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QUESTION OF THE REALIZATION OF THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL
RIGHTS CONTAINED IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND
IN THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL
RIGHTS, AND THE STUDY OF SPECIAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO HUMAN RIGHTS
IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The widening gap: a study of the realization of economic, social
and cultural rights

by

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PART FIVE. INTERNATIONAL ACTION FOR THE PROTECTION
AND PROMOTION OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND
CULTURAL RIGHTS

I.F. United Nations Children's Fund*

* This section should be inserted after paragraph 97 of document
E/CN.4/1108/Add.5.

F. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

97a. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) co-operates with the less developed countries in their efforts to improve the situation of children and adolescents and to prepare them for the future.

97b. UNICEF's assistance to countries is directed specifically to children and mothers, the basic approach being humanitarian. Over the years, UNICEF's activities have gained an important dimension. They seek not only to meet some of the immediate needs of the younger sections of the population, but also to assist countries in establishing and strengthening their long-range services for children, especially those relating to health, nutrition, education and social welfare and development. These services have come to be recognized as essential parts of the over-all effort for economic and social development.

Organization of UNICEF

97c. As a member of the United Nations family, UNICEF is a semi-autonomous organization with its own governing body and secretariat. It works under the direction of a 30-member Executive Board, 10 members of which are elected each year for a three-year term by the Economic and Social Council. The Board meets annually, establishes policy, reviews progress, considers specific recommendations for assistance, and determines the long-range objectives of the organization. UNICEF's work is reviewed annually by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations. As an international organization, UNICEF is financed by voluntary contributions from Governments in the more as well as the less developed regions of the world and also from organizations and individuals. About three fourths of UNICEF's income comes from more than 110 contributing Governments. Income from other sources comes mainly from fund-raising campaigns in the more developed countries, from donations from individuals, and from the sale of UNICEF greeting cards.

UNICEF assistance to countries

97d. UNICEF assistance takes three main forms. First, UNICEF works with Governments to assist them in developing plans and programmes for meeting the needs of children in an increasingly comprehensive manner. Secondly, UNICEF provides material aid in the form of a wide range of supplies and equipment for services benefiting children. Thirdly, UNICEF provides financial aid to meet local costs, especially in the form of stipends for training of local personnel. Particular attention is given to working with countries in elaborating national policies for children and youth.

97e. Within the framework of its general concerns, UNICEF follows a country approach. That is to say, it believes that each Government has to evolve its own policies, priorities and action programmes for the benefit of the up-coming generation, according to its own special circumstances and opportunities. Programmes thus

formulated for the protection of children and adolescents constitute an organic part of national development planning. There is increasing emphasis on integrated programmes for services for children in rural areas as well as in slums and shanty-towns and the poorer neighbourhoods of cities. Such integrated programmes facilitate co-ordinated action as between different services directed to children and also support co-ordination in a wider sense as between social and economic development.

Areas of concentration

97f. Whatever influences the cause of development in a country bears directly on the well-being of children and adolescents. In turn, action taken on behalf of children and adolescents has important social and resource implications which can influence different sectors of development in different ways. Without attempting to draw too sharp a line, much of the specific action of national agencies on behalf of children and adolescents is concentrated in the following areas:

- (i) Development of services for health, maternal and child health, family planning, supply of potable water, and environmental sanitation;
- (ii) Improved nutrition, especially for infants and young children and pregnant and nursing mothers;
- (iii) Development of human resources, including provision of minimum educational opportunities for children, educational and vocational preparation of adolescent boys and girls, and expansion of opportunities for absorbing adolescents and youth entering the labour market into productive work; and
- (iv) Development of appropriate welfare services, community institutions and voluntary agencies to provide, in particular, for the growth and development of the young child. More generally, it is considered necessary to strengthen the family and the community, to prepare citizens for responsible parenthood, and to develop skills and opportunities for gainful and productive work for girls and women.

Each of these areas of concentration falls within the purview of one or more sectors of development. Therefore, UNICEF is concerned not only to strengthen planning and implementation within each sector but also, in co-operation with other agencies, to ensure that various activities are undertaken in an interrelated and complementary manner, so that action in one field may make possible and stimulate action in others.

97g. Up to the present nearly one half of UNICEF's assistance has been devoted to the strengthening and expansion of basic health services, especially for maternal and child health. For several years, on request, UNICEF has provided assistance for family planning as part of national maternal and child health services. In the area of nutrition, two main approaches are stressed, namely: (a) processing and distribution of protein-rich weaning foods, prepared to the greatest extent possible from indigenous sources, and (b) village programmes, commonly described as "applied nutrition". In the field of education, UNICEF is specially concerned with primary

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education, education and training of women and girls, preoccupational training of adolescents, and promotion of non-formal methods of education which both supplement and are better integrated with formal methods of education. About one third of UNICEF's programme assistance is devoted to training personnel, especially those working near the community level.

Special priorities

97h. In recent years, certain priorities have come to be increasingly stressed in UNICEF's work. These include measures of development on behalf of the children of the poorest population groups, development in the least developed countries, concern with the young child, and development of integrated services in rural and urban areas, especially on behalf of the more disadvantaged and backward social groups.

Emergencies

97i. Although, for many years, the creation and expansion of permanent services for children has been the main preoccupation of UNICEF, from time to time UNICEF is called upon to provide emergency aid for children in situations of disaster, whether natural or man-made. In principle, even in emergency situations, when sufficient help from other sources is available for immediate relief, UNICEF prefers to concentrate on the rehabilitation phase.

Partnership with other agencies

97j. Within the United Nations system, several agencies, notably WHO, FAO, UNESCO and ILO and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs share with UNICEF a common interest in the well-being of children. These agencies provide technical guidance in their fields of competence, including, where needed, the service of experts. They supplement UNICEF's own assistance which, more generally, takes the form of material aid and of funds to cover local training costs. The preparation of policy guidelines, planning and programmes, implementation and evaluation are undertaken, whenever possible, in partnership with the agencies concerned within the United Nations.
