

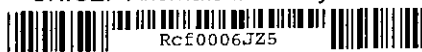
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Interview with Dr. Charles Egger

Conducted by  
John Charnow  
30 October and 2 November 1984



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## The UNICEF Supply function

Charnow: Charles, one of the things that we only touched on lightly in the previous interviews was the role of supplies in UNICEF. I wonder if you would talk a little bit about that as you see it.

Egger: Well, I think it would be good to look at it from the point of view of somebody who has been very closely related to the programme aspect.

### The early years

One also has to realize that the importance of supplies was different in different periods. When UNICEF started as an emergency aid agency, the main thing really was from the countries that had the surpluses to provide children's food, to provide the raw materials — leather, cotton, and wool for making shoes and clothes, to provide medicine, both for treatment as well as for the beginning of the immunization and vaccination campaign against tuberculosis, VD to start with, and then some other communicable diseases.

At that time it was absolutely essential to have supplies, and in fact, the main component in the content of programmes was supplies that were being made available largely from surpluses. The programming process at that time, consisted largely in allocations made several times a year amongst different countries for supplies following a rather schematic pattern of actual distribution on basis of size of child population. This was justified at that time. It did also establish a certain priority for supplies, as most of UNICEF resources were spent on the purchase of supplies and influenced the whole process of programmes. Supply Division was also headed by very capable and forceful personalities (S. Keeny in Europe, Bridgewater, etc.).

### Relationship to projects

Already in the fifties a certain change took place with the project approach, where the supplies had to be linked to a certain project, and to meet technical requirements which required some adaptation, and selection in order to serve the purpose. That began to establish the dialogue between the programme aspects and the supply aspects.

### Linking programming and supply

In many ways, one of the mistakes we made or one of the difficulties we experienced, was that there were two strong separate units namely, Supply and Programme and that there was no organic link between the two. And this has continuously, created problems both at the field level and at headquarters. Efforts were made to overcome this by more regular consultation. One came then to involve Supply people in the programme planning aspects. One tried to establish systems of looking not only at the end-use of supplies, but examine their adaptability, their usefulness in relation with the purpose of a particular project.

### Local procurement

Then came a next phase, when one began to look at the possibility to buy some of the supplies locally. There developed a heroic argument between Supply Division, which, for long a period, maintained that supplies had to be bought on the world market at competitive prices, mainly in the industrialized countries, and from there shipped to the developing countries. But over the years and decades, the idea of local procurement did make steady progress.

### Over-sophisticated supplies

Another aspect we discovered somewhat belatedly was the tendency to select supplies that were not only the most useful, but also the most advanced sometimes even too sophisticated. One raised questions if they were meeting a real need, were they adapted to the ability of the countries to utilize and maintain such supplies? Did we not sometimes bring in too-sophisticated supplies that they were not able to maintain nor even to replace? Did we not help to create a situation where large funds had to be made available to operate supplies and equipment? Think of the enormous investment UNICEF made in transport - for its mass campaigns, for the mobilization of health services, for supervisory purposes, sometimes for transporting in emergency situations.

We were reacting with some delay and not looking sufficiently ahead, to the needs of the countries not just in terms of the making supplies and equipment available, but in assessing their capability to maintain supplies and equipment, to replace it within the resources that were available and with the manpower, knowledge and technical experience that they had at their disposal. This was a long, process where due to a certain dichotomy between Supply and Programming, Programme people were at an earlier stage exposed to these demands in the field, but were not sufficiently able to translate them into concrete recommendations. This has improved however over the years.

### Pressures for over-sophistication: countries, professionals, agencies

- Charnow: Wasn't part of the over-sophistication of supplies due to the pressure of developing countries and the professionals in those countries and the specialized agency experts, who wanted only the best and didn't see the supplies in programme terms, and wasn't pressure put upon our field people to go along with that in order perhaps to accomplish some other goals?
- Egger: You are absolutely right. During a beginning period, there was the expectation of developing countries to create the type of services that would be equal to those that existed in Europe and America, or that their colonial masters had tried to introduce in these countries largely for own benefit. Some of the specialized agencies may undoubtedly have contributed to that. What I am criticizing is that UNICEF did not realize this early enough, and did utilize more common

sense and critical practical thought, looking it from a long-term point of view of the countries. We should have been far more reactive and resisted pressures to maintain a traditional approach of helping to copy the level of services in industrialized countries.

One of the difficulties that arose in this process in our relationship with the specialized agencies was that we were no longer prepared blindly to follow their technical recommendations. Often they were going for the best and most modern equipment, without thinking in terms of the actual use to which the equipment would be put in the countries, nor of the conditions in which that would be operated. There has been in this field also considerable improvement over the years.

If you recall, in the seventies that there were a series of crises due to the oil price shock, the cost of imports of industrial products and food, deteriorating terms of trade, forcing cutbacks in local budgets, etc. All these overall conditions affected the economic and social situation in many developing countries and forced most countries and international agencies including UNICEF to re-think the concept of co-operation to be pursued. In this period of stress we were obliged to give more critical attention to the whole idea of comprehensive programming.

This included the type of supplies that the countries needed most, could afford and were able to operate with the resources available including the level of education and training of the staff remaining in the countries. This led to a sounder approach and make the proposed utilization of supplies part of the whole process of programme preparation and planning. One needed to look at the cost of the investment both from UNICEF and from the country, see where spares were to come from how to replace equipment, examine alternative solutions that might be available and fit supplies to local traditions and customs as well as expectations.

#### The Copenhagen syndrome

There was also to some extent what I would call the Copenhagen syndrome or complex - the idea that all the supplies or most of the supplies had to be standardized, had to be procured centrally and brought together and assembled in various kits or types of sets to be shipped to developing countries. The basic idea was a sound one, but greater care should have been exercised in the selection of supplies and there should have been more decentralization in procurement and distribution.

It was undoubtedly useful for certain types of supplies to be procured world-wide to enter into long-term contracts, to assemble them in Copenhagen and from there in standardized form distributed all over the world. But for many other supplies, this proved to be too expensive and could have been handled differently, by allowing regional and country offices to make their own purchases and rely far more on what could be purchased locally and adapted to different requirements in the countries.

### Local production

Gradually we became interested in developing the the local production of serum and vaccines, of milk powder, and weaning foods (as you know, we at one time went into such sophisticated products as production of insecticides and antibiotics); or we were developing experimentally certain types of water supply pumps. All of this could have been explored earlier and more ambitiously. It was very important for the countries to expand the possibilities of local production, the capacity and the efficiency to produce material that was tailored to the job, and economic in cost and maintenance, and helped develop the experience of the staff concerned.

### Learning from mistakes

Much of this is really a question of development, where we learn from mistakes. Sometimes there were a number of harsh exchanges between staff, and difficulties were experienced in the field; but that is not abnormal and quite typical of UNICEF. It never came to a complete deadlock. Finally there were in most cases ways in which such difficulties had been overcome. A more appropriate type of feedback from the field on supplies and greater participation of supply people in the early stages of programme preparation developed.

### Transport

One particular aspect of supplies, really, is the whole aspect of transport. You remember, we have had a number of reviews of the use that UNICEF made in purchasing and utilizing transport. They included the setting of criteria for selection of transport, the question of maintenance in the countries, service, repairs, training, etc. Some of these reviews proved to be extremely useful and have contributed enormously, albeit somewhat belatedly — as often in life — to permit UNICEF to apply stricter and more efficient criteria for its support of transport systems, the type of transport purchased, the move from the more expensive type of transport (you remember the Land Rover, the four-wheel drive syndrome that was so marked after the war) to lighter types of transport, including bicycles and the purchase of horses and mules for some of the mountainous countries and the like.

### Insufficient dialogue between programming and supply

Our history of Supplies is undoubtedly an interesting one. My main criticism is that organizationally, in terms of management, there has not been a greater dialogue on co-operation and the realisation of the need to work out together and anticipate developments more clearly. Having been in charge of Programmes, I presume I share in this responsibility.

### Country levels of development and supplies

Supply and logistics is an important element, particularly in the least developed countries, where it has to be essentially part of a planned approach — Supplies being one of the elements together with building up of a service structure, the preparation of manpower, the considerations of cost, etc. It has to be part of an approach where the assistance provided, technical training, improved organization and management have all to find their place.

In many countries on a middle and higher level of development, the role of imported Supplies becomes less important. It could more be left to the countries, and UNICEF could then concentrate on the types of co-operation which were more suited to a more advanced level of development. Its resources could be better used to develop manpower, national institutions, improved budget practices and help to strengthen their own production capacity, systems of review and assessment, etc.

All these are probably some of the major aspects that come back to one's memory, based on the many years where we have been wrestling with the problem of bringing about a more effective collaboration between programme planning, supply and implementation. Looking back there has been a considerable improvement in such a joint operation.

### Acceleration of technology in developing countries

Charnow: Would you say also that the supply operation of UNICEF helped accelerate the bringing into developing countries western technologies but adapted to, as a result of our experience and local needs, to mass application? I think of milk conservation, vaccine and other local production plants, cold chains, simplified water pumps, special enriched children's foods, water etc.

Egger: Yes, this is certainly true in a general sense. We were at the beginning living under the false impression that what was good and suitable in more advanced countries was equally the type of material aid and equipment that the developing countries needed. This certainly proved to be a fallacy, and took some time to develop a more critical thinking in this respect. You remember the movement in Great Britain that "small is beautiful," and while some may have exaggerated this movement, there was some considerable truth in it. What was necessary were greater research and experimentation in the development of technologies suited to the level of countries and at the same time representing an advance and making further advances possible.

### Purchases from developing countries

I remember also, difficulties to get Supply Division to accept that the calling of tenders should not be limited to the industrialized countries and include others as well. Developing countries did



increasingly exercise pressure on UNICEF, as they felt they should have an equal opportunity to bid and make offers for supplies. They were beginning to produce both in good quality and at near competitive costs.

#### Use of restricted currencies

In many countries, contributions were made in national currencies which could not be transferred. UNICEF had to utilize these currencies for purchases in those countries. It is to the credit of the Supply Division that they were extraordinarily imaginative and able in many cases to get, if perhaps not always, the best, but to find worthwhile, second-best alternative. UNICEF had one of the best records among the various UN agencies in the utilization of various restricted contributions. There was a great difference with UNDP, for instance, which often sat on large amounts of national currencies they could not utilize. It was, of course, easier for UNICEF because we were buying supplies and equipment; there are certain limits up to which you can hire experts, consultants, arrange for seminars, and so forth.

#### Midwife kits: PHC forerunner

Charnow: Would you like to comment on one aspect of supply operations which at one time received a great deal of publicity and attention, namely the midwife kits?

Egger: Well, the midwife kit, could really be considered as one of the forerunners of basic health services and primary health care. You had in UNICEF pathfinders like Dr. Eloesser, Dr. Bordic, Dr. M. Sacks, who had been very strong advocates for the mobilization of auxiliary health workers, e.g. the local midwife and nurse, of the other people with very little training. They could only utilize simple equipment which was essential for their work, could be easily replaced and did not represent such a value as to be locked up in cupboards for inspection only.

It is to the credit of UNICEF that we did develop over the years different types of midwifery kits depending on the level of education and training of the user for midwifery purposes, for public health nursing, child welfare, or simple sanitary practices. These midwifery kits symbolized the connection between UNICEF and mothers and children, and they expressed UNICEF's interest to go down to the lowest field level and cover large population groups. This was not a question of hundreds, but more of thousands and tens of thousands of mothers and children to be reached through these auxiliary health people that had to be trained, fitted into a certain organization, supervised, guided and encouraged, etc.

This was a forerunner or one of the elements that contributed later to the formulation of the whole concept of primary health care, UNICEF can be rather proud of this.

It made a lot of sense to purchase and assemble such kits in a central warehouse. This contributed to the development of the Copenhagen warehouse.

#### Supply guidelists and programme policy

Charnow: I think it was during your period as head of the Programme Division that there began to be issued guide-lists for the use of various types of supplies. It is my impression that those guidelists, particularly in their introductions, moved toward the use of the supplies as an element in programming. Am I correct in this? And didn't the Programme Division have a hand in the development of these guidelists?

Egger: Yes, this is largely correct. In some cases the guidelists dealt at the beginning with the technical aspects, but increasingly became an important instrument in clarifying and interpreting a certain policy, so as to allow our colleagues in the field to apply these policies and help develop them further. In a sense they were programme planning papers which suggested lists of the type of supplies that were related to specific programme policies.

We had in this a good collaboration with the specialized agencies in the sense that at the beginning they suggested a capable person to draw up a certain list of supplies that related to a particular field of programme development, and then one worked at the further development of a given policy. Later this process took place simultaneously or was even reversed. These lists were then given names like the hurricanes in the Caribbean — there were names like the Eva, etc., and they became quite famous.

#### Evaluation of supply appropriateness

Evaluations offered good opportunities for revisions. We did well on some but in some others, I think we were somewhat late in looking at the use of the type of material that was being provided. We first had to make efforts to find out more exactly how certain supplies were utilized in the field. There were then discussions between the field people, who were not necessarily expert in types of supplies but had acquired strong views about deficiencies, and the supply people on the other hand, who were much more convinced that they had bought the best that could be found on the market. The final reconciliation between these two viewpoints required a considerable effort by both sides. Ultimately it could only be done if there was from the very beginning a close sharing in the process of development of supply selection between programme and supply leading to more organized and systematic reviews and evaluations of the use to which supplies and equipment were being subjected in the various countries

There have been periods when we were quite good at it and others where other events distracted our attention from it. It would be fair to say that these reviews could have been initiated earlier, pursued more persistently, and with greater attention to learning

from the actual experience in the countries themselves, that is from the people that had to use this aid. It had also to be fully integrated in a whole process of programme preparation. Even if certain supplies and equipment, etc. was cheap, effective, had been tried out in the field, there were at times reasons why people didn't like them or felt that they could not become familiar with them. We gave too late attention to the social and psychological aspects of development, how people reacted instinctively to the type of co-operation that was being suggested all the more as they often had little choice in the selection process not to speak of the whole preparation of programmes. This developed drastically in later years.

#### Non-supply assistance: training

##### Opposition in Board

Charnow: Charles, can we turn now from supplies to non-supply assistance? You will recall that for a number of years there was opposition on the Board, principally from the United States delegation, for us to move into providing help with local expenses. Finally that position was modified slowly in connection with training and then increasingly in terms of other things, including help to local institutions and local expertise. This is quite a story in UNICEF's history, in which you played such an important part, and I would be happy for you to comment a little bit about it.

Egger: Well, it seems now such a natural thing to do and had become so much accepted that one always has to go back in one's memory and realize that it was at one time a very difficult subject with certain Board members, not because they did not see the value of it, but they maintained a certain stereotyped approach to co-operation with developing countries, where local expenditure and local cost contribution was something that countries had to assume themselves. Over the years we learned that this is very often not the case, and can represent a real stumbling block.

This attitude was characteristic of the fifties, and was still marked in the sixties and early seventies, when we were already prepared to assist in efforts to train large numbers of auxiliary and paraprofessional people that would be required for basic services. This new approach represented an extraordinary effort for developing countries and we agreed to provide stipends and cover other local training costs; first for some of the teachers of para-professional cadres, supervisors, and also for the training of auxiliaries; and at the end, in short-term courses also for volunteers. The field was always much ahead of Headquarters and experimented successfully and at times perhaps too literally with these new policies. They made UNICEF far more progressive than most other UN organizations.

##### Evolution in education

It then also became an issue when we went into the field of education and the countries were confronted with huge expenditures for the re-training or refresher training of not sufficiently qualified

school teachers, which represent the great masses of teachers. In the budgets of Ministries of Education, eighty-five to ninety per cent of the total budget is practically committed to salaries and only small amounts for school material, buildings and maintenance, etc., Hardly anything is left in the budgets that would permit Education authorities to improve the knowledge of primary school teachers and introduce new curricula and methods of teaching. At a time when UNICEF was moving into education, this became a justified and practical way of spending funds if linked to real efforts of improving both content, quality and methods.

At the beginning we were not paying much attention to improve the type of supervision; to not only helping to develop knowledge of teaching subject but also developing the ability of the teacher to understand children, to know how to interpret a programme, to be a pedagogue. A lot of development in this field has been supported by UNICEF. We have encouraged many of the enterprising UNICEF representatives to help with experimentation, assist in trying out new experiments, to interpret Board policy in a liberal way. We were convinced that this was one of the necessary elements in the building up national manpower in education.

Of course, we went through an entire evolutionary cycle. At the beginning we were too correct in accepting the use of experts from UNESCO and the formulation of somewhat traditional teacher-training programmes. We then started to look more carefully into the context and related it to a country situation. We became more critical and raised questions. We felt the need to examine not the need for training as such, but also its content and impact on both children and parents. We were concerned what opportunities existed for children to go on to the next cycle or what happened to them after leaving school.

So again, one can say that UNICEF has moved with initiative, but we could have gone forward more quickly, become more independent, critical, and more ready to share risks with countries interested in innovation. This at times became a point of friction with the specialized agency; they could not accept that we had begun to accumulate our own experience of a more practical nature, and guided by a searching sense of pragmatism and continuing concern for quality, methods of training, and appropriateness for the advancement of children after schooling. We were ultimately interested in development of the child's faculties, and not just making robots out of children.

#### Building national capacity

##### Local expertise

Then we branched out to encompass other local cost elements beyond the support of training. We ventured into spending local funds to mobilize national expertise, both through individual experts and by

contracting institutions — not only for the technical support in specialized fields, but also in terms of management and organization. These collaborative arrangements had also a beneficial effect on the whole institution.

The development of the planning aspects for children's services contributed to another dimension. UNICEF, the children's agency became concerned with the promotion of ideas and policies, helped in the process of planning and with the more detailed preparation of programmes, and helped to lay the groundwork for later reviews.

### Studies

As a corollary to it, a small percentage of support to local expenditure went into encouraging the countries to undertake studies on problems of children. At the beginning, we reached out to famous institutions to ask in a very general way for studies. Later we learned that we needed to be more sophisticated and spell out clearly the objectives, and sit down and help to prepare workplans, how much would the country benefit from these studies, how did it essentially relate to issues, what ultimate use would the country make with the result of these studies. In some cases, thousands of dollars were spent in studies, but were not necessarily of direct interest to governments, and therefore also much less to UNICEF.

The positive aspect remains that we tried to make the best efforts to develop capacity in the countries themselves, and to encourage studies that might go beyond the more immediate objective use that the government and UNICEF could make of them, but could really add to the knowledge, technical and administrative understanding etc. of institutions and individuals that had been concerned with them.

### Encouraging innovation

These are some of the types of non-supply assistance which have become very much part of the whole approach of co-operation that UNICEF can offer. This is another major way in which UNICEF can contribute to development of the countries, to help them learn and apply certain experience for approaches of their own. What needed to be done was to establish a partnership and move in the direction at the beginning of acquiring better knowledge of children's problems in different situations, and utilize the information gained for better planning. UNICEF was ready to help them with experimentation, and the risk-sharing that goes with it. This could first be worked out on a larger basis, so as to learn about problems involved in larger application. It also established a pattern to go outside of established channels, link up with research institutions, collaborate with voluntary agencies, groups or institutions that were not normally part of the fabric of government.

UNICEF has always tried to be a pace-setter, a facilitator which was able, through flexible systems of financing, to support activities outside of established channels, bring people together with some financial support to concentrate on specific problems, trying out new trails, learning from experiences carried out elsewhere, provide a link between government activities and other private or autonomous sectors. This was certainly a feature of UNICEF activities in the countries that has continued until today.

#### UNICEF TCDC

Charnow: I think it was also during the period you were head of the Programme Division that we used non-supply assistance for exchange of experience, through what you would call our version of TCDC. Was that very useful; did we do much of that?

Egger: I remember when UNDP promoted the idea of TCDC with a lot of drama. We looked into it and realised we had been doing it for years, but did not call it by this name. UNICEF was one of the first agencies to try to develop a system of bringing different experiences from various countries together by reaching out to the people that were directly concerned with new experiences. We were not so much interested in the high-level government officials within whose department particular experiences were being conducted, but with the staff directly concerned with them, bring them together and help to organize a review of their own experiences and the lessons to be drawn from them.

UNICEF can say with a certain pride that in its own fields of concern it had applied the principles of TCDC quite determinedly, at less cost than the UN and UNDP, and without the somewhat cumbersome machinery developed by the UN and UNDP. In several encounters with UN colleagues we explained to them our system and the pursuit of simpler, practical methods, largely thanks to leaving a degree of discretion to our representatives in the field, supported by their respective regional offices, so as to pool experiences in different countries and concentrate on bringing these lessons out in a form they could be utilized by others as well.

#### Laxness in providing local costs

Charnow: The Board members who had reservations on local costs finally came along with our argument that local budgetary practices often made them hard to get even though they were strategic for the purposes of the project. But they didn't feel that we should continue providing them indefinitely, in effect subsidizing the budgets with an item which after a period should be a required part of the Ministry's budgets. In practice however the Board did not monitor this too much. Did we become too lax and continued rather indefinitely when we shouldn't have?

Egger: Yes, I must say that experience has proven that such a danger existed. Although we introduced all safeguards and indicated that we would be rather cautious about regular renewals, in fact, we were not sufficiently strict and persistent. There are, of course, different

situations that have to be met individually. In some of the really poor countries, the policy to contribute over a longer period to provide an important local cost element was justified. In many cases we did agree on a fairly long-term support of these costs. However, there was a danger that this local cost support became repetitious, and did not add much in terms of content, future orientation, improved methods, etc., and therefore did not do justice to the proper role UNICEF had set itself.

Looking back, I am struck how many times we came across a situation where, for reasons of convenience, we just continued as the funds were available. It is easier and seems to look good so you continue, you add a little bit of an evaluation, you make certain improvements and obtain commitments that governments cannot keep.

We should undoubtedly have been far stricter in imposing conditions in this early phase. Due to the encouragement and criticism of Board Members as well as members of our secretariat, we began to apply stricter criterias and became tougher with certain governments. Looking back, I think we should have taken the initiative in developing a more differentiated policy, and have it adopted by the Board. This would have given us greater backing in our negotiations with governments.

#### NGOs

Charnow: Well, Charles, can we turn now to another subject, UNICEF and NGOs, particularly their relationships and programmes in the field. The UNICEF literature about NGOs, for which I was largely responsible for a long period of time, talks about all the great values of co-operation with NGOs in the field, extending the reach of UNICEF, being innovative and flexible and so on. Very little is said about the problems and reservations that many of field people have had about working with NGOs.

#### Evolution of UNICEF attitudes

Egger: Well, it is an interesting field. First we looked upon NGOs only as allies to spread the ideas about UNICEF's work, or later to disseminate basic information on basic problems of children. We also expected them to help us in fundraising or the sale of greeting cards. Eventually, we expected some to adopt UNICEF projects. This was, to some extent, in line with the nature and goals of certain of the non-operational NGOs as we saw them in the industrialized countries.

Then we came to realize more that there were many NGOs working in the developing countries, themselves without international affiliations. NGOs who would not even know what the term NGO was. They were part of the national fabric; and often concerned with fields of direct interest to UNICEF in original ways and with far closer relations to the communities they were serving than government services.

### Africa

I was quite surprised when I learned about work of the various church missions in East Africa and West Africa. In some countries, a variety of missionary church groups had the major responsibility for health and education and not the Government; but many had their own views and policies, systems which were not always in line with UNICEF's objectives. They were often somewhat conservative and more inclined to medical work than public health. Often they were the only social services that assisted in any avenue.

### India

When I was in India and saw the multitude of local efforts in difficult and emergency situations, to provide assistance and education to the poor - all efforts that many spiritual and sectarian leaders like Gandhi, have inspired, I was struck that UNICEF had very little relationship with them. In the first place, the Government was not terribly keen to see international funds utilized in support of these voluntary activities. This attitude changed as under the influences of emergency tragic situations, e.g. the influx of refugees from Bangladesh, in the aftermath of the war with Pakistan; various famine situations that India went through; the problems in the peri-urban and shanty towns of the big cities like Calcutta, Bombay, etc. One came to realize that local voluntary agencies were an asset and could undertake any useful work. It was a question of coming to some understanding with them as to the type of activity that could be supported. One could learn a great deal from their experiences and in many areas they had initiated new pilot experiences. The Indian Government, although not wholeheartedly, did concede that we could enter into some arrangements with them and make it possible for NGOs to play a specific role in national programmes.

### Development of partnership

Certainly these experiences and others that I have observed in Latin America made me realize that we needed to face this problem differently, and look to NGOs, international and national, as real partners in our work at the country level. It was not so much a question of providing some support to them, but to learn from their experience in an agreed and organized way. They usually were very a committed people, working in small areas. They were not encumbered by a series of strict rules and regulations and inevitably could develop a closer contact with segments of the population. Through a collaborative arrangement one would assign certain tasks to them, and by their distinctly different and more grass root-oriented approach and learn from their own experiences.

### Effect of Manila Board Session

I must also mention here the emphasis of the Board session in 1977, in Manila in the special meeting on Asia devoting special attention to the work of NGOs in both peri-urban and difficult rural areas of which neither UNICEF staff or the governments attending the meeting, had much realization of. It was a major breakthrough as it revealed the potentiality of NGOs in dealing with unusual problems in an original way.



All of us helped to develop a new policy of collaboration with NGOs, which the Board subscribed to. Up to that time, it had very much depended on the interest and understanding of the individual UNICEF representative. This helped a lot to bring about a change that could be pursued by UNICEF and accepted by Governments. This did not apply to all NGOs and one had to select those that were prepared to accept some basic criteria that had to be accepted by all concerned, UNICEF, the Governments and the NGOs, of course.

This also encouraged collaboration in emergency situations such as drought/floods in India, earthquakes in Latin America, or the man-made emergencies in Nigeria, Lebanon, Kampuchea and so forth.

#### Slowness in coming

Looking back, I am surprised that we did not realize these opportunities earlier, and learn to work with them as partners in the countries. We should also have tried earlier to formulate policies that would have established some basic criteria to make it possible to support and encourage innovative NGOs where governments were agreeable to this type of collaboration. In some countries the Government policies would not have permitted it; in other countries it may have taken a long time to prepare the scene for it. But UNICEF should have taken the initiative at an earlier stage to bring about a constructive relationship with NGOs.

In fairness, many of our colleagues at the field, country, or area level, were quite aware of that importance and have done on an individual basis what came about as an official policy only at a later stage. There was perhaps a lack of sharing these experiences at the beginning.

You, Jack, wanted us to work with the national branches of the international NGOs. We from the field came to realize that the national branches were often rather weak figureheads or belonged to more conservative groups such as Red Cross or Child Welfare Societies. We realized that there were more and more different voluntary agencies we could enter into constructive working agreements with if we knew the strength of the different partners.

#### Selectivity

Charnow: I think the key to partnership as you have said, is one of selectivity. I did not emphasize that enough, underestimating the difficulties of turning some of them around from other interests and patterns of work to really collaborate with us. I know a lot of our field people were irritated because a number of NGOs that they came across were those who wanted a jeep or a refrigerator or something like that and thought of UNICEF only as a means for getting these additional things without being at all concerned about goals that we

could ~~bring~~ together with the Government. But I also think that in some cases our people didn't make the effort to dialogue with the NGOs along these lines, sometimes because they had other work pressures and sometimes through lack of sympathy or misreading of UNICEF policy "UNICEF works only with governments".

Basically however, I think you are right. The delay was really a reflection of our own development and maturity in our work at the field level. Should we have achieved this much earlier?

Egger: It is easy to say post factum what we should have done. But Headquarters was, with you as an exception, not necessarily keen in developing a wider relationship with NGOs. So it was left to the personality of the field people if they wanted to enter into a real collaboration with NGOs. I only realised the importance when I was travelling in the field, in Africa, in India or Latin America. This helped me to gain a different perspective.

#### Field experimentation as a basis for policy

Rather than ask Headquarters to agree to formulate a policy on the basis of limited experiences, our practice was to try something in the field. If it works we have gained experiences and could discuss it with Headquarters on the basis of documentation assembled. Often, we accumulated experience and had to see if we were on the right track and could see this as a way to tackle a problem on a broader basis.

#### Changes in international NGOs

The IYC, of course, also was a benchmark in terms of the collaboration with NGOs. Our collaboration in Lebanon, in Viet Nam, in Kampuchea has also been very important as well as in Africa where the 1981 drought situation brought us into a quite different relationship with NGOs.

In the meanwhile, some developments had taken place in some of the international NGOs. They had developed a real field experience and capability which in the fifties and the sixties did not exist in the same way. This was quite visible from the sixties and seventies on. There we came to develop a meaningful collaboration in the sense of utilizing the NGOs, in supporting them, in sharing the work with them, in exchanging information. An effective collaboration was established, e.g. with the Oxfam group working in Kampuchea. The various national branches of Save the Children in the U.K., the U.S. and Scandinavian ones were of great help in India, Bangladesh. They had in 1965-66, joined the forces in and Action group, to help the Government not only in overcoming the more immediate aspects of the drought but also the longer-term problems of food production and utilization as part of a redevelopment effort.

#### Future perspectives

Some international NGOs have really developed an expertise and a proficiency in certain fields which exceeds ours. A similar though

intricate situation developed in Kampuchea. We have come to agree in dividing up the work and letting them do certain things for which they were better qualified, with perhaps some financial help. We would concentrate on other aspects that we were more capable of doing. This seems to be the right approach: to recognize their competence, their value, and efficiency. UNICEF used to be a sort of man of all trades in the past. There is a period of much greater differentiation between the various agencies. We have to recognize what is our strength and what we better leave to others, while agreeing together to pursue a common objective while sharing joint responsibilities and finding a basis of close collaboration with governments. This is what has now gradually developed.

The whole relationship with NGOs has been an interesting coalition process and I hope that this will continue to be appreciated, that UNICEF must be ready to recognize that partnership means respect, accepting division of tasks and joining in a common effort.

#### Collaboration with Red Cross

Charnow: Let me ask you about our relationship with The League of Red Cross Societies and the International Red Cross.

Egger: Basically it is the same relationship as with other NGOs but there are some special factors in the light of the Red Cross committee. You have a number of examples. Going back to Nigeria there developed a clear collaboration, which really made UNICEF, and ICRC the major partners in Nigeria, and a number of private groups. It was not without difficulties as it had been one of the first examples of a joint undertaking when the Red Cross still led a rather conservative concept of their role. A similar though intricate situation developed in Kampuchea. There the concept of the joint cooperation emerged, where both agencies had agreed to a common programme and almost common command structures, they worked very closely together during the first periods. A different coordination developed in Lebanon during the various critical periods of the civil war, not only with the International Red Cross but also many other agencies.

The ICRC is very much concerned in maintaining its independence; it has its own very clearly formulated mandate, it draws its strength from the principle that it has a humanitarian task to fulfill under the mandate of the Red Cross Conventions. It has the right and the duty to take initiatives and approach governments in order to carry out its humanitarian obligations. In some of the conflicts the UN has become a party, or was looked upon to be a party which created problems. The ICRC has shied away from any too great involvement with UN agencies with UNICEF was an exception in special cases - an exception that has been criticised inside the ICRC quite vehemently. In the past the ICRC intervened in crisis situations only for a limited emergency period. Principally it has a more long-term task in terms of the protection of prisoners of war, civilian detainees and to political prisoners trying to maintain and defend the system of various Red Cross conventions for the protection of the wounded and civilians in situations of armed conflict.

The collaboration with the League of Red Cross Societies is of a different nature. The League of Red Cross Societies is an association of National Red Cross Societies concerned more with long-term civilian tasks in their home countries. In many countries we have a good collaboration with the national Red Cross Societies. The League is able to inform their national Red Cross Societies of UNICEF policies, along which collaboration can be developed. Mr. Grant is very interested in the League of Red Cross Societies because it gives him, through their channel, an opportunity to communicate and disseminate UNICEF's ideas about the child survival and development revolution to all their national branches.

#### Emergencies

Charnow: Charles, you have been very much involved in UNICEF's activities in emergencies. I wonder if you would like to talk a little bit about that.

Egger: Well, thank you very much. I realize that a lot has and will be written about the emergencies, and I prefer to confine myself to some overall aspects as I have seen them over the years.

#### Learning from experience

One question immediately comes up, and has been the subject of much discussion. How much have we learned from each of the emergencies, and how much have we been able to apply the lessons that we experienced in a great variety of emergencies in which UNICEF has become involved in different ways? My own feeling is that we have been somewhat slow at the beginning in making a systematic effort to evaluate and examine the role that we have played, to learn from the positive and other aspects of how UNICEF organized itself and coped with different emergencies. However, one can say that somehow from each of the major emergency operations, something has been learned and has been applied. In a more pragmatic way, staff that were involved in certain emergencies did remember situations in which they found themselves, and tried to improve upon it during the next occasion.

We could probably have been more systematic. We could have recorded the experiences more appropriately. At an earlier stage we could have developed certain guidelines that could have been helpful. This was however done later, and it is rather typical of UNICEF in its empirical, flexible, but gradually reacting nature, that it has been able to cope with emergencies and make efforts to learn from these special situations.

### Phases of aid

What are some of these broader learning pieces? First of all, we have come to realize that we have to distinguish between three phases: 1) the phase of real immediate need, situations of life or death where one has to deal with basic essentials; 2) the next phase where certain efforts to deal with are still required to meet immediate needs but already geared toward a phase of rehabilitation - to try to rehabilitate services, rebuild institutions, etc, to allow a more orderly process of the post-emergency effort; and then 3) gradually going over to a longer-term span, but making some endeavours to build from lessons acquired earlier plus into a development effort. This is particularly relevant when we are dealing with natural catastrophes due to drought, floods, advances of the desert, etc.

The Executive Board has increasingly put emphasis on UNICEF concerning itself with the more second phase following a more immediate disaster situation. In a more selective way, UNICEF can also concentrate on the first phase but prepare itself for the second phase, when public interest is waning, where other emergencies and political factors have already drawn away the attention of governments and the public, where you have to go more seriously into a first planning-programming effort. The second phase, therefore, should be the one where UNICEF should give primary attention.

### Moving rapidly: other agencies

In an earlier period, we have learned that UNICEF was one of the few agencies, perhaps with the International Red Cross institutions, later also with the World Food Programme, WHO, and some private agencies that could move rapidly, both in raising funds, translating this into needed relief supplies, have them shipped rapidly, and assure their necessary distribution.

While this situation was typical for the 50s and early 60s, it did change considerably with the time. There are now many other agencies that have come up, who have acquired specific experience and often real capacity in certain clearly identified fields. UNICEF is no longer the only emergency relief agency. It took UNICEF some time to realize that, and to develop a more selective approach. It also required to enter into co-operative arrangements with other agencies, both international and private.

UN system: The UN system, as a whole, is still handicapped by its mandate, which is long-term development orientated. The World Food Programme has certainly become a powerful instrument in the field of food supply assistance, with WHO in medical aid, the UNHCR where refugees are concerned all play an important role. In major emergencies the UN has set up special co-ordinating machinery through the designation of special representatives. The UNDRO was created as a coordinating document in the UN but has not been able to play an effective role in the major emergencies that have occurred in the last ten years.

Bilateral aid: During the 70s, a number of the bilateral aid agencies have developed specialized emergency services. The Swedes have done that, so have the Federal Republic of Germany, the U.K., and in some ways, the Swiss. A number of highly specialized agencies have developed an ability to move in rapidly with sophisticated equipment, large transport, selected staff, etc; they are far more geared to contribute aid during an immediate phase, rather than a phase of rehabilitation. It is of value for UNICEF to maintain contact with these bilateral emergency services; through UNICEF resident missions UNICEF has considerable knowledge of the local situation.

Voluntary agencies: The same applies equally to many of the voluntary agencies. Some of them have really developed their own capacity, in terms of fund raising, special training of their staff, rapidity in movement. There are many that could be mentioned in this respect, and have made a very significant contribution to the emergency function thanks to the dedication of their teams that went out in the field, their ability to concentrate on very specific fields, their natural concern to work with a local partner, the support of their constituencies, lack of bureaucratic procedure etc.

Task for UNICEF: It is now, therefore, a very different ballgame. One has to conclude that UNICEF must also develop its own special response to emergencies and concentrate on what UNICEF is probably best at. We'll come back to that.

#### Non-political UNICEF position

One extremely important feature which I've touched upon on earlier occasions is that UNICEF must retain its non-political approach, both in interpreting its mandate as a humanitarian and non-discriminatory organization, and always show concern wherever children are at risk, irrespective of divisions of political and military frontiers, differences of creed, status, political belief, etc. UNICEF, to a very large extent, has been able to maintain its policy, and demonstrated it in many critical situations - e.g. Nigeria/Biafra, in the Middle East, with Lebanon, Syria/Israel at loggerheads, with Indo-China side Viet Nam, Kampuchea, Thailand in deep-seated conflict, in the Gulf war between Iran and Iraq, etc.

Problems: This has not always earned UNICEF praise, there are divisions between the Western world and Socialist countries, different viewpoints between developed and the developing countries, increasingly hardening attitudes where often Western concepts of tolerance, of rules applicable in conflicts, of the Hague convention, the International Red Cross Conventions. These are not the legal instruments or moral principles that many countries under the influence of religious currents are ready to follow as a guide in their policies. This certainly also creates difficulties for UNICEF. I hope all the same that UNICEF will maintain its position in difficult situations - in Ethiopia where there are front lines, in

that country as well as with other countries. Even if we were to suffer from a momentary setback in our popularity with one group, even endanger to a certain extent our fundraising appeal, we should never compromise on principle, in Afghanistan, Angola and so forth.

#### Developing operational ability

Another element that is entirely to the credit of UNICEF is its willingness and ability to improve its operational ability. It started by moving the required type of supplies more quickly, of providing medical relief through teams, protecting children against the cold, taking an increasing interest in the problem of nutritional deficiencies, malnutrition, include providing appropriate sources of energy in emergency situations, helping with communications, etc. UNICEF did move further and developed an ability to look not only as to what was available in the UNICEF warehouse, but find out what could be mobilized and acquired in the country.

Purchase of local resources: And a very big step which was not without internal qualms with our friends in the Supply Division was to make much wider use of local resources, and spend money in the countries themselves. This is now very much an accepted policy.

The present emergency operation in Africa, e.g. has shown that UNICEF is willing to be very flexible, and to provide what is most needed in help a local situation, such as purchasing and moving foods from one area to another, or providing some cash to needy families to buy the food, by providing transport and logistics, many on a wide basis etc. So there is a far greater adaptation of principle to allow flexibility, to look at the needs in the first place, to make use as much as possible of local resources in terms of funds, of knowledge in their own country to provide subsidies for staff, services, transport, to modernize its communication links, etc. All of this represents a very big step forward.

Organizing local activities: In many earlier phases, we provided emergency supplies and equipment, and had the illusion that people stricken by a catastrophe would be ready to make every effort to deal with the situation and have the ability, emotionally and physically, to organize the relief work themselves. This, of course, is only true to a certain extent. We had to take a far greater interest in cooperating in the actual organization of relief and rehabilitation activities in certain situations where normal government services had been so weakened or were nonexistent.

It is a credit to UNICEF field staff that they, in the light of real tragic emergency situations, rolled up their sleeves, moved on and helped as much as possible. It came also to a point where this had to be organized on a much wider scale. In agreement with the governments concerned UNICEF had to assume operational responsibility to help maintain services, go into the construction of building for

dispensaries, hospitals, establishing supply and logistics systems, organize child-feeding schemes of the most vulnerable groups. This is all really to the credit of UNICEF, and shows an evolutionary process which is continuing.

#### Staffing and administrative organization

It also required that one had to find the right people within UNICEF's organization, and then not limit it to UNICEF staff. One had to search for people that were capable, in operational terms, had a knowledge of the country, had the right attitude and commitment, could absorb and brief and be sent to stricken areas, and help build up an organization that could deal more with relief activities, both more immediate and longterm.

Relation to regular tasks: For some of the major emergency situations, UNICEF had to create a special units and set up appropriate co-ordinating mechanisms at both headquarters and regional offices, develop liaison offices in Geneva or the geographical region where a catastrophe had occurred. UNICEF borrowed to some extent, staff from established field offices without infringing much on the regular work that was going on. It was a special organization that was able to deal with a particularly difficult situation, without bringing the rest of the organization in that region to a full stop. This did not always go without some degree of envy or criticism. In military terms, whenever you have a special task force which gets the attention of headquarters, has larger means, is given priority in resources and staff allocations, etc., the regular units don't necessarily like it. The task that UNICEF addressed itself to, or was drawn into, demanded such special organization. I think this has been a credit to UNICEF. We had to do it in Nigeria; we were right to do it in Viet Nam and then later in Kampuchea; we have done it for the Lebanon/Syria/Israel emergency, and also at times in Latin America; and now with regard to the huge problems that are being faced in Africa, and that is certainly where UNICEF has put to use the lessons that it has learned.

Finding right people: I also think it is a very important element to find people who are capable due to their background, personality, experience, knowledge of the areas, to draw them into responsibilities in the field or to coordinate work at headquarters.

Collaboration with other agencies: Then as I mentioned earlier, the collaboration with other agencies always requires a lot of contacts, changes, participating, co-ordinating mechanisms, knowing how to make distinctions between what is absolutely necessary and what you just do in order to keep the system satisfied in terms of information. Co-ordination can be so developed that it almost brings an operation to a halt; co-ordination can make a useful contribution if really there is a clear objective that there are tasks that have been carefully partitioned out, and easy and quick systems of exchanging information, adapting oneself to the tasks that each organization has absorbed.



There I think UNICEF has done, on the whole, quite well. We have always been ready to participate in a UN effort without waiting for the UN to take the initiative and tell us what we ought to do. Often we have been, within the UN set-up, the moving force. I think this will always be to the credit of UNICEF.

#### Board role

We have had the advantage of an Executive Board that gave support to this approach and allowed the Executive Director, a free hand such as the ability to raise funds when confronted with an emergency situation without having to get back approval from the Board first. The Board has followed emergencies with a great deal of interest; but at the same time has quite rightly raised a warning finger, or said, let's now look at the situation as a whole, let us examine if we are on the right track and have a clear understanding of our role for itself. They have shown some concern with whether the role that UNICEF has carved out or has been led to assume, in an emergency situation is the one that they considered to be in the best long term interests of UNICEF.

#### Fundraising for emergencies

One of the great assets of UNICEF was its ability to raise funds both from governments and the public - not necessarily because UNICEF had originally been an emergency agency. But it is a more a question of its credibility, the organization was capable not only to launch an appeal, but to pursue it through hard negotiating. This requires a lot of approaches, supporting documentation. Also UNICEF had the advantage of dealing with children, and was therefore from the beginning in a more favourable situation. It could point out that it was a humanitarian agency, that it concerned itself with children and mothers wherever they were, and therefore, had a common platform that was not easy to attack. UNICEF also had the reputation of being able to put quickly to use good funds received for emergencies.

Labouisse: Under various directors different approaches to fund raising were pursued. With Mr. Labouisse, when appeals were made, he left it to those concerned with fund raising to go through the motions of negotiating and discussing with governments, allowing field staff to visit Government, prepare suitable documentation also. He was one of the first ones to insist that you had to have a clear objective and a clear assessment of the situation if you wanted to appeal to governments with a chance of success.

Grant: Mr. Grant has a different style; he likes to do all of this himself - he likes to do many things himself - and he is a fund raiser. When I worked with him for the Kampuchea emergency, what struck me most, was his absolute insistence that you had to have a clear objective; and know how to get there in stages. Your target had to be both ambitious and realistic. You needed a clear picture of the situation and he disliked generalities or just making a contribution because there was a drought, a flood somewhere. You had to go and immediately assess the situation accurately. While you have to provide some aid in order to demonstrate your presence there on the spot and learn from the first phase, you had to work hard to have a shrewd perception of what was necessary for the emergency and what was required in a second phase. You had to be very clear of your objective in programming and fundraising terms and try to quantify and qualify it as best as you can. Once this had been done it, you had to still continuously follow up and measure your own assumptions and discuss this with your partners. UNICEF has learned a great deal from this and has applied it increasingly, namely, to prepare the ground for appeal and carefully negotiate for support to be obtained from different partners utilising modern techniques of presentation. This has certainly allowed UNICEF not only to obtain astonishing results from its appeals sometimes with the help of the Secretary-General of the UN, etc., but to maintain the trust of donors for successive periods.

Donors: As you know, new techniques have been explored to make this possible. If I remember the consortium idea grew up primarily during the Bangladesh emergency when Bangladesh emerged as an independent country. The UN took a leading role in this through Sir Robert Jackson. He handled such donor meetings in an expert way. This was very interesting for us to observe, and UNICEF followed this lead and in many ways refined it. Further, we now have different systems. We just had an opportunity to observe fund-raising meeting for Africa (November 1984), which was not necessarily the best that I have witnessed. During the Kampuchea period, we had a regular information and discussion sessions with major donors which were not public; they represented a limited group of countries that were really interested in the problem. Open and frank language was the custom in these meetings. These meetings were not just to address the recommendations that UNICEF wanted to get accepted but to share with the members of these donor groups our own assessment of the situation, to explain difficulties, problems, and explain the reasons for indications of progress. This has greatly helped to build up confidence with the donors, which is an extremely important element which we have to constantly remind ourselves.

Too frequent involvement: In the sixties and seventies, UNICEF developed quite a reputation in dealing with emergencies that our field people had the impression that whenever an emergency

occurred, UNICEF would move in, raise funds and do a credible job which would also be beneficial to the staff taking part in. As a result we were a little bit too complacent and too ready to get involved in all kinds of emergencies that were really not true emergencies and could have been handled locally. This has undoubtedly improved since, but at one time we were probably not disciplined enough in this respect.

The funds collected for emergencies have allowed the Executive Director to deal immediately with the first phase of emergencies. The Emergency reserve have allowed him foot more limited emergencies on his own. The Board at the same time that it increased the Emergency reserve has insisted that proper criteria be established for policies and guidelines for execution, so that those who administered these funds would now have to examine requests on its merit.

Problems in Secretary-General appeals: Where the UN set up a co-ordinating mechanism itself and where the Secretary-General issued an Appeal, the difficulty was to distinguish between what really was part of a general UN Appeal, therefore what the UN retained and what share would go to individual agencies, e.g. UNICEF and what were separate appeals of different agencies appealing for the categories of people for which they had a responsibility for.

You can clearly see the mandate of UNICEF for children, UNHCR for refugees, but when it comes to appeals made by FAO, WFP, etc and under the leadership of nutrition, food production, agricultural efforts, water supply, etc., this becomes more difficult. It will become necessary to have a better arrangement with, a clear indication as to the nature of the various fund-raising efforts, which agency is doing what, and to allow governments a much better overview over these different endeavors to secure funds from the international community. It is detrimental for the end result if for the same emergency three or four UN agencies are stepping over their toes to appeal to the same governments for a part of the cake.

There I feel successive Secretaries-Generals should have taken a far stronger line, arranged for consultation at a very early stage so as to determine the nature of the emergency, the reaction the UN should pursue, the kind of co-ordination to be introduced to decide on the need of lead-agency role, etc. Although this question has been the subject of studies and endless discussions in ACC, it is still a problematic area. The S.G. being a political head of an organisation, should have senior aides that can prepare these questions and take decisive actions on his behalf.

Lack of decisiveness on behalf of the S.G., jealousy amongst UN agencies, personality conflicts, the unsatisfactory terms of the Director General of Development and Co-ordination, a more realistic judgement of what the UN can achieve, the inherent weakness of

UNDR, an insufficient concentration on the UN agencies that are really capable of contributing to relieve on emergency, the lack of system to harness both bi-lateral and multi-lateral efforts in a more coordinated effort, the need to reassess past experience, etc., have all contributed to this unsatisfactory state of affairs.

#### Kampuchea

UNICEF was given the role of lead agency, as far as Kampuchea is concerned, because of the difficulty with the membership of Kampuchea in the United Nations. UNICEF, with the UNHCR, is the only agency that can, in practical terms, deal with governments irrespective of their membership in the UN. Where a country exercises authority over a clearly defined area, has a responsible government and is able to administer and provide services to people under its jurisdiction, the basic criteria of being able to enter into a contact and work out understanding on principles of aid are met thus allowing UNICEF to work with such a government irrespective of membership.

This was a very important element in Kampuchea and has put UNICEF before the tremendous task of being designated lead agency with all the attributes that go with it - the prestige, but also the problems of having to take account of the susceptibilities and individualities of other UN agencies, the representation of a situation to donors, the risk of being criticized for failures etc.

#### Prevention measures

Egger: There is one other aspect I have not touched upon. How can we learn from a certain catastrophe, and in our more long-term work, give more attention to preventive aspects, working with other agencies. This is not only UNICEF's concern, and it involves other agencies as well as UNDR's. It is, however, an important element, and that we have perhaps not done enough of it when an emergency is over or moving into another phase. What have we learned from this emergency, and how could this be more generally applied? I know this is a serious preoccupation in the organization.

The Sahel drought situation has been going on now for more than ten years in different phases. We were involved in this in early '72/'73, as one could foresee when travelling in Niger, Volta and also Chad. In addition to concentrating on some of the essential child survival components, how much have we taken account of the problems, e.g. the need to assure a sufficient water supply to rural populations at risk, without affecting the water table; to take continued interest in encouraging food production of protective and basic food and preparation on a village basis that are so essential for early child feeding, as compared to the emphasis on set crops for joining breast-feeding, and with the preparation of weaning food from local resources, how are we prepared to take an interest in the idea of protecting the environment as a practical educational process, to look into

practical proposals for allowing and encouraging community participation in providing meaningful incentives. These are some examples to be weighed and sorted out.

We have witnessed such a succession of emergencies and many lessons have been drawn from it, and have at the same time seen a much sharper focus on what is UNICEF's present policy. Perhaps this duality needs to be more thoroughly analysed and brought out. In dealing with the emergency situation in the Sahel, it strikes me how little is really known of the experience that we and others have gained, and why there is such a widespread impression that not much progress has been made. For fund-raising, from a point of view also of maintaining confidence of the public and the contributing governments it is important to indicate what has happened with previous effort and what has gone wrong - a continuous deterioration of the ecosystem, setbacks in food production, the danger of population growth, dwindling water resources, etc.

UNICEF, of course, cannot answer all these questions by itself, but it should show a greater concern with the necessity to try to deal with the preventive and the longer term development aspects, and insert its present politics into a network.

Long-range vs. emergency

Charnow: As you well know, Charles, there was a feeling over the years in the Board, that UNICEF being a long-range agency, which ought not to spend too much time or resources on emergencies, particularly when our resources were limited. Now in later years when we got into special financing, that was less of an acute problem so far as taking UNICEF's resources in terms of money. But on the other hand, there was always a lot of questioning about the amount of time the headquarters had to devote to unexpected emergencies - and finally we set up a permanent emergency unit to relieve that burden.

Egger: The dilemma will always be there. We cannot avoid it, and it is the particular task of UNICEF both of the Secretariat and the Board to constantly review and examine UNICEF's long-term goal and examine to what extent it can allow itself to get into emergencies.

If you looked back over the years, there has been a certain clear shift that we should be more careful, more selective; we should consider our role to be more in the second stage rather than to spend too much of our resources and efforts in the first stage. The way the second stage is working out and shaping up has a more immediate influence on long-term aspects. In certain very difficult situations where people have been shaken up, were

upfront they had to make a new beginning etc., this has equally offered an opportunity for introducing a new approach, and encouraged a wider degree of participation and brought the people and local officials together, to make a new start. There may be an element of greater willingness and open-mindedness, an opportunity to experiment in introducing a new approach, which is one of the contributory elements for a more appropriate type of longer term development arising out of a critical situation.

The dilemma and difficulties will always be there to find the right measure. One has to accept it; one has to refine the policy and each time to find the appropriate way - how much is one prepared to give the time, the money, resources of the organization related to the type and the size of an emergency and how much UNICEF is really in a position to make a contribution which may also have an influence on longer term efforts. There is no simple answer to this, and we have to be open-minded, we have to examine each situation anew and not rush into it. We have to do also the best possible to learn from, to improve our system of emergency response.

#### Emergency manual

The emergency manual will have to be reviewed continuously because new people will not know how UNICEF has dealt with emergencies in the past; and there is a real advocacy and training to be undertaken. A certain balance has to be kept between the two. Each new group will have to find the appropriate answer, taking into account how one has dealt with an emergency in the past, how one is learning from presentations. One has to keep in mind that UNICEF's response must be justified by its ability to make a significant contribution to an emergency situation, thanks to its mandate, its operational ability, its desire to concentrate on the few elements it specialises in and remember that we deal with children without any prejudices and fear wherever they are, and with whatever government that is working in a country towards a real understanding of what we can jointly concentrate upon to further the process of aid to children in a continuing and meaningful way.

#### Biafra

Charnow: Would you like now to go on to some specific instances where we learned, or failed to learn from experience?

Egger: Relations with Federal government: In the Nigeria/Biafra situation, one of the first emergencies I had to deal with when I came to headquarters, the important element was that UNICEF at a relatively early stage realized that this was a question that had to be handled in respect of the best tradition of UNICEF. It was important to continue to maintain an open flow of communications with the Federal Government of Nigeria while doing whatever could be done for Biafra. We were not able to be directly operational there and had to utilize the International Red Cross and various church organizations that were flying in aid and had staff in Biafra.

This seemed to be a natural line to follow. However, because of the first emotional reaction of the world public opinion to the breaking away of Biafra as a result of onslaughts and tribal massacres, etc., the sympathy was much more on the Biafra side. It took, even at Headquarters, some considerable effort to maintain a balance between both parties in conflict, and we succeeded in maintaining correct contacts and developed positive relations with the Federal Government of Nigeria, who gave us their concurrence to assist children on the Biafra side. Both Bacic and myself were primarily concerned with this responsibility. It has paid off enormously. We were able to speak very openly and inform the Federal Government of Nigeria regularly about our work. Mr. Labouisse, during his visit to Lagos, continued this positive work and, in his own particular way, gave careful attention to maintaining a straightforward, very positive and correct relationship on both sides.

As I mentioned, UNICEF did not operate in Biafra directly. Willie Meyer, who had been in charge of our external relations in the European office, and later the UNICEF Representative in Dakar, was able to go there twice for a short time to assess the situation in Biafra and see how the actual relief work was carried out, and at that time he was already quite ill. He died shortly after from cancer. But Willie Meyer's visits were extremely helpful and useful in order to have some idea of how the Red Cross and church operations were operating and to insist on criteria of priority aid without discrimination for children, which for UNICEF was absolutely essential.

Relations with ICRC: Another interesting element was the close collaboration we had with the International Red Cross Committee, and for one of the first times came in close contact with each other. The headquarters of ICRC thought at the beginning that we were just another donor who would make money on our available supplies and they could handle such contributions in their customary way. It led at times, to rather difficult discussions as UNICEF insisted that it wanted to be a part of the operation; that we had a right to have something to say about how the programme was being carried out, and the need to develop the most effective means to deal with a particular situation. These contacts were much backed by myself in Geneva, later Gertrude Lutz. Both Labouisse went several times to Lagos and we had in S. Bacic a very effective Representative.

Egger: Rehabilitation: The other aspects that struck me in the Nigeria/Biafra emergency situation were two things: one, that in the rehabilitation period thanks largely to the initiative and imagination of Sasha Bacic - UNICEF really went into a rehabilitation operation on a large scale to assist in the reconstruction of small hospitals, health centres and particularly schools in the areas that had been most hit by the civil war that had been raging for almost two years. This was something rather new to UNICEF. When I went there and saw this work going on, I was much impressed. In agreement with the Federal Government, UNICEF

made funds available to hire contractors and architects for building and repairing schools. Timber, frames, nails, and tools had to be bought. These were very visible signs of a major rehabilitation effort which made much sense. Schools could start again; health services could operate more effectively; training of staff got under way, etc. All of this was the Government's overall rehabilitation programme. Based on this expertise we have applied this policy in other situations with very good benefits.

Child nutrition innovation: The other element which I think was new in UNICEF was to deal with the problem of child nutrition on a more scientific and adaptive basis. Up to that time we used to concentrate largely on the distribution of foods needed by infants and very young children to supplement breastfeeding and then gradually replace with other food, in terms of weaning food. But in Biafra, based on the experience of a famous Biafran Pediatrician and Nutritionist, and with the help of a Dutch Public Health Nurse, with practical nutrition training, Ms. Isabel Keëningracht, the health workers organized special child-feeding schemes utilizing a combination of donated milk supplies as well as local food mixtures, and combined it with an educational programme for mothers and guardians. This was geared to provide the young child with the supplementary food required, based on careful examination of the children and an imaginative way to make good use of local products. They utilized locally available foods, like palm oil and bananas, eggs also. It was indeed remarkable how effective these schemes for supplementary child feeding became. For the first time in an emergency situation UNICEF started to look at the problem, and find out more about deficiencies and local habits. We came to distinguish between different stages of malnutrition; a) children that were very much at risk and needed proper attention in hospitals, either as hospital patients or through regular attendance in MCH clinics, b) other children with second degree malnutrition who didn't need hospitalization but who could be brought together regularly for simple feeding operations. Mothers were encouraged to accompany the young children and were given lectures and practical demonstrations in small groups; c) a third group of children of risk could be reached through schools, social services, child health clinics, etc. for education, advice, distribution of dry rations, etc. This was a considerably interesting experience which would be worth going into more detail.

#### Vietnam

Taking another example, Viet Nam. One of the things that really struck me, to the credit of UNICEF, was what happened before we were able to get into Viet Nam.

Board role: First of all I would say our own Board, or rather some members of the Board, played a very important role in explaining and raising the question of assistance to both North and South



Vietnam when it was still at an early stage. The war was still raging, major powers were heavily involved and reacted in a very nervous way. The Executive Board took a rather unusual position in the sense that they prodded the Administration to explore ways of discussing the question of aid with both parties and see how it was possible to reach North Vietnam. Mr. Labouisse was particularly concerned himself about exploring every possibility to see if UNICEF could assist children in Vietnam suffering from such an extraordinarily terrible situation.

Charnow: Which delegations were leaders in this, Charles?

Eggar: There were a number of delegations. In addition to many Third World delegations, I would single out first the Nordic delegations, Sweden in particular. Also the French delegation was much in favour. Naturally the Socialist countries supported it for many essentially political reasons but some also for humanitarian reasons, in the best UNICEF tradition. The Polish Delegate, Dr. Kozusznik, did play an important role in contacts. The Italian delegation with Senator Avocato Montini had also continuously taken a positive, humanitarian attitude in all these matters. The Swiss did support it as well as Australia, but I felt the Swiss could have done it more systematically and courageously. It is also important to note that the US delegation did not oppose these initiatives. On the contrary the US delegate was very much in favour but had to be cautious.

The Board has always been led by a few delegates with vision and commitment who knew how to raise these questions diplomatically. The very fact that it started that way - that the UNICEF Executive Board in a number of meetings, expressed its concern with the need situation in Vietnam, where children were suffering; it repeatedly stated that UNICEF should be prepared to explore every possibility, to raise and explore the question of humanitarian aid with the two sides at war - North and South Viet Nam - was important because their declarations were carefully noted by all sides and helped to pave the way.

Kozusznik's role: As you remember, Professor B. Kozusznik was asked to go on a mission to Hanoi and convey to the government the views of the Board. It is probable that the mission of Professor B. Kozusznik had a far greater positive impact than he was given credit for upon his return. Before he left North Vietnam he was quoted as having officially condemned American bombing, and this created with some delegates a very bad impression. Each one of us would have been prepared to do that on a private basis. What he actually said and to what extent he was misguided, how much of this inadequate interpretation is not clear. He got therefore into hot water and was criticized by some of his colleagues. Professor Kozusznik is a man who is entirely devoted to the idea of UNICEF, and its humanitarian mission. As a representative of the Board, he went to Hanoi to transmit a message, namely the UNICEF Executive

Board, had agreed to provide some assistance through the channel of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. If this first aid got to North Vietnam and would be properly utilized then other assistance could be forthcoming. It was, of course, only a gesture; but it had an important connection. A UN agency was prepared to seek a contact and explore the needs and discuss what aid could be provided with a government that was not a member of the UN, that was at war with the government recognised by the UN and many other countries and a powerful ally of the U.S. It was the feeling of many Board members as well as of the Director and his staff that UNICEF had to address itself to this problem of helping Vietnamese children not only in the South but also the North, irrespective of whether it pleased other governments. This initiative has certainly been to the credit of UNICEF.

Headquarters task force: In order for UNICEF to operate effectively both in North Viet Nam and South Viet Nam, and carry out a rather large relief programme UNICEF had to organize itself for the first time in a novel manner. A special task force was set up under Martin Sandberg, that prepared its members thoughtfully for their new tasks. This training included knowledge about the country, its policies and the philosophy, studying different writers, French etc., who had written about the history, political system. The group reviewed experiences in emergency situations in which UNICEF had previously been involved. A first group went to Hanoi to draw up a first preliminary agreement with North Vietnam, and reviewed our cooperation in the South. Thus we gradually developed at headquarters a special task force, both better trained, more knowledgeable operationally, and who was able to work independently.

Experiences in carrying out aid programmes in Viet Nam: It is certainly due to both the vision of the Executive Director, the operating stubbornness of Dick Heyward, and the skill and practical experience of people like M. Sandberg, the diplomatic ability and basic philosophical belief in people of Jacques Beaumont and others, that UNICEF was able to conclude and start an assistance programme. It was certainly not an easy, and rather unprecedented situation. I came only at a later stage in '77 or so, into close contact with the Indochina operation, and visited the countries in Spring, 1978. It was difficult to operate in a country that had lived through a most crucifying war begun already at the time of the French occupation of Indochina followed by a more heavy-handed American involvement.

One had to cooperate with a government that was sure about its rightfulness of its own stand, had a clear political doctrine, and its own views on how to conduct international negotiations. It was only prepared to collaborate with an international organization on its own terms. There was, at the beginning, little discussion of the content of programmes. Once the principal of a cooperation had been accepted, the Government put forward their demands for material assistance and UNICEF had to deal with them on that

basis. That UNICEF found gradually the proper mixture of working with them first reduced their demands to more reasonable proportions, then in the practical development of the programme, trying to find ways to have certain principals recognized. Once a certain degree of confidence had been established there could be a possibility of a first exchange in determining overall objectives, in discussing programme content and criteria, in finding out the government structures, internal budgets, training components, etc. to which UNICEF supplies were related to - this was a long, drawn-out process.

That some progress was achieved is to the credit of the group that was initially involved. This also included Francois Rémy, later as well as M. Sandberg and J. Beaumont which I have already mentioned. As a doctor of French nationality, F. Rémy, through his whole attitude, his special interest in children helped a lot to create an atmosphere of confidence, and bring about a more systematic approach to develop joint programmes. He had a personal relationship with some key figures in the Vietnamese Government, particularly with people concerned with the Institute of Public Health, in the Ministries of Health, Education; etc. He has described all of this in his recently published book on his experiences as a UNICEF official. It is a very rich source of information and I can only recommend it.

But I realize that to have face in a country that has formulated such a doctrinaire philosophy, people that through many war years have hardened in their belief that they were right, and the rest of the whole world was wrong, one had to recognize what they had gone through and be prepared to take this into consideration when negotiating with them without giving up any essential premises. That UNICEF was able, gradually, to come to an acceptable level of cooperation is a great credit both to the organization and particularly those who were negotiating at the front line and representing UNICEF's interest there.

Prefabricated schools: learning from mistakes: There we did apply one of the principles of UNICEF. After the ordeal of the war years Viet Nam was extraordinarily anxious to rehabilitate its educational system. In discussions, the idea of prefabricated school buildings came up in which they became very interested. The idea to help the government rebuild schools was a good one. The means by which this was done in a first place proved less suitable. The prefabricated schools were not the most adequate; they proved to be too costly and not sufficiently adapted to the tropical climate, and would not easily be maintained with the means at their disposal. But we learned from this. In a second stage, UNICEF made use of locally available building materials importing only certain types of fixtures that had to be imported (e.g. roof beams, window frames,

tools, etc.), and relying much more on local building capacity. The difference of these schools with the prefabricated models from Switzerland was striking. Maybe prefabrication was the only way in an immediate post-war period one could deal with the problem of lack of schools and erect a first number. So, there again, UNICEF showed understanding in dealing with a difficult partner, learning from a first phase and then gradually building up a programme.

UNICEF staff: All the staff of the first years in Hanoi lived in cramped conditions where the one hotel room was the living room, bedroom, office, and also the room where you received the visitor. They accepted it with fair grace. I think the dedication and the capability of our first groups of staff were quite remarkable. They were gradually able to improve on in their collaboration with the government, make field visits in the country, obtain reports, and discuss programmes, etc. Also their living conditions improved perceptively over the years.

A retrospective look: Indochina was a major emergency. UNICEF as an agency was not limited in its cooperation to UN membership (because Viet Nam was not a member of the UN at that time), was able to raise the resources needed, had the capability of developing a programme, and arrive at concrete results in its cooperation of which it can be proud. Perhaps some of the aid and investment we made were not necessarily at the beginning the most appropriate and in certain fields too sophisticated. It was all part of the effort to come to terms and show our interest in helping to rebuild the institutions of a war-torn country for so many years cut off from the outside world. But basically, in terms of helping in the strengthening of their concept of primary health care, in facilitating a new beginning in education and encouraging also local production, and taking an interest in early childhood education, all very much to the credit of UNICEF and showed positive results in the collaboration with Viet Nam which was also increasingly appreciated by the government.

#### Kampuchea

Influence of Viet Nam experience: Our experience of collaboration in Viet Nam was to become a valid argument in preparing for our role in Kampuchea. It was the Vietnamese who from experience had confidence in UNICEF, who recommended to the Provisional Kampuchean Government in Phnom Penh to actively seek the collaboration of UNICEF and try to come to terms with the Children's Fund.

Essentials of cooperation: It took some time until this was established, and again this was a heroic negotiation which will be documented elsewhere. Here the UNICEF representative, J. Beaumont, together with his ICRC colleagues, showed persistence, imagination

and simplicity. They realized one could not insist on maintaining all possible criteria or conditions to establish a basis of collaboration. One had to concentrate on a few essential principles that were important and get this accepted by Pro-Kampuchean Government. It also meant to refuse any unsatisfactory conditions that would have violated a basic principles of the impartiality and non-discrimination which meant that we would continue to assist Kampuchean children on the Khmer border.

This led to the third major emergency effort in which UNICEF became involved as a lead agency of the UN system, working closely with the ICRC. It would require a special interview to analyse the fabric of the collaboration both with the UN and the ICRC. Shawcross in his book on Kampuchea has in fact covered a great deal of it. It is one we could spend hours discussing.

Grant role: It also coincided with the period when Mr. Grant took over the reins of UNICEF, getting into second and third gear, as he likes to say, starting in Kampuchea. He insisted very much on a far more clearly targetted approach. He encouraged us to be more critical in our reviews and try to develop a plan that had a clear relationship to clearly conceived targets based on the best possible assessment of the situation — which was probably insufficient with the information available. It was based on a number of assumptions on knowledge that was available at that time. He underlined the need to have a fund-raising target that was related to the goal of the operation, and then also look at the operation ability, not only of UNICEF but of the whole system e.g. our partners, ICRC, WFP/FAO, NGOs, etc. Having worked all this out, he demonstrated the feasibility of sitting down with the local Government. This was a Government that had very little experience of this nature, lacked management ability, was suspicious of foreigners, and had no idea about how international agencies cooperated. All these shortcomings had to be taken into account, but he showed that it was possible and thus established a basis of confidence.

Operational role: UNICEF sat down with the various Khmer authorities and discussed the plan and asked for their reaction so as to be sure that its elements were really understood. UNICEF then had to put this plan into action with all the operational questions of delivery of certain quantities of aid by a certain timetable, by ship, by air, by road, if it were possible to open up the famous land bridge through Thailand. This never succeeded, however. Instead the transport by air was increased and for sea shipments more harbours were included, eg. Vietnam harbours. Based on the original assessment and the data available at that time we were probably correct in our appreciation. Looking back, one has now of course, a better understanding of the situation. One could have spent more on actual aid giving more attention to the longterm aspects rather than invest so much money on the means of delivery through costly air shipments, etc.

NGO: another element which came out very clearly, although I think it was already apparent in the Nigeria situation, was to have a much more systematic type of collaboration with NGOs, in a sense to look upon them as partners and not just as little private entities with which one had an occasional contact in the field. There UNICEF interpreted its lead agency role not only in terms of cooperation with other UN agencies but to include NGOs as partners. In Kampuchea, they had an important role and were very useful in the sense of sharing information, of supporting joint interventions with the authorities. They were concentrating from the beginning on certain geographical areas and in fields which they were particularly qualified to develop. They were in particular most valuable as they could go into development activities related to agricultural production, irrigation, veterinary services, technical training, etc. and thus complement the work of the international agencies who had to concentrate largely on humanitarian aid. They had also much more direct contact with local officials and the population, and served as valuable sources for information.

Donors/UNICEF Information Division: Also, in Kampuchea, the system of cooperation with different donor groups has become far more refined, and a much more frank dialogue introduced. I mentioned that before. It was also an occasion where we did utilize the capacity of the Information Division in a much wider sense. The information staff became part and parcel of the whole programme approach. They helped to interpret the knowledge that we acquired of the country to the outside world. It was also useful to explain to the public the difficulties that we were encountering in an unprecedented operation like this. They have played a key role — particularly colleagues like Tony Hewett, Mehr Kamal and J. Danois. In his own particular way and a rather one-sided preference, Mr. J.P. Grant, also, in this field, gave the lead. He made Information a partner of the whole approach and not something that you think of at the moment when you are going to launch a fund-raising effort.

Charnow: National Committees need for information: In that respect, Charles, it is my impression that over the years the National Committees have been unhappy with the amount of information that they were getting on emergency situations for the demands of their public and for fund-raising purposes. I take it you are saying that in Kampuchea we had a better record.

Eggar: I would admit that there have been difficulties. We were constantly striving to allow information people from the Committees and journalists from reputable papers or others that took an interest in our work to go and write about it and then distribute such information. The important element is to treat such information not on a secretive basis but to make such information rapidly available to the National Committees. I feel we now have a more open and progressive policy in this respect, which is one of

the conditions, really, for a real partnership, and support from the Committees. It is essential to organize visits of members of the National Committee in groups, not only in emergency areas alone, but for some of the developing countries. This will help them to become familiar with the whole range of UNICEF's cooperation on the ground, and may include emergency problems.

Earlier this year a group of National Committee members went to North Yemen, which had suffered from a very serious earthquake at the end of '82 in Daman, near Sana'a; I had an opportunity to see this area in Y.A.R., and was struck by the extent of the damage. I am sure it has been very helpful for the Committees to see such a situation by themselves.

So there has been a definite improvement. It is a practical administrative question how to work out a distribution of rapid information, and meet the needs of the National Committees. Of course, they will never be entirely satisfied, but I am sure they will now admit that a considerable improvement has taken place. They have become far more partners of UNICEF in these special situations. That doesn't mean that they feel they have achieved an ideal level of cooperation, particularly in the field of formulating UNICEF policies, but in emergencies it has no doubt improved. There are of course different levels of responsibilities and one has to define the areas and points of joint concern and normal complementation.

#### Lebanon/Middle East

Egger: The next area where UNICEF has been engaged in a very difficult and special emergency situation due to civil war, problems of security, utter distrust amongst different religious and social communications in the whole area, including Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, etc. Since the civil war broke out, with so many periods of ups and downs during which UNICEF has had to live through since 1975, it had taken a real toll in terms of the health of our staff, in terms of the ability to maintain a regional focal point in Lebanon, and to follow a clear course of action where different political parties, militia, religious communities, etc. accused UNICEF of being partial to their cause. Fortunately such accusations were not frequent but when I was in Lebanon as of the beginning of January '83, I felt the government to be somewhat suspicious of UNICEF because of our having played a considerable part in support of Palestinian children and in some sense for the Palestinian cause.

Interpreting mandate flexibility: If we look, however, at the broader aspects, one of the remarkable things is that UNICEF has, by and large, interpreted its mandate faithfully and established a working relationship with all political parties and religious communities in Lebanon. That goes, also, for the other countries involved in the conflict including Israel as well as the mothers and children amongst the Palestine refugees in the various countries of which those in Lebanon proved to be in 82/83 the hardest struck.

Now everybody will probably agree with maintaining UNICEF's principles, but how has this in fact been done? Basically, UNICEF has been able to maintain a practical, down-to-earth contact with all these various communities and has stood by them and their children in serious situations to help with whatever it could, particularly when front-lines divided the communities and political parties and their ferocious militia groups as this happened so many times in Lebanon.

During critical periods UNICEF established offices in different parts of the country and around Beirut, through Cyprus with the Christian groups in the mountains of North Lebanon; through Syria with Beirut in and through the office in Quane with the southern part and its predominant Moslem population groups. UNICEF had also taken a real interest in the problems of the children of the Arab Palestine population in the West Bank under Israeli occupation. It was a question of establishing proper communications, to explore access roads, by having UNICEF staff stationed in the various communities, to liaise with key people and contribute to meet more immediate needs in war-like situations.

As of 1975, UNICEF became involved in a large scale rehabilitation and reconstruction programme thanks to funds made by available by Arab governments to Lebanon and funds that UNICEF raised itself in 1982. This programme concentrated in the South of Lebanon under Israeli occupation and UNICEF was the only agency that could operate such a project and have a minimum degree of confidence of all parties concerned.

Adding development to reconstruction: When I came to Beirut early in 1983, I was amazed with the tremendous effort that UNICEF had taken upon itself in the south, the main area of Israeli occupation comparable to a major construction firm in rebuilding or repairing hospitals, health stations, water supply distribution systems and schools. UNICEF on the whole did a very creditable job in carrying out such a large programme for which it had no previous experience. This effort then extended to the southern fringes of Beirut after the Israeli bombardments in the early summer 1982. It also created considerable problems for UNICEF of a logistic nature: having to establish a proper system of awarding contracts because UNICEF rightly used essentially Lebanese contractors, procured much of the material for building purposes and employed a fairly large force of engineers, technicians, accountants, etc. to take care of all the tasks of project reviews, costing, award of contracts, supervision of the work executed, accounting, etc. It also included a large procurement programme of other supplies and equipment for schools largely executed in Lebanon. Basically, the principle was a sound one because it helped to utilize local manpower, it helped many contractors to acquire experience, it pumped some money into idling economy in the south.

Retroactively one can say as an excellent audit report revealed that we should probably have had a better system of examination of



offer and a tighter control of the execution. There was a lot of influence being exercised in the awards and probably some not very proper deals have been made. We should probably have been more careful from the beginning in setting limits on how far we were prepared to go, not just go on because no other agency was able to do it and the government found it easier at the beginning just to address itself to UNICEF. After certain difficulties appeared and the private sector felt they could also handle such work, the government became far more critical.

One can also be critical because there was too great a concentration on a purely reconstruction effort in terms of a brick, mortar and pipes syndrome, and not enough on development of structures, staff, methods, etc. These new hospitals and schools and water supply systems needed the people that had to be trained. We should have taken an interest in the type of training; in new curricula, in helping to recycle teaching and health staff who had been on the job without supervision for years. We should have concerned ourselves with the participation of communities so that they could also have a say, even in a modest way, to contribute to social services that were to serve them.

I tried, during my limited period, to bring more recognition to these aspects, both to the authorities and our own people who had become somewhat routinely accustomed to deal with the purely reconstruction aspect. Thanks to a legacy from a German lady some not inconsiderable resources were available to help orphaned and poor children in institutions in Lebanon. This again concerned not only repairing and assisting institutions as they existed but to build something better for the future, through training of staff, developing proper criteria of how these institutions were to be run by encouraging better participation of the communities. It was a difficult task as one had to overcome prejudices within the government, with the institutions themselves that were run along traditional lines under the influence of the various Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Muslim groups who were reluctant to change old established habits.

Palestinian children: One other element which I think is to the credit of UNICEF is that UNICEF was one of the first agencies to take an active and concrete interest in the Palestine refugee children in addition to UNWRA. This is not for any political reasons, I hope, but from the point of view of humanitarian considerations. UNICEF tried to do it carefully without singling them out exclusively by agreeing with the host governments that some aid be provided through them and with their agreement would go to improve the situation of Palestine children first in the camps but then also for those living outside. This brought UNICEF in touch with particular PLO relief organizations, e.g. the Palestine Red Cross, the Palestine Women's Association, with which a sometimes discreet but effective relationship was established. This was a clear indication of our concern and interest from an

essentially humanitarian and practical point of view. This was one of the reasons why UNICEF was widely recognized as we did not leave out any of the religious or political communities in those countries that had suffered a great deal and were in dire need.

Restoring water during the Israeli siege of Beirut: Our colleagues have shown real courage in this war situation starting with the then Regional Director, Dr. Francois Remy and then Goulmer Anderson, Director of Rehabilitation effort, Raymond Naimy, the chief engineer and many others. At the time of the most critical period of the Israeli attacks in June/July 1982, troops were able to restore to a reasonable degree the system of the municipal water supply by relying on the previously known water wells. All the more recently constructed water supply systems had been severely damaged by artillery fire and bombardments.

I will always remember when the Lebanese chief engineer Raymond Naimy told me what precautionary steps he had taken when he foresaw the attacks on Beirut. He had gone to the municipal authorities responsible for water supply and asked them for detailed maps where they had located the old wells. They had in earlier periods been utilized to assure the population a proper water supply. He also established a reserve of mobile pumps, pipes, generators, etc. so that when the water shortages came he organized mobile units with his staff and was in a position to move around and reestablish these old wells and pump water into the houses during certain hours for the people to drink and wash themselves. I think this is an extraordinary courageous task that has been recorded but people forget very easily.

I understand that some of the attacking forces and their Christian allies were absolutely furious about UNICEF's action because they had counted on cutting off the water supply of the whole city, and thus bringing people to their knees. UNICEF, through this courageous and imaginative initiative stood up in order to meet the basic needs of the vulnerable groups and the rest of the population as well. I hope that if UNICEF were to come into a similar critical situation we would do it all over again.

In a very critical war situation as UNICEF faced in Lebanon without much publicity — did its level best to provide emergency aid and organized it in a way that it was possible to restore a damaged water supply and transport children from one part of the country to the other, to provide hospitals with urgently required medical supplies and equipment, to even organize the collection of refuse without much guidance and instructions from the top levels of the organization.

Having come, myself to Beirut, after the worst period and realizing what this meant in a city like Beirut, I was really impressed by what our UNICEF colleagues, with the relatively limited means at their disposal, had done and displayed such courage, imagination, and found a very practical approach ready to help meet an absolutely priority need. In an emergency of this very special nature UNICEF was able to display the resourcefulness and sense for practical action which represents one of the best qualities of UNICEF namely to inject in people such a spirit and allow them considerable leeway and independence in carrying out what they consider to be the most necessary tasks and take it upon themselves to show the way to direct action. I hope that this spirit can be maintained and cultivated.

Charnow: Well, Charles, this has been a very interesting and useful session, like the others. I want to thank you very much indeed.