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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 Federacion Internacional de Asociaciones
de Ayuda Social Ecologica y Cultural FIADASEC/International
Federation of Associations for Social, Ecological and Cultural
Help, 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 transformative power of positive education and life training for people living vulnerable lives is the reason why it should be part of development projects and actions.

Our proposal for the 54th Session of the United Nations Commission for Social Development (CSocD54) priority theme “Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world” has as a major focus on generating a change in the way of thinking and behaviour of people, as the best tool to overcome inequalities, violence, non-respect for human rights, discrimination and poverty in general to strengthen the worth of every human being and empowering them, so that they may live with confidence, responsibility and take advantage of opportunities.

The Federacion Internacional de Asociaciones de Ayuda Social, Ecologica y Cultural, Inc. (FIADASEC) has 25 years of experience in community service and social assistance for more than 5000 children and 1,123 families in Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Peru and Colombia. FIADASEC has helped provide food, medicine, educational support, disease prevention, general assistance., This experience leads us to a conclusion: it is not only important to nurture and care for the body and mind with food, health, education (colleges and universities) and decent work so people can provide for their families, but it is also necessary to generate a change in ways of thinking about themselves and about life, to really have an impact on social development.

There are social groups that, by their life circumstances, are conformists and believe they are not able to change the situations that surround them; that as much as they try, they will not be able to improve their social and economic circle and will always need assistance, and are powerless to soar to new states of life and satisfaction.

Individuals and families, despite having received the same support as all other persons, do not move, do not transform, do not develop. Instead those who are helped to transcend their circumstances and understand that they are in situations of scarcity, vulnerability, and know that their state is temporary and that there are possibilities for change find opportunities, achieve their goals, improve and succeed. People can understand that their circumstances do not define them as human beings, that scarcity is not their identity, but only a social or economic state that can be transformed. The vision about their own improvement is reflected in this comment: “Your institution helped me in so many ways, but what really changed my life, was to discover that I am a valuable being, with all the possibilities of achieving my goals, that I’m the same as anyone else, have nothing less than other’s and the discrimination I faced in my life, made me believe I am not worthy.”

The root of the problem lies in the “way of thinking” that is set in human beings minds, when they are exposed to extreme situations, precariousness and insecurity, lack of love and care. This is the point we have to improve, through the education of self-worth, to transcend the limits imposed by circumstances experienced or inherited, in order to reveal the human values that each person has, and must give to life to feel satisfaction and happiness. Self-esteem generates security and empowers people who are in a state of vulnerability.

Therefore, we propose to integrate educational training in values into projects and actions for the development of the contemporary world. This will transform limitations and constraints of the way of thinking and life vision of those who have lived or are living in states of vulnerability, to improve, and to discover and connect with the power that underlies every human being to help change their reality.

These actions generate continuous change and strengthen development in the contemporary world in a stable way.
