



CF/RAD/USAA/DB01/1997-03326

Expanded Number **CF/RAD/USAA/DB01/1997-03326**

External ID **E/ICEF/1986/L.0006**

Title

Overview: Children in especially difficult circumstances

Date Created / From Date

Date Registered

Date Closed / To Date

Primary Contact

Home Location **Off of Secy, ExecBoard, UNICEF NYHQ = 3024**

FI2: Status Certain? **No**

2/18/1986

1/1/1997

Contained Records

Owner Location **Off of Secy, ExecBoard, UNICEF NYHQ = 3024**

Current Location/Assignee **Record & Archive Manage Related Functions=80669443 since 3/19/2001 at 1:55 PM**

Record Type **A04 DOC ITEM: E/ICEF 1946 TO 1997 EX BD**

FI3: Record Copy? **No**

01: In, Out, Internal Rec or Rec Copy

Container

Date Published

Fd3: Doc Type - Format

Da1:Date First Published

Priority

Document Details **Record has no document attached.**

Notes

Document Format Series/Year/SubSeries/Number/Rev: **E/ICEF/1986/L.0006; Doc**

Series/SubSeries/Year/Number/Rev: **E/ICEF/L/1986/6**

Doc Series: **E/ICEF/L**; Series Valid date on import: **01-Jan-1950**; Doc Year: **1986**; Doc Number: **0006**; Doc Numb

Short: **6**; Doc Revision #:

English, LAvail: **A,C,E,F,R,S..**; LOrig: **E-?**

Document Alternate Media Store [AMS]: **002**; Type AMS: **MF**

Note PDF or TIF: Chk_PDF: **No**; Chk_PDF_Prob: **No**; Comment: ; Chk_TIF: **No**; Chk_TIF_prob: **No**; TIF ID# Start

= **Printed by Person Submit Image**

Signature of Person Submit

Number of images without cover

Upasana

27



Economic and Social Council

Distr.
Limited

E/ICEF/1986/L.6
28 February 1986

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

POLICY REVIEW

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
Executive Board
1986 session

OVERVIEW:
CHILDREN IN ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES

As a supporting document to the policy review paper "Children in especially difficult circumstances (E/ICEF/1986/L.3), this overview describes the situation of these children in greater detail.

Part I discusses assistance to children in areas torn by armed conflict and other disasters - the oldest of UNICEF's missions. Part II considers the situation of exploited working children and street children, a problem which has commanded growing attention from UNICEF in recent years. Part III briefly addresses child abuse and neglect, a subject in which UNICEF has had relatively little experience. A few general conclusions appear in Part IV.

Additional information is contained in the supporting annexes: "Children in situations of armed conflict" (E/ICEF/1986/CRP.2); "Exploitation of working children and street children" (E/ICEF/1986/CRP.3); and "Child abuse and neglect in a global perspective" (E/ICEF/1986/CRP.4).

5038H

86-05937

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>
INTRODUCTION	1 - 6
I. CHILDREN IN CIRCUMSTANCES OF ARMED CONFLICT AND OTHER DISASTERS	7 - 43
A. The situation	7 - 21
B. The effects of disaster on children	22 - 26
C. Disaster responses: status and major issues	27 - 40
D. Implications for UNICEF	41 - 43
II. CHILDREN IN CIRCUMSTANCES OF EXPLOITATION	44 - 84
A. The situation	44 - 63
B. Responses to the situation of working and street children	64 - 83
C. UNICEF action for exploited children	84
III. CHILDREN IN CIRCUMSTANCES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT	85 - 100
A. The situation	85 - 95
B. Responses to child abuse and neglect	96 - 98
C. Implications for UNICEF	99 - 100
IV. CONCLUSION	101 - 102

LIST OF TABLES

	<u>Page</u>
1. Disasters precipitated by natural events (1960s and 1970s)	26
2. Estimated number of street children world-wide (1981)	27

/...

INTRODUCTION

1. Most children find love, shelter, nourishment and a sense of identity and belonging through their families. It is also through their families that they enjoy access to services intended for them. Consequently, UNICEF has long promoted approaches to serving children that involve and reinforce their families, no matter which of many forms, traditional and untraditional, those families may take.

2. Unfortunately, many children find themselves in the vulnerable condition of not being able to count on adequate family protection. Some have no family at all, or are completely separated from it, but they are relatively few. Many more belong to a family that has been so traumatized by disaster, poverty, armed conflict, family dissension or other causes that it does not meet their basic needs. Still others are in neglectful or abusive families that have become threats to, instead of protectors of, their welfare. Sometimes family incapacity is temporary, as in the case of sudden catastrophes. Other times it is chronic, as in the case of the most absolute poverty. These children, who need substantial protection beyond what their families now offer, are "children in especially difficult circumstances". All of these children require particular assistance and protection. This raises the issue of how UNICEF, within its overall objectives and commitments, should support attention to their special needs.

3. In recent years, many people both within and outside of UNICEF have become increasingly concerned that changing world conditions are at once augmenting the number of these particularly vulnerable children and transforming the nature and relative prevalence of the dangers to which they are exposed. Thus, at its 1984 session, the UNICEF Executive Board requested that:

"a policy review paper on the subject of children in especially difficult circumstances - including children in situations of war and conflict, street children and working children and children affected by natural calamities - should be prepared for the 1986 regular session".

4. While UNICEF has accorded top priority to reducing mortality among infants and young children, it also has recognized that to save the lives of children who do not have the opportunity to grow and develop is a hollow and insufficient victory indeed.

5. Historically, UNICEF has been attentive to the various important issues of child development, for example, questions related to nutrition, day care and pre-school education, early stimulation and other activities intended to ensure the child's social and mental development during the most formative years. More recently, UNICEF has also taken increased note of the extent and severity of developmental problems faced by destitute, working and street children, co-operating in activities on their behalf on three continents. In short, UNICEF has, from the beginning, promoted child survival and development as a single concept, realizing that the two goals are bound together.

6. This paper reports on the situation of children in three different circumstances of special risk, and it explores the implications for UNICEF of expanding efforts to protect their survival and development. Not included in this study are children in other especially difficult circumstances: children who are abandoned, institutionalized, disabled, from migrant or nomad families and from groups suffering serious discrimination.

I. CHILDREN IN CIRCUMSTANCES OF ARMED CONFLICT AND OTHER DISASTERS

A. The situation

7. Both the number of disasters and the seriousness of their impact are growing, and children account for over half of the dead. Moreover, the numbers of victims are growing at rates far beyond those of population growth or the increase in number of disasters. The reasons are that the character of disaster itself is changing and it occurs more frequently, over wider areas with larger populations, in ways that place children and their families at greater risk.

8. Catastrophes traditionally have been considered relatively uncommon disruptions, appearing unexpectedly to ravage a defined area for a limited period. It also was conventional to classify them as either "natural" or "man-made". ~~"Natural" disasters included such events as droughts, floods, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions; "man-made" disasters were generally associated with war. The categories were considered distinct and independent: acts of God and acts of man.~~

9. However, catastrophes have in many places become predictable, and distinctions between "acts of God" and "acts of man" have become tenuous. In light of man's expanding role, it now makes more sense to speak of disasters "triggered by natural phenomena" than of "natural disasters", and to include among them a new category of "ecological disaster". Today, the category of armed conflict includes organized armed violence in general, much of it civil conflict. The present paper follows this usage, and thus "disaster" is not restricted to sudden events, but can include continuous situations having traumatic results, as is often the case of armed violence and ecological disaster.

Armed conflict

10. The disasters that have killed, injured and displaced the most children have resulted from the organized savagery that man still visits upon his fellow man through the use of armed force. UNICEF was established in 1946 to assist children in the aftermath of the largest and most lethal disaster of modern history - the Second World War - in which approximately 40 million persons died. Even though a single catastrophe of this size has not occurred since then, there appears to be a long-term, continuing increase in the number of conflicts employing some form of armed violence. Those conflicts are concentrated in the third world. Deaths are spiralling upward at a rate well in excess of the increases in either population or number of conflicts, and the percentage of civilian deaths is rising. In the First World War less than 10 per cent of all casualties were civilians, in the Second World War the ratio increased to about 50 per cent and in recent years has reached over 80

per cent, the vast majority being women and children, almost always from the poorest regions and classes, and predominantly from rural areas and small towns. 1/

11. Since 1945, approximately 150 armed conflicts of one type or another have occurred in about 70 countries, almost all in the third world. They are occurring today in about 40 countries where UNICEF is co-operating in programmes benefiting children. It is estimated that these upheavals have killed a total of about 20 million persons, of whom the majority were civilians. At least three times as many have been injured, many of whom are handicapped for life.

12. In addition to causing death and injury, armed violence today is responsible for uprooting an estimated 30 million persons. They include international refugees and internally displaced persons. Again, women and children comprise the majority.

13. The effects of armed violence on civilians are changing because the nature of conflict is itself changing. Open warfare between nations has largely given way to struggles between groups within the same country, often with support from outside. Seldom does present-day conflict involve two regular armies in which it is easy to distinguish combatants from civilians and to provide at least some measure of warning or protection to the latter. Instead, today's tactics seek to obscure differences between those who fight and those who do not, both by camouflaging combatants within the overall civilian population and by forcibly recruiting even children for combat activities. Moreover, current "total war" concepts advocate the destruction of the economic base and morale of the civilian population as a way of undermining the cover and strength of enemy combatants. There are no indications at the present time that, left to itself, this trend towards greater savaging of civilians will be reversed. If it remains unchecked, it is probable that, for the foreseeable future, the number of children killed, maimed and displaced in armed conflict will continue to increase.

14. The United Nations Department of Disarmament Affairs estimates the current annual world military expenditure to stand at about \$1,000,000,000,000. Every minute, over \$1,900,000 are diverted to defence expenditures. During that minute, 30 children die from the lack of food, vaccines or other attention. During 1984, a year of serious drought and famine, Africa spent more to import arms than to import food.

15. About 75 per cent of the arms traded internationally are destined for third world countries, and there is evidence that these weapons expenditures dampen social investment. Recent studies suggest that the biggest military spenders tend, on the whole, to be poor achievers in a test of socio-economic performance. A UNICEF review, which grouped countries on the basis of infant mortality rates (IMRs) in relation to socio-economic indicators, found that all groups (but not necessarily all countries within the group) spend much more on defence than health. The greatest disparity was found in the group having the highest IMRs. 2/

Disasters triggered by natural phenomena

16. Disasters triggered by natural phenomena currently comprise about two thirds of all disaster events and account for approximately 80 to 90 per cent of all victims. The Swedish Red Cross, in comparing disaster patterns of the 1960s with those of the 1970s, concludes that both events and numbers of persons affected have been increasing significantly (see table 1). Most such calamities and their victims are in poor countries. These same data also indicate that deaths may be increasing as a proportion of the number of disaster victims, and that the death rate in low-income countries is higher - about 3,000 per disaster - whereas in high-income nations it is less than 500. 3/ Historically, Asia has been the continent with the largest affected population, followed by Africa and Latin America. New information indicates that Africa is the region where the number of disasters is growing at the most rapid pace.

17. Equivalent geologic or climatic events now claim more victims than they used to. As a recent joint study by the International Institute for Environment and Development and the Swedish Red Cross points out:

"There is no scientific consensus that there have been changes in planetary climate mechanics this century likely to cause more or fiercer storms, more droughts or more floods over the long term. Thus the 'disaster triggers' do not appear to be changing in such a way as to provide more danger for humans.

"Forces of nature trigger disaster events, but can no longer be considered the main causes of the disasters themselves. What other factors are there? In the developing world, where most disasters occur, there appear to be three major causes which dominate disaster processes: (a) human vulnerability resulting from poverty and inequality; (b) environmental degradation owing to poor land use; and (c) rapid population growth, especially among low-income groups". 4/

18. The relationship between poverty and vulnerability to disaster - poor people's lack of reserves to fall back upon in times of adversity - has long been recognized. Vulnerability of this type has been exacerbated in many countries by government policies, especially those drawing resources to metropolitan cities from rural areas, where most disasters occur. In many places, modern social and political organization has sharply reduced the traditional options by which people used to survive natural adversities, without substituting new ones that are dependable and workable. The role of population growth is also well known, especially as it has led to denser population and increased habitation of hazardous areas such as steep mountain slopes and flood plains.

19. However, the powerful relationship between increasing environmental degradation and expanding disasters is only now starting to be heeded by policy makers, and its implications for UNICEF and the well-being of children remain to be explored. It is convenient to divide disasters triggered by natural phenomena into "natural" disasters such as earthquakes and tropical storms, the effects of which man's actions can exacerbate but not cause, and "ecological" disasters, in which the actions of man modifying his environment constitute an important cause of the disaster. This category merits more explanation.

Ecological disasters

20. The most widespread of all types of disaster is drought, and the fastest growing is flood. These are largely ecological disasters, and they now account for at least three fourths of the victims of disasters of all kinds, and around 90 per cent of the victims of disasters triggered by natural phenomena. Virtually all are in the third world. They are increasingly related to land management, for the fearsome expansion of these two disasters results mostly from the misuse and consequent degradation of land resources. When mismanaged - usually through inappropriate deforestation and cropping practices - land loses its water-conserving capacity to maintain crops and animals through dry spells, and unabsorbed rain runs off, carrying away precious topsoil and often precipitating floods. This degradation of land leads to increasing poverty, and hence to people who, like their wasted land, do not have the resources to withstand periods of adverse climatic conditions that generations before them weathered successfully on their own.

21. It is largely within man's power to reduce the primary causes of the dramatic expansion of ecological disasters. However, most evidence indicates that in particularly vulnerable zones, poverty, rapid population growth and environmental degradation will continue at essentially current or higher levels in the foreseeable future. Programmes to deal with these problems are slow acting, and so far they have not been started on a sufficient scale. Ecological disasters, therefore, probably will increase in frequency, severity and numbers of victims in the coming decades. Most of the dead and suffering will be children.

B. The effects of disaster on children

22. Surprisingly little is known about the long-term effects of catastrophes on the development of children who survive, and the relatively few studies that have been conducted are mostly from industrialized countries. In order to help children cope more effectively, more needs to be known about which factors cause the worst psychological stress in children, how persistent that stress is, how it influences development, how children deal with it and how they could be helped to handle it better.

23. However, the immediate physical threats that catastrophes pose for children are relatively well known. Not only do the young share with adults all risks of death, injury and displacement inherent in an emergency, they also are more at peril than most adults from many of the accompanying problems. Emergencies often intensify diseases and other health problems that already afflict vulnerable populations in the region. Children are far more susceptible than healthy adults to physical stress from exposure, malnutrition, fatigue, disease and displacement, and thus they become sick and die more quickly. They are especially vulnerable to undernutrition and to respiratory, gastro-intestinal and other illnesses that comprise a major portion of the epidemiological profile of most disaster situations. They also tend to suffer more severely from the various water and sanitation problems attendant on major calamities.

24. Separation from family, community and the routines of normal life can be particularly devastating to children. There is increasing evidence that the development of children caught in disasters suffers less when important

aspects of normality can be maintained or quickly re-established. Studies of children evacuated alone from danger zones have shown that they may be more vulnerable than those remaining with their families. 5/ A sense of continuing identity and sharing with their family is often more essential to their development than is a sense of mere physical security, except perhaps where this is severely threatened. It has been noted that refugee populations often perceive more quickly than assistance agencies the importance for their children of re-establishing a semblance of continuity and normality as soon as possible. They frequently request schools and play facilities for their children before other seemingly more urgent needs, such as clothing and improved shelter. Behind this perception is the implied realization that children can continue their normal development even during times of crisis if certain basic needs are met. A minimal continuity of family and community life, precarious as it may be under the circumstances, seems to be one of these needs.

25. It is likely that disasters caused by armed violence are more traumatic to children than are those triggered by natural phenomena. One reason is that children often are victims or witnesses of direct hostilities and gruesome atrocities. Sometimes they must watch family members being killed while they themselves remain silent in hiding - ravaged by guilt feelings for long after. Since armed conflicts tend to be more prolonged and recurrently threatening than are most other disasters, children may be left with a profound sense of continuous and unending danger.

26. ~~Young persons who have been victims of violence are known to be more~~ likely themselves to practise violence against others, even though this aggression may take many years to appear. Whereas calamities precipitated by nature bring misfortune and grief, those arising out of man's savagery are particularly brutalizing and dehumanizing to their victims. The children victimized today are the adults of tomorrow. To its sorrow, the world will be bound to pay the continuing costs of today's violence for many years to come.

C. Disaster responses: status and major issues

General considerations

27. There is often a tendency in disaster situations to undervalue the importance of maintaining the integrated development of the child as a whole. Thus, actions to maintain that development - placement with nurturing adults, establishment of viable day-care facilities and schools, maintenance of basic health and nutrition services, skills training - should be undertaken even in the earliest stages of responding to an emergency. Yet assistance agencies too often give low priority to requests by communities and their own field staff for education, training, cultural, religious and recreation facilities. This also has the effect of discouraging re-assumption by local families and communities of responsibility for the protection of their own children.

28. Unaccompanied children in disasters represent a particular problem. Experience indicates that conscientious tracing and placement services can put virtually all unaccompanied children back in a family situation, usually with relatives. Very few have no relatives or community friends to take care of them, especially if essential assistance is available, but tracing needs to start immediately. Unnecessary institutional care for unaccompanied children

/...

remains too common, and there is sometimes a tendency to place "orphans" for adoption, although family or community members are available to take them in.

29. There is still no general agreement about which international agency has the leading responsibility for unaccompanied children, or which can best help internally displaced persons, who represent half of all uprooted persons. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis through consultations among agencies and national authorities in the field and in their respective headquarters. This means, however, that UNICEF participation retains a rather ad hoc character that precludes planning.

30. Victims of disasters usually provide most of the work and resources going into their own relief and rehabilitation, help from outside the community amounting to but a relatively small percentage of the total. Assistance should target activities that are necessary to complement and make more effective what the affected people do for themselves, encouraging families and communities to undertake initiatives in their own behalf and to assume their protective function for children as soon as possible. It is essential to prevent family and community disintegration during an emergency, for rapid rehabilitation depends on maintaining their cohesion and structure. Closer communication between the country's assistance providers, external donors and the affected communities is necessary to preserve and reinforce indigenous capacity to respond to the emergency, minimizing dependence on outside interventions.

Response to armed violence

31. International humanitarian law provides for general protection of persons not participating in hostilities and for special protection of persons who are particularly vulnerable. Children are fully covered under both these categories, as participants as well as victims in hostilities. In the original Geneva Conventions, children are implicitly included under the provisions for treatment of all civilians in time of war, and in the 1977 Protocols, the reference to children is explicit, applying to internal as well as international conflicts. These humanitarian provisions also stress the preservation of family unity in armed conflicts, even for persons deprived of their freedom. They likewise take into account the personal rights of the child, such as access to education and special care and preferential treatment for children in both non-international and international armed conflicts. Other provisions prohibit the participation of children as combatants in hostilities and extend special protection to them as prisoners of war, even if they do become combatants. The death penalty is prohibited for persons below the age of 18, even when all other conditions for application of the penalty exist.

32. Few situations arise regarding children in armed conflict that are not addressed at least reasonably well by one current provision or another. The real problem is implementation, which the Geneva Conventions and Protocols place under the responsibility of Governments in conflict, protecting powers, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the United Nations. Nevertheless, while most countries have signed and ratified the Geneva Conventions (fewer have ratified the Protocols), there is, in practice, no effective means of enforcing compliance; all depends upon the will of the

/...

signatory nations to abide by those principles to which they have committed themselves. A review of how these provisions are being applied in different conflict zones around the world indicates that, for the most part, they are widely ignored. In most of today's armed conflicts, the rights of children are almost routinely violated, along with the rights of civilian populations as a whole. Violations include indiscriminate attacks on civilian populations, attacks on refugee camps, mass killings for retribution and the recruitment of children and their use as combat troops. All are expressly forbidden by the Geneva Conventions, but are engaged in or condoned by signatories and non-signatories alike.

33. It is obviously more difficult for agencies of external co-operation to deal with armed violence disasters than with natural or ecological disasters. Foresight and planning are harder, although some work on premonitory signs has been done by ICRC. Once an internal conflict breaks into armed violence, it is increasingly difficult to obtain compliance with international humanitarian norms. Even emergency relief, especially to the uprooted, which in most places remains the principal option available, is difficult. Political will is usually lacking or divided, lengthy negotiations take precious time, access to the most affected areas is often especially difficult and there may be substantial danger to workers. Moreover, the prolonged and disruptive nature of conflicts often leads combatants to undermine deliberately what little relief assistance has been able to achieve.

34. Nevertheless, even when armed hostilities cannot be prevented, child death and illness can in some places be reduced by maintaining key services in the midst of conflict. This is important in view of the fact that in situations of armed conflict child mortality and morbidity rates soar. In some of the approximately 40 countries in which armed conflicts are found today, UNICEF is able to work with the various combatant parties to secure continued services for children on both sides.

35. There was an interesting example of this in El Salvador, where as in all countries, the number of child deaths from immunizable diseases surpassed the total of military and civilian deaths from fighting. In 1985, both sides of the current conflict held their fire on three different days to facilitate the vaccination of about 250,000 children throughout the country. The immunization campaign illustrates the concept of "children as a zone of peace", where all parties to conflicts would consider children to be "a neutral, conflict-free zone in human relations". The application of this concept in situations of internal conflict requires acceptance not only by the Government, but also by opposition groups without legal standing. Services have to be provided to children in ways that are politically and militarily neutral.

36. In El Salvador the political problem was solved by using the good offices of well-connected international, religious and other organizations. Agreement was reached without compromising the position of either side regarding the political issues separating them. The delivery problem was handled by agreeing on exactly what would happen and who would do it. In some contested areas, ICRC teams performed the inoculations; in others it was done by approved civilians with active support of the Ministry of Health. It has already been suggested that perhaps oral rehydration therapy (ORT) could be promoted in a similar manner.

Response to natural and ecological disasters

37. The ecological base for human existence is being so damaged in large parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America that it will no longer support the expanding population of the affected regions, and it is increasingly difficult to deal effectively with consequent large-scale disasters after they have occurred. Thus, certain relief agencies are now convinced of the need to see disaster response in a longer-range context, which emphasizes prevention aimed primarily at reducing the vulnerability of those most at risk of becoming disaster victims. Some, such as the Scandinavian Red Cross Societies, have already begun to allocate substantial portions of their emergency funds for preventive actions in threatened areas, essentially merging short-term relief and long-term development concerns.

38. The technology now exists to estimate the areas and populations facing hazards likely to turn into disasters. However, in countries where planning is most needed, little is being done.

39. Just as available forecasting technology is too often ignored, so are available practical interventions which could make the environment less disaster-prone and potential disaster victims less vulnerable. In many areas, at least the basis for an appropriate technology is now available for feeding larger populations while both protecting the environment and providing a better quality of life for rural families and communities. In the African drought area, ~~for example, many defensive methods - such as the use of more~~ drought-resistant fodder and crop varieties, interplantings, construction of microstructures to retain moisture, digging of wells for small area irrigated cultivation and improvement of on-farm storage - have been employed on too small a scale. In some areas, such technology is already available, while in others it still must be adapted to the different ecological zones. Much benefit could be obtained from more agricultural research on food production, adapting it better to different soil conditions and to use by small cultivators, including women.

40. As the International Institute for Environment and Development and the Swedish Red Cross concluded in their joint study:

"Most disaster problems in the third world are unsolved development problems. Disaster prevention and mitigation is thus primarily an aspect of development....Relief interventions should be linked, where possible, with development programmes. Disasters can actually become vehicles for change and involve both development and relief agencies in long-term programmes aimed both at development and at disaster prevention and mitigation". 6/

D. Implications for UNICEF

41. Since growing numbers of children are likely to be affected by disasters, the need for UNICEF involvement in dealing with disaster situations also will mount, becoming an increasingly important and unavoidable part of its working context. Consequently, there is every likelihood that this will involve more staff time and more resources. Presumably the latter will continue to come mainly from supplementary funding.

/...

42. UNICEF faces significant opportunities to support development strategies that reach the poor and effectively reduce their vulnerability. In this situation, it is well served by its standing policy favouring interventions with long-term developmental effects, such as supporting innovations and services that can continue long after the period of crisis. In its country programming, UNICEF can work with other international, government and non-governmental agencies to identify the areas and populations most vulnerable to disasters, and in those cases adapt its programme to strengthen their capacity to weather adversity and protect their children. Rural areas, which contain the vast majority of victims of all major types of disaster, merit special attention.

43. The UNICEF mission is child-centred rather than sectoral, and is therefore appropriate for actively promoting the rapid establishment of schooling, day care, and other activities that will maintain an ambience of normality in children's lives and lessen the traumas of living through calamity. It can do much to promote early tracing and other methods of dealing with unaccompanied children that reunite as many of them as possible with their own families and communities. Where necessary it can also encourage interventions that enable these families and communities to care for their own children.

II. CHILDREN IN CIRCUMSTANCES OF EXPLOITATION

A. The situation

44. For many children, families cannot or do not play the normal protective role, and indeed they are in some instances the instruments of exploitation. Innumerable families so overburden their young with work that they grow up knowing little else. Many families simply do not know when they are exploiting their own children by overburdening them or exposing them to danger, for the practice has become so common that it is accepted as normal, and sometimes even desirable. In the worst cases, they knowingly injure and exploit their own children directly, as when they maim them to enhance their begging ability. In other cases, pressured by poverty, they sell their offspring as bonded labourers, to live and work in exploitative circumstances away from home. Some encourage their children to enter prostitution or other illicit activities.

45. Accumulating evidence suggests that working children and street children comprise a large group that is especially vulnerable to this situation. Many of these young persons are engaged in economic activities, either for others or for their own survival, or in relationships that threaten their health and development. Work that is detrimental to a young person's physical, mental, emotional or social development is "exploitative". 7/

/...

Children and work

46. Throughout history, in virtually every culture, children have worked. It is largely through work, usually in a family context, that children are socialized into many adult skills and responsibilities. In the best of circumstances, the work of children and youth is an integral part of healthy family and community life, and a powerful vehicle for their intellectual, emotional and social development. Through work, they not only acquire skills, but they also earn status as family and community members, which in turn promote their self-esteem and confidence as capable and independent human beings.

47. Traditionally, children have worked not only to learn and develop themselves, but also to help their families. Their labour - whether tending flocks, attending customers in small family shops or caring for younger brothers and sisters at home - has been an essential element in the well-being of the family household. However, the burden of work may become too great, while its educational and socialization role is neglected. In these circumstances, it can become a threat to their health and development, i.e., exploitative.

48. Beginning in 1981, the World Health Organization (WHO) and Defence for Children International (DCI) collaborated in a study of the health effects of exploitative child labour - in terms of both physiological and psycho-social effects (e.g., ~~stunting and poor personality development~~). ~~The study draws~~ attention to the dangers of hard work for children who are already malnourished - as are a great percentage of the poverty-stricken young who enter the labor force. It notes exposure and reduced resistance to disease, which leads to active cases of serious illnesses in young adulthood, and points out the unusually high number of children who are victims of industrial accidents and toxic hazards. It calls attention to the special consequences of inappropriately heavy responsibilities in the home for young shut-in children, mostly girls, in countries all over the world. In one Asian country, for example,

" ... it is estimated that sometimes 50 per cent of women in village situations are economically active, and elder children are those who mind their younger siblings. One study showed that 42.6 per cent of these mother substitutes were children 6-15 years. The physical growth of such children is restricted, but more significantly, there are grave psychological problems, especially in the long term. Usually in situations of stress, malnutrition and poverty, the growth spurts of puberty cannot take place. Emotional and personality development is retarded. These children are often emotionally cold, with diminished physical capacity and limited innovative and creative thinking". 8/

49. It is impossible to estimate how many of the children working in the world today are exploited, for there are few statistics on the working conditions, access to services and quality of life of children who work. Statistics usually report only the numbers of children who work. In addition, data typically are available only for the formal sector work force, while most

children perform their work in the informal sector. The Anti-Slavery Society for the Protection of Human Rights, which has long been interested in working children, estimates that there are at least 100 million of them. ^{9/} In 1981, a United Nations report, suggested a world-wide total of about 145 million working children between 10 and 14 years of age. ^{10/} Many believe that if children working part time in the informal sector and at home - such as girls tending younger siblings - are included, the estimate would be considerably higher. An estimate of 300 million or so might be reasonable.

50. The majority of child workers perform agricultural tasks, usually in a family context. In many parts of the world, girls typically bear a heavier burden than boys, largely because, like their mothers, they are expected to work both in the fields and at home. Early and heavy labour responsibilities of girls have serious consequences for their ability to attend, perform satisfactorily and stay in schools. In fact, the chances of a rural girl obtaining an education are considerably more remote than for rural boys or for urban children of either sex. In most rural areas, a high proportion of the child's working time is spent in the company of his or her parents, but there is also a very significant movement of rural children to employment in towns where they are away from family protection. Many of these migrant young persons become domestics, "sweat shop" factory workers or prostitutes, and are subjected to unfavourable working conditions, sometimes approaching slavery.

51. While urban child workers are a minority, their number seems to be expanding along with the number of urban poor. Many who work in the street, shining shoes, peddling ~~small items or parking cars, are quite visible; but~~ many also work away from the public eye in small shops and factories. More than in rural areas, they tend to work outside the family and for cash. Their work sites are likely to be under the supervision of employers or other persons not related to them and beyond the protective reach of family. In some cases, children may receive health and other services from their employers and be allowed to attend school, but there are many recorded instances of young workers being kept in virtual bondage, isolated, ignorant, malnourished and in poor health.

52. Child exploitation is common in certain labour-intensive industries such as the weaving of carpets, finishing of textile products or assembly of electronic components. Children - especially girls - are often preferred for such tasks because of their fine finger dexterity, their docile nature and their cheap wages. Because they are unprotected, they are more likely than adults to be overworked and underpaid, and many of the tasks for which they are preferred frequently lead to permanent health damage. It has been widely reported, for example, that many child carpet weavers ruin their eyes and develop deformities.

Child-family relations in three groups

53. It is possible to think of children in three groups, according to how they relate to their families. The first are those who live in a family situation from which they receive continuous family support. The majority of working children fall into this group. In some cases there is an element of exploitation by the family due to the economic situation in which the family finds itself.

54. A second group, smaller than the first, is made up of children who are in contact with their families, but whose family protection and support is inadequate. Such children must at least in part look after themselves, and they tend to work in situations in which family contact is sporadic. These children have special needs that arise from the fact of their weakened family ties, and they are often more vulnerable to exploitation by others.

55. A third group, the smallest, is made up of children having little or no contact with their families, lack family support and must make their own way in the world. Their needs and isolation are often acute, and they require outside assistance to compensate for their loss of family support and protection.

Street children

56. Street children are found in all three groups discussed above. The term denotes a place of congregation, but also a certain set of working and living conditions. The very fact that they are in the street means that most of these youngsters face some common but difficult situations. First, according to surveys from countries in which UNICEF co-operates and elsewhere, the vast majority are in the street to make a living for their families and/or themselves. The returns may be paltry, and may be in kind rather than in cash, but to these children the street is above all a work place. Second, they spend large amounts of time in the street, frequently because of the low returns on their labour. Third, most make their way in the informal sector as petty hawkers, shoe-shine boys, scavengers of raw materials or even thieves and street prostitutes. Fourth, by the nature of their work and life, they are normally on their own, largely unprotected by adults. For that reason, above all others, they are vulnerable to many dangers and abuses, and they tend to receive few services essential to their protection and development. Relatively few attend school or receive health care.

57. Street children easily fall prey to other young persons and adults, are frequently robbed or must pay other youths or adults for "protection". Many suffer personal violence. In a survey of street children in one country, the greatest fear expressed by many of them was that of dying a violent death. Perhaps even worse for their personal development, street children are in most places disparaged by the rest of society and consequently suffer from very low self-esteem, despite their often considerable achievements in surviving. Too often they become adapted to survival only in the specific demi-world they inhabit, but not to the broader society in which they must succeed as adults.

58. In the nineteenth century, as a result of rapid industrialization and urbanization, reportedly there were large numbers of street children in such industrial centers as London, Paris and New York. After each of the two world wars in this century, there were many wandering European children without homes. Economic depression between the wars exacerbated the situation. Today, however, the vast majority of street children are in the growing urban areas of developing countries.

/...

59. Available data suggest that half the world's street children are in Latin America. However, this may be an illusion based on the fact that most of the available data are from Latin America. Field observations in parts of Asia and Africa indicate that the problem may be serious there, too. By all accounts, the problem does not exist in centrally-planned economies of Eastern Europe and Latin America, and is quite small - though often very visible - in the industrialized countries of Western Europe and North America.

60. Nobody knows how many street children there are, and all estimates are very crude. Perhaps the most systematic attempt to arrive at an approximate order of magnitude is by the Anti-Slavery Society, which has attempted an alternative approach by demographic deduction (table 2). Taking into account IMRs, urbanization rates and population and estimates of economically active urban children, the process generates a figure of a little over 30 million street children world-wide. During the recent world economic recession, there have been reports that more children are appearing to work in the street. Some countries also report that the mix of street children is also changing - with more girls and younger children now joining the contingent.

Sexually-exploited children

61. Few forms of exploitation approach the degradation of child prostitution and pornography. However, field workers report that teen-age street children involved in prostitution frequently tend to consider it to be merely another form of work. It is doubtful that younger children can evaluate the implications of such activity, and there are persistent reports of sub-teen children being sold, kidnapped, drugged or otherwise forced into pornography and prostitution ~~against their will.~~

62. The Anti-Slavery Society and DCI have for some time warned that an apparently increasing number of working children and adolescents are being commercially exploited sexually. The growth of sex tourism seems to be a stimulus to this, particularly in certain Asian and Latin American countries to which sex tours operate from abroad. However, although international sex tourism is highly visible and has received much press attention, the vast majority of child prostitution and pornography is entirely internal.

63. Some countries have taken vigorous action against prostitution. Others have countenanced the trade for adults but have tried to dampen the participation of children in it. Community organizations - especially women's groups - have often been more active than Governments in attacking the problem, and in some places they seem to have achieved significant success.

B. Responses to the situation of working children and street children

64. Working children and street children are in special need of three things: protection from dangers; access to services; and opportunities for personal growth and development. Most government and non-governmental organization (NGO) responses have dealt with the first two needs, but rarely with the third.

/...

Legal approaches to protection

65. For many years, various organizations, including the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Anti-Slavery Society, tried to protect children from exploitation in the work place by making it impossible, or at least difficult, to work before a legislated minimum age. This approach was undertaken in the last century and grew to fruition in the Minimum Age Convention of 1919, which fixed a minimum age of 14 for admission to employment in industry. Later, the more comprehensive Minimum Age Convention of 1973 provided for a total abolition of child labour below the minimum age in all sectors. However, 10 years later, only a small fraction of countries - 26 - had signed this Convention, although more had selectively adopted some of its provisions. There had been far more support of the first Convention; the reasons are instructive.

66. By 1973, progress towards the elimination of child labour had been impressive, at least in the industrialized countries. But as the modern sector in the third world countries showed itself unable to expand employment faster than population growth, as education lagged and as poverty-stricken families continued to depend on their children's work to stay afloat, there were many second thoughts about the feasibility of abruptly legislating against all child labour below a minimum age. If desperately poor families lost the income of their children, how would they cope? Poor families tended to oppose such restrictions on their survival mechanisms.

67. This has led to problems in implementing commitments already made by many countries to eliminate or regulate child labour. Like the humanitarian conventions protecting civilians in armed conflicts, the conventions eliminating or limiting child labour have frequently been ignored, especially in the third world. Some social welfare organizations have even sought ways to keep opportunities for responsible employment open, for they fully recognize the precarious economic position of poor families, and the dangers of driving child work completely underground.

68. ILO, for decades the leading international advocate of legislation prohibiting child labour, now takes a pragmatic view:

"Effective policies aimed at the protection of children at work and the gradual elimination of child labour must be adjusted to the socio-economic situation of each country.... When work by children is truly part of the socialization process and a means of transmitting skills from parent to child, it is hardly meaningful to call it child labour. Nor can such work be divorced from the poverty and underdevelopment and the absence of alternatives to child work which together generate and sustain it. For the overwhelming majority who assist and work with their parents at home (on the farm, it is almost impossible to address their situation through formal measures as such; nor would such measures, if successful, necessarily be in the interest of many child workers and their families". 11/

69. Recognizing that children who need to work will find a way to do so no matter what, ILO and other organizations - without surrendering their long-term commitment to the abolition of exploitative child labour - have

/...

focused their attention on the shorter-term problem of improving children's working conditions. For example, the 1973 International Labour Conference recommended that children should receive equal pay for equal work, be allowed at least 12 hours off work at night and have weekly rest days, paid annual holidays and medical care. Even these recommendations, however, have been adopted or observed by very few countries, and some feel that they are unrealistic because they raise the costs of hiring young persons near to those of hiring adults, thereby destroying the incentive, essentially their cheaper labour, for employers to hire children.

70. Nevertheless, in some places youth are working in conditions that approximate or surpass the ILO recommendations. For example, UNICEF has documented a large NGO programme in Brazil that places needy slum youth in legally registered jobs that pay the official minimum wage and grant all workers' rights. This was accomplished by studying the market carefully, structuring the programme to meet the need and training and supervising the participants so that they became superior workers. Nearly 1,000 boys currently work in this programme, studying at night and having access to health and other services through their worker social security coverage. This experience suggests that the strategy of providing employment with worker rights for young workers could be used more widely. On the other hand, most experts readily concede that relatively few of the world's children now working or seeking work could find employment if such standards were strictly enforced.

71. In summary, even though legal protection is a useful instrument for ~~eliminating the worst child labour abuses in most industrialized countries~~, it is not yet very effective in developing countries where the problem is concentrated. While there is no call to abandon legal remedies, it is clear that more practical supplemental approaches to protecting working children are required.

Services benefiting children

72. If children cannot realistically be protected through laws that bar them from the work force or guarantee working conditions approximating those enjoyed by organized labour in the modern sector, what other options are available? One is to increase family income so that children are not forced to work. In industrialized countries, the economy has not done this for families; the traditional intervention has been a system of social security and welfare. Most developing countries, however, have not been able to mount social security and welfare systems, nor are they likely to in the near future. Many of them do undertake development and income-generation projects to boost the income of poor people, but so far these have been on a limited scale. Other basic services - such as day care, birth-spacing information and female education - have been helpful in various places.

73. When services undergirding the family income are not feasible or sufficient, another option is to provide services directly to the children. In some areas, such activities as subsidized lunch programmes provide essential basic health, nutrition and other services. Education content and schedules are sometimes adapted to meet the needs of children who work, making it possible for more of them to study. In Brasilia, for example, a special school for working children has flexible hours and an individualized method of instruction, which makes it possible for almost any working child to

/...

receive at least a primary education. In a district of Maharashtra, India, a programme to provide access to primary education for rural working children operates an innovative voluntary evening programme that, in but a few years, has taken children through the seventh grade examination with an 80 per cent pass rate.

74. UNICEF has observed a number of practical programmes, usually operated by NGOs, extending special services to working children and street children. Activities of this type are relatively inexpensive and easy to organize and maintain, but government involvement is required if these services are to be provided on the necessary scale.

Support for families

75. The capacity of families to provide adequate solidarity with and support to their children is often the essential ingredient in preventing the young from drifting into the street or other marginal circumstances. Children already on the street (with occasional family support) or of the street (without family support) can be reached by various family and community actions so that they do not become completely abandoned. Appropriate community action can provide them special services they need, while finding ways to place them once again in a family context.

76. A particularly interesting example of this approach is the ecumenically-based Pastorate for Children in Sao Paulo, Brazil. There, ~~communities are assisted to mobilize protective services for their children,~~ such as growth monitoring and ORT for infants and young children; partner families who provide back-up help for families with children in trouble; and special activities attempting to re-establish family linkages with children already on or of the street. In this case, mobilization of religious groups results in the careful organization of resources and services at their disposal to support and strengthen families and communities in their child protection role. This approach is consistent with the UNICEF basic services philosophy and objectives. Urban basic services programmes, in particular, could adapt their activities to include the reinforcement of family and community solidarity and protection.

Transforming work

77. A few imaginative programmes have gone beyond the provision of protection or services, to test the idea that it is possible to adapt economic activities to accommodate the needs of participating children. Accepting the reality that some children must work, they seek to transform the nature of work itself from exploitative drudgery into an educational vehicle that promotes child development. Tasks are designed and distributed in such a manner as to meet the development needs of children; hours are set to ensure that children can attend school; sometimes remuneration includes ample nutrition and access to health care; and equipment may be adapted to make sure it does not pose a health hazard.

78. Some of these programmes are fully or nearly self-supporting, for humanizing work can be a stimulus to economic efficiency as it is a stimulus to personal development. Examples of this strategy exist in places as different as Botswana, Brazil and India, and the subject is of considerable interest in some educational circles.

General observations on responses

79. Successful responses for dealing with the problems of exploited children follow at least three methodological rules. First, they seek out the children wherever they are, usually the work place; services offered passively tend to be less effective. Second, they are community-based, operated by people the children recognize and with whom they identify. Third, they deal with the children's own concerns and when possible those of their families, and not merely with what the attending agency thinks they ought to have. In other words, these interventions are not just service systems, but important contacts of human warmth and concern. Perhaps that is why community organizations, and especially religious ones, seem to be particularly well suited to this type of work.

UNICEF experience with working children and street children

80. In 1980, UNICEF began to explore more deeply the problems of "children without families". In 1981, a pilot project was established in Brazil, where UNICEF was invited by the Government to help develop new ways for dealing with the problem of street children, a group that had come more than any other to symbolize the problems of neglected working children. A year later, a Latin America regional programme was funded, and until 1984 almost all UNICEF activity of this type was confined to Latin America. By 1985, however, similar activities had been started in the Philippines and were under study or proposed for other parts of Asia and Africa. About \$2 million has been spent world-wide. Although these activities related to the child exploitation issue have dealt mostly with street children, UNICEF has gained considerable insight into the problems faced by working children in general and some important lessons have been learned.

81. First of all, it is now known that the problem can be tackled. Country reports from Brazil, for example, indicate that during the period that UNICEF has worked with both the Government and NGOs on the street children problem, government policy has changed, NGOs have organized and found more effective ways to work and communities in many states have mobilized to deal with the problem. In the Philippines, where the programme is new, substantial progress already has been made in mobilizing Government and communities in selected cities.

82. UNICEF has found several ways of effectively dealing with the problems of street children. Perhaps its most effective role has been as an advocate, raising and legitimizing new ideas. For instance, the National Foundation for Child Welfare in Brazil now applies the methodology of the street child project to working with other children within its programme mandate. Regional communications among the various countries of Latin America have created a strong base for a Latin American movement on behalf of street children, and Latin Americans already have provided technical assistance in this area to countries as far afield as the Philippines and Mozambique.

83. UNICEF has been able to obtain support for street children projects through "noted" projects. For example, funds have been provided by the Governments of Canada, for projects in Brazil, Colombia and the Philippines;

/...

the Federal Republic of Germany, for Colombia; the United Kingdom, for Brazil; and the United States, for Mexico. Other countries also have indicated interest.

C. UNICEF action for exploited children

84. It may be appropriate for UNICEF to maintain a special emphasis on street children, an area in which other agencies such as ILO and WHO are less involved and in which UNICEF leadership probably would be appreciated. For other working children, UNICEF should concentrate its efforts on helping develop community-based activities. This is an area in which it already has some experience and can assist and complement work being done by ILO and other agencies. In countries where working children and street children are a problem, this community emphasis should constitute an integral part of country and urban basic services programming. The current strategy, developed through the Latin American experience, should be explored and tested for its applicability to other regions. In fact, solid evidence already exists that in at least one Asian country, the Philippines, it is working well.

III. CHILDREN IN CIRCUMSTANCES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

A. The situation

85. Children are never so vulnerable as when persons or institutions responsible for their care and safety betray that protective purpose, becoming instead direct threats to their life, health and development. Recent research and experience suggest that many more children may be in this situation than ~~are~~ facing tangible danger both from their families or other caretakers and from social institutions supposedly dedicated to their protection. Although relatively little is known about the world-wide pattern and incidence of child abuse and neglect, it is possible that more children are in this especially difficult situation than in any other discussed in this paper. Data are very sketchy, but some leading experts prudently estimate that perhaps 10 per cent of the world's children suffer abuse and neglect sufficient to endanger their lives, health or development.

86. Child abuse and neglect can be defined as "the portion of harm to children that results from human action, or inaction, that is proscribed, proximate, and preventable". ^{12/} Child abuse is active, and neglect passive, maltreatment. Child abuse and neglect are defined by local norms, and this has impeded treating the subject on an international scale.

87. It is now clear, however, that child abuse and neglect are more than merely culturally-relative concepts, for there are firm bases for certain standards apart from local norms. These include, for example, widely recognized standards for physical and mental health by which actions may be objectively judged as detrimental or not to the child's welfare. Such criteria frequently are based upon findings of medical and social science research. In addition, some standards are emerging from essential international consensus. Only part of this consensus has been codified in international declarations and conventions; there is a far broader level at which most societies agree to fundamental propositions about the treatment of

/...

children. For example, even though there are a few groups that consider it appropriate to use children as combat troops, the practice is roundly condemned by the international community at large. Because the technical and consensual bases for practical standards now exist, it has become possible to undertake the task of defining child abuse in terms that will promote global dialogue and action.

88. In the West, where most of the published research on child abuse has been conducted, it is conventional to divide the subject into four categories: physical abuse; physical neglect; emotional abuse and neglect; and sexual abuse. Each will be discussed separately. 13/

Physical abuse

89. Parental child battering, usually as overzealous physical punishment to modify child behaviour, appears to be the most common and widespread form of physical abuse. It is thought to be especially prevalent in situations of intense social and economic stress, such as rapidly urbanizing areas suffering from high rates of poverty and unemployment. Estimates from Western Europe and North America suggest that each year about 4 per cent of all children face serious harm-inflicting violence from their parents. Few of these children suffer death or permanent physical impairment from this battering, but the psychological effects may be long-lasting. In various parts of the world, child battering is also widely reported from institutions such as schools, factories, orphanages and reformatories and prisons. In almost no part of the world is the ~~physical battering of children to the point of injury considered~~ acceptable.

90. As pointed out in the section on children in armed violence, violent conflict is a source of serious physical abuse of children, who sometimes are singled out for death, torture or other forms of brutality, in order to coerce other adults.

Physical neglect

91. Most physical neglect of children is due to poverty and ignorance over which the family or caretakers of children have little direct control. However, there is also a substantial portion arising out of purposeful discrimination. This selective neglect often leads to malnutrition, disease and even death. Those who most suffer in this situation are girls, handicapped children and the youngest children in large families. Differential mortality rates among female and late birth-order children in many countries may reflect this phenomenon of selective neglect more than any other factor, yet this very widespread problem is usually overlooked by programme planners and administrators. 14/ Depending on the society, other neglected children may include disabled children, orphans, homeless and nomadic children, adopted children, children of racial and ethnic minorities and children with certain personality characteristics or disorders.

Emotional abuse and neglect

92. Emotional abuse and neglect are the most difficult to define, diagnose and deal with, and also might be the most common. They take many forms: chronic denigration of the child's qualities, capacities and desires;

/...

deprivation of access to social contact and resources necessary for normal cultural development; threat of abandonment or of grave bodily, social or supernatural harm; age-inappropriate demands on the child; and subjecting the child to deviant care practices such that it experiences severe impairment of its ability to function socially. Lack of love for and interest in the child is a serious and common form of neglect. Emotional abuse may be committed either by parents and other caretakers or by institutions, as in the practice of incarcerating juveniles with adults in prisons, where DCI has graphically documented the intense psychological (and often physical) abuses suffered by children. 15/

Sexual abuse

93. The sexual abuse of children appears to be much more widespread than supposed as little as 10 years ago. Parent-child sexual involvement is unexpectedly common. While quantitative data are lacking for most parts of the world, this kind of abuse has been observed to thrive on family isolation, male sexual domination and low female self-esteem, all conditions which exist in many societies around the world. Other caretaking individuals also abuse their relationship to children for sexual purposes - uncles, brothers and authorities such as teachers and babysitters being especially common. It is well established that the vast majority of sexually-abused children suffer that abuse from persons they know well.

94. Very little is known about the rape of children, but it is widely feared by families around the world - especially in situations of rapid urbanization and social conflict.

95. Child sexual abuse for commercial purposes - largely through pornography and prostitution - is relatively visible and much discussed, but, compared to other forms of sexual abuse, fewer children are involved. Even so, observers estimate that the number of juveniles world-wide ranges in the millions. 16/ This problem has been discussed in the section on child exploitation.

B. Responses to child abuse and neglect

96. To date, most organized social programmes combating child abuse and neglect have been concentrated in the industrialized countries, where most research has been done. Attempts to transfer industrialized country models to developing country situations have raised serious questions about the appropriateness of their relatively high-cost, professional-intensive approaches to most of those settings. Moreover, in both industrialized and developing countries, much remains to be learned about how to deal more effectively with both the nature and the extent of child abuse and neglect.

97. In order to gain a truly international perspective, it will be necessary for more countries to become interested in the issue in their own societies. It also would be helpful to have ample opportunity for researchers and practitioners from various countries to exchange findings and ideas. About a decade of recent experience demonstrates that contacts between professionals of different countries have been largely responsible for the gradual diffusion of concern about child abuse and neglect in many countries.

/...

98. Some professionals in the child abuse field have commented that the moment is ripe to establish international perspectives and action in this area, and that UNICEF could make a major contribution by helping facilitate this development. 17/

C. Implications for UNICEF

99. Because many child abuse concerns are specific to particular cultural and economic contexts, most initiatives are best taken at the national or sub-national level. UNICEF could be helpful in stimulating attention to this subject, and in providing information and other types of support for building awareness and helping find workable solutions. Because nations differ greatly in the types of child abuse and neglect that are most manifest, each country should be encouraged and assisted to develop its own analyses and plans for action.

100. There also are some activities in which UNICEF could productively assist at the international level. First of all, it can help raise awareness and interest regarding a few selected problems that are known to be commonly prevalent throughout the world, such as parental child battering, selective neglect and child sexual abuse. Specifically, it could help provide for information sharing on such issues by professionals working in different countries. Subsequently, UNICEF could be instrumental in developing means of international co-operation, at both the government and NGO levels.

IV. CONCLUSION

101. For each of the groups of children discussed, concrete and practical actions have been identified which can be undertaken in reasonable expectation that the survival and development of children can be advanced, tangibly and substantially. Almost all of these actions have been tried already, including by UNICEF itself, and have been found useful. There is no question that families and communities can be empowered to protect their own children and to assist them when they do fall into difficult circumstances. It is demonstrated that government and non-governmental agencies can mount programmes that address the needs of many of the children most at risk. Experience shows that UNICEF can have a crucial role in creating government and public awareness, in mobilizing support, in disseminating information and ideas leading to workable action, in supporting creative innovations and in helping the world understand and learn from its own experiences in assisting these terribly needy children. All this is known to be possible because, as the paper and its supporting documents indicate, it is already being done somewhere in the world.

102. In responding to these children, UNICEF can seize the opportunity to advance the cause of peace in its most profound sense, reducing the violence which mankind often unwittingly inflicts upon its own children, and hence upon its own future. The many forms of violence to children, emanating from armed conflicts, from destroyed environments, from unalleviated poverty that drives them into streets and sweatshops and from abuse and neglect directed at them from those they best know and love, all undermine the essential bonds that unite society.

Notes

1/ Unless otherwise noted, figures from this point on regarding armed conflict are from "Children in situations of armed conflict" (E/ICEF/1986/CRP.2), New York, UNICEF, 1986.

2/ Leo Goldstone, "Selected social and economic indicators by infant mortality groupings", unpublished manuscript, UNICEF, April 1985.

3/ Anders Wijkman and Lloyd Timberlake, Natural Disasters: Acts of God or Acts of Man? (London, Earthscan, 1984), pp. 22-24.

4/ Ibid.

5/ Reviewed in Everett Ressler, Neil Boothby and Daniel Steinbock, Unaccompanied Children, draft report, May 1985 (to be published).

6/ Wijkman and Timberlake, op.cit., p. 122.

7/ Definition from "Exploitation of working children and street children" (E/ICEF/1986/CRP.3), New York, UNICEF, 1986.

8/ P.M. Shah and W. Cantwell (eds.), Child Labour: A Threat to Health and Development (Geneva, Defence for Children International, 1985).

9/ The Anti-Slavery Society for the Protection of Human Rights, "The exploitation of child labour", London, unpublished manuscript, 1984.

10/ A. Bouhdiba, "Exploitation of child labour", (E/CN 4/Sub.2/479 Rev. 1), New York, United Nations, 1982, para. 31.

11/ ILO, Report of the Director-General, 1983, Part I: Child Labour; and A. Beguele, Towards an Action Programme on Child Labour: Report to the Government of India of an ILO Technical Mission (Geneva, ILO, 1984).

12/ Definition from "Child abuse in a global perspective" (E/ICEF/1986/CRP.4), New York, UNICEF, 1986.

13/ Ibid.

14/ "Child abuse in a global perspective".

15/ Defence for Children International, "Children in prison with adults", preliminary draft, June 1985.

16/ Kenneth J. Herrman, Jr., An international strategy for intervention into the commercial sexual exploitation of children, special report prepared for UNICEF, August 1985, unpublished.

17/ "Child abuse in a global perspective".

Table 1

Disasters precipitated by natural events (1960s and 1970s)

Number of recorded disaster events per year

<u>Type of disaster</u>	<u>1960s</u>	<u>1970s</u>	<u>Percentage increase</u>
Drought	5.2	9.7	87
Flood	15.1	22.2	47
Tropical cyclone	12.1	14.5	20
Earthquake	6.9	8.3	20
	39.3	54.7	39

Number of persons affected by disasters per year

<u>Type of disaster</u>	<u>1960s</u>	<u>1970s</u>	<u>Percentage increase</u>
Drought	18,500,000	24,400,000	32
Flood	5,200,000	15,400,000	196
Tropical cyclone	2,500,000	2,800,000	12
Earthquake	200,000	1,200,000	500
	26,400,000	43,800,000	66

Number of persons killed by disasters per year

<u>Type of disaster</u>	<u>1960s</u>	<u>1970s</u>	<u>Percentage increase</u>
Drought	1,010	23,110	2,200
Flood	2,370	4,680	97
Tropical cyclone	10,750	34,360	220
Earthquake	5,250	38,970	642
	19,380	101,120	422

Source: Swedish Red Cross, 1984. Cited in Anders Wijkman and Lloyd Timberlake, Natural Disasters: Acts of God or Acts of Man? (London, Earthscan, 1984), p. 22-24.

/...

Table 2

Estimated number of street children world-wide (1981)
(in millions)

Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	Total population	Population urbanized (%)	Urban population	Urban child population aged 5-15 years	Economically active urban children	Children on the street <u>a/</u>	Children of the street <u>b/</u>
Over 100	1,301.9	21	273.4	90.2 (33%)	29.8	9.8	3.2
60 - 100	657.1	41	269.4	89.9 (33%)	29.3	9.7	3.2
26 - 50 (excluding socialist countries)	322.3	51	164.4	36.2 (22%)	11.9	3.9	1.3
Under 25 (excluding socialist countries)	741.0	76	563.2	61.9 (11%)			
Socialist countries	1,438.7						
Totals					71.0	23.4	7.7

a/ Children living with families, appearing in the street to work.

b/ Children with sporadic or no family contact, usually living in the street.

Source: The Anti-Slavery Society, 1985.
