



File Sub: CF/EXD/SP/1986-0040

DRAFT Message by Mr. James P. Grant
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
at the
Pan-Africa Programme Strategy Meeting
(Incomplete Typescript of Tape Recording)

Dakar, Senegal
6 September 1986

	UNICEF Alternate Inventory Label
	 Rcf0006HML
Item # CF/RAD/USAA/DB01/1998-01973	
ExR/Code: CF/EXD/SP/1986-0040	
Pan Africa Programme Strategy Meeting (Not Complete). DRAI	
Date Label Printed 17-Jan-2002	

cover + 7pp + 0/b

Programme Strategy Meeting - Dakar 1986James P. Grant**[6 September 1986]**

We have a health revolution in process in the United States today on smoking, on alcohol and breastfeeding and nutrition. But the way that social organization is being done 80 per cent of the college graduate women breastfeed their babies today. Well under 10 per cent, closer to 1 per cent, of the low income minority population women in the United States breastfeed. So if you go to the New York Hospitals and you go to Beth Israel Hospital and the upper income areas you will see virtually all the women there breastfeeding. But if you go to the hospitals where you have the low income blacks and hispanics you see only 1 per cent breastfeeding. So who is stopping smoking in the United States - it is the well off. You go to a meeting of American business executives or American educators today, out of 20 people it is surprising if one smokes. But I have a big construction job going on next to where I live and I watch them taking their coffee breaks across the street and I see everybody lighting up cigarettes. You can go right on down. Who is changing their nutrition habits, who is exercising? Social organization is a key but you need to find out to whom that social organization is targetted and that is why we have been talking about universality. For a social organization to be relevant, it must have as its objective universal coverage. Once you begin to say it has got to reach everybody, two things leap out at you. One is that one must mobilize frankly all sectors of a society to achieve what looks like a sectoral goal. Thus, we learned in Asia for the Green Revolution that no country in Africa ran a successful revolution just through the ministry of agriculture. Every country that had a successful Green Revolution involved all sectors. The population problem - for the first years it was treated as a health problem. We did not begin to get significant results in Asia until it broke out and became the responsibility of many sectors with national leadership. And, I must say, I was very impressed at the last session of the World Health Organization which had as their key theme of the meeting the responsibility of the non health sectors for health. The resolution that came from there was just a joy because it talked about the fact that you cannot succeed without involvement of all the sectors and calling on them all to be involved.

Secondly, it must be cost effective. You cannot talk about succeeding if the costs cannot be replicated on a national basis. Now what has this to do with GOBI, CSDR and UCI. Let's take one field, and within one field, particular aspects of it and demonstrate this set of concepts which, if they can be successfully demonstrated in one field, then have applicability in most other fields. It is against that background that we have been moving in the CSDR field, the GOBI field, the ORT. And, we have been trying it seems to me in the last three years to demonstrate first if UNICEF itself can organize to be relevant to these strategies. It is very easy for us to do a little bit of everything and to be very efficient as an organization and there is no way of measuring results. Once you begin to get this kind of focus and say well even if we only spent 10 or 20 per cent of our money on this we are going to test ourselves. This will test our personnel policy. It will test our professional training capacity. It will test our supply/response capacity. It will test the ability of our people in the field to relate to other sectors - to deal with top levels of government. So, first and foremost, it has been a

cover + 7pp + 8b

test for us. There has been the challenge of how to capture multiple sectors. Again in this GOBI/CSDR, I think we have had an interesting effort to try to capture other sectors. We are still lagging quite significantly.

If you really want UCI 1990 to be the third power and for it not only to get the immunization to be but to sustain and be the trojan horse to pull in the rest, we do need to get educational curricula revamped. We need to get primary school teachers changed. Most of you know that from your own experience and observation that if there is going to be an educational curriculum reform, in most countries historically it has taken between 10 and 20 years. Now, can we through the use of our approach to GOBI and UCI and CSDR get educational turnarounds that take place in two years. In some countries we are doing this. But there is here the challenge of capturing the multiple sectors.

Let us demonstrate here that we make the strategic alliances with the NGOs in countries. Historically UNICEF has not been that strong in working systematically with the religious groups, with the other NGOs- indigenous or international that are in the country. Internationally there is the question of can we develop the world alliances that are required to create a new ethos? I regret to say that the basic world ethos towards the people that are trapped in poverty and gross underdevelopment is to say too bad and then let them struggle, die and have their misery.

We are out to try to prove for once that there ought to be a world ethos that says that this is just intolerable as was once the ethos that accepted slavery. As late as when I was a boy in the 30's and a proud member of the British Empire that regarded Empire as the natural thing, the ethos changed. The ethos towards civil rights within the United States has changed. The ethos towards the untouchables in India has changed. I can remember that less than 20 years ago when the environment ethos just really did not exist. It looked remote out there. Now in our field where we have had a dramatic change of ethos during the lifetime of UNICEF is the response to loud emergencies. Forty years ago you could have a loud emergency - I was in Calcutta in 1943 when over a million people died in the streets in Calcutta with food granaries full, the retail stores brimming with food and the government did not lift a finger any more than it did during the famine in Ireland when the potato blight hit and Ireland was exporting record tonnages of corn to England because the weather that brought the blight was extremely good for corn. Now we know this new ethos. We see it in Kampuchea etc.

Query - can we mobilize the world ethos on one aspect at least of the poverty problem - the grossly unnecessary deaths of at least half of the 40,000 children that die every day? To develop this new ethos obviously requires a strategy of mobilizing world opinion, developing strategic alliances with groups like the international pediatrics, the League of Red Cross Societies, the Vatican, El Azzar, The World Council of Churches. I must say we have just gone through one of the most skillful exercise from which Marco and George Kassis have come. This was to go to Yerevan and to meet with socialist mass organizations to get them aboard just the way we have the Vatican aboard and results are quite remarkable. But can we develop over the next five years an ethos that says it just is intolerable to have 20,000 small children die each day because they are not immunized and their parents do not know how to do oral rehydration therapy, their mothers have not been taught the simplest weaning food practices that scientific knowledge now gives us.

I think it can be done. But I think that if we can demonstrate in one sector of our concerns that we can develop national strategies, mobilize the world behind it, develop new ethos, then frankly we have something from which you can build to all the other aspects of our concern for children that are so important, including, of course, early childhood development, the role of women which you can never separate from the role of children and the many other aspects such as the availability of food. It is against this background that I think we have to see our focus on the CSDR in a management advocacy sense.

I would make only one other footnote by saying that we are assisted in this in the last 15 years by, as we have stressed repeatedly, two new developments. One, of course, is the technological advances which have made it increasingly absurd that 4 to 5 million children should die of dehydration. Ten years ago this was much harder to demonstrate. People had to wash hands, boil water, find more clean water etc. You still have to do this but we do have the oral rehydration therapy. Twenty years ago you did not have a measles vaccine. Ten years ago we did not even have smallpox eradication. We are far ahead in this. So let's make UCI 1990 work and right behind it let's make ORT work. Right behind that let's make better weaning practices and growth monitoring work.

I should say that the most important new development that I have not mentioned is the information revolution in the western world. Computers is the symbol flag of it but there is an explosive growth on the information use side. What we have not really focused on is that we are having an information revolution capacity within our developing world and that if we want to achieve -if knowledge is the key and over half the people do not have knowledge, there is this utterly new capacity to communicate. The heart of our new capacity to help people in Africa is the new capacity to communicate that is reflected in the ubiquitous radio, the spread in television, the school in virtually every village, the increasing literacy rates, the explosion, thank God, on the ministry of health side in terms of paramedics and health auxiliaries. This is a whole new capacity to communicate. If we can break through on the health side, then we ought to be able to break through on the food side, on the early childhood stimulation side using this new tool.

Second, I get asked in New York why can New York not be more helpful? Why is New York Headquarters putting this endless levy of burdens on us? Why do they not just give us money instead of saddling us with those damned Italians? Why do you have to go through 50 hoops to get your money? Why do they burden us with things like Sport Aid out of the blue with 60 days notice? What is this new thing called FER (First Earth Run) that so many of us are being asked to participate in? To say nothing of all the new messages trying to collect data on various things.

I do not want to pretend that New York Headquarters positions are always valid. I would suspect that maybe one third of them are not. I do not know. Maybe a quarter, a fifth?? It is a very important function of the field offices to keep fighting back although maybe the more polite word to use is questioning back. When it does take 11 or 18 months to recruit somebody, you do need to be irate. UNICEF New York does not really work that much better than field offices, if at all. We each need to interact with each other. On the other hand, it is clear I think that policy should come from New York. Implementation should basically be in the field with a support implementation

capacity obviously being required in Headquarters.

But to play its policy role, Headquarters needs information. If we are going to raise money, we are going to have to report. Frankly, I would ask all of you at this stage when money is tight when the rest of the world and other agencies are suffering from acute financial stresses, relatively speaking we are a financially sturdy boat compared with others. One reason is that we have been able to innovate not only in policies. I would say clearly without any question the CSDR, GOBI, UCI front in spite of some frictional problems with the external world, has been the result of an overwhelming positive response. It has also made use of new means of financing. When Marco went to the new Italian government and took our 100 million dollars worth of requests that we had just made the appeal for (good solid projects for water, cash for work etc) and they said frankly we are not interested in this. We would like to be in something creative that we have helped develop. You have been talking about immunization and child survival and we will give you 100 million for that. It was clear there were going to be problems. I think a conventional man in Marco's position would have said the gap is too great. Sorry we cannot use your money and would have walked away from it. Instead, like the fisherman with a big fish, Marco got them to bite then came a lot of playing on the line and all of you have been part of the playing on the line as they have educated themselves. The Italians have been educating themselves on how to deal with Africa. It has been painful but I think that we will all agree on the net basis of an optimal 10 we are at least 6 or 7 on this now. This is making a big difference but I do call upon you.

Sport Aid really represented a pioneering by UNICEF into a new world.

The African Emergency did demonstrate that global and public opinion makes a difference as to what governments do in terms of their policies and responses to Africa. Band Aid, Live Aid, USA for Africa demonstrated that the outside of the normal opinion groups there is a lot of willingness to respond. Query for us in UNICEF at a time of need to keep attention on Africa and children because of the global recession and also the need to get more money - is there a way that UNICEF can tag into these new ways? If you can get a world cup where two billion people in the world (40 or 30 per cent of the world) watches one game, can you use these things for UNICEF? Out of this came the news of Sport Aid. It is very clear if you talk to the Secretary General in New York, if you talk to Stephen Lewis who was the Chairman of the Special Session, they will all say that the margin between a disappointing, more or less failed session and a modestly successful session was what happened at Sport Aid. It was an incredible accomplishment around the world. It did demonstrate that the UNICEF apparatus when it is mobilized, even though it groans and screams, can give incredible results. It does not happen everywhere but it happens in enough places that the world thinks.

I think we have learned. The First Earth Run as we will hear about later is the International Year of Peace. My own judgement on Sport Aid was that if it came off with 2 million runners and 2 million net for UNICEF, it would be a success. We can say millions have run and UNICEF netted millions of dollars on this experiment but instead as you know 20 million ran or participated in one form or another. I will never forget what happened in Ouagadougou or in Hyde Park or India. There is a series of high points. But everybody participated. You can each see in your own minds the exciting events you did

but the last count was that we are nearing a gross of 30 million. It cost us about 1 million dollars and of this gross UNICEF gets a net of about 15 million. This is about what we make in greeting cards. We do not know what will come out of First Earth Run. I cannot tell you right now whether in addition to identifying UNICEF with the theme of peace, this is the biggest event of the International Year of Peace or whether we will make five million or 40 million? But I can tell you if we can really have a successful First Earth Run on top of the relative success of the Sport Aid and if the US Congress does not cut its contribution to UNICEF as it has done across the board except for UNICEF, we are still there. If that can hold and we have these other things frankly our financial situation and the elbow room we have to deal with all the problems is significantly changed. It is very hard for each of you in each individual country to see this. But we see this in New York and we are going to make some big mistakes in New York in these initiatives. Sometimes they are with us just as we try to bear with you when you take an innovation when you take a worthwhile risk. But some of them are going to fail.

So with that let me wind up relatively quickly with three other points. Richard will talk to you about what is the relevance of adjustment with a human face. Historically UNICEF has not involved itself with the macro policies of a country. In the 1960s we did pioneer by country analysis trying to see how UNICEF and children fit into national plans. It was a great innovation. But we have tended to stay out of macro policies and really what we have introduced ourselves into now is a macro financial forum and it is extremely important if first we are going to protect social investment and second, that it is just as important on the social investment side that efficiency be improved. It is very clear on food production that most countries need more efficient food production policies than they have had. This does mean the kind of thing that I mentioned yesterday where in Pakistan they have mounted their big GOBI initiatives by delaying for several years the building of one hospital which was going to be something like the John F. Kennedy hospital in Monrovia. Another example is in Indonesia where they have reduced the health budget but expanded their initiatives on all these fronts by taking it out of the building of new hospital construction. We need to get into these new kinds of issues in a way that we have not before.

My penultimate question is what is the relevance of the African Special Session? This will be discussed again at greater length. But I do want to say that there was a historic first when Africa asked for this special session and Africa came to this session saying we are going to make these kinds of changes ourselves and will the external world respond more effectively more sensibly to our needs? As I said, the conference was moderately successful. It came out with a plan of action. The plan of action from our point of view is a livable one in the sense that one of the factors is human resources, stress on women, on mortality. But it clearly was weak in the plan on social sectors. But it does incorporate our minimal needs where we can build on. This does mean that in every country we need to be doing things more effectively as a team with the rest of the UN structure than we have been.

This will call for special efforts on the part of all of you in the months ahead. It also, however, means that I think it is imperative that we push ahead and demonstrate the success on the UCI, ORT, CSDR front because this is very relevant to showing what our strategies are that work in Africa and frankly are badly needed for public opinion in the industrial world to mobilize support. They need some symbols of success.

I see these as being implementation focused. How can we get things done better? How can we get things done more quickly? What is it that New York, UNIPAC, Geneva needs to do to respond more effectively? What are the holes on your side that need to be filled? I have suggested that since in the one and a half hour that we have for each country, you cannot cover everything, let's once again take as our litmus the biopsy slice, let's take UCI and to a lesser extent ORT, as the sort of illustration of what is it that is required to let us as an Organization both in the field and in Headquarters function at a 90 per cent plus level of effectiveness.

Let me close my comments by saying that when I look out upon you all in this room from the field, from New York, I do so with a feeling of awe. In a sense we are a group of ordinary people better trained more dedicated but somehow we have managed to come together in a way to perform remarkable things around the world. This in a sense is in the UNICEF tradition. There is a mystico quality about UNICEF. As your Executive Director I travel around and I cannot help but feel it. I just came out of Kampuchea. It is an isolated, out of the way restricted place but your colleagues are doing a great job there. I came out of Hanoi which is much more civilized than when Bert Collins spent two and a half years there living in a hotel room for the whole period.

Think of living in a hotel room for two years with the air conditioning going off two or three times each evening in a hot, damp climate. I do not know what else Betram would add. Living conditions are better there now but it is still a place where if your four year old Ghanaian child runs out to play, no Vietnamese child is allowed to play with him. Or if you are in the same compound living with the East Block technicians and your child sees a group of Russian children, the mothers call their children in so that our people's children cannot play with them. It is very difficult and our people perform remarkably. Or, you go to Lebanon. I do not know how our people do it in Lebanon. They have over 100 projects throughout the country. We have pulled out all the international staff. It is functioning at I do not know what 98 per cent efficiency. Somehow our (drew staff, our shiite staff, our suni staff, our manonite staff???) travel throughout that country and somebeing looked after them. They have had hundreds of shells through their vehicles. But they survive. They are allowed to travel throughout the country.

You go to a situation such as the Uganda one where through two, three, four, revolutions, our staff seems to respond to them and keep on immunizing children throughout the fighting. I could go on endlessly. In these kinds of circumstances UNICEF has always done well. From the very first day we started we have been remarkable. But we also have been remarkable in being social innovators in countries. So what our colleagues did in Colombia when they pulled off the first immunization and which I said it was more important than the first landing on the moon. And it was. When I saw what happened in Ouagadougou - impossible but somehow the impossible has become possible - sufficiently so that people are now saying that really it is easier to do in Ouagadougou than somewhere else.

It is true that every success story can be explained. Of course the South Koreans are a success economically. People can give you 10 cent reasons but I can remember 25 years ago when they were the basket case of the world and they did not have anything.

So I watched all of you here in this room participate. We have never got anywhere in Algeria - Beredinc is incredible. I can remember the circumstances under which he came. Revy and Richard Reid earlier in Nigeria - we remember the series of failures we had in Nigeria. Nigerians were difficult people to work with and when Dickson was there it was a much more difficult place than it is today but our people have done wonders organizationally.

So I look upon you all and say that individually I do not think that you or I could move the world but collectively we are in our own field moving the world. It is crucial that you continue to move the world not only in a slice such as being successful in UCI 1990 which frankly five years ago anybody would have given the odds at 100 to 1 against it being successful. You must remember that at this moment people are prepared to do many things in the name of children that they are not prepared to do under other labels so that you as UNICEF representatives have a tame responsibility to do things in countries, to work together with the rest of the structure. In the name of children lots can be done. We cannot afford to be broken at this time. We have to recognize we are an important part of the system and this is one reason why I, revelled last night in the discussion about Southern Africa. Of course our colleagues were responding to the crisis in Southern Africa not just as UNICEF but really in a much more total sense. I genuinely believe that in the name of children we probably can organize things for the front line states that would not be possible under other names.

It is very good to be with you. Thank you.