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UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND  
Programme Committee

JORDAN

Recommendation of the Executive Director  
for an Apportionment for Continued  
Emergency Feeding Assistance

1. In this paper the Administration recommends, subject to the availability of funds, an apportionment from the Emergency Situations allocation to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan of \$435,000 for the provision of dried skim milk, other food items and soap and the services of an administrative officer to continue during 1955 and 1956 UNICEF assistance to about 50,000 children and mothers in the Jordanian villages along the Jordan/Israel border.
2. If this recommendation is approved, it will represent a continuation of the programme now in operation for which apportionments totalling \$540,000 (not including freight) have already been made by UNICEF: \$60,000 in February 1952 by mail poll ballot, \$110,000 in April 1952, \$220,000 in October 1952 and for the year 1953 and \$120,000 in September 1953 for the year 1954 (E/ICEF/198, paras. 606-614, E/ICEF/212, paras. 604-615, E/ICEF/243, paras. 898-906).

The Present Aspect of the Problem

3. The difficult economic conditions under which the population of the Jordanian villages on the Jordan/Israel armistice boundaries have been living since the end of hostilities in 1948 have been described in previous recommendations to the Board (E/ICEF/R.301, R.358 and R.476). These people are deprived of a livelihood and, at the same time, are not eligible as refugees to UNRWA aid. Unfortunately, an improvement in the situation cannot be expected in the near future. The prevailing atmosphere of oppression and distress has in fact been heightened by the increase in border incidents, the frequency and unpredictability of which have added fear and tension to economic destitution.

4. That this situation has caused serious and widespread malnutrition and underweight in the children of the area is shown in a recent report of the Medical Officer in charge of the British Save the Children Fund team engaged in health

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relief work in the villages.

5. Government efforts to improve economic conditions have consisted of the work of the Government-sponsored Jordanian Board of Development and of the Development Bank of Jordan to which USFOA, the Government and UNRWA contribute. The Jordanian Board of Development, operating with funds from the British Loan to Jordan, started in early 1953 work aimed at improving village water sources and at introducing methods for reclaiming the hilly and stony lands which characterize the area. This constitutes a long-term plan, the results of which cannot be anticipated for at least four years. Furthermore, since it has been started in only a few villages, its effect, although valuable as an example and stimulus, cannot be expected to solve the total problem.

6. The Government, with the assistance of UNRWA and bilateral agencies, has recently started work on:

- (a) irrigation and hydro-electric projects on the Jordan/Yarmuk rivers;
- (b) the development of the Aqaba Gulf where a main harbour is being built to augment the provisional port facilities now available;
- (c) the expansion of railway and road networks, mainly for tourists and pilgrimage (including the restoration of the Hedjan Railway).

Since the average time for completion of these projects is five years, the anticipated long-range gains are too remote to provide comfort for the presently destitute. Any immediate benefits are directed primarily to the settlement and rehabilitation of the 480,000 Palestinian Refugees whose problem takes priority over that of the borderline villages.

7. Since the previous recommendation in September 1953, a general revision of the lists of beneficiaries (first elaborated in early 1952 on the basis of figures provided by UNRWA) has taken place, resulting in the adjustment of the overall figure to about 50,000 beneficiaries including new births. The figure of 35,000 which has been quoted in previous recommendations was found to be true as a monthly average of the daily milk collections and adequate as a basis for liquid milk distributions only, which are dependent on the existence of milk distribution centres for the refugee programme. When other supplies and dry rations were made available however, and the full complement of beneficiaries appeared, the difference was such as to necessitate considerable investigation, which was carried out in cooperation with UNRWA, the village mukhtars and the District Government Commissioners. The

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distribution plan for the future is therefore based on approximately 50,000 beneficiaries.

8. In view of the need, it is proposed that the Fund allocate to the border populations a greater proportion of foodstuffs received by the Fund as contributions in kind, reducing such allocations to the UNRWA refugees programme, which has its own food budget and does not depend in any way on UNICEF; no allocation to the Palestine Refugee programme is proposed at the current Board session. If this proposal is accepted, annual allocations of "Other foods" to the Jordan border emergency programme would have increased as follows:

1952	-	\$ 30,000
1953	-	60,000
1954	-	110,000
1955	-	178,650
1956	-	178,650

The apportionments proposed for 1955 and 1956 can be fulfilled through contributions which UNICEF receives in kind, or through those money contributions for which foodstuffs or soap represent by far the best purchase. The milk ration would also be continued, at a nominal purchase price, plus overseas freight.

9. UNRWA has continued to provide without charge valuable assistance in the transport, warehousing, distribution and accounting of UNICEF supplies. To date, this service has been performed by a competent senior official, with staff, who coordinated all requirements and ensured close control. The increasing responsibilities of this official and the reorganisation and reduction of the UNRWA personnel establishment, have now made it impossible to continue this arrangement. UNRWA is, however, willing to continue these services on a loan basis against reimbursement of half of the salary of a qualified staff member. Since such service is vital to the effectiveness of the programme, it is proposed that funds be provided accordingly within this apportionment.

10. Cooperation between UNICEF and the voluntary relief societies in the area continues. Both the Lutheran World Federation and the Mennonites have distributed large quantities of UNICEF supplies to which they often added food and clothing. The British Save the Children Fund is providing health and nutrition services to mothers, infants and children through a centre in Hebron and sub-centres in outlying areas.

Plan of Operations

11. The plan would continue daily distributions of liquid milk and quarterly distributions of other commodities through UNRWA and voluntary society channels. The plan of operations would, at the same time, look toward developing all possibilities of changing the present emergency character of the programme to one of constructive and long-range benefit.

UNICEF Commitments

12. It is estimated that 800 tons of skim milk powder will be required for the continuation of the programme through 1956. In addition, the Administration recommends that \$357,300 be apportioned for the provision of other foods and soap which will be taken in part from contribution in kind made by Governments to UNICEF.

13. If this recommendation is approved, UNICEF will provide the following:

			<u>Cost</u>
(a)	<u>Milk (Skim)</u>	800 tons	\$ 17,700
(b)	<u>Other Foods:</u>		
	Rice	600 tons	105,600
	Margarine	400 tons	134,200
	Soap	100 tons	17,500
	Other		100,000
			357,300
(c)	<u>Administrative Officer</u>		
	The cost for the two-year period of reimbursement to UNRWA of salary, travel and other allowances as described in paragraph 9.		4,000
(d)	Freight costs estimated at		<u>56,000</u>
		TOTAL:	<u>\$435,000</u>

Government Commitments

14. Because of severe financial stringency, the Government has in the past limited its participation to occasional releases of wheat, flour and dates and to the provision of personnel to assist in local distribution of dry rations. Distribution through schools of a small amount of UNICEF milk has also been organized in the past six months with the use of local Government funds for equipment and UNRWA assistance with transport. First reports show that 3,755 and 5,713 school children were reached in January and February, respectively. It is hoped that these distributions may be expanded, particularly through community participation.

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15. The Government will resume distributions of flour grain or such other items as may be available. As an indication of its concern and interest in the programme, the Government will earmark in its limited 1955 budget a cash contribution to the UNICEF programme of 4,000 Jordanian Dinars (about US \$11,200) to be spent, in consultation with UNICEF, on material relief for the children and mothers of the border villages. The supervisory services previously provided by the Jordanian authorities will be expanded to the degree possible, for which the cooperation of the Probation Officers of the Ministry of Social Affairs and of the border-line Police Force will be made available. The Government will further try to develop the school feeding scheme referred to in paragraph 14 above.

UNRWA and Voluntary Societies

16. Apart from the proposed revision of arrangements for the availability to the UNICEF programme of an UNRWA staff member, the services and facilities heretofore provided by UNRWA and the private societies will continue. The Lutheran World Federation and the Mennonites, in distributing UNICEF supplies through their centres, will supplement them with food and clothing from their own resources. The Save The Children Fund team will continue to provide medical and nutritional services to infants, children and mothers in the area, in addition to distributing UNICEF supplies.

UNICEF Representation

17. Projects in Jordan are serviced by visits from the UNICEF Eastern Mediterranean Area Office in Beirut.

Recommendation

18. The Administration recommends, subject to the availability of funds, that:
- (a) an apportionment of \$435,000 be made to Jordan from the Emergency Situations allocation to provide skim milk, other foods and soap and reimbursement to UNRWA for the services of an administrative officer for the period 1 January 1955 - 31 December 1956 to continue the emergency feeding programme in villages on the Jordan/Israel border; and
  - (b) that the Administration be authorized to approve a plan of operations as outlined above.
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