

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S EMERGENCY FUND

PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

UNICEF Programme in Greece

A Report by Mr. E.J.R. Heyward, Australian Member of Executive Board, on a Visit to Greek Mission
28th December, 1948, to 3rd January, 1949

1. The Director of European Headquarters invited the Australian Government to send their representative on the Executive Board, who was then in Europe, to visit Greece, where the Chief of Mission is an Australian. The period from 28th December to 3rd January was spent in Greece, and the following observations may be of interest to the Board. The first four days were spent on a field trip with the Chief of Mission and a representative from the Greek Ministry of Welfare, and the Greek Ministry of Coordination. A plane supplied by the Greek Government enabled visits to be made to Kastoria, Ioannina, Larissa and Karditsa. On return to Athens, the Chief of Mission held discussions with the resident Minister in Charge of Coordination, Mr. Boxiadis, the Minister of Welfare, and the Welfare Section of ECA.

State of Need.

2. The needy sections of the population, as estimated by the Greek Ministry of Welfare, are approximately as follows:

	Percentage of Total Number Population	Children 0-18 (about 1/3rd)	Children 2-6 (about 8%)
Indigents	18	1,400,000	500,000
Refugees from guerillas	10	750,000	250,000
Soldiers' dependents	7	550,000	180,000

Source: Based largely on Monthly Statistical Bulletin of Greek Ministry of Welfare.

3. It will be seen from the first column that the total proportion of the Greek population requiring assistance amounts to 35%. The total number of children 0-18 is 2,700,000. The total population of the country is 7,500,000.

/4. Indigents

4. Indigents are classified on a very austere standard. The test is whether they have income less than what is required to buy a monthly quantity of food only (not including provision for clothing, shelter, fuel, etc.) This monthly ration includes 30 lbs. of bread and flour, 2 lbs. of oil, 3 tins of meat and a reasonable supply of vegetables, and in Dec. 1948 was costed at 144,000 drachma (\$14. U.S.). An indigent who has less than a quarter of this sum is in category A, if he has between a quarter and a half, he is in category B, between half and three-quarters in category C, and between three-quarters and the whole sum, category D.

Greek Aid to Needy People.

5. Indigent Children - Information was obtained only about aid to children of indigents. This consists of a monthly ration of milk distributed free from ECA supplies. In the age group 0 - 2 this amounts to 15 tins of evaporated milk (equals approximately 2 lbs. of dried whole milk) and for 2-6, 4 tins (equals 1/2 lb. dry) plus 3 lbs. of dried skim milk - all distributed as a dry ration.

6. Refugees - These receive a bread or flour ration of about half a pound per day plus 1,000 drachma (10 cents) per person per day, the actual payment of which sometimes falls a month or two behind.

7. The children of refugees receive a dry ration of milk the same as above for indigents. Money is also spent on the construction of shelter, the distribution of blankets, fuel, etc. The Ministry of Welfare for the financial year 1948/49 had an appropriation of 300 billion drachma (\$30 m.) for relief to refugees. There was also provision for work relief to the extent of 110 billion drachma (\$11 m.). Recently a supplementary appropriation of the 136 billion drachma (\$14 m.) was approved for January to June 1949 on account of the increase in the number of refugees. The number of refugees is roughly the same as from the combat areas in Palestine and the financial provision of \$55 m. is roughly comparable with the 32 m. requested from U.N. members plus \$6 m. from UNICEF estimated as being required for 8 months relief to the latter.

8. Soldiers' Dependents. Information was not collected about Greek aid to these as it is not of interest to the Children's Fund as a separate category.

ICEF Aid.

9. The present programme is for 340,000 child units and its value for the 17 months from its beginning to June 30, 1949 is \$4 m. The 340,000 child units, which amount to 12% of the child population - a proportion second only to Austria was programmed to go to 110,000 school children and 230,000 children in the age group 0-6 - mostly refugees. The areas chosen were in northern Greece (omitting Attica which contains about 1/3rd of the population of the country) because the conditions in the north are very much harder.

10. School Feeding for the Age Group 6 - 18. The Greek Government had for 1948 a school feeding programme embracing a million children. For 1949 this was reduced for budgetary reasons to 400,000. The Fund's plan of operations was to supplement this for 110,000 in Epirus. Owing to the closing of schools in evacuated villages, and the requisitioning of schools in towns for the housing of refugees, this programme was not reached for some time and it was decided to provide also 20,000 rations for 6 months in Thessaly out of the surplus. It has now been decided on the recommendation of the Greek Government and the Chief of Mission to use part of the unprogrammed balance to include a further 150,000 children in Macedonia for 4 months beginning as early as possible. This will raise the total number of Fund recipients among school children to 360,000 for the next four to six months. The Greek Government will be allocating ECA milk for another 300,000 children. It also provides raisin bread as matching to the Fund's milk. The milk ration is one kilogram per month per child.

11. Pre-School Feeding 2 to 6. The programmed number was 118,000 children, almost all refugees. In October, 1948, 50% of this distribution was through congregate feeding, but owing to further finances becoming available local authorities were planning to extend this to 100% by the end of the year. It has now been decided on the recommendation of the Greek Government and the Chief of Mission to aid a further 50,000 recipients through the existing centres. This will be done by opening the centres to all children who wish to obtain a ration card from the local committee, and special efforts will be made to inform the children of indigents. It will be seen that the ICEF ration of 1 kilogram per month amounts roughly to 50% addition to the AMAG/ECA dry dis-
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tribution to indigents and refugees described above in para. 5. There was therefore little point in making it in dry form, but when it is given in prepared form it is at present the only prepared meal which the refugee children receive outside what may be cooked for them by their families.

12. Children 0-2 and Pregnant and Nursing mothers. One hundred and ten thousand received 1 kilogram per month of milk dry.

13. Milk is not a traditional food in Greece, and is, therefore, not appreciated by parents or officials, though children probably like it by now, since substantial quantities have been coming in from UNRRA on. Everywhere officials ask couldn't the Fund send them some "food", and especially meat. The Mission replies that more food value can be supplied for the money in the form of milk. Greeks are sweet tooths and congregate feeding cannot be started until sugar has been found. The Fund sends some sugar to Greece but additional supplies have to be obtained from matching. Fats (other than cod liver oil) are not supplied to Greece owing to local production and export of olive oil.

Administration of ICEF Programme.

14. School Feeding. This is well run by the Department of Education which was beginning a school feeding programme in 1939. It has on its regular budget an appropriation of 30 billion drachma (\$3 m.) for this purpose. The programmed number of recipients by ICEF was not reached in the first part of 1948 because of the evacuation of villages and the requisitioning of schools for housing refugees. Hence the programme was extended into Thessaly with unused stocks, and is now to be extended to Macedonia from the unprogrammed balance.

15. Pre-School Feeding. This is run by PIKPA, a semi-autonomous body supported with Government funds, originally set up to run local medical clinics. In each locality there is a PIKPA committee of which the president may be the bishop, nomarch, or welfare officer (who is responsible to the nomarch and the Ministry of Welfare). Many committees have lacked money for congregate feeding. They drew certain funds from the sale of AMAG milk

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(milk being available for sale to people who did not qualify for free distribution as indigents or refugees). A small proportion of these proceeds had been set aside for future long-term projects. These were unblocked as from 1st December, and became available to use for supplementary food, fuel and wages of a person to prepare the milk. These funds should provide for this purpose for about 4 months. ECA (which has now taken over from ATAG) has decided that its milk should be sold through grocers rather than PIKPA committees (with exceptions in certain towns). The Chief of Missions is hopeful, however, that before the ATAG funds run out the Government will have decided to use its supplementary appropriation (para.6 above) for giving a prepared meal to refugee children, which would of course enable milk also to be prepared with little additional cost.

Refugees.

16. Probably the best source of information on the problem as a whole is a mimeo report by Hansi Pollak a U.N. consultant, prepared in November, 1948

17. Evacuation. Refugees now amount to roughly 10% of the population. They have come down from the villages to the "towns" - a town having over 5,000 population. The towns are protected by a garrison from the Greek army. The evacuation of villages takes place only on government orders. Villagers are evacuated if the Government can no longer protect them from "kidnapping" for service in support of the guerilla troops. Evacuation may also be ordered if a village is suspected of collaboration with guerillas.

18. After the Grammos campaign (June 48) guerillas were scattered all over the mountains of Northern Greece and right down the Pindus range, and a substantial number of villages are now evacuated. The refugees are concentrated in the northern towns where frequently there are more refugees than permanent population. For example, in the Kastoria nomos (province) nearly all villages have been evacuated; in the Yoannina nomos 200 have been evacuated and 100 remain; in Karditsa nomos 70 have been evacuated and 70 remain. Villagers near the towns walk in in the evening for protection, returning to their work in the morning. Of the places visited
/Karditsa..

Karditsa town has the greatest refugee problem since its population is 15,000 and it has about 30,000 refugees. Ioannina town has a population of 20,000 and 20,000 refugees.

19. Cold, and Fuel Shortage. The condition of the refugees is made worse by the very severe cold in most of the towns where they are. During the night of our visit to Kastoria the temperature fell to 20 degrees centigrade below zero and at Karditsa to 8 degrees below. At the same time there is an extreme shortage of fuel resulting firstly from the long-standing depletion of Greece's forests and secondly from the fact that such resources as there are are mostly in territory which has been evacuated on account of the guerillas. At Kastoria we saw water being heated for reconstituted milk with kerosene. Though this has to be imported by military convoy it is about 1/3rd the cost of local wood. In villages we also saw dung being dried for fuel instead of being used for manure. Refugees burn a small amount of brush wood and, a hole in the roof serving for a chimney, discomfort from smoke is intense. The more fortunate are provided with stoves. In such conditions it is almost impossible for people to keep clean. The shortage of wood also makes it much more difficult for refugees to construct shelter for themselves, as all materials have to be imported.

20. Housing. During the last month partly as the result of the urging of the Chief of Mission and the ICEF field representatives, nearly all refugees have been taken out of tents and either billeted in houses or put into specially constructed accommodation such as Nissen huts, wattle and daub, or Kraft paper huts. In all these accommodations there are typically 5 to 8 people crowded into a small room. Conditions around encampments are extremely unsanitary with human excreta much in evidence. This does not create particular problems during the present cold, but in the summer there are flies, bad odors, and danger of disease. There is an attempt to vaccinate the camps most exposed to infection - an operation which has to be forced on the people by police. It is not possible to have any systematic control over the shifting population.

/21. Hunger

21. Hunger. There is no doubt that the people are miserably hungry; the meals we saw in preparation consisted mainly of marrow, potatoes or bean soup, and were insufficient in quantity. People typically said they had had no meat for one or two years. Presumably these supplies were brought with the thousand drackma daily allowance which is additional to the half pound of flour or bread. There were also a few goats running around the encampments.

22. Idleness. Probably equally as damaging as the cold, hunger, and dirt is the idleness in which the men, and to the lesser extent the women, live. The small-scale industries of the towns sheltering refugees, e.g., the fur-scrap trade in Kastoria or silversmithing in Ioannina cannot be expanded to give employment to peasants, and the weather prevents public-works projects during the winter even if money were available. There appears to be no local personnel available to do the necessary social welfare work, e.g., many of the peasants are illiterate and would greatly benefit from education and instruction in more modern agricultural practice. The women could use looms if these were provided to communities together with some raw wool. Visiting refugees at New Year, which is the greatest festival of the year, we saw no signs of singing, dancing, observance of folk traditions, or other festivities. It seems that many refugees crouch round their miserable fires at night, too cold to sleep, and snooze during the day. Apathy is general, worsened by the lack of a definite prospect of returning home.

23. The Scouts were an active movement in Greece and made some contribution to this problem before most of their leaders were called up for military service. The only exception to this picture is provided by the "Queen's homes" which care for 14,000 (about 7%) of the refugee children in conditions comparable with the provision for orphans in other countries, and with an interest in education and development as well as material needs. In these UNICEF milk is served in conditions comparable with instructions in other countries.

24. Finance. The \$55 m. now being spent on refugees is a significant sum in the economy of Greece. It amounts to \$70 per head compared with \$130 /average

average national income plus foreign aid per head of the population. Nevertheless the refugees are worse off than this comparison might suggest because this sum has to provide for the construction of shelter and other simple equipment which these people have had to leave behind in their villages. An unknown additional amount is spent by local authorities. The central government money comes from ECA counterpart funds, which are supposed to be used for reconstruction purposes. To give one additional prepared meal a day (at 10¢ per meal) to all refugees could cost about \$25 m. or to refugee children only about \$8 m. Hence it is quite beyond the capacity of the Fund to provide a supplement that would raise the standard of the refugees to an acceptable minimum.

25. How long? A few months ago the slogan was that the refugees would be home by Christmas (1948). The general expectation now is that they will need relief also next winter. Even if peace is restored during the summer many villages have to be reconstructed before they can be lived in and in all cases crops have to be replanted before the villagers will begin to grow their own food.

Blankets.

26. The villagers brought into the refugee camps only what they could carry. Moreover blankets are one of the first items to be taken from villages by the guerillas. There is no proper survey of the total need for blankets in the camps and it is probably impossible to make one. About 300,000 blankets have already been distributed but enquiries made on the field trip revealed less than one blanket per person. Hence the Greek Government and the Chief of Mission recommended, and the Executive Director has now approved, the purchase of 100,000 blankets from the unprogrammed balance (cost about \$200,000). These will meet a great need and can be distributed without the difficulties involved in expanding congregate feeding rapidly.

27. Possibility of a Further Raw Materials Programme. The possibility of commandeering existing stocks of blankets in Greece and possibly supplying raw wool for their replacement was explored. It is understood there is
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capacity to make about 100,000 blankets per month, and that this is mostly idle. Production during 1948 was about 1700,000 and commercial stocks in Athens are reported by the Government at 70,000 compared with a pre-war stock of 250,000. Despite the fact that these are priced at \$8 and \$9 a piece they are said to be moving into commercial consumption and the Government states that to commandeer these stocks would disrupt commercial distribution. As regards provision of blankets for next winter, Mr. Doxiadis stated it would be impossible to provide as matching the manufacturing costs of raw wool. The difficulties are partly financial. After a runaway inflation during the occupation resulting in the annihilation of all old currency at the end of 1943, and a second inflation from 1944 to 1947 very stringent measures were taken during 1948. The inflationary effect of manufacturing blankets for free distribution would of course be very small, but people are frightened to make any exception. The existing Greek raw materials programme draws its manufacturing costs from the Queen's fund, not the State budget though matching for the milk conservation project would come from the State budget. The Mission is not aware of any further voluntary funds that could extend the present programme.

UNICEF assistance to needy children in Greece without political discrimination

28. The Mission is confident that there is no political discrimination within territory administered by the Greek Government, and this conclusion is supported by such observations as I was able to make. It is known that there are many children of guerillas, among those receiving assistance. The children who come down from the villages among the refugees often include the children of guerillas or guerilla sympathisers, especially of course where the Government orders evacuation of a village because it is suspected of giving help to the guerillas. The Queen's homes also receive the children of guerillas.

29. The only question, therefore, is whether there are children in the villages not administered by the Government to whom it would be practicable to provide UNICEF aid.

/39. It is

30. It is probable that there are some children in guerilla territory. There are said to be villages partially inhabited by guerilla sympathisers. Also the guerillas take back people to work in support of their front-line troops, and these groups of "hostages" or "kidnapped" people include whole families, e.g. a thousand people were taken from Karditsa during December 1948 including whole families. In general, however, the conditions of life in the mountains, among a group of people who have to be very mobile, are such as to make children an encumbrance and it seems reasonable to accept the generally held view that among the guerillas there are only children too young to be separated from their mothers, or else children old enough to be trained for useful work - that is from about 15 up.

31. Though there are a small number of children among the guerillas, I believe it would be completely impracticable for the Fund to assist them. The guerillas are not in possession of any place with a name on the map. They control villages but no towns with over 5,000 people. In February 1948 they attempted to capture Kastoria with a population of 6,000 and in December 1948 Karditsa which was held for 36 hours. It is believed that one of the objects of these attacks was to secure a recognized centre in which the "Markos Government" could be established. As things stand at present, however, it would seem completely impracticable to send supplies to Markos and completely impracticable to distribute them within his territory because all the regular lines of communication are under at least partial control of the Greek Government. It would be impossible to establish congregate feeding because Markos is not in control of settled centres of population of sufficient size. He is always ready to withdraw his forces and his supporting workers from any territory which the Government is prepared to enter in force. His tactics is to have a mobile force which attacks towns near the mountains, which are not at the moment strongly defended by the government.

/Economic data

Economic Data relevant to ICEF Programme.

32. The National Income of Greece in 1947 (a) and 1948 was about \$700 m., equal to about 60% of pre-war. (b) This amounts to about \$100 per head. Greece received in addition about \$30 per head of non-military foreign aid. Before the war also Greece was a very poor country, and this makes more difficult the task of evaluating the need of Greece relative to pre-war rather than its absolute need, which is required by the Fund's first task of aiding reconstruction to pre-war standards.

33. Greece was always a substantial food importer. Arable land per head is 0.74 acres, the same as Italy and India. But the rural over-population is such that arable land per head of farm population is 1.31 acres, which is the same as India, but less than Italy (1.68) (c). Greece is not a milk-drinking country. Three-fourths of its milk production comes from sheep and goats, and is used for butter and cheese. (d) Though plans for the restoration of cow-milk production exist (e), since it is not a major factor in the country's food production, it is not appropriate as an indicator of ICEF allocations. Owing to ECA imports, total milk supplies are probably greater than pre-war. Agricultural production as a whole is estimated at 81% of pre-war in 1947 and 77% in 1948 (f). Guerilla activity may well reduce 1949 crops even further. ECA food imports are said to be planned on the basis of maintaining the national diet at 2,400 calories per head, which is a low maintenance level, the same as that of the Greek population before the war (g). However, in practice many people must fall below this level, since there is no rationing.

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- (a) U. N. Statistical Bulletin.
- (b) Statement of Mr. Doxiadis.
- (c) Ezekiel, para. 25, Appendix 1, Report of FAO Mission to Greece.
- (d) Statement of Need, E/ICEF/W3.
- (e) "European Programmes of Agricultural Reconstruction & Development," FAO.
- (f) "Quarterly Report of the Government of Greece on Operations under ECA," July - Sept. 1948, Table 13.
- (g) Ezekiel op.cit. para. 41.

34. External aid has been very substantial in relation to the national income. UNRRA aid during 1945 and 1946 totalled \$420 m. and was very effective in rehabilitating the country before the civil war became so much more serious in 1947. U. K. made a loan of \$40 m. in 1946. In 1947/48 Greece received from the U. S. A., from the Greek-Turkish aid programme, \$125 m. for civil aid and \$174 m. for military; also \$40 m. from U. S. Post-UNRRA relief (h). In 1948-49 Greece is receiving about \$200 m. from ECA (i), for civil purposes, and military aid from the second U. S. Greek-Turkish aid appropriation of \$275 m. ICEF allocations to Greece to 30/6/49 total \$4 m.

35. The Greek State budget is relevant to ICEF negotiations about matching. In 1948-49 (fiscal year July 1 - June 30) it amounts to 3,450 billion drachma (equals \$345 m.), approximately half the national income, a high proportion typical for a country at war. One thousand nine hundred and forty-nine billion drachma is allocated for non-military purposes.

Taxation represents only the same proportion of the national income as before the war (j). The tax system is very complex, 85% of tax revenue coming from indirect taxes (k). Five hundred billion drachma are allotted to the budget from ECA counterpart funds. The Ministry of Welfare spends 500 billion drachma, most of which also comes from counterpart funds and is spent on emergency relief. The Ministry of Education has 30 billion drachma for school feeding. It is encouraging to have provision on the regular budget for this purpose, but disappointing that it has been reduced from last year, and that owing to higher prices it will feed only 400,000 children for 6 months in 1949 instead of 1,000,000 in 1948.

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(h) "Salient Features of the World Economic Situation" (UN) p. 126.

(i) Quarterly Report of Government of Greece.

(j) "Survey of Economic Situation and Prospects of Europe" (UN) Table 35 gives taxation as 61% of pre-war. National income is also 60% of pre-war

(k) Ezekiel, op.cit. para. 72.

/Summary

Summary.

36: Owing to disruption of school feeding by guerilla activity and shortage of "matching" finance for congregate feeding of the 2-6 age group, there was an unprogrammed balance of \$460,000 at 30th November, 1948. It has now been decided to spend \$200,000 of this on 100,000 blankets (which will be useful only if supplied very quickly), and \$260,000 on more milk to be used through school feeding (for which the machinery already exists) and through existing congregate feeding centres for the 2-6 age group. One of the important factors in considering the next Greek allocations must be the degree to which the Mission and local authorities actually succeed in using the present allocation.

37. There is a serious situation among the refugees in Greece. Outside Attica, the Fund is reaching most of the children 0-6 with its daily ration of milk, the only limit being inability of local authorities in some areas to arrange congregate feeding. So far as children 6-18 are going to school (in some cases prevented by requisitioning of school buildings), they will also receive the Fund's daily milk ration in Northern Greece. The Fund is thus carrying out its policy of supplementary feeding among refugee children throughout the area where they constitute the greatest problem, and is also providing some blankets. Even if the Fund were prepared to go beyond its established policy of a milk supplement for refugee children, the proper solution of the problem would be beyond its financial resources. Hence the refugee situation should be made known elsewhere. There will be a second period of acute need next winter, and the contribution that the Fund should make should be considered when new allocations are made especially in the light of success in actually using the present allocation.