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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the
twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority
theme: rethinking and strengthening social development in the
contemporary world**

Statement submitted by Smile Foundation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

The Logical Transition from MDGs to SDGs

The MDGs have been substantially successful in achieving desirable results; however, the outcomes have been uneven. Whilst the MDGs are set to expire in 2015, there is a need to continue the development agenda; hence SDGs are set to take over from 2016.

India's progress towards MDGs has so far been mixed. The country is moderately on track to achieve the targets on universal primary education, reducing child mortality, etc. However much ground still remains uncovered when it comes to issues like poverty, hunger and malnutrition, sanitation, gender discrimination or reduction of maternal mortality. There is no denying the fact that India remains critical to the global attainment of the MDGs and forthcoming SDGs.

The SDGs have been designed to focus on building a sustainable world where environmental sustainability, social inclusion, and economic development are equally valued.

Smile Foundation: Making a Difference

Smile Foundation was established in 2002 with the mission to make a difference in the lives of underprivileged people. Smile Foundation is a catalyst for bringing change to the lives of poor children, youth and women, through a life-cycle approach with focus on six MDGs (poverty and hunger, education, empowering women, child and maternal mortality, health, etc.). Smile believes that 'Life Cycle Approach' holds the key for addressing the issues like healthcare, poverty, population control, unemployment, eco system, justice or human rights. Smile Foundation empowers the underprivileged by helping them realize their potential, emerge as productive assets, and sets the foundation for nation building.

Currently, Smile Foundation directly benefits over 350,000 children and their families every year, through 175 welfare projects on education, healthcare, livelihood and women empowerment, in more than 750 remote villages and slums across 25 states of India.

Driven by a Global Development Agenda — Doing it in the Sustainable Way

At the very core of Smile's intervention policy, lays the emphasis on sustainable development of the underprivileged with special focus on women and children. Smile's philosophy has been grounded in the requirements of people and resonates the essence of the SDGs, which will shortly steer the international development agenda.

People — at the Core of Interventions

People form the core for every intervention. Smile came into existence to improve the lives of the underprivileged, economically weaker or disadvantaged sections of the society. Through our interventions in the field of education, we have been providing education to underprivileged children including school dropouts, street children, orphans, single parent children as well as children affected by HIV/Aids, etc. Underprivileged youth have been grappling with the lack of relevant skills and struggle to get decent jobs. Smile Foundation has been running employment skills training centres where youth from marginalized communities are trained in English, computing and soft skills to create a life of dignity, independence

(including financial), freedom, self-reliance and help them to break out of the vicious cycle of poverty, misery and oppression.

Healthy people contribute towards a prosperous family as well as nation. Smile Foundation runs an innovative Mobile Health Program called Smile on Wheels with special focus on women, children and elderly. The program tries to address the issues of accessibility, availability and affordability by providing quality basic healthcare to underprivileged people.

The plight of underprivileged women is grave, and therefore women remain at the very core of all interventions of smile Foundation, be it education, livelihood, or healthcare. Besides this, Smile Foundation runs a special women's empowerment program called 'Swabhiman' that aims to improve self-esteem and inner strength for marginalized and socially excluded women and adolescent girls through innovative community practices.

Dignity — Reinforcing the Right of Dignified Life

Living a dignified life is an inherent right of every human. Smile has a two pronged strategy — working with underprivileged and engaging with privileged to promote Civic Driven Change — for reinforcing this tenet. The objective is to bridge the gap between underprivileged and the privileged and thereby work towards eradicating inequality.

On the one hand, Smile empowers marginalized people so that they are able to lead a life of dignity. So far, over 1.5 million people have been helped to move out of the vicious cycle of poverty/misery through Smile's Life Cycle approach (interventions around education, healthcare, women's empowerment and livelihood).

Smile also works with the privileged [corporations and individuals] to communicate that dignity is an intrinsic right for all, including the underprivileged without discrimination. Smile runs 'Value Education' sessions for privileged children, emphasizing their responsibility to accord dignity to all so that we live in a cordial society free from discord and disdain. Over half a million children have been reached every year under the 'Child for Child' program to lead change-makers for ensuring dignified life.

Partnership — Coming together is the beginning; staying together is progress; working together is success

Smile believes in socially driven change where corporations, the public sector, international institutions and individuals contribute towards the wellbeing of underprivileged people. Thus, Smile acts as a catalyst to provide a platform for the 'powerful' to contribute towards the development of people at the bottom of the development pyramid.

Through Smile's Social Venture Philanthropy Model, partnerships are forged with community based organisations (CBOs) to empower them to reach underprivileged communities. The programme also focuses on bringing excellence, good governance and sustainability in local CBOs.

Planet — Survival of people and planet is intertwined

The fragility of the ecosystem has been staring us in the face and nature's fury does not distinguish. Therefore the need of the hour is to act to protect the ecosystem for the survival of mankind. Smile realizes the importance of the survival

of the people and planet, which are intertwined, and has been working to enlighten communities about the issue.

Smile runs awareness building campaigns including painting competitions, poster making, group discussion, slogan writing, etc. with underprivileged and privileged children. Children learn to respect natural resources and use them judiciously. Various days are commemorated to instil respect for the planet such as Earth Day, World Environment Day and World Water Day. Children are at the forefront of Smile's strategy to be 'Environment Ambassadors' and bring desirable change within their families as well as the larger community.

Justice — Making Safe and Peaceful Society a Reality

All the interventions of Smile Foundation aim at creating a safe and peaceful society and helping the underprivileged to move out of the vicious cycle of poverty and thereby end their miseries/misfortunes. So far over 1.5 million people have been helped to move out of the shackles of poverty. This has set the foundation for creating and contributing to promoting a safe and peaceful society.

Realizing Prosperity — Creating a Prosperous Humankind

Over last 13 years, Smile has contributed in its own way to the lives of over 1.5 million underprivileged. Smile has supported over 1 million women and children with basic healthcare facilities through a mobile hospital program. We have educated over two hundred thousand children and provided employability skills training to over 40 thousand youth and almost 50 thousand women and adolescent girls have been empowered to act as change agents. Further half a million privileged children have been sensitized for social development every year.

A Way Forward: Promoting Sustainable Development

- Through the structured, scientific and holistic 'Life Cycle Approach', Smile Foundation has helped underprivileged people fight the menace of poverty.
- Smile's interventions focus on economically weaker as well as social disadvantaged people with special focus on women and children. It aims to empower them with the power of education, health and employability skills.
- The program interventions have been designed to eradicate inequality and create a society where people are treated with dignity.
- Focus on environment conservation is critical for the survival of humankind and respect for planet needs to be instilled early for rational use of natural resources.
- Partnering with key players is critical for sustainable development and Smile has been successful in leveraging over 100 partner organizations in joining the mission of bringing about change.
- Smile's interventions have been successful in bringing success and prosperity to lives of the underprivileged.

In conclusion, Smile's innovative interventions have brought hope and change in the lives of millions of underprivileged people. However, there is a long way to improve the social conditions of all underprivileged people, and Smile's success story has the potential to expand to a bigger scale.