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FROM CONCEPTION TO YEAR FIVE

A working paper on priority setting within the UNICEF
programme for consideration by the Executive Board */

Prepared by the Canadian Delegation to the
UNICEF Executive Board

*/ The comments of the Executive Director on this working paper
will be contained in document E/ICEF/L.1341.

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(19p)

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PREAMBLE

1. This paper has been prepared by the Canadian delegation in response to the request of the Executive Board that the conception to year five pattern of priority setting be set out so that Executive Board members might give it informed consideration. The paper is a product of the Canadian delegation's considered discussion and is presented to members of the Board in the expectation that they will wish to review it with their home Governments. Such a process should spur further exploration and thinking over the coming months. It should be noted that this paper explores a particular conceptual approach. It does not address itself to questions of the type now under discussion within the Secretariat and by the Group of Experts on the structure of the United Nations system, established by General Assembly resolution 3343 (XXIX) of 17 December 1974, nor to matters relating to the review by the Economic and Social Council of the agreements between the United Nations and the specialized agencies as defined in ECOSOC resolution 1906 (LVII) of 2 August 1974.

2. At the 1974 meeting of the UNICEF Executive Board in New York, the Canadian delegation expressed concern over what it viewed as the danger of over-extension of UNICEF resources and activities. Canada suggested that a sharper delineation of programme priorities would allow for more effective use of resources; help clarify UNICEF's relationship to other United Nations agencies, to recipient and donor Government members, to non-governmental organizations and to volunteers throughout the world; and thereby bring more benefit to UNICEF's target population.

3. This paper reviews the development of UNICEF; lays bare the assumptions on which the case for the re-ordering of UNICEF priorities is presented; sets out background considerations; notes the importance in human development of the conception to year five period; suggests a firmer approach to UNICEF programming and examines some of the implications which this approach might have for UNICEF itself and for the UNICEF target population.

UNICEF DEVELOPMENT

4. In 1946, the United Nations General Assembly established the International Children's Emergency Fund to provide relief to children primarily in those countries which were victims of World War II (General Assembly resolution 57(I)). In 1950, the General Assembly extended the mandate of UNICEF to include the developing countries (General Assembly resolution 417(V)). Later, the General Assembly transformed the organization from a temporary relief and recovery agency centered in Europe into a permanent development assistance agency (General Assembly resolution 802(VIII)). Throughout the 1960s, UNICEF emphasized a development assistance role. It has participated since 1970 in country programming as one of the partners of the United Nations development effort.

5. Under the terms established by the Board in 1965, UNICEF has maintained an emergency relief capacity while recognizing that "long-term measures to meet children's needs have overriding priority in the allocation of UNICEF resources". 1/ In the middle of the United Nations Second Develop-

1/ See Annex I.

ment Decade, in a world where disaster has become an everyday occurrence and where the needs of long-term development are therefore in danger of being overlooked, UNICEF continues in this dual capacity.

6. Through its history, UNICEF has been an innovative and efficient institution. In fact, it may have become the most efficient aid agency in the family of the United Nations organizations. This is due in no small measure to the wise management and foresight provided by its headquarters staff and the unquestioned excellence of its field staff. In the United Nations context, however, one must define efficiency in terms of the distribution of responsibilities through the development system in its entirety as well as in terms of one agency's own programme execution capability. In these times of crisis which affect developed and developing countries alike, UNICEF may have to reorient its thrust - as it has done periodically - if it is to remain relevant both to those it seeks to serve and to those who seek to serve it.

ASSUMPTIONS

7. This position paper assumes that UNICEF Executive Board members subscribe to the following positions:

(a) Basic UNICEF responsibilities relate to the economic, social and cultural rights of children, particularly as delineated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child;

(b) Today's children being tomorrow's leaders, it is in the interest of all nations to support the development of children to their full potential in the most effective way possible;

(c) Development of children to their full potential is dependent upon their mother's diet during pregnancy, their post-natal food intake and their physical, psychological, social and emotional environment;

(d) Satisfaction of the minimum needs of children will continue to exceed, in the aggregate, the resources which UNICEF and the nations of the world can devote to them at any given point in time; and

(e) A clearer focus for UNICEF activities should allow greater economies of specialization to be achieved; a more effective working relationship with other agencies (private, inter-governmental and governmental) to be developed; and thus help lay the foundation of a more concerted effort on behalf of the UNICEF target population. By its very nature, such concerted effort should reach a larger proportion of the children in need.

BACKGROUND CONSIDERATIONS

8. In his 1974 Report to the Executive Board, the Executive Director gave a vivid account of the plight of the world's children. He devoted particular attention to the detrimental effects on development assistance of rising prices for petroleum, food and manufactured goods, to the seriousness of the world food crisis and to the effect of the world's burgeoning population growth on that crisis. He related these events to the estimated 800 million children under five years of age in the world in 1973, noting

/...

that some 10 million of these are severely malnourished and that as many as three quarters of the remainder may be deprived of adequate needs for growth and development. The Board responded by adopting a Declaration of an emergency for children. 2/

9. UNICEF presently reaches only a minute portion of the world's deprived children. Inflation is seriously affecting UNICEF's ability to deliver services. In his last report to the Executive Board, the Executive Director noted that even if the target of \$100 million were reached in 1975, the real value of assistance would be substantially less than in earlier years. 3/

10. In its work with developing countries, UNICEF soon recognized the need to get some priority for children's programmes in over-all development plans and organized a series of conferences on planning for children in national development in the early 1960s. The 1969 Jackson report on the development assistance capacity of the United Nations system strengthened the case for country programming. 4/ There may well come a time when the importance of the next generation to the world's well-being will be so universally recognized that the merger of UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme, recommended by Sir Robert Jackson, will come to pass. 5/ Until we have reached that stage, however, and in the light of the Executive Director's proposal that the Board look at the role of UNICEF 6/, it may be opportune to examine how best limited resources can be harnessed to meet the needs of the most deprived of the UNICEF constituency.

11. Two sets of considerations prompted the Jackson recommendations concerning UNICEF. The first of these was the absence of co-ordination among United Nations development agencies giving rise to overlapping services. Much has been done by UNICEF and other agencies to facilitate country programming and ensure co-ordination of development activity. But much remains to be done; overlapping services still exist. This breeds confusion both among recipient Governments (as to which organizations should be approached) and among donor Governments (as to which agencies' projects are most worthy of funding). The apparent inability of United Nations development agencies and of their Governing Councils to put their house in order is, in some measure, discrediting the field of development aid.

2/ See Annex II.

3/ General Progress Report of the Executive Director for 1974, E/ICEF/632 (Part III), paras. 42 to 44.

4/ A study on the capacity of the United Nations Development System (DP/5) Vol.VI, pp. 37, 53, 60.

5/ Ibid., Vol.II, pp. 304, 329, 332, 335.

6/ General Progress Report of the Executive Director for 1974, E/ICEF/632 (Part I), para. 49.

12. The second consideration leading to the Jackson recommendation lay within the development of UNICEF itself. As UNICEF has matured, its interpretation of long-term development for mothers, children and adolescents has broadened with the complexity of development in the world at large. Until recent years, social development was seen at the "action level" as a special and separate activity. UNICEF, to its credit, was one of very few international institutions that concentrated on this aspect of development. More recently, and to an increasing degree, social development is being understood as a concern or preoccupation that must be an integral part of all development thinking. It is not a "sector" (like agriculture or transport) but rather a continuing test of the end purpose of all development. The integration of social development into development planning still has a long way to go, but progress is undeniable. From concern with pure "economic growth" as measured solely in terms of output, there has been a progression to concern with income distribution and social benefits, and more recently, with environment and the role of women. These should form a constant pressure on the evaluation of socio-economic activity.

CONCEPTION TO YEAR FIVE

13. There is a mounting body of evidence that the period conception to year five is the determinant stage in human life. This is well documented in a report on the young child 7/ adopted by the Executive Board in 1974, and in the 1965 UNICEF report on reaching the young child. 8/ The Executive Board recognized the importance of this period for the development of the child and for the consequent future development of society, when in 1965 it asked that young children as a group receive special UNICEF emphasis. In 1967 and in 1972 9/, the Board reviewed and reasserted the need for such an emphasis. The 1972 Board Report on this item ended with the following comments:

"Many of the national studies that UNICEF had assisted in the past few years had drawn attention to the crucial importance of that age group and that appeared to be having its effects on the selection of priorities in some national development plans. On the whole, however, there was no planned and systematic approach to the young child which considered the whole range of his needs, including not only his health and nutrition requirements, but his emotional development and his preparation for schooling."

7/ The young child: Approaches to action in developing countries - A draft report and recommendations by the Executive Director, E/ICEF/L.1303, paras. 11 to 70.

8/ Growth and development of the young child from one to six years: Report prepared by International Children's Centre for the UNICEF Executive Board, E/ICEF/521, paras. 80 to 221.

9/ See Annex III.

14. From a physical health standpoint, both pre-natal and post-natal nutrition condition the child's development. Maternal mal-nutrition reduces fetal growth and may result in brain damage: one of the three main causes of morbidity for low-weight infants is pre-natal malnutrition. Bodily growth from conception to year five and - research suggests - mental and behavioural development during this period have indeed higher nutritional requirements than the ones for older members of the family: more easily digestible and better quality protein, as well as more vitamins and minerals than minimum adult requirement per kilogram of body weight. It should also be stressed that mother's milk is the ideal food for infants not only from the nutritional but also from the psychological and immunological viewpoints. Once they lose the passive immunity given by their mother, children become particularly vulnerable to infectious disease - a hazard which is heightened in marginal environments, especially when infants are weaned early.

15. From a mental health standpoint, research indicates that the first few years are determinant with respect to emotional response patterns and to intellectual awakening.

"Just as the body needs food and water, the child's mind needs experiences that facilitate the first stages of intellectual functioning. At birth the child is helpless and it is primarily through the continuing mothering experience that he begins to perceive the world, develop sensory motor activity, become aware of self, socialize, verbalize and incorporate moral values. These early experiences provide the foundation for a child's subsequent development, and will affect such matters as relations with others, school performance, work skills (for example through his ability to adapt to changing agricultural technology and geographic mobility), and his enjoyment of life." 10/

16. In a working document on the family as part of the social environment, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Working Party on social indicators refers to the importance of uninterrupted caring relationships in the emotional development of babies in the following way:

"The general point is correct that both the pattern and quality of care are critical in establishing strong personal identities and the emotional capacity to extend, generalize and reproduce affectionate, responsible relationships in future life." 11/

17. Thus, if the combined observations of biological, medical, psychological and behavioural scientists from several nations can be trusted, the period conception to year five emerges as the single most important period in every human life. In his comparison of child rearing patterns in the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uri Bronfenbrenner concludes that:

10/ The young child: Approaches to action in developing countries - A draft report and recommendations by the Executive Director, E/ICEF/L.1303, para. 46.

11/ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, SME/SA/182, mimeo, 18 pp., 1975.

"The success of any program designed to foster the development of children requires as its first ingredient an intact child. Such biological integrity can be impaired by baneful environmental forces even before the child is born. Hence the first principle for any strategy of intervention is to insure that the initial environment meets at least the minimum level for sustaining normal development. In practice, this means adequate nutrition, medical care, and circumstances of life for mother and infant." 12/

CONCEPTION TO YEAR FIVE AS A YARDSTICK IN PRIORITY-SETTING

18. All the considerations above suggest that the Board must articulate its programme priorities in such a way that the highest possible portion of the target population will be reached and that recipient and donor Governments, private organizations and individuals alike will perceive the importance and urgency of the task at hand and be motivated to participate more actively in it.

19. Given these considerations, and taking for granted that specialized attention must be paid to the unique and important problems relating to young children and their immediate environment, there appear to be two basic functions which need to be performed until such time as "integrative" development automatically includes in national development plans all of the vulnerable elements of each sovereign state's population. These are described hereafter as the "advocacy role" and the "investment role". Both have been assumed by UNICEF in varying degrees of emphasis over the years.

20. The "advocacy role" is that most closely associated with the uniqueness of the problems of children under five and the need that action affecting them be based on fairly specialized information. In the context of the growing awareness that all agents of development must be urged to take into account the particular problems of various groups in society (children, women, the poorest 40 per cent, etc.), UNICEF might become the major advocate of the under fives in the whole business of development. That is to say UNICEF could use conception to year five as a vehicle to ensure that the world's prime target population gets its share, in priority, of scarce development resources. By way of illustration, a conception to year five programming focus would include clean water systems and sanitation projects which are crucially important for young children and benefit other age groups as well. Such an approach will ensure that as large a contingent of "intact" children as possible enters the development process.

21. The advocacy role should respond to the Executive Board's expectations - over time and in any programme year - from each of the links in the world-wide network supporting the child's environment. In articulating its expectations, the Board will need to bear in mind the means, the terms of reference and the operational requirements of each constituent supporter. Other United Nations agencies and multilateral institutions obviously have a different role to play than either the recipient constituency or the donor constituency. Headquarters should therefore tailor its advocacy role to the requirements of each constituent group.

12/ Bronfenbrenner, U., Two Worlds of Childhood: U.S. and U.S.S.R.
Russell Sage Foundation, New York 1970, p. 124.

22. The functions associated with UNICEF advocacy will include some or all of the following:

- (i) To investigate, describe and publicize the conditions and special problems of under fives around the world, drawing as appropriate from UNICEF's experience;
- (ii) To identify problems requiring special research, and play a role in arranging that it gets done;
- (iii) To monitor, analyse and report on the effect of the activities of Governments and international agencies on this group of the population;
- (iv) To recommend to Governments (recipient and donor) international agencies (United Nations and multilateral) and non-governmental organizations with emphasis on UNICEF Committees in recipient and donor countries - what actions they might take with respect to children under five; and
- (v) To institute a variety of carefully chosen pilot projects in support of the advocacy role.

23. The "investment role" - which UNICEF has traditionally emphasized - is severely limited from the outset by the fact that, given the size of the target population and the size of its budget, UNICEF can never hope to directly reach more than a minimal number of the children in need. This being the case, the investment role (by UNICEF and by other links on the network) needs continued emphasis. The case for an enhanced UNICEF investment capacity would appear to gain credibility if UNICEF investments were targeted specifically at closing gaps in programmes and services for the under fives, through funding of pilot (demonstration) projects as part of UNICEF's long-term orientation and of special relief actions in times of emergency.

24. Development assistance expenditures, concentrated on pilot (demonstration) projects and emergency actions which are most relevant to the development of children to their full potential would allow UNICEF to:

- (a) Contribute directly and selectively through its target population to the United Nations system's long-term development programme;
- (b) Use the results of such projects to illustrate for other links in the supportive network what can be achieved under conditions of specialized planning;
- (c) Encourage national Governments to attach high priority to children in country programming; and thereby
- (d) Extend to a much more significant portion of the deprived children of the world the benefits of UNICEF knowhow in safeguarding the environment of children from conception to year five.

25. Giving the UNICEF investment role a specific focus by directing it primarily to children from conception to year five would strengthen

/...

UNICEF's uniqueness and help define its activities in respect of a relatively more manageable group. Such an approach would obviously need to be phased in carefully over time so that aid for over fives which the Board has approved not be dropped without fair warning having been served on its recipients.

CONCLUSIONS

26. Given all of the above, the Canadian delegation concludes that UNICEF should use conception to year five as a priority-setting yardstick in all of its decisions as an advocate and as an investor. Emphasizing UNICEF's advocacy role and giving sharper focus to its investment role in this fashion will impact in a variety of important ways on the institutions as we now know it, on the United Nations development system, on national Governments and on the private sector.

27. The major effects of such reordering in the approach of the Executive Board to the setting of priorities in UNICEF programmes would appear to be as follows:

(a) To enhance the visibility of UNICEF's prime target population and of UNICEF's own purpose;

(b) To require an increased capacity within UNICEF as an advocate to analyse, monitor, evaluate, report and feed back information to each of the constituent groups on the development network in a way such as to facilitate their undertakings on behalf of children;

(c) To facilitate judgements within UNICEF as investor, both at headquarters and in the field;

(d) To give focus to relationships with other agencies (United Nations, multilateral and bilateral) working in subject areas (nutrition, health, education, community development) which cover the general needs of children;

(e) To cause national Governments and other agencies, gradually, to integrate into country programming and forward planning concern for the environment of the over fives;

(f) To increase the efficiency of the United Nations development system in its entirety by helping to remove duplication; and

(g) To increase the efficiency of UNICEF itself by helping it reach a vastly more significant number of deprived children so that more of them will enter the development process as "intact" beings.

Annex I

EMERGENCY RELIEF AND REHABILITATION

Excerpt from report of UNICEF Executive Board on
its June 1965 session, E/ICEF/528/Rev.1

[Criteria for aid]

196. The Board had decided to discuss at its present session criteria for post-disaster aid, particularly the distinction between immediate aid and aid for rehabilitation following a natural disaster. It had before it a note from the secretariat on this subject (E/ICEF/517).

197. The Board recognized that in view of the many public and private institutions which stood ready to offer a country immediate emergency relief, it would be better for UNICEF to concentrate in its post-disaster aid on the restoration of services for mothers and children. This was the type of aid which fitted into UNICEF's basic objectives and tended to be neglected by agencies more concerned with the rapid alleviation of suffering in an emergency situation.

198. UNICEF had, however, been able to help occasionally with rapid emergency aid, in particular through the provision of vaccines, sera, drugs and light equipment for the control or prevention of sudden epidemics of disease. For this purpose the Executive Board had established an Emergency Aid Reserve Fund of \$50,000 to be used at the discretion of the Executive Director between Board sessions.

199. The Board decided that it would be useful to make a distinction in its provision of post-disaster aid between emergency aid and restorative aid. It adopted the following policy for post-disaster aid:

1. Emergency aid

(a) Disaster relief in the immediate post-disaster period may be provided on a limited scale and only in exceptional cases where UNICEF is in a unique position to help. Requests for such aid should normally be made within three months of the disaster.

(b) To permit the prompt provision of aid in small emergencies, such as threatened epidemics, the Emergency Aid Reserve Fund to be used at the discretion of the Executive Director between Board sessions should be set at a level of \$100,000. If necessary, the Executive Director may undertake over-expenditures not exceeding an additional \$100,000.

2. Restorative aid

(a) Long-term measures to meet children's needs have overriding priority in the allocation of UNICEF resources.

(b) Consequently, when asked for post-disaster aid, UNICEF will give preference to the restoration of permanent services for mothers and children.

(c) In the restoration of services, priority will be given to projects already assisted; and, within such projects, to the restoration of equipment or supplies which UNICEF has previously given to a project.

(d) Proposals for the restoration of permanent services should, so far as feasible, be planned and reviewed in the normal way with Governments and with the technical agencies of the United Nations. When such proposals lie outside a project already assisted by UNICEF, the technical approval of the United Nations agencies should be sought before a recommendation for UNICEF assistance is made to the Executive Board.

(e) The Executive Board will take a decision on post-disaster restorative aid by mail poll only when the seriousness of the situation requires that the decision not be deferred until the next scheduled session of the Board.

Annex II

DECLARATION OF AN EMERGENCY FOR CHILDREN

Excerpt from report of UNICEF Executive Board on
its May 1974 session, E/ICEF/633

6. ...

"1. The Executive Board has reviewed the situation of the 400 to 500 million children in countries adversely affected by the current economic crisis which prompted the convening of the sixth special session of the General Assembly. The Board concludes that an emergency situation faces many of those children and believes that it is the Board's duty to call this danger to the attention of the world community.

"2. The Board has long been deeply concerned about the situation of the children in the developing world, particularly in the poorest countries, where millions live in poverty. It considers that, as a result of the economic crisis, there is now grave danger of a further deterioration of the situation of children in many countries, including possibilities of more wide-spread malnutrition and famine. It fears that many countries will be in danger of having to reduce already minimal basic services for children, affecting not only their nutrition but also their health, education and, more generally, their prospects for life. The danger is particularly threatening in countries which have been victims of natural disasters, such as drought or floods.

"3. Bearing in mind the fact that the main responsibility in dealing with the situation of their children falls upon the developing countries themselves and that their total needs will require the full co-operation of the world community, the Board decides that an appropriate response for UNICEF in the circumstances should include:

- "(a) Immediate special assistance to Governments in the promotion of national food and nutrition policies, the production and storage of food particularly at the village level, the education of parents and community leaders in child nutrition, support to supplementary feeding schemes, as well as the rapid strengthening and enlargement of basic health services and the encouragement of responsible parenthood;

"(b) Help to developing countries to monitor the overall situation of their children and to develop additional programmes for children which might be assisted through UNICEF as well as through many other sources of aid;

"(c) Help in disseminating information about the needs of children to the widest possible audience.

"4. The Board requests the Executive Director to bring the needs of children in adversely affected countries to the attention of the Secretary-General for urgent consideration in the emergency operation and to the attention of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Special Programme. It also authorizes the Executive Director to participate as fully as possible in the Special Programme and to take any other appropriate measures to alleviate the situation within the context of approved Board policies.

"5. The Board appeals to all Governments, especially those of the industrialized countries and other potential contributors, as well as to the general public, to increase, as soon as possible, their support of programmes for children in adversely affected countries, whether bilaterally, through the Special Programme to be established pursuant to the recent General Assembly action, or directly to UNICEF, as appropriate.

"6. The Board invites all members of the UNICEF family - the members of the Board, the Secretariat, the UNICEF National Committees and accredited non-governmental organizations, as well as private individuals interested in UNICEF - to support the implementation of this decision in all ways appropriate for them.

"7. The Board requests that the Economic and Social Council endorse this decision in an appropriate way at its fifty-seventh session."

Annex III

THE YOUNG CHILD

Excerpts from report of UNICEF Executive Board

(a) June 1975 session, E/ICEF/528/Rev.1

How to provide services for the young child

34. A major policy question on the Board's agenda was how to reach the young child, aged one to six years...

35. The Board had before it a report especially prepared by the International Children's Centre on the growth and development of the young child from one to six years (E/ICEF/521 and Corr.1) and a note and recommendations by the Secretariat on reaching the young child (E/ICEF/520 and Corr.1). Considerable additional documentation was introduced during the course of the Board's discussion, including written statements by a number of Governments, by technical agencies in the United Nations family, and by some non-governmental organizations. In addition, oral reports were made by a number of delegations. Statements were also made by UNICEF consultants.

...

52. Much had to be done to focus attention on the importance of giving the young child adequate care and on the possible consequences of neglect at this age on future growth and development. Recognition of the importance of this age group by parents, the community, and by the State, would help provide the missing link in ensuring the continuity of essential services from infancy through school age. Moreover, it might well provide a significant new incentive for strengthening existing programmes in the fields of health, nutrition, education, social welfare and community development.

53. The Board agreed that the greatest emphasis should be placed on reaching the young child through existing channels and established programmes. Everything possible should therefore be done to mobilize all available resources in order to improve and increase services to young children. National policies for children should take into account the needs of this critical age group. In the United Nations system, the advice and assistance of the technical agencies was needed. Non-governmental agencies could make an important contribution; in some countries they had pioneered in this field.

54. UNICEF's current policies regarding assistance for training, pilot projects, and programmes in the fields of health, nutrition, social welfare services and education made it possible for UNICEF to help countries meet the problem of the young child. It was clear, however, that much more could be done within these forms of UNICEF aid. The Board suggested that the Executive Director arrange for a person to have specific responsibility for ensuring that the necessary attention was given to encouraging action on behalf of the young child.

55. The Board believed that countries planning projects in various fields assisted by UNICEF should be encouraged by UNICEF staff and by the co-operating technical agencies to pay special attention to the benefits that might accrue to the young child.

56. The Board also believed that it would be useful to bring to the attention of key persons in countries concerned with programmes which could benefit the young child some basic information about the needs of this age group, examples of practical ways to reach the group and the possibilities of UNICEF aid. The country reports and other materials presented at the Board's session could constitute a basic source for the preparation of this information.

57. The developing countries present such a variety of situations that it has to be assumed that any country seeking to reach the young child more effectively, with help from the outside, would assess the situation of its young children on the basis of the following factors:

(a) The situation in different parts of the country: urban, rural, etc.

(b) The important objectives for the young child, such as improving nutrition, health, child-rearing practices, etc.

(c) The possibilities of helping the young child directly, and of helping him through his mother, the family and the community.

(d) The extent to which present services and training programmes are benefiting the young child, and the ministry or administrative channels and other resources which can best be used, or adapted to use, for these purposes.

58. UNICEF assistance for such assessments could be available within the framework of the present global allocation for help with country planning and project preparation. The agencies of the United Nations system are also in a position to give technical help for such assessments.

59. Usually it will be necessary for several ministries to co-operate if a comprehensive approach to the problems of the young child is to be found.

...

61. In view of the many unsolved problems and the absence of generally accepted methods for reaching mothers and children, it is assumed that countries will want to experiment with new ideas and test methods in pilot areas. UNICEF would be prepared to provide assistance for this purpose.

62. It is essential to introduce into the basic and in-service training of people in services coming into contact with children a greater understanding of the development of the young child and some orientation concerning his needs. This

applies to professional and auxiliary personnel in health, education, social service, community development, home economics, agricultural extension, and all the various channels which could be used to bring services to the young child (see chart above). Provision for field practice is important and could be a significant aspect of pilot projects. Conferences, seminars, and various information media reaching the professions could be encouraged. The normal forms of UNICEF assistance to training could be supplemented in order to bring this new emphasis to existing training schemes as well as to new courses.

63. So much depends on the education of mothers and the public generally that special efforts should be made for information programmes of a practical nature, using all available channels, including mass media (e.g. radio and television), and such activities as literacy classes. This will require the preparation and dissemination of information materials on the young child. UNICEF assistance could be given along the lines already established in various programmes for aid in the preparation of educational materials.

64. Assessment of the results of programmes was considered important by the Board. Provision should be made for such assessments to individual projects.

65. The global programme assessments prepared periodically for the Board (e.g. maternal and child health, family and child welfare) should contain special sections on how young children fare. ...

(b) June 1967 session, E/ICEF/563

Review of progress in aid for the young child

144. Following its review in 1965 of the needs of the young child, aged one to six years, the Board urged greater attention to these needs and asked for a report in 1957 on the progress made...

145. In the reports to the Board and in the Board discussion a number of points emerged. Special attention had been given to the young child in various international and inter-country conferences and seminars, in which UNICEF had participated. The dissemination of the conclusions of these conferences and the special papers on the young child prepared for them, as well as the calibre of the conference participants, was apparently leading to some re-orientation of administrators, planners and technical experts toward the young child. In several countries which had participated in the conferences beginnings were being made by the Government to develop an over-all view on action required along a number of fronts to reach the young child.

146. In some countries there was evidence of greater efforts being made to reach the young child through the extension of day-care centres. A few countries had begun to experiment with setting up day-care centres in the villages as part of community development and social welfare activities, placing considerable reliance on mothers' clubs and volunteer effort. Short-term training for workers in day-care centres was receiving more attention in some places.

147. There was a growing recognition of the need to incorporate more about the young child in the training of health and nutrition workers and school teachers. There was also a growing awareness that the schools, through encouraging the attendance of more girls and including such practical subjects as nutrition, health, home economics and child care, could have a very important influence.

148. Efforts were also being made through MCH centres in some places to reach the young child. However it was clear that a much fuller use of existing health resources needed to be made for the benefit of the young child...

149. The acceleration of local production and distribution of low-cost protein-rich foods would be an important step in meeting the nutritional needs of urban children... Of interest to the Board also was the evidence that new approaches were being found to reach the young rural child through involving mothers in various types of feeding-demonstration-education schemes as part of applied nutrition programmes.

150. These developments reflected the increased interest of countries in the young child, encouraged in part by the efforts of field staff of UNICEF and other concerned agencies in the United Nations family. Nevertheless, it was clear to the Board that, on the whole, the advance toward improving the position of the young child, was very slow. In far too many places there was still little evidence of any progress. It was sobering to be informed by the representative of WHO that in developing countries mortality rates among children one to four years old were thirty, forty or as much as fifty times higher than in the developed countries. Considerably more future effort was needed by UNICEF and the agencies with which it collaborated to help countries protect the young child against death, as well as to provide those who lived protection against disease and promote their emotional and social development.

(c) April-May 1972 session, E/ICEF/624

91. A main preoccupation of UNICEF, in its assistance to maternal and child health and nutrition, was with the young child. As was underlined in the Board's discussion on nutrition, feeding programmes for the young child, while important, did not necessarily prevent protein malnutrition for that age group; it was necessary to immunize the children against infectious disease, provide safe drinking water and educate mothers on the elements of hygiene and nutrition (see para. 30). Although UNICEF had been providing aid to day care centres for pre-school children, mostly for working mothers, as part of family and child welfare programmes, the extent to which it should encourage pre-primary education, discussed in connexion with UNICEF policy on aid for education, was left open for further study ...

92. Project recommendations before the Board indicated that some Governments were beginning to give special attention to reaching the young child by adapting and co-ordinating existing services to involve local community resources, train staff and educate parents. Many of the national studies that UNICEF had assisted in the past few years had drawn attention to the crucial importance of that age group, and that appeared to be having its effect on the selection of priorities in some national development plans. On the whole, however, there was no planned and systematic approach to the young child which considered the whole range of his needs, including not only his health and nutrition requirements, but his emotional development and his preparation for schooling...

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