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UNICEF  
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18 April 1986

INFORMAL PAPER BY CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Conclusions and recommendations on  
"Children in especially difficult circumstances"

1. The Executive Board notes the broad and strong consensus on the timeliness of the policy review undertaken on the important subject of children in especially difficult circumstances, taking particular note of the fact that its Joint Session with NGO Forum focused attention on this subject. The Board expresses appreciation to the UNICEF secretariat for its involvement of and consultation with concerned organizations in the preparation of the documentation on the subject (E/ICEF/1986/L.3 and L.6).
2. The Board notes the strong general support expressed by its members for the recommendations contained in document E/ICEF/1986/L.3 and reaffirms the UNICEF mandate and responsibilities for the child as a whole, in the context of the policy review.
3. The Board notes with concern the large and growing number of children in especially circumstances, notably in the areas of armed conflict and those affected by natural disasters, children in exploitative work situations, street children and children subject to abuse and neglect, and recognizes that feasible preventive and rehabilitative measures are available to support physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social development of many of these children. In this context, the Board notes the support of the international community for the early adoption of a Convention on the Rights of the Child which bears significantly on the situation of these children.
4. The Board reaffirms the importance and significance of the principle and practice of UNICEF working for children on both sides of the conflict and requests further elaboration and refinement of the concepts of "zone of peace for children" and "corridors of peace". It urges all countries, relevant international agencies and non-governmental organizations to give moral and material support for actions on behalf of these vulnerable children, without ethnic, political or religious discrimination, aimed at providing essential services for them on all sides of armed conflict situations.
5. The Board is of the view that UNICEF should expand the scope and range of its co-operation in programmes benefiting children in especially difficult circumstances, stressing that the programmes for such children form an appropriate part of UNICEF strategy for child survival and development.
6. Within this framework, the Executive Board endorses the following activities, among others, as UNICEF's response with regard to the children in especially difficult circumstances:

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A. At the country level:

(i) The scope of the regular analysis of the situation of children should be widened to include children in especially difficult circumstances to enable appropriate consideration for policy or programme action;

(ii) UNICEF support may be provided to strengthen the capacity of the government organizations, universities, institutes, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations to formulate policies and to plan and implement effective actions for children in especially difficult circumstances;

(iii) The country programmes should include support, where it is needed and requested, for extending existing or creating new services for children in especially difficult circumstances and, wherever possible, should integrate such services into the existing UNICEF-supported programmes;

(iv) UNICEF should promote in government, professional groups and private sectors awareness of children in especially difficult circumstances and of the need for preventive and rehabilitative action for them.

B. At the international level:

(i) UNICEF should collaborate closely with other relevant international agencies involved in actions relating to the children in especially difficult circumstances, recognizing the lead role played by such agencies in relation to various aspects of this problem. Regarding street children, UNICEF should play the lead role and collaborate with concerned agencies;

(ii) UNICEF should promote and assist the collection, analysis and diffusion of programming information about interventions and actions with regard to the children in especially difficult circumstances. It should also contribute to an information-sharing network, including transfer of scientific/technical knowledge from developed to developing countries pertaining to this area;

(iii) UNICEF should take active interest and participate in the work being done within the United Nations system for the establishment of legal framework for rights, needs and requirements for children;

(iv) UNICEF should work with its National Committee partners, with international agencies and non-governmental organizations, particularly UNICEF NGO Committee, in dissemination of information and raising of awareness about children in especially difficult circumstances and the need for appropriate action;

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(v) All countries should consider increasing resources contributed to UNICEF to undertake expanded activities with regard to the children in especially difficult circumstances. UNICEF should also seek specific-purpose contributions for projects in this area. Technical assistance and training facilities may also be provided to needy countries for better and effective implementation of such projects.

7. The Executive Board requests that UNICEF develop an implementation strategy with special attention to improved staff training and appropriate allocation of resources and staff time to undertake activities relating to the children in especially difficult circumstances, taking into account its priorities and overall resource situation.

8. The Executive Board requests that activities undertaken by UNICEF in this area be reported annually through the Executive Director's report to its sessions.

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