Italy – ITEM 5 - “Brief on action taken in Harnessing Knowledge to achieve results for children”

The comprehensive report of the Director of the UNICEF Office of Research, submitted to the membership on the progress made since February 2012 in the implementation of the three strategic priorities outlined in report E/ICEF/2012/6, presents a number of achievements, which demonstrate significant developments in making available sound knowledge to improve results for children and help achieve the MDGs with equity.

Some major achievements were made possible thanks to UNICEF’s commitment in recent years to improving this function. Our achievements are also owed to the relentless work carried out by the UNICEF Office of Research, which was established with the specific aim of supporting the Fund by providing a sound social knowledge basis - a key element for the development of well-calibrated programs and initiatives.

Childhood poverty is commonly considered as “deprivation of the material, spiritual and emotional resources needed for children to survive, develop and thrive” and is generally measured by single dimensional, economic or specific development indicators.

These indicators today are no longer sufficient and adequate if we want to capture all aspects of childhood poverty and deprivation.

The Office of Research has elaborated various analysis tools that have different empirical approaches:

the MoRES (Monitoring Results for Equity System), the MODA (Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis), the MICS (Multiple Indicators Cluster Service), the DHS (Demographic and Health Survey), all developed by the Office of Research represent effective tools in investigating deprivation and poverty among children from a multi-dimensional perspective.
The previous report (E/ICEF/2012/6) underlined three strategies to support the goals to improve results on children:

1) building the evidence base for results for children;
2) supporting country offices and their partners as both a starting point and, most importantly, as end-users of gathered and shared knowledge;
3) forging more effective linkages between technical areas and knowledge functions of the organizations.

It is essential to work across the Organization, in synergy with the National committees and UNICEF’s local Offices and with other International Organizations working in the field of humanitarian assistance, to develop common tools that are able to generate evidence over comparable data. It’s fundamental, at the same time, that these new research tools generating a new capacity to support national policies in favor of children be shared.

To this end, it is of utmost importance to continue to provide the Office of Research with adequate financial support and make every effort to ensure that additional resources are made available for this key function.

In conclusion, Italy confirms its full support for UNICEF’s continuing efforts in improving its research functions and encourage, at the same time, a substantial reinforcement, in the next program cycle, of the Office of Research within the Organization.