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Agenda item 2 & 3, General Debate

The role of good governance and public services for children's rights

Joint NGO Oral Statement

Mr President,

This statement is made by Save the Children on behalf of 8 NGOs.¹

Children, who constitute over 30% of the world's population, are often more dependent on good governance and public services than adults. Every day millions of children go to school, visit a health clinic or benefit from social assistance.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is at the heart of making children's rights children's realities. This can only happen with good governance, including effective, equitable and resourced public services. Children have different needs than adults. Governments, therefore, need to ensure that services for children, whether delivered by public or private service providers, are child-friendly and have the best interest of the child as the primary consideration.

Transparency, public participation and accountability are cornerstones of effective and responsive governance and public service delivery. Without access to information the public, cannot participate effectively in decision making, nor can they hold Governments to account.

¹ Co-signatories include: Casa Alianza Switzerland, Child Helpline International, Child Rights Information Network (CRIN), International Catholic Child Bureau (BICE), International Council of Jewish Women (ICJW), International Council of Women, Save the Children and World Vision International.

Children often remain invisible in decision-making. Yet, children know their own situation best and have the right to participate in these processes. Across the world there is a growing body of evidence of how children's involvement has improved public service delivery.

In Nicaragua, a wide range of civil society and government partners have supported children to engage with child-friendly municipalities, which has contributed to bring about an average 35,5% increase in municipal investment in children². In Tanzania, Save the Children has supported children to engage with the 2011/2012 district budgets in seven areas resulting in more children accessing school feeding programmes and the recruitment of additional teachers³.

We call on UN Member States to put children and their best interest at the centre of transparent, participatory and accountable public service delivery based on the UNCRC. We also call on Member States to include a goal on open, inclusive and accountable governance in the post-2015 framework.

Thank you Mr President.

² Save the Children (2014), Municipal Investment in Children and Adolescents for the 2009-2012 period

³ Save the Children (2013), Impact on Child Rights Governance