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E/ICEF/R.413
19 February 1953

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S EMERGENCY FUND

Programme Committee

RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FOR AN APPORTIONMENT TO ISRAEL FOR EXPANSION
OF MATERNAL AND CHILD WELFARE SERVICES.

1. In this paper the Administration recommends, subject to the availability of funds, an apportionment to Israel of \$30,000 from the Eastern Mediterranean Area allocation for the purchase of equipment and supplies to assist in the expansion of maternal and child welfare services. This recommendation represents an extension of a programme already in operation for which a first apportionment of \$1,000 was approved by the Executive Board in November 1951 (E/ICEF-184, paras. 14-190.)

M Problems

2. A general outline of statistical background and the main features of maternal and child welfare problems and services in Israel were set forth in the November 1951 recommendation to the Board (E/ICEF/244/Rev.1). Since the end of 1950, the population has further increased by more than 250,000 and now totals over 1,500,000. This figure includes a large number of immigrants. The number of annual births has risen from 36,000 in 1950, to an average of 50,000 in 1951 and 1952. The Government has, meanwhile, maintained its policy of developing preventive health services for mothers and children and has attempted, despite severe economic problems, to keep pace with the rapid expansion of the population. There are at present 270 infant welfare centres. The need for additional work in this field in rural areas, especially in the new immigrant settlements, is demonstrated by the

fact that the infant mortality rate continues to rise with the highest rate in 1951 occurring in rural areas settled by immigrants, registering 82 per 1000 live births as compared with a rate of 39.02 for the whole country and of 17 for the collective settlements (Kibbutzim.)

3. The facts indicate that most of the morbidity and mortality among infants can be attributed directly to preventable causes, in which lack of knowledge of hygiene and basic child care principles plays an important role.

4. The previous assistance by UNICEF to Israel for a long-term programme of child care provided \$40,000 for the supply of transport servicing 120 MCH centres, and a small amount of equipment. Practically all of these supplies were delivered by the Autumn of 1952, and have already produced beneficial effects on the programme, although it is too early to give a full evaluation. During a recent field survey, a visiting UNICEF representative had an opportunity to accompany some of the MCH teams on a typical round of duties served by the UNICEF vehicles. He reported evidence of effective work which had been made possible solely through the provision of these cars. They have ensured the regular servicing of many villages which were previously beyond reach due to impassible roads and long distances, and the retention of nurses previously about to resign on account of the fatigue of haphazard transport. These cars have also been able, in a few cases, to save children's lives by emergency transport to hospitals for severe illnesses.

Objectives and Plan of Action

5. The Government proposes to direct its main efforts towards the expansion of the existing network of infant welfare centres for maternal and child health with special emphasis on preventive work in rural areas. During the financial years 1953/54 an additional thirty such centres are planned, about one third in each of the southern,

/central and

central and northern areas. This addition will bring the total of functioning stations in the country to 300. Some of the new centres in the Galilee region are to be opened in Arab villages where no adequate services have been available hitherto. These centres will each serve a population of about 100 pregnant women, 1/170 infants, 500/600 children aged 1-6 years, and 800 school children. Five of these twenty larger centres will include a qualified midwife on the staff. The centres operating in smaller settlements will be in the charge of one public health nurse and visiting obstetrician and paediatrician. Twenty of the centres will be staffed by two fully qualified public health nurses and one nursery nurse as an aid, with paediatrician, obstetrician and eye specialist as visiting doctors.

6 In the Galilee region, and in one or two new settlements where circumstances justify it, the Government intends to begin a domiciliary midwifery service. Although hitherto more than 90% of births in Israel have taken place in institutions it has been found that in certain areas the scarcity and cost of transportation to hospital, lack of telephone service and prejudices against institutional deliveries have brought about an increase in the number of non-hospital cases. It is significant also that there has been a sharp increase in infant mortality from tetanus, indicating umbilical complications arising out of untrained assistance at confinements.

7 In the Galilee area, near Tiberias, it is proposed to open a ten-bed maternity home to serve a large new immigrant settlement adjoining a camp of some 8,000 immigrants. Personnel and buildings are already available. The local municipal council will share with the Government the costs of maintenance expenses. The maternity will be staffed by two midwives, a visiting obstetrician and paediatrician and supporting personnel. /, 8 In addition

8. In addition to equipment and expendable supplies for the above new stations, UNICEF would provide a small amount of soap and fish oil capsules for distribution in 100 of the already existing centres.

9. The Ministry of Health will administer the program.

UNICEF Commitments

10. If this recommendation is approved UNICEF would provide:

Standard equipment and expendable supplies for one year for 30 additional MCW centres including: \$19,700

Midwifery kits and incidentals for 5 MCW centres

13,000 lbs of soap and 2,600,000 fish liver oil capsules for 100 centres 8,300

Equipment and supplies for 10-bed maternity home 2,000

Total \$30,000

Government Commitments

11. The Government undertakes the following commitments:

(a) The construction of the buildings of the 30 centres and the maternity home. Several of the buildings are already available. Estimated Capital Cost: IL 120,000 (approx US \$336,000)

(b) To provide an annual budget to cover the upkeep of the buildings, maintenance of transportation and salaries of the staff. This budget will become part of the permanent financial provisions of the Ministry of Health. Some of the staff are already trained and can be employed as soon as centres and supplies are ready. Estimated annual cost: IL 120,000 (approx US \$336,000)

Other: International Participation and Technical Approval

12. The program has the technical approval of WHO. The Public Health Planning officer of the WHO Regional Office reviewed the Government's proposals during a recent visit to Israel. WHO will continue to be closely consulted in the development of the programme and will aid in determining final supply specifications. The Eastern Mediterranean Area Social Welfare Adviser has also been consulted on social welfare aspects of the project with which he is in agreement. He has expressed his preparedness to cooperate further during the implementation of the plan of operations.

Target Time Schedule

13. The equipment and supplies will be delivered as the centres are ready with facilities and staff, starting by the end of Summer, 1953.

UNICEF Representation

14. Israel is in the area serviced by the Eastern Mediterranean Area Office and will continue to be visited regularly by personnel from that office.

Total UNICEF Aid

15. If this recommendation is approved, UNICEF aid to Israel will total \$875,000 as follows:

	<u>When Approved</u>	<u>1948/52</u>	<u>Shipped</u> <u>1953 and after</u>
Feeding and Nutrition	Nov. '49, June '50		
	Nov. '50, May '51	393,100	—
Leather and Textiles	June 1950	22,800	—
MC	Nov. 1949, Nov. '51	92,400	16,900
MC	April 1952	—	300,000
Unprogrammed		—	19,800
MC	Recommended this document	—	30,000
	<u>Total</u>	<u>\$508,300</u>	<u>366,700</u>

•/Recommendation

Recommendation

1. The Administration recommends, subject to availability of funds:
 - a) that apportionment to Israel of \$30,000 from the Eastern Mediterranean Area allocation for the provision of equipment and supplies including drugs, diet supplements and soap, for the expansion of MCH services, and
 - b) that the Administration be authorized to approve a plan of operations as outlined above.