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Comments by Mr. James P. Grant
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
on the occasion of the presentation of the
1988 Maurice Pate Memorial Award

to the

Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga
(Family Welfare Movement of Indonesia)

New York
18 April 1988



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UNICEF often speaks of the vital importance of social mobilization to improving the health and well-being of the world's children and women. We speak of how "people-power" is a key - especially in times of economic retrenchment, and whenever resources are scarce - to building a strong future for a society, and ultimately, for the world.

And people often ask, what is social mobilization? Or, what does it mean to empower families - and especially women - with the knowledge, the means, and the societal support to take greater control of their own health and well-being? How can people help each other to take greater control of their own lives and the lives of their children? Or, people ask, how does a community go about empowering families?

Well, it is happening, so there are answers to these question, but the answers are broad, and they can be approached on many levels. Often, the best replies are given with examples.

There is perhaps no better example of large scale community participation in self-health activities - active at village level, and networked nationwide - than the PKK. [PKK is the acronym for Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga, the Family Welfare Movement.] First there are now 200,000 integrated services posts, or posyandus, which the PKK was instrumental in establishing - "one-stop" service posts which provide basic health and nutrition services for children and mothers at the ratio of one for every 100 children under the age of five. This health infrastructure has increased by some 50 per cent since the autumn of 1986 and now serves 20 million - or 85 per cent of all -

Indonesian children. And such a remarkable increase in maternal and child health coverage has been accomplished despite actual cut-backs in governmental spending - necessitated by the sharp fall in oil revenues in recent years - which have affected the health (as well as other) sectors.

Secondly, there are presently about 1.5 million PKK volunteers actively enhancing and supporting village-level social development programmes - including staffing the posyandus - in each of Indonesia's 67,000 villages. People join the PKK by taking part in its activities, and they are led on by "motivating teams" formed at national, provincial and local levels - usually chaired by the spouses of area administrators.

The work of the PKK is not only building a strong future for Indonesia by ensuring the health of its children and involving people in learning how to ensure that their own needs - and, in the process, that the needs of all of the children and women in their country - are met. This important work is elevated to yet another level by the challenging example it sets - it is at the forefront of creative, effective response to the current development crisis which grips the Third World, and it points the way to the type of innovation which will be required to respond meaningfully to the current economic crisis which threatens even the most powerful nations in the world.

We are honoured to have with us this evening the former Chairperson of the PKK and Chairperson of Dharmawanita, which has an advisory role with PKK, Ibu Soepardjo Roestam. As the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund, I extend, through you, Ibu, gratitude and admiration for the work of the PKK, on behalf of the children of the world. I extend the heartfelt wishes of the organization for your continued success, as well as our redoubled support, wherever we have the privilege of working together. I also have to extend special appreciation to you Mrs. Soepardjo, for the leadership I have personally observed you providing over the 5 year period since we first met - many women, and some men, properly deserve credit for the success of PKK, but very special credit goes to Mrs. Soepardjo Roestam.

And I now turn these proceedings to Dr. A.P. Maruping, the Chairperson of the 1988 UNICEF Executive Board.