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UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

Programme Committee

Recommendation of the Executive Director for an Allocation

LIBYA

School Feeding

1. The Executive Director recommends an allocation to Libya of \$108,000 to cover freight costs on 2,997,440 pounds of skim milk powder and to provide fish-liver-oil capsules, soap, milk, distribution equipment, to continue and to expand the school feeding programme during the two school years 1957/1958, 1958/1959. This allocation covers assistance in the third and fourth years of a programme for which an allocation of \$118,000 (including freight) was made by the Board in September 1954 (E/ICEF/L.611). The implementation of this allocation will be dependent upon the availability of United States surplus skim milk powder free of charge at the time shipment by UNICEF is required.
2. The school feeding programme began as a small-scale pilot project in the spring of 1955 when a daily supplementary meal was given to 3,500 children in eleven primary schools. Valuable experience was gained during this preliminary phase both with regard to administration and practical methods of distribution. It was possible, therefore, to launch the school feeding programme on a country-wide basis in October 1955 and to feed in the ensuing school year a peak daily number of 60,700 children. During the 1956/1957 school year, which is still in progress, a peak number of close to 70,000 children has been reached. The plan is to extend the feeding programme to benefit 80,000 children in 1957/1958 and 90,000 during the 1958/1959 school year. These figures constitute

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the entire school population of Libya. An FAO nutritionist was assigned to the programme from early 1955 to the end of 1956 and a nutritionist for the new programme will be provided for six months from 1 July, 1957. In 1958 it is anticipated that a full-time food technologist will be supplied in addition to a nutritionist.

3. The Government commitments for the two-year period are estimated as equivalent to \$840,000. A major portion of these costs will be met out of funds raised through a surtax on imported goods, established exclusively for the purpose of financing this programme.

Progress to date

4. It is planned that the feeding programme will reach all children enrolled in all the primary schools. There are in Libya an estimated 200,000 children of primary school age. The number of children actually attending school at present is 70,000 and is gradually increasing. As new schools are opened by the Government, the feeding programme is extended to them as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made in each school. When the UNICEF-assisted feeding programme started in October 1955, there were 320 schools in the country. During the 1955/1956 school year another fifty-four schools were opened, thus bringing the total number of schools to 374 with approximately 61,000 children. During the first few months of the second year of the programme, i.e. the school year 1956/1957, feeding operations were carried out in all 374 schools.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Number of Schools</u>	<u>Enrolment Children Fed (peak) or to be Fed</u>
1955/1956	20 beginning of school year 374 end of school year	60,700
1956/1957	374 beginning of school year	70,000
1957/1958	400 (Planned)	80,000
1958/1959	420 (Planned)	90,000

5. The FAO nutritionist assigned to the programme has assisted the Government in implementing and administering the early phase of the programme.

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He has collected information on locally available foodstuffs, on their nutritional value, on diets and customs in various parts of the country, and on other data. These data are being used for the further development of the school feeding programme. It has not yet been possible to initiate a programme of education in nutrition. However, the information referred to above collected by the FAO nutrition expert will help to serve as a basis for developing a sound programme of education in nutrition linked with the school feeding programme. This will start with the appropriate training of teachers. It is planned that this aspect of the programme will be given special attention in the coming school year. FAO will provide a nutrition expert as from the 1 July 1957, who will be concerned with this phase of the programme. In addition, the expert will make a more detailed study of nutrition conditions, particularly through the initiation of dietary surveys. He will also, later on, assist in planning food production on a regional nutritional basis with special reference to the needs of mothers and children.

6. From the beginning of the school year 1955/1956, dates were made available by the Government as a local matching food. The Government-operated factory, which was opened during the first half of 1955, with the technical assistance of FAO, was scheduled to process 1,100 tons of dates per year for the feeding programme. Since a portion of the dates received at the factory was considered unfit, only 700 tons were processed, of which 570 tons were produced in time for distribution in schools. The plan is to double the output in order to cover the total requirements for the school year 1956/1957; it is expected to produce 1,800 tons in 1958/1959. The feeding programme is thus contributing indirectly to the development of the date industry in Libya.

7. In order to compensate for the insufficient output of the date factory and to match the contribution of cheese supplied by the CARE Organization, bread was introduced into the programme and received wide-spread distribution. Some difficulties were encountered with the dried skim milk, and it was considered necessary to provide sugar to make it more acceptable. The Government made sugar

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available during the school year 1955/56 and plans to do so also in 1956/57 (120 tons). The FAO nutrition expert drew attention to the possibility of substituting sugar with locally produced date syrup. It is likely that an FAO food technologist will be supplied in 1958 as a follow-up of the food technology survey carried out in 1955. The preparation of date syrup and protein rich food will be the responsibility of this expert.

8. The daily supplementary meal, which is distributed in the schools during 200 days per school year, consists of a cup of skim milk with sugar added, 100 grammes of dates, a small loaf of bread (approximately 100 grammes), and one fish-oil capsule every other day. Cheese and butter, provided by the CARE Organization, will be added to the meal as long as stocks are available.

9. The school feeding programme is carried out under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education with the co-operation of the Ministry of Health. The immediate responsibility for the implementation rests with the School Feeding Directorate, which was especially established for the purpose, within the Ministry of Education. This central administration is working with three Provincial Inspectorates which have been created for the purpose of administering and supervising the programme. These Inspectorates are responsible for the instruction of the school principals and teachers on the practical aspects of the preparation and distribution. Responsibility for the execution of the programme in the schools rests with the principals.

10. The local UNICEF Representative reports that the Federal, Provincial and local authorities display a very active interest in the development of the programme. It is due to this interest, and the active co-operation of the authorities at all levels, that it was possible to implement this programme even in remote and desert areas thus reaching almost all primary school children.

11. Reports indicate that the number of children attending school has increased due to the distribution of daily meals. There has also been a significant decline in the number of absences due to sickness. Teachers report a steadily increasing alertness among the children.

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The proposed plan

12. Information regarding the widespread malnutrition of school children in Libya, was given in the previous recommendation to the Board (E/ICEF/L.611). The assistance proposed in this recommendation has as its long-term objectives the development of a permanent school feeding service and the gradual improvement of child nutrition throughout Libya. The school feeding service will be used as a medium to increase community and family interest and participation in the educational, social, economic, and health aspects involved.
13. FAO will provide a nutrition expert for six months (as from 1 July) in 1957. He will be responsible for providing technical guidance to the service both with respect to the preparation of foods and in the methods by which nutrition education may be progressively carried out in the schools and communities. This expert will be concerned with the detailed study of nutrition conditions including the initiation of dietary surveys, development of a programme of nutrition education and the planning of food production in order to meet the nutrition requirements of the population, particularly of mothers and children. The Ministry of Health will make available suitable counterparts to work closely with the FAO nutritionist, who will train them in nutrition. In addition to nutrition education, his most important responsibility will be the search for a permanent basis for a comprehensive school feeding service with locally produced foods replacing the presently imported items.
14. The assistance proposed in this recommendation will make it possible to reach 80,000 children through 400 schools in the school year 1957/1958 and increase this number to 90,000 children and 420 schools in 1958/1959. Skim milk will be given on the basis of forty grammes per child per day for 200 days and fish-liver-oil capsules on the basis of thirty capsules per child per year. In view of the vitamin A deficiency in the basic Libyan diet, the FAO expert assigned to the programme has recommended the continuation of the distribution of fish-liver-oil capsules. Soap will be distributed at the rate of one four-ounce cake per class of forty per day.
15. Administration of the programme will continue to be carried out as indicated in paragraph nine. In order to bring about closer co-ordination and co-operation

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between the Ministries of Education, Health, Finance and Agriculture, it is proposed that there be established a central advisory board. This board will lay down the principles for a permanent feeding programme, and will ensure the implementation of the plans thus worked out.

UNICEF commitments

16. UNICEF would provide the following to cover the requirements for two years:

	<u>US\$</u>
a) <u>Skim milk</u>	
At 40 grammes/day, for 200 days/year =	
2,997,440 tons: in plastic bags	
$\frac{1}{2}$ pounds each	NO COST
b) <u>Fish-oil capsules</u>	
At 30 capsules/year/caput =	
5,100,000 capsules	11,475
c) <u>Soap</u>	
Four-ounce cakes (one cake per class of	
40 per day) = 212,500 pounds	18,060
d) <u>Milk distribution and heating equipment</u>	2,500
e) <u>Freight</u>	
i) on milk at $2\frac{1}{4}$ cents per pound = \$67,442	
ii) on other supplies and equipment = \$3,200	70,642
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	102,677
f) <u>Contingencies</u>	323
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	<u>108,000</u>

Government commitments

17. If this recommendation is approved, the Government will undertake to continue the matching of UNICEF contribution by providing daily rations of dates, sugar and bread as follows:

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First year for 80,000 children:

	<u>LE</u>
a) <u>Dates</u> : At 100 grammes/day/child for 200 school days = 1,600 tons	32,000
b) <u>Sugar</u> : At 10 grammes/day/child for 200 school days = 160 tons	5,120
c) <u>Bread</u> : One loaf/day/child for 200 school days = 16,000,000 loaves	80,000
	<u>117,120</u>

Second year for 90,000 children:

	<u>LE</u>
a) <u>Dates</u> : At 100 grammes/day/child for 200 school days = 1,800 tons	36,000
b) <u>Sugar</u> : At 10 grammes/day/child for 200 school days = 180 tons	5,760
c) <u>Bread</u> : One loaf/day/child for 200 school days = 18,000,000 loaves	90,000
	<u>131,760</u>
(US\$696,864)	

18. The Government has also undertaken the provision of one full-time director; three full-time inspectors and assistants; one inspector; the necessary number of personnel in schools, and drivers for the vehicles. It will also continue meeting all other expenses in connexion with the programme. The total cost to the Government for this programme, including the cost of local food is estimated at \$840,000 for the two-year period.

FAO participation

19. FAO maintains an active interest in the development of the programme. It will make available the services of a nutrition expert as from 1st July 1957. The expert will be continued in 1958 providing the appropriate Technical Assistance request is received from the Government. In addition, the work of the FAO

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food technologist to be provided in 1958 will have a considerable bearing on the development of the programme on the basis of local foods.

Target time schedule

20. UNICEF supplies are required to arrive in Libya in July 1957, with a view to enabling the continuation of the programme beginning with the 1957/1958 school year.
