



COROLLARY



Several presentations made at the Consultation Seminar placed special emphasis on the need for policies on violence in children and adolescents to be public – that is, that they become State policies, beyond the periods of individual government administrations and providing for more participation of civil society at all stages.

A year and a half after the Seminar, I believe it is a timely occasion to integrate the vision that the IACI proposes in its Strategic Plan. Said Plan proposes that it is relevant to attempt a new approach to child-related issues, looking for equilibrium and subsidiary complementarity between universal public policies and targeted social policies. This involves promoting and strengthening the public-private discussion at the intersectoral and multidisciplinary level on all matters concerning citizens under the age of 18. This also means generating responses to broaden the management capacity for respond integrally to problems such as violence in children and adolescents.

These responses or tools are not, and should not be, an end in themselves. They must be part of a political, communicational, and comprehensive assistance strategy for children, which must necessarily be complemented by support for the training of human resources of the sustainability of actions.

This proposal that the IACI is making today, along with UNICEF, and with many other Governing Bodies on Child Affairs, was also present at the 1999 Consultation Seminar. In fact, it stated the need for specializing decision-makers, to implement the political and programmatic reforms necessary for a true National System for Children.

While public policies for children involve an articulate cluster of actions carried out by the State and Civil Society, the Consultation Seminar suggested varied coordination mechanisms for the formulation and supervision of a National Plan for children that may effectively address the problem of violence.

A proposal with these characteristics involves knowledge of institutional responses in terms of present benefits, national and international legislation to be observed, the capabilities of the actors involved for introducing change, and most of all, the political will to decide the implementation of a State policy that goes beyond control to focus on prevention and social reinsertion.

In this context, the Consultation Seminar highlighted the leading role played by children and adolescents as active holders of rights – that is, as persons who have the right to participate and be taken into account in all matters related to them, and thus, to receive the necessary respect and strength for the building of citizenship.

Finally, I would like to remind you of the objective that we set at the beginning of this Consultation Seminar, to achieve the necessary insight, a strong grasp on this problem, thus going beyond the shell of violence and the noise of aggressiveness. Carefully reading the works presented and bearing in mind their subsequent discussions, we may affirm that we have reached an acceptable “insight” into the processes involved in child and adolescent violence, from diverse disciplinary perspectives and analytical-explanatory approaches. The Seminar shed light on the multidimensionality of the problem of violence by and against children and adolescents, the role of the media, the importance of the child's or adolescent's ties to the fundamental support of their social integration (their family references, their parents, their community, and the education system), and finally, the importance of having efficient and effective public policies to address the problem.

I would like to conclude with some thoughts that were written many years ago by Dr. Gregorio Araoz Alfaro, of Argentina, in a Bulletin much like this one:

“Let us care for children with technical competence and love; let us effectively protect the family in order to make it united and happy; let us justly educate bodies and minds; let us provide everyone with a minimum of well-being; let us avoid, at least, ignorance and misery, and suppress juvenile delinquency.

Children are the potential nation. For children to be born healthy and strong, and grow up under the necessary supervision and care to strengthen their bodily and moral health, and for children to receive a physical and spiritual education capable of giving them vigor, intelligence, honesty, and skills to cultivate

their own well-being and increase collective wealth and power, is to ensure the future of the homeland, and its rank and importance in the community of nations.”

Although perhaps not in the same words, but in the same spirit, we continue to seek the way for all human beings – children, young people and adults – to have their rights respected, without being victims of violence or aggression, or violating the rights of others.

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