and achievable goals are useful and necessary, but not sufficient to obtain progress. In addition, sustainable strategies towards the goals must be elaborated and implemented. In the area of health, this has led among others to the promotion of the Bamako Initiative and similar strategies.
-    Some of the themes seem to be based on assumptions about reality which are not necessarily correct for West and Central Africa. For example, the learning theme assumes an adequate availability of school facilities, which is not necessarily the case in the great majority of the countries. A basic lesson learned during recent years in this region is the necessity of rethinking traditional educational concepts and experimenting with innovative and better adapted forms of schooling to meet local needs.
-    An assumption behind themes 4, 6 and 7 appears to be that all the

governments (and other partners) are fully aware of the obligations inherent in the
ratification of the CRC and are effectively committed to implement the required key transformations - but our experience is that still remains to be done, and that is is necessary therefore to collaborate with all partners from the beginning.

9.   Question 3 -   Should these be the priority themes for UNICEF's advocacy and action? How can we define and prioritize what UNICEF should do?

Answer

The seven themes could be relevant priority themes for UNICEF's advocacy and action. However, in the context of WCAR, given the economic and social conditions, necessary partnerships and the "unfinished business", a better prioritization is needed to maintain the strength of the message. In this region, the agenda must clearly be more limited, in a certain sense, and represent a step towards the more global vision. The "packaging" of the message is also crucial. For example, a shift from "goals" to "themes" must be properly explained in a situation where the goals still remain to be achieved.