



UNITED NATIONS

**UNITED NATIONS
INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S
EMERGENCY FUND**

A SPECIAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

(25 MARCH 1953)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

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A Special Report of the Executive Board (25 March 1953)

INTRODUCTION

1. In view of the decision of the General Assembly that it would discuss the future of UNICEF in 1953, and because this subject is also included on the agenda of the Social Commission and the Economic and Social Council, the Executive Board of UNICEF deemed it useful to have a general discussion on the work of

UNICEF. This discussion was held on 25 March 1953 (E/ICEF/SR.107, E/ICEF/SR.108) with representatives of twenty-one governments¹ participating. A synthesis of their observations is presented in this paper. For background purposes this is preceded by a brief description of UNICEF.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF UNICEF

Early Years

2. UNICEF was established by the General Assembly in December 1946, under Article 55 of the Charter, for the purpose of assisting needy children, primarily in war-devastated countries.

3. During its first several years the Fund's resources were devoted largely to meeting the emergency needs of children in Europe for food and clothing. In 1948, the Fund also began providing emergency relief for Palestine refugee mothers and children. At the same time a start was made in aiding programmes of long-range value in Europe and in Asia and Latin America.

4. By the end of 1950, UNICEF had provided approximately \$113,425,000 for aid to countries. Of this amount, approximately 76 per cent went to Europe, 10 per cent each to Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean area, and 3 per cent to Latin America. Seventy-eight per cent went for "emergency" relief, which also in part gave an impetus to permanent child feeding schemes.

5. The following table gives a percentage distribution of the main types of aid by geographic region.

Main Types of UNICEF Aid

(By geographic region)

1947 to 31 December 1950

(Per cent distribution)

	Total	Emergency food, clothing, etc.	Mass health	Maternal and child welfare	Milk conservation
	100.0 ^a	73.6	11.6 ^a	6.3	3.5
Asia	10.4	3.2	3.8	3.4	—
Eastern Mediterranean..	10.1	9.6	0.5	^b	—
Europe	76.0	65.1	5.3	2.2	3.4
Latin America	3.2	0.7	1.7	0.7	0.1

^a Total includes 0.3 per cent for BCG anti-tuberculosis vaccination campaigns in Africa.

^b Less than one-tenth of one per cent.

Since 1950

6. In December 1950, the Assembly altered the Fund's terms of reference, shifting the main emphasis of its work to aid for long-range child care programmes, particularly in under-developed countries (resolution 417 (V)).

7. Since 1950, the Fund's assistance has mainly taken the form of:

(a) Assistance to maternal and child welfare services and training through equipment and supplies for rural health centres, clinics, laboratories, children's hospitals, wards, children's institutions, and training schools and centres.

(b) Insecticides, penicillin, vaccines, transport, and sprayers for control of communicable diseases largely affecting children (malaria and other insect-borne diseases, tuberculosis, yaws, pre-natal syphilis, diphtheria, whooping cough, and others) and equipment for local production of insecticides, antibiotics, vaccines and sera.

(c) Dried skim milk, fats, fish, fish-liver oil, and some meat for long-range supplementary child feeding.

(d) Equipment for milk-drying and milk-pasteurizing plants to assure better use of locally available milk for children.

(e) Emergency relief action in the case of earthquakes, floods, droughts, famines, in the form of food, clothing, blankets and medical supplies.

8. The Fund is currently providing assistance to sixty-nine countries and territories² as follows: Africa, 11; Asia, 18; Eastern Mediterranean Area, 11; Europe, 5; and Latin America, 24.

¹ Australia, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Greece, India, Israel, Iraq, Italy, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Yugoslavia.

² Fifteen countries and territories were formerly assisted by UNICEF.

9. From 1951 through March 1953, the Fund approved approximately \$29,360,000 in aid to countries. Of this amount, 88.4 per cent was to the underdeveloped countries of Africa, Asia, the Eastern Mediterranean area, and Latin America. Aid for long-range programmes accounted for 68.6 per cent of the amount. Of the 31.4 per cent for emergency relief, approximately half was in connexion with the Palestine refugee problem. In April 1952, the Executive Board decided not to make further allocations for Palestine refugee mothers and children, except with contributions in kind, since a special United Nations agency, UNRWA, had assumed responsibility for this function.

10. The following table gives a percentage distribution of the main types of aid by geographic region.

Main Types of UNICEF Aid

(By geographic region)

1951 through March 1953

	(Per cent distribution)					
	Total	Maternal and child welfare	Mass health	Long-range feeding	Milk conservation	Emergencies
	100.0	20.0	31.9	7.3	9.4	31.4
Africa	4.7	—	3.6	1.1	—	—
Asia	41.0	13.6	16.9	1.0	—	9.5
Eastern Mediterranean..	27.3	2.7	4.2	1.0	3.8	15.6
Europe	11.6	2.0	0.8	1.6	3.0	4.2
Latin America.....	15.4	1.7	6.4	2.6	2.6	2.1

11. At recent Board sessions there has been a greater trend toward aid for maternal and child welfare services and training than indicated in the above table. At the March 1953 Executive Board session, for example, the percentage distribution of aid approved to countries was as follows:

<i>Aid approved by Executive Board by main types of programmes at March 1953 session</i>	<i>Per cent distribution</i>
Maternal and child welfare services and training....	37.8
Mass health	25.8
Long-range feeding	12.2
Milk conservation	9.0
Emergencies	15.2
TOTAL	100.0

12. The target programme and budget for 1953 provides the following percentage distribution of aid to areas (excluding aid for emergency situations and projects benefiting more than one region):

<i>Aid to areas provided in 1953 target programme and budget</i>	<i>Per cent distribution</i>
Africa	15.0
Asia	45.4
Eastern Mediterranean	14.9
Europe	4.8
Latin America.....	19.9
TOTAL	100.0

Beneficiaries

13. The following figures indicate the number of beneficiaries reached by UNICEF-aided programmes during the year 1952: 13.5 million tested for tuberculosis and 5 million vaccinated; 5 million examined in campaigns against yaws, bejel and pre-natal syphilis and 1.3 million treated; 8.3 million protected against malaria and other insect-borne diseases; 126,000 immunized against diphtheria and whooping cough. The average number of children reached monthly in 1952 by UNICEF-aided feeding programmes was 1.5 million. During the year, aid was approved for 2,000 maternal and child welfare centres, mainly in rural areas.

14. Comparable beneficiary data for numbers reached by currently-aided programmes¹ from the time they started until the end of 1952 are as follows: 25.5 million tested for tuberculosis and 8.6 million vaccinated; 9 million examined against yaws, bejel and pre-natal syphilis and 2.5 million treated; 10 million protected against malaria and other insect-borne diseases; 685,000 immunized against diphtheria and whooping cough. Some 11,500,000 children and mothers have benefited from UNICEF milk and other foods for various periods since the inception of the Fund. Aid has been approved for over 4,200 maternal and child welfare centres.

Basic principles in assistance to countries

15. Although assistance is provided on the basis of needs these are not construed as total needs of children in general but rather as requirements for which international assistance in supplies and equipment is appropriate and can be effectively used. This implies (a) a serious problem of child care; (b) plans for effective national efforts to meet the problem; (c) a necessity for some imported supplies as an integral part of the country's programme.

16. The actual administration of operations, including technical planning and direction, is in the hands of, and remains the responsibility of, the governments of the assisted countries, or agencies designated by them. UNICEF supplies are made available on the basis of "plans of operations" drawn up by the governments and approved by the Fund, which set forth in detail how the supplies are to be used as part of a larger child care programme. International personnel aid governments in the development of the plans of operations and in the observation of the programmes.

17. In order to assure long-range values the Board favours aid for programmes which give results on the basis of low *per caput* costs, which are within the capabilities of the country to continue after the initial period of international aid, and which set local organizational patterns capable of being duplicated and extended elsewhere in the country.

Relations to other agencies

18. As a result of the experience of recent years a clear division of the responsibilities of UNICEF and the other agencies has been worked out. Before

¹ Excludes beneficiaries of programmes for which UNICEF aid ceased before the beginning of 1952.

UNICEF aid is granted for any programme, a survey is made of the possibilities of assistance from other sources and account is taken of related programmes developed with the aid of United Nations and other agencies.

19. In the division of responsibility for aid to countries, UNICEF provides the imported supplies and equipment required, and WHO, FAO, and United Nations Social Welfare Advisors provide the International technical assistance required by the governments both in planning and implementing the programmes. These agencies also provide assurance to UNICEF that the plans formulated by countries for the use of UNICEF aid are technically sound. They participate in the field at the earliest stages where the screening process in the development of the programme takes place; they likewise participate in the follow-up and evaluation process after aid is granted.

Local matching

20. The plan of operations always requires substantial expenditure from local resources (local personnel, facilities, supplies, services, etc.) in addition to the aid given from the Fund. In 1952, UNICEF allocations of over \$15 million were "matched" by government commitments of over \$23 million. These figures understate the amount of local commitments since they do not include the expenditures which will be made on a continuing basis for the programmes after UNICEF aid has ceased; nor do they take into account the large amounts of voluntary effort characteristic of many of the programmes.

21. In some programmes the local matching during the period of UNICEF aid is a number of times greater than that provided by UNICEF. For example, at the March 1953 Executive Board session, UNICEF aid of \$775,000 approved for a comprehensive maternal and child welfare programme in a country in Asia will involve a capital investment by the country of \$4,700,000 over a period of two to three years in addition to annual recurring expenditures. In the Eastern Mediterranean area, UNICEF aid of \$115,000 for a maternal and child welfare programme will involve government expenditures of \$1,189,000 over a three year period; for a long-range feeding programme in this area UNICEF aid of \$136,000 will involve government expenditures of \$716,000 over a two year period. In Latin America, UNICEF aid of \$65,000 to a country for an anti-diphtheria/whooping cough programme will involve government expenditures of \$202,000 in one year period. In Africa, UNICEF aid of \$150,000 for a yaws control programme will involve government expenditures of \$400,000 over a two-year period.

VIEWS OF GOVERNMENTS

3. The discussion of the work of UNICEF took the form of statements by representatives on the Board expressing the features of UNICEF they considered especially significant in the light of the debates to take place during the course of the year on the future of UNICEF. Some of the points set forth below were put

Financing

22. Apart from certain residual sums received from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, the Fund is financed by voluntary contributions from governments and individuals. In the period 1947-1950 when income from UNRRA residual assets and United Nations Appeal for Children campaigns was substantial, contributions from governments accounted for 70 per cent of the total. In 1951 and 1952 they accounted for over 90 per cent of the total. Over twenty-five governments have now adopted the practice of making regular annual contributions to UNICEF.

23. The total contributions and pledges, and the number of governments contributing to UNICEF since 1950, has shown a steady increase. The following table (prepared to show the year for which the contributing government made its pledge) illustrates the trend:

	Amount of government contributions	Number of contributors
1950	\$ 7,919,000	31
1951	9,851,000	35
1952	10,775,000	38

24. For 1953, assuming that pledges made and informal information from government representatives are finalized by parliamentary action, total income from governments during the year would amount to over \$14,000,000 from forty-three governments.

25. For the period 1947-1950, governments of underdeveloped countries contributed 5.8 per cent of government contributions to UNICEF. In 1951, they contributed 17.5 per cent, and in 1952, 17.7 per cent.

26. UNICEF is able to use government contributions in local currencies for purchase within the contributing country of locally produced supplies. On several occasions governments have sold surpluses of foods to UNICEF at nominal or token prices. While these price reductions do not enlarge the recorded amounts of contributions to UNICEF, they do enable UNICEF to provide aid at considerably expanded levels.

Structure

27. The policies of UNICEF are established by a twenty-six-nation Executive Board in accordance with principles laid down by the Economic and Social Council and the Social Commission. In addition, the Executive Board approves the aid granted for each programme, and the administrative expenditures of the Fund. The Fund is administered by an Executive Director in accordance with these policies and decisions. As of 31 March 1953, 119 international staff were employed in missions, Regional Offices and headquarters. The Fund is represented in each of the assisted countries, where the size of the operations warrants it, by a small international mission; in others, a single representative serves; and for still other countries, several are served by one mission or by the Regional Office.

29. The purpose of the summary below is to reflect the points which the various representatives of governments considered most important.

* * *

Only United Nations Agency exclusively for children. UNICEF is the only agency whose concern is primarily children. This singleness of purpose has important results in concentrating facilities and resources.

Strengthens work of other United Nations Agencies. UNICEF is the focal point within the United Nations family for direct action for children. UNICEF supplies and equipment strengthen the value of the technical aid given by other agencies and help bring their services into play. The resources of the United Nations in health, nutrition, and welfare are thus aligned in a unified approach in helping governments meet children's needs.

Provision of supplies and equipment. A distinguishing feature of UNICEF operations is that its resources are used chiefly for imported supplies and equipment required by governments to start programmes or expand them to significant proportions. Other United Nations agencies would be unable to undertake this function without an increase in their resources or a change in their terms of reference or both. As a consequence of the emphasis on the provision of supplies, UNICEF has assisted in the provision of tangible services to children, many of which have immediate and observable results.

Provides additional international resources. UNICEF has attracted resources which would not have been available had there been no special agency for children. Support for children elicits greater public response than support for more general activities.

Stimulates use of more local resources for children. The "matching" requirement for UNICEF aid enables officials and national groups most actively concerned with child-care programmes to secure governmental budgetary and administrative provisions which otherwise would not have been available. Because a programme to benefit children often involves the interests of several governmental ministries (health, welfare, agriculture, education), UNICEF-aided projects have often become a focal point for governmental co-ordination and planning. In a number of instances, maternal and child health or welfare departments have been created in ministries as a result.

Long-range values. UNICEF aid is related to the ability and readiness of countries to use their own resources on behalf of children. Programmes are conceived in practical terms and are geared to the administrative and financial capacities of the country. Thus a solid basis is laid at national, provincial and local levels enabling the countries to carry on the programmes when UNICEF aid is no longer needed.

Catalyst for other community developments. Many UNICEF-aided projects have provided a practical and easily understood starting point for co-operative action of public authorities, voluntary groups, and individuals. Many thousands of volunteers have contributed devoted efforts. The concrete benefits of the programmes have made the people interested in next steps. This experience stimulates improvements in health, social services and community organization, especially in countries where such developments are only beginning.

Increases capacity for economic growth. The permanent strengthening of programmes initiated with UNICEF aid frequently increases the productive power of benefiting countries. For example, a malaria-control programme in the Terai region of northern India aided by UNICEF and WHO, in addition to bringing down the infection rate of infants to zero, has made possible a striking improvement in the economic status of the region; area under cultivation increased by nearly 30,000 acres; food production increased from 55,000 tons (1947) to 73,500 tons (1950-51); land values doubled; and colonization made possible a population increase in three years from 167,000 to 285,000. As a result of a similarly aided successful programme in Ceylon, the government has been able to undertake a land reclamation project which will increase food production significantly. In Yugoslavia, a UNICEF-aided milk-drying and pasteurization programme to bring safe milk to children previously supplied with UNICEF imports, is having important repercussions on the agricultural economy of the country by supplying steady and enlarged markets for milk, and providing focal centres for educational programmes for dairy farmers designed to improve milk production practices.

Cost of aid is small. When measured in terms of its mass impact and far-reaching effects the cost of aid by UNICEF is small. For example, in a large-scale anti-yaws campaign in one country the cost of UNICEF aid was 27 cents per person treated. This disease, if not caught in time, can leave its victim permanently crippled and helpless. In an anti-malaria campaign the cost was 23 cents per person protected; in a BCG vaccination campaign the cost was 4 cents per child immunized; in a diphtheria/whooping cough campaign the cost was 14 cents per child protected. About \$250 provides the basic equipment for a rural maternal and child welfare centre serving a district of up to 10,000 population, and an additional \$500 provides sufficient drugs, milk, fish-liver oil capsules and soap for these centres for a year.

Concentration. UNICEF aid is concentrated on a few types of programmes which are strategic in dealing with basic lacks in adequate child-care. These are programmes which experience has shown to be effective in producing substantial results. At the same time, the approach toward aid in each country is characterized by adaptation of the aid to local conditions. Experimental work, looking toward practical results which can be widely adopted, is not ruled out. For example, the Executive Board recently authorized the Executive Director to examine the possibility of aid in equipping plants for local production of soybean milk-powder and fish-flour in order to increase protein-rich foods in children's diets in non-milk-producing countries.

Aid in catastrophes. The experience of UNICEF as a supply organization has enabled it to act rapidly when called upon for assistance in emergency situations brought about by drought, famine, earthquake and flood. The governor of a drought-stricken state in Brazil recently stated that UNICEF emergency aid "saved a generation of children".

Constitutional structure. The constitutional structure of UNICEF provides for governmental control of policies, programmes and the expenditure of funds, including the administrative budget. Governments have an opportunity of approving programmes before they are

carried out. No programme is approved unless sufficient funds are available to enable it to be carried through to a useful stage of completion. Concentration on a limited number of types of programmes, fundamental in character, has enabled the Administration, under the authority of the Board, to work with commendable efficiency. The experience of years has given the Administration flexibility.

Economical administration. UNICEF has earned the reputation of being one of the most economically administered agencies. Administrative expenditures have been kept at the lowest level consistent with the Fund's responsibilities. With the same basic organizational structure, a considerable expansion in aid would be possible, given sufficient contributions.

Mass impact. UNICEF aid is currently being extended to sixty-nine countries and is estimated to have benefited over 60 million children. This mass impact is further strengthened in many cases by the direct nature of the aid and by its speedy and tangible results.

Fits into larger United Nations purposes. UNICEF has become an outstanding symbol of a successful United Nations activity. It fits admirably into the larger purposes of the United Nations, enhancing its prestige. Its work creates an atmosphere of solidarity which transcends political divisions. It constitutes one of the best and most direct methods of expressing the goodwill

of the international community toward many countries, including those not Members of the United Nations. It has provided thousands of individuals in many countries with an opportunity to participate in a direct and personal way in a constructive United Nations activity. To millions of persons who have never read the United Nations Charter, many in remote areas of the world, its concrete benefits have conveyed the real meaning of the United Nations in understandable and tangible terms.

Much remains to be done. Despite the significant achievements of UNICEF, it is apparent that much remains to be done to extend its benefits both in areas where only a start has been made, and in those underdeveloped areas which have not yet received UNICEF aid.

* * *

30. The Executive Board felt that it was not proper for it to make a recommendation regarding the Fund's future. However, eighteen of the twenty-six governments represented on the Board took the opportunity to announce the hope of their governments that a decision would be made by the General Assembly to continue the Children's Fund substantially with its present terms of reference. Other representatives were not in a position to indicate the views of their governments.

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