

File Sub: CF/EXD/SP/1990-0044c

Contribution from Mr. James P. Grant  
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)  
to the  
UNESCO Album on International Literacy Year

November 1990



UNICEF Alternate Inventory Label



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UNESCO Album on International Literacy Year. Contribution

*Date Label Printed* 20-Aug-2002

cover + 1p + 06

David 30/11/90

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Graphic arts - from the human hand-print in red ochre on a cave wall to brilliant computer illustrations of complex ideas - are a sign of the intelligence of our species, and of our will to communicate the content of our thought.

In today's world, communicating the right knowledge can save lives and improve people's well-being, as we have seen in the field of maternal and child health, where millions of lives are being saved annually and at an accelerating rate, largely as a result of sharing knowledge which is already available. A principle key to such communication is literacy - the capacity to use flat graphic symbols of an alphabet to unlock the doors of knowledge - and when that key is in the hands of women, the lives of children, families and societies improve.

In an age when satellite pictures can be used to record people still dying of starvation, our challenge is universal literacy. If our will is engaged...collectively...to work together - it is do-able.

cover + 1p + 06

File Sub: CF/EXD/SP/1990-0044d

Foreword by Mr. James P. Grant  
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)  
for  
*A Voice for Children*  
by Maalfrid Grude Flekkoy

Fall 1990



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Item # **CF/RAD/USAA/DB01/2002-01023**

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Foreword by Mr. James P. Grant, Executive Director, Unicef  
Date Label Printed 20-Aug-2002

cover + 1p + 0b

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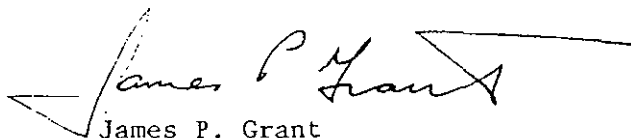
A VOICE FOR CHILDREN  
by  
Maalfrid Grude Flekkoy

Foreword

Following a ratification process quicker than that of any other international human rights instrument, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child went into force 2 September 1990. Even before the draft Convention was presented to the General Assembly of the United Nations, UNICEF was seeking as well as developing materials which might be useful as implementation and advocacy tools for the critical follow-up activities. The real test of the Convention will be in its implementation, and there are plenty of skeptics ready to declare this document just another example of international diplomatic rhetoric. Careful and continuous monitoring will be important on a country, regional and global basis to make sure the Convention does not become merely an additional declaration of good intentions for the world's children.

Many nations will now find it useful to develop a mechanism to serve as watchdog for children's rights and to monitor the evolving situation of their children against the international standards laid down in the Convention. The Norwegian Ombudsman for Children experience offers one possible approach. UNICEF therefore asked Maalfrid Grude Flekkoy to write a critical evaluation of her experiences as the first - and until 1988 the only Ombudsman for Children in the world. She began her work on this book in September 1989, having been named by UNICEF as the first Senior Fellow at our new International Child Development Centre in Florence, Italy. Since then she has also been in contact with child rights specialists from many countries where other models have been tried or where there is a strong interest in setting up such mechanisms, from the national to the municipal level, under public or private initiative. Her analysis also includes comparisons among various alternatives and tentative conclusions about what should be among the guiding principles for whichever mechanism is chosen as the watchdog for children.

There is no doubt that children and their families need strong and independent spokesperons. Nor is there any doubt that the future of our societies depends on the conditions we offer our children. Whatever path a nation chooses in seeking to ensure a future worthy of our children's trust, I am confident that "A Voice for Children" will become a useful tool to help guide the way.



James P. Grant  
Executive Director  
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

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