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Notes

**4pp. Discusses fundraising policies and details what the press work entails. Stresses the importance of good press relations in New York. Discusses the work of the US Cttee for UNICEF and its press work (very limited). Also mentions UNICEF staff involved with media work.  
This paper was possibly part of a budget document, medium term plan, or similar document.**

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## MEDIA WORK IN NEW YORK

UNICEF's media work at Headquarters has changed dramatically over the past two years. Whereas Mr. Labouisse was cautious in his approach to the press and reluctant to meet journalists, Mr. Grant is acutely conscious of the advantages of an aggressive and upfront media policy. He not only welcomes meetings with the press, but constantly seeks opportunities for these. The new emphasis on public sector fund-raising and the target of \$50 million from the private sector in 1982, up 25 percent from last year, further underscore our need to increase our efforts to get more and better media exposure.

In response to the changes in the Front Office, the Information Division in New York was re-organized in 1981 to include a Media and Special Events Unit. At the moment the unit has the following responsibilities:

- a) Covering the media side of UNICEF's emergency work. In 1981/82 this has meant dealing with special emergency situations in Kampuchea, 14 African countries, Lebanon, El Salvador, East Timor, etc., in addition to the smaller one-time emergencies funded from the Executive Director's emergency reserve.
- b) Covering conferences and meetings, such as Executive Board sessions, pledging conferences, donor meetings, etc.
- c) Press work - This includes:  
writing press releases --- 83 press releases and information notes were issued in New York in 1981; arranging press conferences and feeding information to the U.N.'s O.P.I. for the noon press briefing; arranging media interviews for Mr. Grant, Prince Talal, etc; dealing with controversies -- media attacks, etc.; media work relating to special events -- including support for the Greeting Cards Operation; and responding to ad hoc demands from the Front Office.

In 1981, the Unit responded to events, attacks and media requests, thus performing a fire-fighting function. If we are to adequately

meet the demands and expectations of the Front Office, we have to do much more. In the years immediately ahead, we have to make greater efforts to initiate coverage and take full advantage of opportunities presented.

### Emergencies

After many years of debate over the desirability and extent of UNICEF's involvement in emergency situations, the organization has recognized that it will have to continue to play a clear and definite role in almost all emergencies affecting children. It is now re-examining its emergency procedures and getting ready to send out new instructions to field offices. A focal point for emergencies in the Front Office will become operational in September; the section on emergencies in the Field Manual is being re-written; a new training programme for staff involved in emergency work is being initiated and a system of regular reporting (both internal and external) is being established.

The Information Division will have to gear itself up to meet this new situation. In New York this will mean the allocation of almost full-time responsibility for emergencies to one Information Officer. If this is done, we can expect to participate in the reporting of emergencies and can prepare adequate briefing material. In recent months we have produced and updated a kit on Africa and tried to keep up a regular flow of press releases and information notes for Committees. We need to do this not only to report on what we are doing but also to explain our position in situations such as the current one in El Salvador - and until recently East Timor - where there is a 'loud' emergency affecting children, but no UNICEF special effort on their behalf.

### Press work

The Information Division in New York needs to build up its press contacts. Those of us who live in New York know that no matter how good our media contacts are elsewhere, Headquarters are in New York and our press work will be judged to a considerable

degree by our ability to get published there. A solid beginning must be made with the press corps based at the United Nations and foreign correspondents with offices elsewhere in New York. U.N. based correspondents not only cover the daily activities of the U.N. and its New York based-agencies but also often prepare the initial background material for all U.N. conferences whether they are held in Cancun or Nairobi. If we are able to produce adequate press material on the child-related aspects of hunger, the environment, energy, etc, we can get mentioned and have our concerns expressed when these issues are covered.

#### The U.S. press

This is the primary concern of the U.S. Committee for UNICEF. Unfortunately, the Committee's own press work is very limited. In the new re-organization of the Committee, media work has been given a very low priority. The Committee's Communications Department plans to concentrate its efforts on supporting their corporate fund-raising efforts, stimulating the sale of Greeting Cards, supporting trick-or-treat campaigns and helping to expand the Committee's work with NGOs.

Since the Committee cannot afford to pay the salary of an experienced Information Officer, they have hired someone whom they hope to train on the job. She has no media or development experience and the process of training her is only just beginning.

All in all, the Committee is not in a position to do any real press work.

Last year, they hired a commercial firm to design a public relations programme for them. This programme included a plan for feature placement, monthly press luncheons and an annual press briefing. Very little has come of any of this.

#### Staffing

UNICEF is fortunate in having people at senior levels with some excellent press contacts at the management and senior editorial

level in the U.S. and other media. However, we need to systematically build contacts at the correspondent and producer/editor level. In order to do this we need to have adequate staff resources.

The media side of the work carried out by the Unit has so far been done by one professional officer who has other important additional responsibilities.

We need to have one press officer who can deal with emergencies and prepare most of the press releases. In addition, we need to have another professional officer who can devote time to planning and developing our media relations. Establishing and maintaining contacts with journalists and supplying them with information relevant to their individual needs is a time-consuming business.

#### Other Media Unit Activities

The work of the Unit in terms of both special events and liaison with National Committees presents other special problems and needs to be reviewed seperately.

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29 June 1982