



CF Item = Barcode Top - Note at Bottom =
CF_Item_One_BC5-Top-Sign

Page 18
Date 1/14/2004
Time 11:46:36 AM
Login jrm



CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS/1995-0083

Full Item Register Number [auto] **CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS/1995-0083**

ExRef: Document Series/Year/Number **CF/NYH/SEB/HST/1995-0083 ; ER-COR/LUT C150**

Record Item Title

Interview Gertrude Lutz by Reinhard Freiberg: Pre-UNICEF; Poland; Brazil; Milk Distribution; Health Programmes; Education; Milk drying plant; training

Date Created / on Item 4/24/1984 Date Registered 11/29/1995 Date Closed/Superceeded

Primary Contact
Owner Location Strategic Information Section = 6090
Home Location Strategic Information Section = 6090
Current Location History Related Records =60909132

Fd1: Type: IN, OUT, INTERNAL?
Fd2: Lang ?Sender Ref or Cross Ref ER-COR/LUT C150
F3: Format Form = 025 pp + 1 b

Container Record
Container Record (Title)

N1: Numb of pages 25 N2: Doc Year 1995 N3: Doc Number 83

Full GCG Code Plan Number

Da1:Date Published Da2:Date Received 10/30/1989 Date 3 10/30/1989 Priority

If Doc Series?:

Record Type A02a Item Hist Corr - CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS

Electronic Details No Document

DOS File Name

Alt Bar code = RAMP-TRIM Record Numb : **CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS/1995-0083**

Notes

= 25 pp + 1 b

Archive Code Valid Date: 10/30/1989

mothers' clubs; Portuguese; Publicity; drought; feeding programmes; rehydration; Recruitment

WU_Staff:

Print Name of Person Submit Images

Signature of Person Submit

Number of images without cover

JOHN MANFREDI

John Manfredi

26

DOUBLE SIDED

Blank Page

Back of

Cover Sheet

Interview with Gertrud Lutz*
by Reinhard Freiberg in Gunten, Switzerland
on 24 April 1984

Table of Contents

(i)

	<u>Page</u>
Pre-UNICEF experience	1
Recruitment into UNICEF	2
Poland	2
UNICEF aid	2
Problems in 1950	3
Closure of UNICEF office	4
Brazil	4
Briefing	4
Lack of communication within country	5
Early programming activity	5
Drought and feeding programme in Northeast	6
Problems with breast-feeding	7
Rehydration units	7
Milk distribution programme	8
Adverse publicity	8
Saving a generation of children	8
Feeding programmes - the cutting edge	9
Mothers' clubs	10
Logistic problems	10
Uses of empty milk drums	11
Learning Portuguese	12
Travel in Brazil	12
Challenge of being UNICEF Representative	13
Brazil: both developed and developing	13
Health programmes	13
Misleading impression on visiting MCH centres	13
Training	14
Milk drying plant	14
High-protein food programme prematurely dropped	14
Education	15

*Mrs Lutz started with UNICEF in May 1949 as Mission Chief in Warsaw, a post she held until she was transferred to Rio de Janeiro as UNICEF representative in August 1951. In February 1965 she became representative in Ankara. She moved to Paris as Deputy-Director in September 1966 and was given responsibility for the External Relations Division. She was Acting Director for the first half of 1970, retiring in June 1971.

	<u>Page</u>
Financial aspects	15
Government contributions to UNICEF	15
Support of programmes	16
Leaving Brazil	16
Turkey	16
Malaria	17
Integrated health	17
Vehicles	18
Female UNICEF Representative in a Moslem country	18
Women on UNICEF staff	19
Paris Office	20
Galas	20
National Committees	21
The "field" in developing and developed countries	21
Importance of field exposure for External Relations	21
Important UNICEF personalities	22
Sicault	22

15 July 1985
1197Q

Pre-UNICEF Experience

Freiberg: It is a real pleasure to be with you, Gertrud, here at your beautiful home overlooking the Lake of Thun. You have just shown me a valuable document, a copy of which you will give to the History Project - the history of the Mission to Poland which lasted from July 1947 to December 1950. Would you like to go to the beginning of your association with UNICEF, at the very place where UNICEF was born?

Lutz: May I first of all say that it is a great pleasure for me to welcome you here! As you know, I have had relatively little contact with UNICEF in recent years for family reasons, and I am very happy that it is now possible to renew the links and to follow more closely how things are progressing.

Freiberg: How did you get to UNICEF? I remember that you were in Budapest during the War. Maybe you can tell us how you got involved in UNICEF business.

Lutz: Well, Reinhard, this is a rather long story. As you probably know, Switzerland - a small neutral country - has been and continues often to be called upon to render its services in the safeguarding of interests of countries at war. During our six and a half years (1935-1941) in Palestine, where my husband Carl Lutz was Swiss Consul for Palestine and Transjordan, the War broke out, and the Swiss Consulate was entrusted with the safeguarding of German interests. Upon his transfer to Budapest in January 1942, my husband was in charge of the Foreign Interests Division of the Swiss Legation, entrusted with the safeguarding of the interests of some twelve allied countries, foremost the U.S.A., the United Kingdom (including Palestine, then still a British Mandate), Belgium, Yugoslavia, etc. You were then too young to know but have meanwhile learned of the terrible persecution of the Jewish population following the occupation of Hungary in the spring of 1944. Officials of various Legations, in the first instance of Sweden (Raoul Wallenberg) and Switzerland, spared no effort in their life-saving mission, often at the risk of their own lives. For your information, I may add that the Foreign Interests Division of the Swiss Legation has been credited with having saved over 60,000 persons. These tragic events, followed by a seven-week siege during the battle over Budapest, more than brought home to me that during wars, as in natural catastrophes, children and mothers are always those suffering most.

When, after the war, my husband and I decided to separate and later divorce, it was thus obvious that I wanted to devote all my time and strength towards helping children and mothers. In January 1946 I joined Don Suisse, a semi-official relief

organization created to assist civilian victims in war devastated countries. Don Suisse sent me to Sarajevo, where I had the function of distributing badly needed clothing and shoes to the population of war-devastated villages throughout Bosnia (in cooperation with the Yugoslav Red Cross). From there I was transferred to Finland (late summer 1946 until spring 1947) cooperating with Suomen Huolto, and as of May 1947 I represented Don Suisse in Poland.

Recruitment into UNICEF.

Shortly before Don Suisse ceased to exist (late 1948), I met Al Davidson, then Director of UNICEF's European Office, who invited me to join UNICEF, my having had war- and post-war experience in various types of emergency programmes.

Poland

UNICEF aid

Freiberg: Can you tell me a little bit more about the nature of UNICEF programming in Poland at that time and then, maybe, give a couple of final words on how you look at that time of initial UNICEF assistance from today's vantage point, now that UNICEF has become such an important Organization?

Lutz: Looking back, I would say that in those days the feeding programme was of utmost importance. While there was no mass starvation, the great majority of Polish children were underweight. Lack of adequate food, in addition to most unsatisfactory housing conditions, greatly increased the tuberculosis rate. Tuberculosis among children was then appallingly frequent, and the disease was reported to be spreading alarmingly among the youth and middle-aged people. Hence, these children needed food and medical attention, and it became imperative to co-operate with other organizations, in particular the Danish Red Cross, in its BCG vaccination mass campaign. Moreover, UNICEF supported the anti-rickets campaign and granted fellowships to young doctors, enabling them to proceed to Switzerland for short post-graduate courses.

Reverting to the feeding programme benefiting around four hundred thousand children at the outset, the programme was gradually expanded, reaching, by 1950, over one million children through maternal and child health centres and schools.

The great value of the feeding programme was strongly reflected by the Polish Government's request for assistance to establish milk powder plants, so as to be able to continue the feeding programme on a permanent basis. It will be recalled that the agricultural, dairy and most of the industrial establishments had been destroyed during the War. Complying with the Government's request, UNICEF participated a.o. in the setting up

of five milk powder factories which, as far as I know, are still fully operating. In addition, UNICEF also supplied equipment for milk collecting centres, pasteurization units, and so on. The BCG vaccination mass campaign, already referred to above, called for UNICEF assistance in the setting up of health centres for adequate screening and UNICEF supplied, a.o., 140 x-rays, streptomycin, etc.

Freiberg: I guess, from the very detailed report which we fortunately still have, we can complete the information on this particular programme. But tell me, what were relations at the time with the Polish Government? How did the Government respond to UNICEF's initiatives?

Lutz: With a few exceptions, referred to later, the contacts with the Government were very friendly and effective throughout the lifetime of the Mission. I believe that the report "History of the Mission to Poland" handed to you, will convey to those concerned the spirit of our co-operation, in addition to the full details of the various types and scope of UNICEF-assisted programmes. The report reflects, for instance, how, on arrival of the first shipment in October 1947, there was a tremendous welcome by high officials from various ministries and, also, by some 800 schoolchildren waving UN and USA flags at the port of unloading.

Problems in 1950

However, 1950 was a somewhat trying period. Contrary to previous years, it seemed to become more and more difficult for Polish officials to publicly recognize UNICEF's assistance. There developed a trend in newspapers and over the radio of no longer referring to UNICEF's part in the setting up of the various MCH and other services but, instead, of speaking of the Polish Government "following the glorious example of the Soviet Union." This trend was obviously noticed by representatives of some of the donor countries who queried about the matter. Yet, they too realized that we were going through a period when journalists and officials had little choice, and they too were impressed to witness how quickly "bush-telephones" came to function.

Frieberg: Now, this is the official side, but what about the human side? What about the effect on children, because what we are really interested in is, of course, what could be done with the help of UNICEF for Polish children, what effect had UNICEF's input on allowing children to have a really good start in life again?

Lutz: The trend referred to, fortunately, had no effect on the implementation of UNICEF-assisted projects, and contacts with those responsible remained friendly as ever. The most important was, after all, that children continued to be well taken care of, and time and again we were told by those in charge of

programmes that UNICEF's assistance was decisive in helping thousands of children regain their strength and health; decisive, in fact, for their survival.

Closure of UNICEF office

When closing the office in Warsaw, in December 1950, we had to pack the Mission's records in cases and dispatch them by rail to UNICEF's European office in Paris, for reporting and subsequent archiving. This met with some difficulties - not the archiving, of course, but taking the documentation out of Poland. However, goodwill and perseverance won. In between writing the "History of the Mission to Poland", I returned to Poland, accompanying UNICEF's milk engineer on his check-up on the functioning of the five milk powder plants (laboratory tests, etc.). Standing for hours in these plants, often during the night, probably helped to aggravate my back ailment, and on conclusion of the report I had to spend several weeks at home for medical treatment.

Brazil

While I was in Switzerland, Al Davidson telephoned, asking me to go to Bulgaria. Still very hampered by my back problem, I had to decline. Next, Al Davidson proposed Beirut. Still not in good enough shape, I had to decline once more, considering also that Beirut was too far away.

Freiberg: But you had come from Palestine to Europe, so it was not really so far away for you!

Lutz: Well, I somehow seemed to remember it as being very far away. But then, to put the dot on the "i", UNICEF's next proposal was to go to Brazil. So, after considering Beirut too far away, how could I say yes to Brazil?

Briefing

Yet I did and went there in August 1951. Still undergoing medical treatment, I first also hesitated, the more so since, much to my shame, I knew little or nothing about Brazil. Running to different bookstores to overcome the educational gap did not prove very helpful either. At that time the only book I could lay hands on was the one by Kurt Pahlen on Latin America. This may seem strange today, when thanks to the mass media the whole Latin American continent moved closer to Europe, and when time and again our radio offers us Brazilian music for breakfast. Over the radio and television we now also benefit from many reports, usually quite interesting, yet, much to my regret, rather seldom in a balanced and unbiased way.

After some briefing at Headquarters and on arriving in Brazil, I was very glad indeed that Dick Heyward was there to meet me, together with my predecessor, Dr. Martinez Sotomayor, from Mexico.

Lack of communication within country

He was UNICEF Representative for one year only because he was not able to take field trips, being highly allergic to dust. Dr. Martinez Sotomayor was no doubt a good paediatrician, but he had been used to working in a well set-up Children's Clinic in Mexico City and seemed to be totally unaware of what was awaiting him on his travels through the backlands of the Northeast of Brazil.

Freiberg: But isn't this a rather generalized phenomenon, particularly in this, already then, highly urbanized Latin American society, where many of the élite people were cut off from the realities in the rural areas where UNICEF was trying to do some serious work?

Lutz: Well, this was then certainly true of Brazil, and I think you are absolutely right in saying that it is still true to a great extent throughout Latin America. When travelling, Brazilians went to the U.S., to Paris, Rome, etc., but seldom, if ever, to the backlands of their own country. This was primarily due to the lack of adequate means of communications within the huge country.

During the fifties and sixties things changed considerably, thanks to ever better air transport connections to every part of the country and, last but not least, the huge network of roads built following the transfer of Brazil's Capital from Rio de Janeiro to Brasilia, hand in hand with the corresponding development of the Brazilian automobile industry. At that time, this development seemed to best answer the great need of opening the country from East to West, and North to South. However, today, I shudder at the thought of what this has meanwhile cost in foreign currency as a result of the "oil crisis".

Early programming activity

Freiberg: But when you arrived in Brazil, what did you find? What was the situation, since you were opening the UNICEF mission there? Who were your first contacts, and what was UNICEF's first programming activity in Brazil?

Lutz: It will be recalled at Headquarters that the initiative for UNICEF's work in Brazil, indeed for its extension to Latin America, was first taken by the Brazilian Delegation to the United Nations in February 1949. In December of the same year, UNICEF sent its first delegate to Brazil, Dr. Leo Eloesser, to discuss joint programmes and to develop plans of operation, together with the National Department of Child Welfare of the Ministry of Health. On June 9, 1950, the basic agreement was signed between the Government of Brazil and UNICEF by H.E. Dr. Joao Carlos Muñoz, then Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil to the UN, and Mr. Maurice Pate, Executive Director of UNICEF.

At the request of the Government, this joint activity was first started in the Northeastern States of Paraiba, Rio Grande do Norte, Ceara and Piaui. In 1950, Dr. Martinez Sotomayor established the first UNICEF office in Brazil at Joao Pessoa, in the State of Paraiba. In September 1951, the office was transferred to Rio de Janeiro, to afford a closer contact with the Federal Authorities. Soon our joint activity expanded and was then carried out in 13 States, namely, Amazonas, Para, Maranhao, Piaui, Ceara, Rio Grande do Norte, Paraiba, Pernambuco, Alagoas, Sergipe, Bahia, Mato Grosso and Goias, plus the Federal Territories of Acre, Rondonia, Rio Branco, Amapa and Fernando de Noronha.

Following my arrival in Brazil, Mr. Heyward and Dr. Martinez Sotomayor spent considerable time discussing with the Federal Government the various requests for UNICEF assistance. Brazil, then having a very active Delegate to the Executive Board, Dr. Cleantho de Paiva Leite, who was fully familiar with the types of projects UNICEF was assisting in other parts of the world, a whole catalogue of requests had to be screened in order to ascertain what was within the means of both UNICEF and the Government.

Drought and feeding programme in Northeast

These discussions brought out that additional quantities of skim milk powder and vitamin capsules were urgently needed, since the Northeast was once again suffering from a serious drought, as was periodically the case and, unfortunately, continues to be. Milk distribution was already underway, but the quantities available were far from meeting requirements. The situation in drought-stricken States was such that in many localities mothers had to bring a bottle of water in exchange for a bottle of milk, water having become so scarce. These periodic droughts have been, and continue to be, greatly responsible for the massive migration of untrained workers to large urban areas, in particular industrial centres of Brazil, thereby creating new, very serious problems.

The periodic serious droughts in the Northeast represented "natural disasters," obliging thousands to leave their land and migrating to industrial centres or the Amazon area. During the fifties supplementary feeding through MCH Centres had time and again to be heavily expanded, so as to be able to meet urgent needs of children in the drought-stricken States.

The annual country reports and in particular the very detailed field reports, based on personal surveys in addition to Government and newspaper reports, might still be available at Headquarters. There exists in Brazil a "Departamento de Obras contra a Sêca" (a specific Department of the Federal Government for Projects to combat the droughts). So as to be able to get an immediate overall picture of the situation and to report to

Headquarters accordingly, said Department made one of its single-engined aircraft, capable of landing on any field, available to the UNICEF Representative whenever required.

I shall always remember as one of my most gratifying experiences (just as was later the case in connection with the Nigeria/Biafra conflict) how very quickly Headquarters acted and how time and again milk powder for emergency feeding was shipped from a port in the U.S.A. or Canada practically within hours. UNICEF was in fact always the first to effectively answer these calls for help.

Problems with breastfeeding

Friberg: It's very interesting that we are talking about the bottle, and about bottled milk in 1950, 1951, in Brazil. We are talking a lot about breast-feeding now, you know, and we have become somewhat hostile to the bottle, so I would like to know how you look at this problem in retrospect.

Lutz: In retrospect I can, but I emphasize that nothing can surpass the value of breast-feeding and that this had already then been fully recognized! Strangely enough, however, this was a real problem in the Northeast of Brazil, in the sense that most mothers could breast-feed for a very short period only, often less than one, and seldom more than three months. Several experts from WHO analysing that situation showed great astonishment and were at a loss to find an explanation. Often they simply asked: "Why cannot these mothers breast-feed when, in equally poor areas of Central America, they can for many months?" To my knowledge the reasons for this unusual deficiency have never been fully ascertained. Personally, I cannot help but wonder whether the periodic droughts over many generations, all along subjecting the entire population to most serious privations (hunger), could not be partly responsible for this incapacity of mothers to breast-feed over a normal period. This question arises, considering that the problem in the Northeast of Brazil existed many years before the question of excessive propaganda on the part of milk industries could have had an effect.

Rehydration units

As is generally known, the Northeastern States of Brazil - with a population of around 25 million in the fifties and now probably over 30 million - have for generations been and continue to periodically be suffering from serious droughts. Precarious sanitary conditions, in particular the lack of proper excreta disposal, lead to widespread infesting of drinking water, as soon as the first rains come. As a result of this situation hundreds of babies fall prey to dehydration and death usually occurs within a day or two unless immediate medical care in the form of rehydration can be provided. To cope with the serious problem special "Rehydration Units" were set up in hospitals of the respective State Capitals, foremost at Recife and
Fortaleza.

I remember, for instance, how following a long drought period in the fifties, so many babies were brought from the Interior of the State of Ceara to the hospital at Fortaleza in such a desperate condition that only a few survived. The statistics of Fortaleza for that year registered in fact more deaths of babies than births! With the expansion of UNICEF--assisted MCH services mothers became better informed and took their babies to the hospital without delay. Also, the rehydration units became more and more effective, Brazilian doctors having developed an unusual skill, so that an increasing number of babies could be saved.

Milk distribution programme

Adverse publicity. In the early days we had some difficulties, due to bad storage of a small quantity of milk powder, and in Recife there developed quite a serious press campaign against UNICEF, claiming we were distributing American milk powder "fit to be fed to pigs only." Although the storage problem was soon solved and the spoiled milk was withdrawn from distribution, the press campaign just went on, and I was told that the responsible journalists were hostile to the U.S. In these circumstances nothing could have been more effective than to be able to tell them that in Poland, from where I had just come, UNICEF had been assisting MCH and school-feeding programmes benefiting over one million children, and that the Polish Government had been anxious to continue these feeding programmes as long as possible with the same type of American milk. Expressing my regrets over the spoiled milk which, in fact, had caused some disturbances, telling the journalists how the storage problem had been solved, and speaking to them about Poland and UNICEF's activity in general allowed us to part as friends, and the press attacks ceased.

Friberg: This was, in fact, the visible proof that UNICEF was completely non-partisan and that its staff was exclusively interested in providing better health to children, independently of any political constraints.

Lutz: Saving a generation of children. In retrospect I would say that the feeding programme held highest priority throughout my stay in Brazil, and in drought-stricken States newspapers spoke of "UNICEF having saved a generation of their children". The number of beneficiaries, which at the outset was some 70,000 to 80,000 in five States, soon rose to over 600,000, thanks to the availability of surplus milk powder from the U.S.A. and Canada, which permitted the expansion of the feeding programme both area-wise, to thirteen States and five federal territories, as well as to new age groups.

Thus, UNICEF co-operated not only in meeting the needs of over 300,000 infants, pre-school children and mothers through MCH, but also co-operated with the Ministry of Education, strengthening the National Campaign of School Feeding by providing milk for some 300,000 children of primary school age.

Although UNICEF has not been able to reach more than 15 to 20 per cent of the needy children and mothers, and although difficulties in carrying out the programmes have been numerous, the results achieved were very encouraging and certainly well worth every dollar invested by UNICEF and the Brazilian Government, as well as the generous USA and Canadian donations of surplus milk powder.

Feeding programmes: the cutting edge. With regard to the school-feeding programme, the beneficial effects on children likewise resulted in an ever greater demand for milk. School attendance increased everywhere whenever a school snack was being served. Teachers kept stressing that children receiving milk become more attentive, learn better and lose their sad, apathetic look. Hence, milk distribution did not only cope with nutritional deficiencies but also had its beneficial long-term effects in the educational field. It was therefore not astonishing that in Brazil the distribution of milk powder laid the foundation and literally paved the way for all the subsequent UNICEF-assisted programmes! Going into so many details on the benefits of milk distribution which, in Brazil, was like a bait inducing mothers to go to MCH centres for orientation and inducing children to attend school, is last, but not least, also to counter-balance some of the too negative views expressed in recent years, in connection with the marketing of infant foods by multi-national companies. What was, unfortunately, no doubt true in some countries, may not necessarily have altogether been so in others.

I would say that in Brazil, the impact - both immediate and long range - of the feeding programmes was one of the most gratifying experiences. UNICEF was always first on the spot, and supplies coming from the USA and Canada seemed all along to reach destinations in the Northeast and also in the Amazon area much faster than shipments coming from Rio or other ports in the South of the country. This was particularly true in drought periods when UNICEF's speed and reliability greatly helped to strengthen the confidence and encouragement of government officials, in addition to meeting urgent needs. This positive effect continued to prevail over the years. Moreover, it assured that the Federal and State Governments lived up to their commitments, i.e., making their part of the funds available even during periods when practically all other budgetary allocations had to be cut back.

Reverting to the Northeast, where infant mortality reached 250 to 300 per thousand, the rate dropped impressively among

assisted children. Moreover, milk distribution through MCH centres and schools was reported to have a great impact throughout the country. Commercial sales increased everywhere, and industrialization of local fluid milk jumped from 7,000 tons to over 40,000 per year within eight years.

It was often stated by competent authorities that the beneficial effects of UNICEF-assisted milk distribution programmes have helped to accelerate the understanding of the nutritive value of milk. Supplementary feeding through MCH centres was carried out from the beginning of UNICEF's assistance and long before the school feeding programme became effective. Public health services, in particular maternal and child care, expanded more rapidly, attendance in child care posts grew steadily, more and more women came for pre-natal care and then brought their babies for check-ups - wherever milk was available. With a growing market throughout the country, both farmers and private enterprise became increasingly interested in further developing the milk-producing areas in Central and Southern Brazil. The breeding of higher-quality cattle was introduced, and the hygienic conditions on farms improved, since the assured outlet of the fluid milk produced afforded farmers a steady income, thereby contributing towards raising their living standard all around.

Mothers' clubs. The programme of "mothers' clubs" which, from the point of view of health education and community development, was of considerable importance, also owes its initiation and success primarily to the availability of milk powder.

By the time I left Brazil in 1964, over 400 such mothers' clubs existed throughout the UNICEF-assisted States and Territories. Each club had a membership of 25 to 30 pregnant women and young mothers, meeting once a week under the guidance of a health or social worker. Doctors participated, simple lectures were given on the many aspects of child care, in particular on the importance of breast-feeding, cleanliness, safe water, vaccination, etc. Moreover, handicrafts were taught, enabling mothers not only to improve the standards in their humble homes, but often giving them the possibility of earning some money through sewing and embroidering. Here and there, first successful attempts were made with regard to food conservation. Simple, illiterate women discovered many aptitudes through the attendance at mothers' clubs, becoming increasingly self-assured, and by and by actively participating in the leadership of clubs, thereby contributing towards the development of the community as a whole - all of which benefited children.

Logistic problems

Allow me to mention some of the difficulties: the size of Brazil, resulting in the necessity to ship supplies to each

State and Territory separately and to maintain 28 central warehouses, in what, allocation-wise, was referred to and thought of as just one country; the lack of trained staff and adequate warehousing; the difficulties of inland transport in the vast areas covered; the lack of water during drought periods and often also in schools; the insufficient number of vehicles to organize and supervise the programmes; the thousands of miles to be covered by national and international field observers, etc.

On my many trips to farthest corners of the assisted States and Territories my satisfaction was great in finding that, in spite of so many adverse factors, UNICEF supplies were reaching beneficiaries according to plan. At times I could, nevertheless, not help but feel that all of us, on the so-called "donating" side, are a bunch of jokers, when on the one side insisting - as indeed UNICEF should - that supplies reach the most needy in the poorest areas, while at the same time expecting that warehousing, distribution, and accounting records meet our high standards from the outset. This, in countries and/or areas still lacking trained staff on all levels. It was thus a further source of satisfaction and encouragement to find that the intensive "educational campaigns" on the part of the UNICEF Mission and Government officials had not been in vain, but had become effective within a short time.

Freiberg: This is what we perhaps nowadays call "project support communications", right?

Lutz: Yes, I think that project support in the form of training is all along terribly important, irrespective of the function of the person involved.

Uses of empty milk drums. People in the industrialized part of the world used to getting groceries, shirts, blouses or other garments back from the laundry or dry cleaner neatly packed in all sorts of first-class wrappings - only to land in a chute a few seconds later - would be astonished and deeply impressed by the ingenuity with which these mothers made use of every bit of material available.

Thus, the empty fibre milk drums did not only serve as containers of rice and beans, at times also, of soiled laundry in maternities and child care posts, or were in many instances lined with cement to become water containers; but at mothers' clubs these drums were frequently turned into baby cribs by cutting them in half, lengthwise. Plastic bags, too, were then in very high demand, and the plastic inner lining of the drums served multiple purposes, from waterproof sheeting to covering water jugs or other containers, to making aprons or raincoats for children, etc.

Learning Portuguese

Freiberg: But what did you do at the time, specifically, in order to help the population and the beneficiaries to understand the objectives of the programme?

Lutz: Allow me first to mention that UNICEF had taken a bit of a risk by asking me to join Mr. Heyward in Rio de Janeiro, since UNICEF's earlier written proposal to appoint me as Representative to Brazil had been turned down by the Government on grounds that I did not speak Portuguese. Mr. Pate's attempt for a change of mind, assuring that "learning Portuguese would be no problem for Gertrude", was of little or no avail, and it was only when, towards the end of his stay, Mr. Heyward took up the question anew that the answer was yes. So as to become rapidly familiar with the land and its people, and last but not least, in the light of Mr. Pate's assurance, how could I not but live up to his word? Fortunately, it was not too much of a problem, since French and Portuguese both have the same roots, and when it came to pronouncing words with a rather strong nasal sound, it amused me to find that my mother tongue (Bernese dialect) proved quite helpful.

Travel in Brazil

The second step was to move the office from Joao Pessoa to Rio de Janeiro for closer contact with the federal authorities. Then followed intensive travel for contacts with those responsible on the State level and also to get first-hand knowledge of living conditions in the backlands of the country. In Brazil, representing approximately half of Latin America in population and size, distances were great from South to North and East to West.

Freiberg: And that was before jet travel!

Lutz: Indeed it was! In the early fifties there was but one flight daily by "Constellation" from Rio de Janeiro to Recife, the rest of the airfleet being DC-3's. Thus, whenever I had to fly back from Fortaleza to Rio, for instance, it took the best part of a day, i.e., 12 to 14 hours, the plane landing at every State Capital on the way. On field trips these State Capitals were, however, only the starting points, since travel to the interior of UNICEF-assisted States had to be undertaken by jeep or station wagon. Field observation was all along of great importance, as it still is today, not only for UNICEF Representatives but also for those in charge of information - so as to get first-hand knowledge of local conditions and also on how the local people themselves see solutions to their problems. Such field visits always resulted in reciprocal confidence and encouragement.

Challenge of being UNICEF Representative

Freiberg: Tell me, what would you consider, overall, as the most interesting activity in connection with your assignment in Brazil, specifically? You were in Brazil thirteen years, a very long period for any Representative. They are changing much faster now.

Lutz: Over 13 years was, in fact, a long period. Yet, even so, I would find it difficult to call any given programme "the most interesting activity", since being UNICEF Representative involves a most challenging activity all around, belonging to the few who are privileged to get to know officials and the people of the country on all levels.

Brazil: both developed and developing

As you know, Brazil is a most interesting and fascinating country and, as already earlier mentioned, represents about half of South America in population and size (over eight million square kilometres). Because of the diversity of climate, we find in Brazil not only all the ailments common to people living in countries with a temperate climate, but likewise a great variety of tropical diseases, including yaws, leprosy, malaria, etc. Due to its enormous size, earlier lack of means of communication and diversity of climate, Brazil is very unevenly developed and consequently has to cope with an unusually wide range of problems. Some States in the Centre and South are highly industrialized, yet the greater portion of the country is still in the course of development. Many UN and other conferences are taking place with a view to finding solutions for the tremendous world-wide disequilibrium existing between "North" and "South". We have to remember that Brazil is faced with this very same problem within its own boundaries.

Health programmes

The Government and people of Brazil are fully aware that only a healthy youth can assure the continuation and acceleration of the country's development. Efforts were therefore geared towards eliminating the main causes of infant and child mortality - primarily malnutrition, unsafe water and bad sanitation, inadequate housing, misery and ignorance. Hand in hand with supporting the feeding programmes, UNICEF supplied various types of equipment for the maternity wards and child-care posts established throughout the assisted States. Then UNICEF participated in programmes of integrated health, covering all aspects of public health, including the provision of well-drilling rigs to ensure safe water, etc.

Misleading impression on visiting MCH centres

Visits to MCH centres in the Northeast, as well as photographs of mothers and babies attending these centres were at time

misleading, in the sense that these mothers, no matter how poor, took great pride in attending a centre in her Sunday best. In the beginning of my stay in Brazil I was sometimes also puzzled as to whether these mothers actually represented those in greatest need. Often I asked the one or other whether she would allow me to accompany her to her home, with the result that I was literally flabbergasted at how these poor women succeeded in keeping themselves so clean and neat when - as in Recife living in slums comparable to the world's worst.

Training

The expansion of MCH and integrated health services inevitably called for more trained personnel, and UNICEF co-operated by providing training equipment and stipends for midwives, child-care aids, nurse-auxiliaries and auxiliary social workers, as well as midwife kits for the girls who had successfully concluded the respective courses. About two thirds of the trainees came from small localities in the backlands and returned to these localities upon conclusion of the courses, the Government providing funds for employment in line with their training.

Milk drying plant

In an effort to assure the continuation of the feeding programmes, at least in part, UNICEF co-operated with the Ministry of Agriculture in the setting up of a milk-drying plant, at Pelotas, in the State of Rio Grande do Sul, by providing the equipment for receiving, pasteurizing, condensing and drying the milk. The Ministry of Agriculture provided the necessary funds for the construction of the building, the installation of water, electricity and the purchase of locally available equipment. The Ministry of Health, in turn, committed itself to purchase, over a period of ten years, the entire output of the milk drying plant for distribution to needy children.

High-protein food programme prematurely dropped

In Brazil a high-protein food destined primarily for children in pre-school age, had been developed at relatively low cost, based on soya beans and had been tested and found good acceptance. However, precisely when we were about to come to agreement with the Ministry of Health for a wide-scale distribution through MCH Centres and/or sales of the product, called FORTIFEX, something totally unexpected happened. Newspapers throughout the country reported that thousands of turkeys had died in the United Kingdom due to toxic Brazilian soya-bean-cake! Irrespective of the fact that Brazilian soya-beans of good quality were available and that the technical facilities and know-how to ensure a product fit for human consumption existed, we had to abandon the project since it would have been illusory to try to convince people of the value and safety of the new project.

Education

In the field of education, the training of primary school teachers was of considerable importance. Brazil, striving to allow each child to at least attend primary school as soon possible, was lacking teachers throughout the country. In some backward areas, many "teachers" had themselves attended four to five years of primary school only!

Reckoning it would take until the year 2000 to provide all primary schools with fully-trained teachers, the Ministry of Education decided to resort to short-term training, as did the Ministry of Health in connection with para-medical staff. Hence, girls who had attended one or two years of secondary school were selected and given an intensive one-year training course, for which UNICEF provided the training equipment and stipends. These UNICEF-assisted training centres were established at Inhumas and Morrinhos, in the State of Goias, and at Cuiaba, State of Mato Grosso. These "one-year-teachers" were assigned to rural schools, in which girls who had only four to five years of primary school functioned as "teachers." It was felt that this would respond to overcoming, at least in part, the problem of quality and quantity, the more since a network of supervision by fully trained educators and subsequent refresher courses for those who had attended a one-year teacher training course only, were to take place.

Financial aspects

At times some difficulties in meeting targets arose whenever additional budgetary provisions were needed, due to the already then skyrocketing inflation. As a result of galloping inflation, due to many factors such as the decrease in prices for Brazil's raw products, the huge sums paid for the warehousing of coffee, the tremendous deficits of its railways and merchant marine, the construction of the new Capital Brasilia, the serious strikes in 1963, too great a number of Government employees, the increasing social and political tension, etc., the value of the cruzeiro kept dropping and the earlier official rate of exchange no longer applied.

Government contributions to UNICEF. To illustrate the effects of the devastating inflation, suffice it to refer to the effects it had on the contribution of the Brazilian Government towards UNICEF's general resources, as described in the report. Headquarters' accounts will reflect that the first contribution received, in 1950, amounted to Cr. 1,700.000, representing an equivalent of some US\$ 90,000 at the then official rate of Cr. 18.82 per dollar.

It may be recalled that, over a period of years, the Government contributions increased steadily, both nominally and in actual value, reaching an average equivalent of between US\$ 500,000 -

US\$600,000 per year, thanks to the preferential rates granted to UNICEF for the payment of sea transport costs of UNICEF supplies shipped to Brazil (large quantities of milk powder, etc.). However, in mid-1961, President Janio Quadros abolished all preferential rates, except for the import of wheat and petrol.

Since that period, the cruzeiro amounts have continued to increase, yet, in actual value, UNICEF started to suffer losses, reaching the lowest ebb in 1964, when the Government's contribution of Cr. 170 million was exactly one hundred times that of 1950, yet in actual value represented only around US\$150,000 (optimistically).

In spite of this deplorable development, we nevertheless felt that the increase of the Government contribution from 50 million in 1963 to 170 million CR for 1964 and again for 1965, should be interpreted as a clear indication of the Government's desire to continue supporting our work as much as possible, and that as soon as conditions permit, UNICEF could count on a substantial adjustment, with a view to bringing the actual value of the contribution back to the level of the years preceding the Janio Quadros administration.

Support of programmes. Fortunately, the effects of the galloping inflation have not been too disastrous on UNICEF-assisted projects. However, the delays in the liberation of funds to match UNICEF's allocations inevitably did have some consequences, obliging us to reformulate part of the programmes, in particular MCH and sanitation, in order to bring them in line with the then financial reality.

Freiberg: Leaving Brazil. After Brazil I know you went to Turkey.

Lutz: Allow me first to say that I did not welcome the transfer to Turkey. Not because of Turkey, of course, but because I just did not want to leave Brazil for various reasons, a.o. the very constructive work and achievements, thanks to an excellent team at the office, as well as the many highly dedicated Brazilians in charge of UNICEF-assisted programmes, and my deep affection for the country and its people as a whole. Last, but not least too, however, because Brazil was still in a state of upheaval following the revolution of March 1964. Thus, I feared that a new Representative, at that very time, might become discouraged by the difficulties in rapidly finding his way around and knowing "who is who", whereas I had previous experience in facing up to political upheavals of one sort or another. This was one of the few occasions when I argued strongly with some of our friends at Headquarters, yet to no avail.

Turkey

Initially, I was to be transferred from Brazil to Teheran, but since Dr. Otto Lehner, then Representative in Iran, was for

health reasons not in a position to be moved to Africa, Mr. Pate simply wrote to me: "Well, Gertrude, you are now slated to go to Turkey."

And so I went. I am pleased to place on record that, although the Turks are not nearly as spontaneous as the Brazilians, I could not have been welcomed more warmly, first of all, by the colleagues, in particular Mr. Suat Cobanoglu, now an international staff member of UNICEF, and also by Government officials. In Turkey I was the only international staff member, all my colleagues being Turkish nationals, who literally outdid themselves to make me feel at home at once. I would also like to mention that I found in Ankara an unusually well-organized office, thanks to my predecessor, Mr. Genevière, transferred to Brazil.

While one should generally not try to compare countries, I could not help doing so, since I found that Brazil and Turkey had to cope with very much the same problems when it comes to MCH, public health services, education, etc.

Malaria

I was very astonished, however, to find that Turkey was faced with a serious malaria problem. After my years in the Middle East, I had expected that trachoma, for instance, would be very prevalent but somehow did not expect to also find malaria and leprosy.

In Turkey the most important programmes UNICEF assisted were the malaria eradication campaign and the national integrated health services in the still very backward Eastern provinces of the country - Erzurum, Kars, Agri, Van, Hakkâri, Bitlis, Mus, Bingol, Elôzig, Diyarbakir, Siirt, Mardin, Urfa, Gaziantep and Adana. The Provinces bordering Iran and Iraq have a very high percentage of Kurdish population, in widely scattered villages of often difficult access. I remember that I was among the first foreigners allowed to travel in that area, it having been until then a military zone, out of bounds to civilians.

Looking back, I often wonder how the malaria eradication campaign in Turkey, for which UNICEF supplied the vehicles, equipment and insecticides and which was then carried out by efficient teams under the guidance of a very capable Director, has finally developed, considering the growing resistance of the "biests" to the various formulae of insecticides.

Integrated health

As regards the setting up of integrated health services in Eastern Provinces, I would like to stress that the Ministry of Health did a real pioneer job. The same may be said for the young doctors, nurses and sanitarians working in those areas.

This was a completely new experience for Turkish doctors and para-medical staff, since it had until then been common practice for a doctor to work in those areas only whenever a punishment was due, and if so, in the capital of a Province only. In rural areas there existed no services whatsoever. To now find young doctors, nurses and health assistants working throughout the area was most encouraging indeed, and I can but hope that the Ministry of Education has meanwhile followed suit by establishing schools in some of the hundreds of villages still without them at the time of my stay in Turkey.

Vehicles

The integrated health centres, called "Ocaks", were responsible for taking care of many villages, sometimes as many as ten to twelve. It was therefore very important that UNICEF provided vehicles in addition to the medical equipment. However, the cars in Turkey gave me quite a number of headaches, since I found that about one fourth of the over 400 vehicles supplied by UNICEF, mostly Willy's station wagons - assembled at Istanbul - were not in running condition. Searching for the various reasons, I discovered a.o., that little or no maintenance instructions had been given to drivers. Thus, the manufacturer's instructions were simply handed to drivers in English, which is almost inconceivable, when considering that some drivers were not even in full command of reading Turkish.

We thus had to arrange for proper translations and, in addition, find ways and means of giving courses for drivers and mechanics. At the time I greatly appreciated UNICEF's flexibility in immediately agreeing to provide the necessary stipends. This was an important decision, considering the programmes at stake, especially the malaria eradication campaign. Also, other than in the village in which an "Ocak" was set up, doctors and health assistants could not carry out their mission whenever the vehicle did not run, and in cases like this it may well be said that the driver's function was equally, if not even more, important.

Female UNICEF representative in a Moslem country

It was somewhat strange that a woman should have to take in hand the vehicle problem when men are usually those keenly interested in mechanical and technical matters. However, this is irrelevant; something simply had to be done.

Speaking of a woman, it might amuse you to know that before I left Brazil, a number of people said to me: "What is UNICEF thinking of by sending a woman to a Moslem country?" Most anxious to stay on in Brazil, I naturally also used this as an argument with Headquarters. Well, it did not hold, and while in Turkey, I found that it was in fact an advantage to be a woman in a Moslem country. In Ankara and the more developed areas of

the country, officials and others were trying to prove to me how valuable they considered the work of women and how a steadily increasing number were holding responsible positions, etc. I found that some 12 per cent of the Turkish doctors were then (1965/66) women and also found women in many other high positions, including judge.

May I also give you another example: when moving into a furnished apartment, a young mother just came from the maternity with twins in her arms. Moreover, she already had a child about years old. It never occurred to me that she might have a function other than that of a charming wife and loving mother. Well, some five or six weeks later, I happened to see this young woman leave the house in an Air Force uniform and was then told that she was the one and only female jet combat pilot in the whole of Europe.

On the other hand, whenever I would travel to the Eastern Provinces and visit the rural areas thereof, the great advantage of being a woman was that I could go into every house and hut and into places where the words of Attaturk had not yet had their effect, and where many women still wore their veils. Contrasts were very great indeed, and being a woman proved in Turkey to be of dual advantage.

Women on UNICEF staff

Frieberg: Well, I'm very grateful you touched upon the subject of the role of women in UNICEF, and I think everyone would be very interested to know more about what it was to start in 1949, as a woman, not only in an executive position, but in a very visible position, in Poland, in Brazil, in Turkey. How to make a career in UNICEF as a woman? Now it is obviously a very normal situation, as it should be, and one shouldn't even ask what is the gender of a person. I think everybody has accepted that, but I know from experience that it has not always been that way, so I think your career has been a very spectacular career, also, in those terms.

Lutz: Well, Reinhard, it may perhaps look a bit spectacular, but in reality it was not so, at least as regards UNICEF's Representatives in Latin America. In the fifties and sixties, two other women were heading UNICEF offices, i.e., Alice Shaffer in Mexico and Cordelia Trimble, who then married Arthur Robinson, in Ecuador. As a somewhat amusing factor, I might add that Mr. Robert Davée, a Frenchman, was then Regional Director and said to be somewhat reluctant to working with women in leading positions. Yet, it so happened that precisely in his area, three of the four then-called "Chiefs of Mission" were women!

Freiberg So he overcame this, assumed, handicap?

Lutz: I believe that Robert Davée soon realized that all three women held him in very high regard, striving as he was to give their best for the welfare of children. After a few minor initial difficulties, there never arose any real problems, and reciprocal respect and affection soon held the floor. Once, however, Robert said to me: "Gertrude, I have difficulty in telling you off because you are a woman." When I said: "My dear Robert, just go ahead, please," he merely replied, "Well, just now I cannot think of anything." That concluded the matter.

Paris Office

Freiberg: I think after this great lesson of Turkey, and a woman Representative of UNICEF in Turkey, you came back to Europe. And this is where we met for the first time, when you were the Deputy Director for Europe, in Paris. And it would be very interesting to hear something about how you reacted after this long career outside Europe, in Brazil, then Turkey, which obviously was partly European, but not considered by everybody as European, but from a different world maybe than the kind of Europe you came from.

How did you react to this return to Europe, and then leading, obviously, to the end of your so-called "official" career? I know you were also at the time in charge of External Relations, and you were one of those who started some very important directions which we are still struggling with today, especially in 1983, when External Relations has become such an important feature of all UNICEF work in the industrialized countries, particularly European.

Lutz:: How did I react on my return to Europe? Well, much as I knew that a highly challenging mission was awaiting me at the European Office, I returned rather reluctantly, since I was fundamentally a field person, feeling closest to the people in poor areas of the countries I had been assigned to. For years and years I had been at the end where UNICEF was rendering its assistance. Paris, in turn, meant seeking increased contributions from Governments and supporting National Committees in their fund-raising campaigns, so as to ensure continuity and further expansion of UNICEF's field work.

May I nevertheless say that I felt at home in Paris very rapidly, thanks to Dr. Georges Sicault and the excellent spirit of the entire crew. Also, the positive response to UNICEF's concern and aims on the part of many European Governments and National Committees was a constant source of encouragement.

Galas

You, too, Reinhard, will no doubt warmly remember many of the very efficient and hard-working colleagues of the Paris Office. Then I was particularly pleased to find you there, and I am very

happy that we now have occasion to meet from time to time. I shall never forget how, shortly after my arrival in Paris, you threw yourself single-handedly into the first gala ever held in Europe with Danny Kaye, and how it became such a great success, serving as an example for other such galas to follow. I don't know what has meanwhile become of galas, times having changed.

Freiberg: I think we have overcome the gala stage. Now we have the "State of the World's Children" Report.

Lutz: To have overcome the gala stage is probably just as well, but in those days galas seemed to have their right of being and no doubt contributed their share towards bringing UNICEF to the attention of some groups who otherwise might never have become aware of UNICEF's aims.

National Committees

Reverting to National Committees, I soon became full of admiration for what these Committees throughout the European area accomplished, starting out with nothing, overcoming many obstacles and steadily ploughing their way to success. It has taken far too many years to give Committees due recognition for their valuable work, and I am very happy to know that this has meanwhile changed considerably, both Headquarters and the Field having become increasingly aware of the importance of National Committees.

The "field" in developing and developed countries

Freiberg: Well, wouldn't you say, Gertrude, that in UNICEF we have two field situations? We have our staff working in, what we refer to generally as "the field" - which means our Programme Officers, our Information Officers, PSC Officers, our Representatives - who have the direct contact in developing countries with those whom we call our beneficiaries, which means the children and mothers and families in the rural areas principally, or slums in the urban areas.

But on the other hand, on the other extreme of UNICEF's wide system, we have the National Committees and a whole army of volunteers working in the villages of Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan, Israel, etc., who do all the nitty-gritty work to support UNICEF in every community of the world. So I really think there is a very logical link between these two worlds, because both are the real believers in progress.

Importance of field exposure for External Relations

Lutz: One can, in fact, speak of two types of field workers: those in industrialized countries and those in underdeveloped areas. It is therefore terribly important that the two get together! I am

thinking of how very important it is that persons who have fund-raising functions - be they members of a Government or of National Committees - have field exposure, not only for their own information, but in particular so as to be able to convey the message directly from the beneficiary end to the source of contributions. The same applies, of course, also to UNICEF's Information Officers.

Important UNICEF personalities

Freiberg: Gertrude, I would be very interested to know how, in retrospect, you look at your reintegration into Europe, your exposure to this new group of staff you have already referred to, emphasizing the fact that all those representing UNICEF, or working for UNICEF or supporting UNICEF in the industrialized countries, should preferably have had very solid field exposure and experience.

But you met also, people who have been very important in the history of UNICEF, like Dr. Sicault and Professor Debré, and others. Maybe you want to say something about them and others you have met.

Lutz: I could include Dr. Rajchman and, of course, Mr. Pate! I could also refer to some of the Board Members who came to Poland in the early days, such as Mrs. Adelaide Sinclair. Then, to Dr. Hans Konzett, who is at the same time President of the Swiss National Committee.

Last, but not least, there would be a very long list of people from developing countries who in one way or another were linked to the history of UNICEF, starting with Heads of State, Ministers, Governors, Congressmen and Senators, as well as the Directors of UNICEF-assisted programmes, etc.

Sicault

However, I would like to say a few words about Dr. Sicault only. I think he is by far the best example of what I meant by saying that field exposure and experience are terribly important. As you know, Dr. Sicault had been Director of Public Health in Morocco prior to joining UNICEF, i.e., in an area where he was faced with all the problems of a developing country. He was thus a man with a very wide experience before assuming the planning post in New York and later, Director of the European Office. This background, together with his outstanding intellectual capacity and hard work, made him an excellent leader, respected by all.

Freiberg: Well, just to tell you that since Dr. Sicault disappeared from the scene, all Directors, with one very short interval, in the Office for Europe, have all been Directors coming with a very long field experience: Gordon Carter, Aida Gindy, and now our new Director, Uffe König.

Lutz:

I am indeed aware of the excellent work of Gordon Carter and Aida Gindy and am confident that with the growing importance of UNICEF's activities responsible positions are, world-wide, held by experienced staff members.

Blank Page

END