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UNICEF: Planning and programming
for children at the country level

A report by Maurice Bertrand, Joint Inspection Unit

UNICEF: PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING
FOR CHILDREN AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL

by

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Chapter I

THE PLACE AND ROLE OF UNICEF IN OVERALL DEVELOPMENT
EFFORTS. THE STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT.

1. The activities of UNICEF are designed to alleviate the effects of under-development on children and to combat poverty. Although the scale and gravity of these problems are well known ^{1/}, it is also clear that, however tragic their nature, the modern world does not seem to have the technical or, above all, the political resources to solve them rapidly. This is only one aspect of the development campaign, which is seen by all as necessarily a long and hard one and in respect of which, given the impossibility of mobilizing the massive financing which would eliminate one of the major difficulties, efforts to devise more effective development methods are continuing.

*More
progress
has been
made...*

2. Although no magic solution has been found in the two decades during which these problems have persisted in a world composed of independent States, some advances have nevertheless been made at the intellectual level. While the main efforts have naturally been concentrated on the economic field, it is becoming clear that, in the final analysis, it is in the social field that the most original and effective methods have been found. It is essential to see what is UNICEF's role within this overall context before considering possible ways of increasing the organization's effectiveness.

3. Perhaps the chief merit of the concept of "development" is that it has led to consideration of the questions involved in raising the standard of living of poor peoples as a problem to which the international community had a duty to find solutions from the standpoint of both national policy-making and the forms of international co-operation.

At the national policy level the first idea to impose itself was that of planning. It was not a inconsiderable achievement to secure, among countries with different regimes and ideologies, a consensus on this particular method. Even if adherence to the concept of planning was sometimes more a formality than a reality, in general, it opened the way for a systematic study of situations and problems and for the development of investment programmes. It was the attempts to make the latter coherent that tended to alleviate the principal difficulties resulting from the shortage of resources.

*in the
methodology
for social
development ...*

^{1/} The figures most frequently quoted to illustrate this situation are 15 million avoidable deaths of children under five years of age each year and 50 per cent of primary-school-age children in the developing countries who do not, but could, attend school.

The international co-operation approach was based on the concept of transferring technology from the developed to the developing countries. Armies of experts in all fields have been mobilized for this purpose under bilateral or multilateral aid arrangements.

*than for
economic
development.*

4. The results achieved have varied. On the whole, however, with a few successful exceptions, the poorest countries, whose economy is based either on subsistence agriculture or on the export of one or two agricultural or mineral commodities, have not yet achieved economic take-off. In the case of most of the others, a widening of the gap between the modern sector of their economy, which has achieved some degree of development, and the traditional rural sector, which has continued to stagnate, during which time an urban proletariat has been in process of formation, has been the most obvious result of the development efforts undertaken.

5. This situation has long caused a questioning of the methods employed. As far as international co-operation is concerned, the developing countries collectively have endeavoured, through UNCTAD, to raise the issue of the terms of trade and raw material prices, and then to broaden the debate in the context of the new international economic order, by considering such matters as the possibilities for technical co-operation among developing countries and the "new dimensions" of technical co-operation. As regards national development methods, while each country has been seeking to develop its own approach, the international organizations also have sought new formulae and for some years have been devoting more attention to the social aspects of development. The use of such expressions as "integrated approach", "integrated rural development", or "action to combat poverty" was intended to demonstrate that economic development brought no rapid solution to social problems and that it was essential to seek more specific and more direct solutions to the latter.

At the same time, in the field of health, the development of "primary health care" methods, jointly advocated by WHO and UNICEF ^{2/}, has undoubtedly introduced a number of methods which are infinitely more effective in combating the causes of morbidity than the types of technology transfer which were being recommended in this area only 10 years ago. In the field of education, together with the continuation of efforts to promote planning in this sector, which has begun to produce positive results, increasing stress has been placed on the adaptation of primary and secondary school curricula to development needs, the integration of schools into community life, the use of work in schools, etc.

^{2/} These methods consist, basically, in stressing both the importance of all forms of prevention and the fact that a very large proportion of diseases can be treated and cured by using simple methods which staff can be rapidly trained to apply.

6. The avenues of research thus opened seem finally to be leading to two basic observations which conflict with the philosophy of development that has been generally accepted until recent years. These observations are:

- (a) That development is an overall process in which the interaction between economic development and social development is not one-way and in which the latter may even constitute a cardinal element of the whole;
- (b) That a relatively satisfactory level of social development, including a standard of education equivalent to that produced by full primary school attendance, and an infant mortality rate approaching the level prevailing in the developed countries, could be achieved rapidly, even by countries still at a low level of economic development.

In other words, it was realized that the development of the physical and intellectual potential and the channelling of such potential towards development needs was probably a more important and more valuable raw material than those that might result from an increase in a country's agricultural or mineral resources. Moreover, the experience of a number of countries has shown that, given a determination systematically applied, it is possible to achieve major results in these areas at a more rapid pace than the rate of overall economic growth. Instead of being a belated consequence of an inevitably slow economic development, social development is therefore entitled to be recognized as an objective which can and must be pursued simultaneously with economic development itself. This means that, in some situations, as a result of voluntary efforts or activities undertaken at the local level, social development can precede and condition economic development. However, such a radical change in approach to the problem of development has not yet been adopted in all countries, and considerable progress remains to be made.

*UNICEF,
as a
development
agency*

7. It is in this context that UNICEF's work as a development agency should be considered and this will be the main purpose of the present report. By its continuous defence of the cause of children and by the methods which it has gradually perfected, this organization has done much to bring about this change in attitudes. From an agency responsible for distributing emergency aid to children stricken by natural disasters, it has gradually become an organization which serves the Governments and populations of the developing countries as a centre for applied research aimed at formulating policies and programmes for the benefit of children throughout the world.

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to this
progress.*

For this purpose it is using a set of methods, forming the "basic services strategy", which concern all aspects of the lives of children, their families and the communities in which they live. Moreover, unlike UNDP and the other agencies of the United Nations system, which for the most part employ the services of experts

recruited for specific projects, it maintains in the countries concerned, permanent teams of "programme officers" who co-operate with the Governments in defining policies and programmes in favour of children. 3/

8. The question of the effectiveness of the methods thus employed by UNICEF is the central topic of this study. It is necessary to determine whether it is possible to increase the aid which UNICEF is giving to the Governments and populations of the developing countries for the execution of their policies and programmes in favour of children. This calls for a detailed examination of the methods of preparing and drawing up the "plans of operation" which are the main tools used for this purpose.

The report will endeavour to show that a considerable increase in effectiveness could be achieved by applying generally the best methods which UNICEF is already employing in some countries, it being understood that this systematization should not slow down, but should rather encourage, an intensified search for new methods, particularly with regard to the relations between social development and economic development.

3/ UNICEF's own definition of its role is to be found in paragraphs 81 to 83 of the latest edition of the document entitled "An Overview of UNICEF Policies, Organization and Working Methods" (E/ICEF/670):

"Combining humanitarian and development objectives, UNICEF co-operates with developing countries in their efforts to protect their children as a vulnerable group, and to enable them to develop their full potential and become productive members of their societies. This co-operation, taking place within the context of national development efforts, is designed to help the countries build up their capacities and enhance their self-reliance in connexion with services benefiting their children.

"UNICEF cannot itself provide the scale of external co-operation needed by developing countries to provide basic services benefiting their children. It sees one of its functions as helping lay the base for larger-scale action by: advocating necessary policies; providing advice and assistance in the design and implementation of services benefiting children; supporting the training of national personnel; co-operating in small-scale "starter" projects to work out the methods for extension of services, leading by steps to country coverage; cooperating in larger-scale projects when others cannot; and working directly with bilateral aid agencies when the agency wishes this and it is acceptable to the developing country concerned.

*This report
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how the
effectiveness
of the methods
employed by
UNICEF
could be
increased.*

9. The study which the author of this report has made of the methods applied by UNICEF, through local visits of inspection, examination of the replies to questionnaires and the reading of available documentation, has led him to conclude that a very severe bottle-neck in almost all the countries concerned prevented any further progress. This bottle-neck is the inadequacy of information about the situation of children. It therefore seemed to him essential to recommend that a very special effort be made to overcome this major obstacle.

10. The present report examines the following questions:

- (a) The problems of planning and programming for children at the country level (chapter II),
- (b) The problems of monitoring the implementation of programmes and evaluating the results achieved (chapter III),
- (c) The problem of continuing research efforts (chapter IV),
- (d) The bottle-neck in information concerning the situation of children and means of eliminating it (chapter V),
- (e) The implications for UNICEF, including the structural implications, of the recommended changes in methods (chapter VI).

*Outline
of the
report.*

11. Before beginning his examination of each of the points mentioned above, the author of this study should first state that he is proposing his diagnosis and recommendations solely on his own responsibility. He wishes however, to express his appreciation of the most valuable assistance he received from the secretariat of UNICEF at all levels in preparing this document. No effort was spared in helping him to find essential documentation and information and in providing him with food for thought. He is grateful to all those who thus helped in this task at the headquarters of UNICEF and at the regional and field levels.

Contd/. 3/

"UNICEF has an advocacy role for children, both at the international and national levels. This advocacy role is an essential element in its policies and its methods of work. As part of its advocacy role, UNICEF attempts to focus attention on the critical needs of children and the opportunities to meet them, and it tries to secure higher priorities in national and international development efforts, for services benefiting children. This includes the deployment of more resources for these services, both by the developing countries themselves and by external co-operation through technical and funding agencies of the United Nations system and regional bodies, bilateral aid and non-governmental sources. It also includes the better use of existing resources. In the countries with which it co-operates UNICEF seeks to promote adequate provision for children in national development plans, or in the development plans for particular areas or zones within the country."

He also wishes to point out that this report should be regarded as a contribution to the sustained effort already being made by the UNICEF secretariat to improve programming methods and develop its support of evaluation activities. The scale of that effort was acknowledged and mentioned in paragraph 6 of the Joint Inspection Unit's previous report, submitted to the Executive Board at its 1979 session (JIU/REP/79/4; UNICEF symbol: E/ICEF/L.1403). The detailed examination carried out on the occasion of this second report has not altered that view; it has simply led to far more specific recommendations, based on a study of the situation which existed during 1979 but which, far from being static, was rapidly evolving.

Lastly, it should be noted that the author realizes that the efforts recommended in this report will not always be easy and will require time in order to achieve the desired result. The co-operation of UNICEF is programmed in relation to the policies and priorities defined by Governments and this co-operation forms only one part - whose importance varies from country to country - of the Government programmes as a whole. It is clear, moreover, that UNICEF's ability to improve its own co-operation at the country level depends to a large extent on the existing development planning environment, and that this environment is sometimes at odds with the possibility of rational programming. The continued development of the rational and scientific character of the UNICEF secretariat's approach to problems concerning children is still the best means available to the organization for assisting national services in their difficult task.

Chapter II

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING METHODS

A. The contribution of UNICEF to the formulation of policies and programmes for children

12. For the sake of clarity the problems of the planning and programming phases have been dealt with separately here from those relating to the monitoring of implementation and to evaluation. Although a complete cycle is involved in which each phase determines the next one, there are specific problems at each level. The method by which UNICEF endeavours to co-operate with Governments in the formulation of policies and programmes in favour of children involves, in those cases where the mechanism functions best:

- An institutional system of co-operation between the government and UNICEF;
- A timetable for the preparation of a medium-term plan of operations whose execution period co-incides with that covered by the country's national development plan. This timetable, which extends over a period of 15 to 18 months, comprises phases covering the following points;
- The preparation of a "situation analysis" which describes the problems affecting children, defines possible types of solution and justifies the objectives chosen;
- The determination of specific quantified objectives (which can be measured and monitored). The targets selected must be as close as possible to the desired levels of impact (reduction of mortality and morbidity rates, school attendance ratios, etc.);
- The development of methods to overcome the major constraints which have been identified;
- Specific programmes in the various sectors concerning children or integrated programmes translated into projects, for each of which objectives are defined, execution deadlines are set, responsible officials are designated and the allocation of tasks between the national services and UNICEF is made clear;
- The existence in a large number of projects of machinery for consulting the populations concerned and definition of methods for providing information on and explaining the projects (project support communication);

In the best cases, the co-operation between UNICEF and Governments...

leads to the establishment of specific programmes based on well prepared analyses of the situation of children.

- Identification of areas with special problems where integrated and concentrated efforts permit attainment of more rapid and comprehensive results (programme concentration areas);

- Lastly, a system for monitoring implementation and evaluating results.

13. Comprehensive and systematic utilization of all these methods is, of course, fairly rare. We attempted to draw up a balance sheet of the current situation by examining in detail the plans of operations, projects and preparatory documents of a few countries and then having some overall statistical research be carried out. This examination has produced the following results:

(a) With regard to the application of the programming methodology contained essentially in circular PRO 25 of the Programme Division, the statistical research on the practices followed on a few fundamental points in the countries as a whole has yielded the following figures:

Regions	Number of Countries	Existence of a situation analysis	Level of definition of quantified targets			Existence of programme concentration areas
			services	products	impact	
Africa	46	16	9	30	4	13
Latin America *	21	18	17	17	2	10
Asia *	18	9	14	17	9	11
Middle East	9	7	6	6	4	5
Total	94	49	46	70	19	39
%	100%	47%	49%	74%	20%	41%

* The data for these two regions does not account for approximately ten countries in the Caribbean and ten countries in the South Pacific. In both cases these are very small countries which are covered by global recommendations to the Executive Board.

The table shows that documents which can be considered as "situation analyses" exist in approximately half of the countries. The documents computed in the above table comprise various studies prepared by the national services or the local UNICEF offices, which vary considerably both in quality and dimensions. The table also shows that the definition of objectives at the different levels is in many cases still insufficiently precise. Half of the plans of operation have no quantified service coverage objectives. Furthermore, only 41% of the programmes include the utilization of "concentration areas".

The situation revealed by these figures could in any case be improved. Some of the variations are probably due to the specific nature of each country's problems and the manner in which Governments have decided to utilize UNICEF's co-operation. In a few countries, the permanent UNICEF staff is no doubt too small in number for it to be possible to anticipate a development of co-operation as comprehensive as that described in paragraph 12 dealing with programme formulation. However, the situation is also due in part to inadequate application of existing guidelines. In some countries, for example, we found that the guidelines relating to programming methods were not sufficiently known. An effort in this area should make possible a substantial increase in the effectiveness of UNICEF's co-operation in the field of programming.

But these methods are not yet applied in all countries,

(b) Furthermore, even in those countries where the existing guidelines are being applied in the best possible manner, a substantial improvement in methodology seems clearly still possible. We have noted that the understanding of the role of situation analysis and the general concept of these exercises could be considerably improved, that progress can be made in the formulation of objectives, that methods of identifying concentration areas and of preparing relevant specific programmes can be improved, etc. It therefore seems necessary to make a distinction between measures which should make possible better application of existing directives and those which might lead to improvement of the methodologies themselves.

and improvements in methodology are still possible.

B. Necessary systematization of UNICEF's internal guidelines

14. The existing UNICEF guidelines relating to the methods to be applied by the local offices in order to co-operate with the national services cover a very large proportion of the points mentioned in paragraph 12. These guidelines include:

The existing system...

- Documents (books, manuals, circulars, etc.) concerning the methods to be applied in the various fields of co-operation;
- Circulars (including circular PRO 25 on the methods of preparing and drawing up plans of operations)

The local UNICEF offices could in many cases increase their effectiveness if they were fully acquainted with and had a good understanding of the existing guidelines and the capacity to adapt them to local circumstances. Ways of achieving this should therefore be considered. The current presentation of the guidelines undoubtedly has some drawbacks. The guidelines as a whole are more the result of a historical accumulation that has taken place over more than 30 years than of a systematic organization. A first classification effort was made in the 1950's. It

of guidelines

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resulted in a field manual that was more or less comprehensive but which was last updated in 1961 and may be regarded as entirely obsolete. Preparation of a second, more detailed, manual on the basis of an entirely new plan began in the 1960s. Unfortunately, this latter work is itself either outdated on a number of points or incomplete. The series of circulars which supplement the manual includes series which have now been abandoned, such as the EXPRO and FO series and series currently in use (EXD from the Office of the Executive Director and PRO from the Programme Division) which are issued in chronological order. These cover areas that vary greatly in importance. Some of them are concerned with operations of limited duration or of a recurrent nature, others explain points of policy or describe methods which should normally have their place in a manual.

The coexistence of manuals and circulars does not produce very satisfying results. In dealing with a given subject, it is difficult to discover where the relevant regulations are to be found and to distinguish what still applies from what is obsolete. Several chapters listed in the manual's table of contents were in the end never written and the only possible substitute is circulars which are old and sometimes difficult to obtain (chapters on education and training and on disease control); as substitutes for other nonexistent chapters (e.g. those on planning and programming) there are some recent circulars and a few informal documents which are of value but of whose existence the field offices are in many cases unaware. Some chapters are excellent and recent (nutrition) while others are very useful but in need of some updating (e.g. the chapter on "assessment"). In the best of cases, to facilitate use of the directives by the field offices brief summaries containing the essential points should be issued 4/. Lastly, a number of recent documents (PRO 42 on women, PRO 49 on responsible parenthood, etc.) do not fit within the intended structure of the manual. This would seem to indicate a need for an entire re-shaping of the document.

4/ What is said here relates solely to the matters contained in volume I of the manual, which deals with programme questions. A volume II on administrative and financial questions is in preparation. Production of this volume could usefully be expedited.

15. Necessary systematization, better presentation and utilization for training

A rapid improvement should therefore be made in the present situation. The efforts to systematize the existing guidelines, fill in the gaps, eliminate the outmoded sections and ensure that the guidelines are constantly updated or renewed could take the following form:

i) The systems of manuals and circulars should be combined. The circulars themselves should be reserved for ad hoc operations and superseded as new circulars are issued;

ii) The outline of the reference manual in several volumes should be revised in order to cover all the questions with which UNICEF is concerned. The revised manual should include as detailed and comprehensive an account as possible of developments in all the important subject-areas and the circulars on these subjects that are still operative should be incorporated into the corresponding chapters;

iii) All the parts which do not reflect the latest state of the subject in question should be brought up to date without delay and all the outdated parts should be deleted;

iv) Substantive changes and additions to existing guidelines should be formulated and presented as supplements to existing chapters of the manual (the system of fly sheets to replace pages that have become superseded seems to be the best method available for the purpose), 5/

v) A simplified field manual of not more than 15 pages for each main subject and 300 pages in all should be given to every UNICEF official (and also transmitted to national officials who might be interested) as the basis of their information. This should also be constantly updated;

vi) Training courses should be organized on this system of guidelines;

vii) It would seem extremely useful for this body of guidelines to be prepared other than at headquarters alone. On the essential points, it would certainly be very constructive to consult the field offices (or at least some of them) on documents containing draft guidelines. Consultations of this kind, which would ensure the participation of the persons responsible for applying the guidelines, would also be of great use as a continuous form of training; 6/

5/ A subject index should also be compiled.

6/ On the more important substantive points, it should be possible to arrange consultations not only within UNICEF but also with the national services of the countries concerned and the United Nations specialized agencies. UNICEF does not exist in isolation; it is important to arrange the broadest possible consultations on the best methods of solving, for instance, the problems of children in poor urban areas, or problems of nutrition or primary health care.

The publication of a reference manual in several volumes...

and of a short and simplified field manual...

should facilitate...

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viii) The supporting machinery for a system of this kind has to be set up. A new scheme should be prepared, missing chapters drafted, different texts on the same subject should be amalgamated, the contents updated and revised, summaries should be prepared, style and presentation harmonized, consultations with field offices should be arranged, up-to-date documents sent out regularly, etc. These tasks would have to be allotted, more particularly within in the Programme Division. Provision should be made for a focal point to supervise and take charge of the operations as a whole.

C. Possible methodological improvements with regard to some points

16. The meaning of a long-term strategy

*UNICEF
should
encourage...*

The possibility of improving programming methods themselves seems to me, first of all, to depend on an overhaul of the scheduling of the work, both for the long term and for the medium term. To begin with, too little attention has hitherto been given to the possibility of formulating long-term strategies for children. Such strategies would offer considerable advantages:

i) In most countries, there is a gulf between the present situation of children in terms of their general level of health (levels of mortality and morbidity, nutritional status,)etc.) and education (percentage of children finishing primary school, in secondary education, etc.) and a reasonably ideal situation. In the circumstances, the only hope of narrowing the gulf within a given time-frame is through continuing long-term action;

*the formu-
lation of
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strategies
for children
in all
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ii) The experience of some countries which, despite a level of economic development that is still too low, have succeeded in attaining a relatively satisfactory level with regard to children's health and education, 7/ shows that it is useful to formulate a specific strategy for children's problems along with the over-all economic and social development strategy. The problems affecting children are of course part of development problems in general, but the fact that a successful strategy for children can be achieved more quickly than one can expect to attain a satisfactory level of development is in itself an extremely important factor to which UNICEF should draw attention;

7/ We can quote here the cases of Sri Lanka, which with a per capita GNP of about 200\$ has been able to achieve an infant mortality rate below 50‰ and a primary school enrolment rate of 83%, and of Tanzania (GNP about 200\$ and more than 80% enrolments in primary school). Other examples also exist.

iii) It is only by using a long-term strategy that Governments can clearly comprehend the kinds of policies they should adopt for children, particularly with regard to education. The kind of options in education (choice of curriculum, type of training at the secondary and higher levels, teaching methods, etc.) are directly dependent on the kind of development chosen for the long term. When the aim of the educational system is not to produce the unemployed and the misfits - indeed, when it is hoped that the capabilities fostered by education can be harnessed in the cause of development, projections, even if only approximate projections, have to be made for 15 or 20 years ahead;

iv) Lastly, the establishment of long-term strategies would have the added advantage of providing a framework for preparing successive medium-term plans, thus making it unnecessary to go over certain major points again every four or five years.

17. The scheduling of work in field offices and the time-table for plans of operations

The schedule of work in the UNICEF field offices is variable. The choice of a particular schedule for programme preparation and formulation and for implementation and evaluation, depends first of all on the schedule wanted and accepted by that the country itself, for example, the duration of the national development plan. It is obvious, however, that the schedules now chosen by the UNICEF offices are also based on other considerations and usually have too short a cycle. The fact that some 50 recommendations are submitted each year to the Executive Board indicates that, on the average, a new plan of operations is prepared every two years. It should be possible to lengthen this period considerably.

In order to frame policies and prepare effective programmes for children, an effort must be made to formulate long-term strategies and to fit a succession of medium-term policies into this strategic framework. The preparation of programmes over the medium term entails a number of difficult operations for which a precise time-table has to be drawn up. If it is estimated that the preparation will take 12 to 18 months, it is unreasonable to repeat this effort too often in view of the serious risk that programme preparation will then take up a disproportionate amount of the time available for implementation. There are undoubtedly situations which make it difficult to plan programmes for as much as four or six years ahead. Unfortunately, cases of political or administrative instability abound and, to deal with them, it is sometimes necessary to work on a short-term basis. 7bis/

Principles defining the rhythm of programming activities should be established in each country.

As a general rule, programmes should cover the medium-term...

7bis/ It can be estimated that in 1980 about 10 per cent of the countries in which UNICEF is active are in a situation which precludes medium-term programming. If all the others, therefore, it should be possible to draw up plans of operations for more than four years ahead.

Nevertheless, in many cases it should be possible to preserve the necessary flexibility without having to relinquish medium-term programming. One way of facilitating a longer time-span of this kind in difficult cases would be:

- To establish programme objectives and frameworks for a medium-term period (four, five or six years);
- To specify fairly clear-cut conditions for programme implementation for the first two years only;
- To establish plans of work for each year within this relatively flexible framework;
- At the end of the second year, to redefine the conditions of implementation for the next two years, and so on.

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for their
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This formula, which can be adapted to requirements in a variety of ways, would, for example, make it possible to submit to the Executive Board recommendations for a minimum of four years, the corresponding plans of operations being worked out to cover the same period but the details of the projects being fixed for only two years at a time.

In any case, it seems to me very important to try to induce each country to state the principles it intends to follow with regard to programming schedules and act accordingly in the work of preparation. These principles should apply to the programming of all external aid, to all the agencies of the United Nations system as much as to bilateral aid. UNICEF for its part should make every effort to contribute to such over-all harmonization, which Governments often find it difficult to secure from their outside partners.

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In relation to children, such harmonization and a clear definition of the schedules to be observed should simplify the preparatory work. For example, in the case of countries which agree to draw up long-term strategies for children, an in-depth situation analysis could certainly be undertaken at the time the strategy is being formulated and then simply be updated when each new medium-term programme is drawn up. Generally speaking, it would be useful to make a distinction, in the whole set of operations required for programme preparation, between non-recurrent operations and operations which must be undertaken whenever a plan of operations has to be prepared. With such a distinction, permanent files could be kept and simply brought up to date (situation analyses, problems arising in the concentration areas, long-term policies in health and education, etc.), while the preparation of medium-term programmes would focus on the formulation of specific projects. This preparation should, on the whole, be scheduled to take from about 12 to 18 months.

18. The country approach and the role of situation analyses

To define a strategy ^{7ter/} for solving the problems that affect children in a particular country is unquestionably an extremely difficult task. It involves the use of clearly-defined criteria in order to determine which problems are the most urgent and which are the easiest to solve, choose between a wide variety of ways and means in the light of particular constraints, shape the main programmes (education, health, water supply, nutrition) and determine the relative importance to be attached to each one in the financial package envisaged by the country. The responsibility for these tasks lies with Governments, but UNICEF cannot be successful in its role of advocacy for children unless it shows that it is capable of taking an active and effective part in analyzing the situation of the country concerned. After reading some of the situation analyses (sometimes presented as a collection of explanatory notes on a sectoral basis) in the preparatory documents for the plans of operations for certain countries, I am convinced that it is absolutely necessary to give some thought to the nature, substance and presentation in this fundamental exercise and that precise guidelines on the subject should be drawn up after consulting the field offices and interested Governments. The following points seem to me to be essential:

a) The situation analyses should not be made by the UNICEF offices themselves. They are the responsibility of the national services and should be submitted to the Governments for their assessment. All UNICEF can do is encourage the national services to undertake such analyses and try to help them in this work. Other United Nations agencies, such as UNESCO for education and WHO for health, should also be called upon to contribute to these analyses if they have adequate local representation. In each country UNICEF should therefore try to suggest ways and means of organizing the work and securing the most effective co-operation of all concerned;

b) The situation analyses should not be general essays on the countries or a string of platitudes about them. Country monographs already exist, either in the economic literature of the countries themselves or in the documents published by the World Bank and other international organizations;

c) A model outline for a situation analysis which UNICEF might recommend for adoption could comprise:

7ter/ In this report the term "strategy" is generally used to designate a long-term policy; the term "policy" is mainly used in connection with medium-term periods. The planning vocabulary of the International Community has not yet been officialized through a series of approved definitions. It was therefore thought necessary to specify the meanings given to these two terms on this report.

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i) An introductory chapter giving a very short summary (no more than three pages) of the best existing studies, stating the basic points a layman must know in order to understand the context of the problems confronted. Some general maps showing the distribution of the population, the topography, the rainfall and the means of communication might also be added, together with a concise bibliography of the most important documents, accompanied by brief commentaries;

ii) A description of the main features of the situation concerning children, followed by an assessment of the reliability and comprehensiveness of the information available (critical analysis of sources, how long the methodology has been used) and recommendations on the measures that seem indispensable if the basic data on children are to be brought up to an acceptable level for use in framing policies;

iii) An outline of an over-all strategy that justifies the orders of priority among the different sectors of activity and the various regions of the country and makes use of the link between the Government's social policy for children, the type of development chosen and the economic development policy that has been adopted. As the central part of the situation analysis, it is undoubtedly the most difficult. It means integrating all the available data and making a diagnosis which will determine choice of approach. From a set of files covering the social, political and administrative aspects, it means determining the over-all situation concerning children in terms of health, education, nutrition, availability of drinking water, etc. grasping the differences between the various regions and deciding which tasks are the most urgent, the most useful and the most difficult to carry out. It is in this diagnosis part of the analysis that UNICEF should be in a position to give the Government of each country the quintessence of the experience it has acquired through its work in the developing countries as a whole. The easiest ways should be worked so that UNICEF can muster its know-how and cite the example of its most successful experiences. In other words, on this particular point, which is, in the last analysis, simply the actual application of the country approach philosophy adopted by UNICEF, it seems that a clearly-defined methodology should be developed and illustrated by a large number of examples. Doubtless, methodology of this kind already exists and is described in numerous articles and documents, but it would be very useful to summarize it in such a way as to make it operational. One way of doing this might be to set up a focal point in the Programme Division to which the field offices could address requests for consultation on matters of interest to the countries in which they are working. The focal point could also provide the most appropriate advice on the specific problem of making diagnoses: commenting on the method used giving examples of comparable situations and of successful experiences which could be drawn on by the country in question, etc.;

iv) Chapters on the fundamental problems affecting children (education, health, nutrition, drinking water supply, etc.). Each of the chapters would comprise:

- A specific situation analysis;
- An analysis of the causes of the shortcoming observed;
- An analysis of the sociological environment of the problem;
- A list of the problems identified;
- An indication of the responses to the problems;
- An analysis of the constraints that make the solution difficult and of the means of overcoming the constraints;
- A statement of the very long-term and the medium-term objectives with the respective policies;
- A list of the programmes and projects considered, including the funding;
- An indication of the methods proposed for monitoring programme implementation and evaluating results;

v) Chapters on each of the concentration areas.

19. Additional remarks on situation analyses

UNICEF should endeavour:

a) To emphasize to national services and Governments the importance of situation analyses and help them to maintain these as up-to-date, living documents (this should be one of the essential tasks of the Field Offices; in no case should a situation analysis be considered as an academic exercise, possibly for outside consultants, and once completed, no longer of any interest);

b) To provide the most effective assistance possible to the national services in drawing up the preliminary document, which might well be prepared when a "long-term strategy for children" is being formulated (in this respect, it would be helpful to arrange for regional and headquarters assistance and, in particular, the use of specialized teams in programming, evaluation and information problems);

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*and UNICEF
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c) To encourage the use of maps to illustrate these analyses. A special annex of the report deals with a study of the use of maps to reveal existing problems and describe the conditions for solving them - a technique which, if progressively developed, would certainly help in making diagnoses and explaining child problems in all circles; 8/

d) Again regular updating of situation analyses and exchanges of views between Governments about the methodology of preparing them might provide an important foundation for continuing UNICEF's researches on methodology in the various fields and devising a typology of situations and problems.

Moreover, after situation analyses had been prepared in a sufficient number of countries, they would constitute basic tools for broader pictures, such as a "report on the situation of children in the world" to be issued periodically, e.g. every two years. 9/

20. The establishment of objectives

The establishment of objectives involves essentially two problems:

- The level at which they should be formulated,
- The hierarchy of the various levels and the links between them.

The best plans of operations we have studied try to set objectives for the medium-term period, at the impact level. It might well be thought that the ultimate impact is for children to be in very good health and attain the most satisfactory educational and cultural level possible. However, the impact indicators that can be used are still, on the whole, somewhat more modest: mortality or morbidity rates, level of school attendance (expressed as an average for all school years or for only one characteristic year in primary and secondary school), birth rates, distances from supplies of drinking water, etc. In short, the impact level

8/ See annex 1, where we make a few suggestions regarding greater use of maps.

9/ Or less frequently if the work of preparing it proved too great.

seems to be that of the results which are considered necessary and, when added together, describe a situation that is deemed satisfactory. 10/

A definition of objectives at the impact level is highly desirable. Not only does it allow the successive stages to be determined but it is the only possible way of really mobilizing everyone's efforts, since it provides a tool for tangible measurement of the result of these efforts. It also greatly facilitates evaluation and thus make it easier to understand the advantages and disadvantages of the policies that have been followed.

The definition of objectives at the impact level is the only way of mobilizing everyone's efforts.

Moreover, while it is often very difficult, if not impossible, to determine the impact of the action taken by an international organization or of bilateral external aid in a country because the means employed are often too slight for the results to be pinpointed among a number of separate efforts, it is none the less quite normal to define at this level the objectives of a Government which is co-ordinating the over-all national and foreign efforts. However, the plans of operations define the objectives of Governments and not those of UNICEF or any one specialized agency.

The other levels of objectives to be determined in a plan of operations may be described as "service coverage objectives" and "output objectives". Service coverage objectives mean those corresponding to the setting up of the institutional arrangements which are necessary in order to achieve the impact objectives, such as increasing the distribution of iodized salt from 4.7 to 5.7 million beneficiaries by 31 March 1982 11/ or, systematically developing primary health services to cover 140 villages in the first year and 376 villages in the second year. 12/

Continuous and persistent efforts...

The output objectives are elements of service coverage objectives, for example, to train X nurses or health workers, to equip Y primary health centres, etc.

10/ These results may also be defined as the stages to be reached. For example, the objectives of a long-term strategy can be expressed as a maximum percentage: 100 per cent primary school attendance, X per cent in secondary, Y per cent birth rate, etc., and the objectives of a medium-term plan incorporated in the strategy could indicate the stage to be reached at the end of four, five or six years; e.g., 70 per cent primary school attendance, X-a per cent in secondary and technical education, and infant mortality rate of 70 per thousand, a birth rate of Y-b per cent, etc.

11/ Example given in paragraph 9 of Circular PRO-25.

12/ Example taken from the plan of operations for Indonesia.

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At a still lower level, it is then possible to enumerate the "inputs" needed to obtain these results: stipends for trainees on a training course, arranging seminars to train instructors, list of necessary equipment, etc. 13/

It would obviously be desirable to formulate the ultimate objectives at the impact level and then define the other levels by explaining the links between them and with the impact level. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to arrive at such a definition. The inadequacy of information systems, and of statistical information in particular, might quite simply make it impossible to define the objectives at the impact level. For example, in order to decide that infant mortality should be reduced from 170 to 100 per thousand in five years, the means must still be available to ascertain the exact level for the year preceding the one in which the plan comes into operation and then measure these levels periodically (or at least once again at the end of five years). We are still very far from such a situation in most countries.

Moreover, the establishment of credible linkages between an impact objective (for example, the reduction of infant mortality from 170 to 100 per thousand) and the various levels of the services established (development of primary health services; mother and child care, immunization, etc.) can only be based on working hypotheses which are themselves based on the experience gained earlier in the country or in other countries of the same type. In some cases (systematic immunization against a particular disease), the connexion between cause and effect, and consequently the probable effect of this kind of measure, is relatively easy to determine. In others (results achieved by combining numerous measures, as in the case of reducing average infant mortality), the connexions between cause and effect are less obvious.

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However, it should be possible to achieve important results in this field by continuous and persistent efforts. This presupposes, of course, a rapid improvement in statistical information methods, without which nothing would be possible. But once this prerequisite is met, the working hypotheses carefully based on precise calculations and confirmation of them by a monitoring and evaluation system, along with the results from experiences in the concentration areas and, lastly, exchanges of experience among countries should gradually build up a series of techniques and methods conducive to the formulation of increasingly precise objectives. This effort would lead to essential and decisive progress in planning and programming.

13/ Speaking more generally, the "outputs" of a level of objectives represent the inputs used to reach the next highest level.

21. Identification of constraints

Identifying constraints and suggesting solutions to overcome them represent one of the most important phases in the preparation of plans and programmes. One of the great merits of the existing guidelines is that they have long stressed the necessity of such an analysis. The best plans of operations are drawn up after a preliminary feasibility analysis. Paragraph 11 of Circular PRO-25 makes it clear that this examination should consider feasibility from the operational, institutional and administrative points of view, as well as the stand point of resources (manpower, equipment and funds).

Imagination and ingenuity are called for to establish realistic objectives and programmes in countries which may suffer from political or administrative instability, inadequate sources of information, a lack of skilled labour, transport and communications difficulties, supply shortages, financing difficulties, etc. In each case, it is necessary to discover what kinds of response should be made by integrating the necessary mechanisms into the programmes. In each country, the situation analyses should take account of these feasibility studies and of the solutions envisaged in each instance. However, it seems to me that, besides the response to be made to these difficult problems in each country, the examination of constraints is something which might be carried on at a more comprehensive level in UNICEF. Detailed studies to discover the types of constraint resulting from under-development are doubtless unnecessary: we have just mentioned the principal ones. On the other hand, it might well be valuable to find out which ones could, as a matter of priority, be met with global responses. UNICEF could participate in the work of identifying them, either by trying itself to set up institutions capable of making at least a partial response or by trying to draw the attention of the international community to the importance of a particular problem.

There are two main types of constraint: those which it is impossible to try to remedy (political instability) and those for which some partial, global or regional response can be envisaged. It would seem to us desirable to carry out a study of existing constraints along these lines. Such a study should make it possible to identify the points on which a special effort by UNICEF or by the United Nations system might be useful. One likelihood is that it would reveal important opportunities for training national staff dealing with the problems affecting children, and perhaps for establishing channels of communication and information.

A study of the most frequent constraints might reveal possibilities for global responses...

especially for training national staff dealing with problems affecting children.

22. Programme concentration areas

The method of identifying within countries areas which are the size of a province, several districts or an urban zone of some importance and in which the efforts and therefore the available means can and should be concentrated is used by a large number of countries. ^{14/} Many Governments have adopted this formula, which has numerous advantages, either because it facilitates the preparation of social programmes in areas where economic development programmes have been launched, or because it means that special attention can be paid to the most underprivileged areas and a response can be made to their most urgent problems, or because it can supply testing-grounds for programmes which might gradually be extended later on to the other parts of the country. In any event, it is easier to achieve definite and measurable results with limited means by concentrating programmes in specific areas.

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Pages 15 to 28 of the booklet on a strategy for basic services deal with these problems, but no other internal documents (manuals, circulars, reports to the Executive Board) seem to have pursued the matter and specified the methodology which should be applied. However, the method deserves very close attention. Systematic pinpointing of areas of this kind seems to me to be of exceptional interest for the following reasons (besides the general advantages mentioned above):

- The basic services strategy means integrating numerous facilities in the most widely differing sectors and it is infinitely easier to do this for a province, an urban area or several districts than for an entire country;

- One of the most difficult problems that countries have to solve is that of the links between economic development and social development. One way to make progress in this respect is to carry out a detailed study of the problem at a more restricted and manageable, a level at which it should also be easier to organize co-operation between the national services (central and local), UNICEF and the other organizations in the United Nations system;

- The preference given to directing efforts towards the most underprivileged areas is a trend that **should** be encouraged; by trying to solve problems in those places where infant mortality is highest, where the rates of school attendance are the lowest, nutrition is the worst and water supplies are the most difficult, we can not only respond to the problems of the most underprivileged children but also try out and develop techniques that should prove easier to use in those areas where the problems are not so serious;

^{14/} We have seen that 41 per cent of the countries where UNICEF is working have been using this formula in their plans of operations.

- The testing-ground aspect of such areas, mentioned above, is in fact an extremely important one; with systematic organization of such experiments, exchanges between countries about the methods used could be very helpful for the over-all development of the methodology.

For all these reasons, it seems to me that UNICEF should draw up precise guidelines on this problem after consulting the Governments concerned and that the guidelines should cover, among other things, the following:

- The methods generally followed by countries in order to identify these areas and the criteria what UNICEF should recommend for consideration;

- The kinds of preliminary studies to be recommended in these areas and the way in which they should be carried out (use of sampling surveys, etc.);

- The methods of analysing the sociological, administrative and planning environment;

- The definition of strategies for these areas and the establishment of objectives formulated at the impact level;

- The most advisable methods of co-operation between the national services (central and local administration), UNICEF, the other agencies in the United Nations system and external aid and, generally speaking, the methods to be followed for "joint" planning;

- The types of combined projects conceivable;

- Monitoring and evaluation methods.

23. The definition of projects

The notion of a "project" is not very precisely defined in UNICEF. Some plans of operations (Bangladesh, for example) are broken down into a fairly large number of very specific projects and each of the documents for these projects sets out the objectives to be attained, the prescribed time-frame, the areas concerned, the persons responsible for implementation, etc. Other plans of operations (for example, Sudan) merely distinguish between the different "fields of co-operation": health, education, drinking water, etc., and the relevant plans of action are not very precise. On the other hand, it seems that, generally speaking, the histori-

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cal weight of UNICEF's role as a distributor of supplies has an important impact on the actual formulation of programmes and projects. In other words, UNICEF's intervention is often described as taking many different forms; ^{15/} its programmes seem to be drawn by a kind of gravitational force towards forms of intervention that consist mainly of deliveries of supplies and to a much lesser extent the utilization of specialized personnel (either as experts or to assist in training national personnel). In UNICEF's present guidelines, it is clearly pointed out that plans of operations should be broken down into projects and that each project should be divided up into a certain number of specific "activities" in the annual work plan, but no definition is given of the actual notion of a project, either as regards its size or as regards its nature. It seems to me that this is a gap which ought to be filled in and that guidelines should be issued on this point after consultation with the field offices. In my opinion, these guidelines should be based on the following principles:

This definition should be based on established criteria.

- Projects should be built around an objective at the "service coverage objective" level and designed to be directed by a clearly designated national service. The various "activities" into which a project is divided up should, for their part, be at the output objective level;

- Projects should be of a reasonable size, the criteria for their size being clearly defined so that a plan of operations can be broken down into a moderate number of easily identifiable projects;

- Projects should be identified by numbers that could well explain their nature and the schedule for implementation by means of a fairly simple code;

^{15/} For example, the guidelines in the manual on nutrition specify the following: "UNICEF can provide staff time, finance consultants, both long and short-term, finance contracts with local or regional institutions, provide supplies and equipment or encourage others to provide them. This range of interventions covers such things as surveys and planning and appraisal of options; feasibility studies; design and testing of interventions and organizational patterns; project identification and formulation; assistance to training and orientation at all levels and in all aspects; assistance to nutrition education through the public media, governmental or non-governmental channels; support to logistical operations and other aspects of management; support to monitoring, nutritional surveillance and evaluation; direct supply and non-supply assistance to services that are to be strengthened, e.g. health-related nutrition interventions, or education-related nutrition interventions, family food production (applied nutrition), womens' activities, etc."

- At the level of the programme concentration areas, the sum-total of activities concerning these areas could constitute a single major project, provided that a national or local service has been designated by the Government to assume responsibility for all operations in the area. In this case, the notion of a "sub-project" might possibly be used in the breakdown of the various types of activities in each area.

24. The participation of populations in project formulation implementation and evaluation

In some countries, experiments have been tried out with the participation of UNICEF ^{16/} in the form of projects whose objectives, priorities and methodology are defined by the population for which they are intended. Because of its effectiveness in the case of children, this technique should receive the closest attention and be developed as far as possible. Everybody realizes that a knowledge of the sociological environment is absolutely basic for a project's success. Organizing the participation of the populations themselves in project formulation and implementation is the most highly developed and positive way to ensure communication between the planners and the beneficiaries of the policies undertaken.

Countries should be encouraged to facilitate the participation of population...

The experiments in this field, which have so far been rather few in number, have made it possible to develop a methodology which is sometimes very precise and seems to give excellent results. These experiments, therefore, should now be analysed with a view to drawing up guidelines which would tend to encourage Governments to facilitate this approach and make it more widely used. Actually, this would only involve explaining the community approach in the measures already recommended by the basic services strategy, but such methodological exactness is essential if these methods are to be developed.

in project formulation and implementation.

25. Improvement of country profiles and submission of recommendations to the Executive Board

We have already stated in paragraph 19 how proper situation analyses in each country could facilitate the preparation of a "report on the situation of children in the world", but all the measures advocated in the preceding paragraphs, and especially those concerning the formulation of objectives at the impact level, could also be beneficial with respect to the submission of documents for the attention of approval of the Executive Board. One of the initial consequences of preparing situation analyses would obviously be an improvement in the presentation of "country profiles". These profiles could also include a few maps which would give a quick overview of the problems and of the solutions envisaged.

The above recommendation should also allow improvements to be made in the presentation...

^{16/} And, in some cases, non-governmental organizations.

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However, it is above all the presentation of the recommendations themselves that should reflect the over-all progress achieved in the preparation of the plans of operations. In particular, improvements could be made in the definition of objectives at the impact level, explanations of the hierarchy of objectives, identification of the concentration areas and project identification. On the latter point, especially, it could be useful to replace or supplement the data supplied in the tables of figures for each "field of co-operation" by a list of the projects. Such a presentation would do much to clarify programme presentation and would later make it easier for the Executive Board to exercise its prerogatives with respect to the evaluation of results. 17/

17/ The following chapter will deal with the problems of monitoring and evaluation, but this report will not go into any further details concerning the implementation phase itself. This is naturally a very important phase in the programming cycle. We have taken the view that progress in the other phases should facilitate implementation. This does not mean that UNICEF should neglect to co-operate in the work of examining and solving the specific problems involved in the implementation of projects by Governments.

Chapter III

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

26. Present situation

From UNICEF's standpoint the present position with regard to monitoring and evaluation ^{18/} is different from that of programming. A number of principles and guidelines have indeed been established in these areas, but on the whole they are put into practice only sporadically. In other words, considerable preparatory work has been done, the desire for practical action exists, but the absence of reports on what has been undertaken leaves one with the impression that the actual implementation remains to be carried out.

*With regard
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Almost all the plans of operations which we have studied contain clauses concerning the joint monitoring of project implementation by Governments and UNICEF; institutional provisions for collaboration between UNICEF and national specialized agencies responsible for the monitoring of implementation have even been studied or introduced in some countries. However, we have not yet had occasion to see the results of these agreements in the form of monitoring or evaluation reports on a given project or programme. Some time is obviously needed for such machinery to get under way, but it appears that difficulties are also arising as regards manpower, available working time and the methodology to be applied.

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Furthermore, the exercises which we have studied on the basis of the annual reports of representatives, the audit reports, special reports for the Executive Board in 1979 concerning three countries and the (ongoing) comprehensive review of education programmes, vary enormously in nature and conception. The annual reports of representatives, for example, usually contain a very frank critical review of successes and failures, but if recognition of certain setbacks is in itself praiseworthy, it is no substitute for a detailed analysis of their causes or a study of solutions which would make it possible to avoid them in future.

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^{18/} The term "evaluation" is understood here as defined in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit JIU/REP/78/5 (Glossary of evaluation terms, by Earl D. Sohm), namely "a learning and action-oriented management tool and process for determining as systematically and objectively as possible the relevance, effectiveness and impact of activities in the light of their objectives, in order to improve both current activities and future planning, programming and decision-making".

From the standpoint of programmes relating to children, we believe that the "ex-post evaluation" phase is the one to which the most attention should be paid.

The term "monitoring" is defined in that report as "the continuous oversight of the implementation of an activity which seeks to ensure that input deliveries, work schedules, targeted outputs, and other required actions are proceeding according to plan".

Furthermore, it would seem that most field offices are not sufficiently well equipped efficiently to assist Governments in systematically monitoring the implementation of all projects, so that certain setbacks may simply be overlooked. Among the audit reports studied we have found only one example of a monitoring report which took the trouble to analyse programming shortcomings. Finally, the performance reports prepared for the Executive Board for three countries contain interesting observations in some cases, but they cannot really be described as evaluation reports.

As for the existing rules, the excellent chapter of the Manual on "Assessment" sets forth principles and defines methods, but it should be updated at least as regards vocabulary, and should conclude with more precise guidelines on exactly what each field office should do.

Finally, we must point out that in all the field offices which we visited we found great concern regarding the need to help national services develop the monitoring of project implementation. A monitoring spirit exists and problems relating to evaluation are generally understood. Some seminars on the development of monitoring and evaluation methods have in any event, been organized in certain countries.

In sum, the present situation should normally lead to the implementation of a genuine monitoring and evaluation system in the near future. However, a system of this kind does not yet exist, and this is a gap which should be filled. A number of specific measures should now make it possible rapidly to achieve this result. Broadly speaking, the measures to be introduced should distinguish very clearly between monitoring, or the supervision of implementation at the output level, for which the national services should be helped to develop a permanent organization that should gradually be extended to cover all projects, and evaluation at the intermediate level and above all at the level of the final results, i.e. levels as close as possible to the impact objectives, which in each country should be set forth in a plan successively addressing a number of specific problems.

27. Measures relating to the monitoring of programme and project implementation

The proper operation of a monitoring and evaluation system depends, of course, primarily on the manner in which objectives are defined. Measures relating to monitoring concern the level of output objectives; it is therefore a prior condition that there must be properly defined objectives at this level. This is not yet the case in all plans of operations, but the development of regular monitoring practices would have the effect of encouraging Governments as well as UNICEF to improve the definition of programmes and projects in this respect.

A decisive breakthrough could be made by providing quite a rigid format for that section of the reports of heads of field offices in which the results achieved by various projects are reviewed. This section, which is either part of the report or annexed to it, could simply take the form of a table listing, for each project, the objectives laid down, the target date for their achievement and a description, objective by objective, of the state of progress made at the time the report was drawn up. Separate columns could be used to indicate inputs (supplies, payment of salaries or expenses, time of trained personnel, and so forth) provided by UNICEF and by the Government, as well as the outputs, such as "training of nurses", "opening of PHC centres", etc. A final column might contain comments on the results achieved and on any setbacks encountered.

National services should be encouraged and assisted in drawing up "Monitoring tables on the implementation of project objectives".

Negotiations should, of course, take place in each country to ensure that the national services set up a monitoring system of this nature and prepare this final table of results. The intervals at which such tables should be attached to the reports of UNICEF representatives could be decided upon in the light of the duration of plans of operation (and of projects). Inasmuch as all plans would be of medium duration (four to six years), as recommended above, it would probably be enough to prepare tables of this kind only every two years.

Monitoring methods and practices could be developed in each country on the basis of the establishment of a tool as simple as this. The clauses of the agreements with Governments relating to the monitoring of project implementation should mention the preparation of such tables. On the whole, this would help to develop a monitoring spirit which should prevail at the time projects are thought up and decided upon. When the "Assessment" chapter of the Manual is revised, it might be worth mentioning specifically the usefulness of these "monitoring tables on the implementation of project objectives". 19/

28. Measures relating to evaluation

Just as the quality of monitoring depends on the sound definition of output or service coverage objectives, so the quality of evaluation depends on the definition of objectives at levels

19/ Monitoring is a continuous activity, its aim being to encourage the services concerned with the implementation of projects permanently to monitor that implementation. The monitoring tables should always be kept up to date. The biennial returns suggested here are recommended purely for the purpose of informing the national authorities and UNICEF headquarters (in the case of projects involving UNICEF collaboration) of the progress made in the implementation of each project and of accustoming the services to the practice of monitoring.

The effort to be made in respect of evaluation is linked to the effort required to define objectives at the impact level.

National evaluation plans should be established.

A biennial information report to the Executive Board would be useful.

as close as possible to the impact. We have already noted the difficulties encountered in the establishment of working hypotheses at this level. Clearly, evaluation exercises encounter the same problems. At the time of appraising results, no evaluation technique can magically make good the shortcomings which hindered the correct definition of objectives. In other words, the indicators of results should be built into the objectives themselves, and so that they can be used, the necessary measuring tools must be available at the opportune moment.

The effort to be made in respect of evaluation is therefore of the same nature as that required to define objectives at the impact level. We have already said that this is a difficult, long-term task which implies the parallel development of methods of measurement, in other words, machinery for collecting information and particularly statistical information. That is why, bearing in mind that in so difficult a sphere everything cannot be done at once, we consider that:

(a) In each country the Government, with UNICEF support, should choose the sectors where a special evaluation effort is necessary, the date when the evaluation should be made so that the conclusions drawn can be used in the preparation of new plans or programmes and finally the organization of the method of implementation (in particular, the designation of the authorities to whom the reports should be addressed and who should be responsible for drawing conclusions from them). As far as children's problems are concerned, UNICEF should advocate the establishment of evaluation plans, limited to a number of well-chosen sectors, but carefully prepared. It would be desirable that these plans should include, wherever possible, the evaluation of the results obtained in the programme concentration areas (especially because of the broader facilities offered by small geographical areas). These plans should in any event be prepared sufficiently in advance to allow for the development of measuring devices, namely, methods of collecting statistical data.

(b) In future, the UNICEF Executive Board should be regularly informed about the evaluations thus made in various countries. A report on this subject might be submitted, for example, in non-budget years. A report of this kind would enable the Board to measure the progress made in various countries, draw lessons (at least as far as UNICEF is concerned) from the evaluations made, and indicate the areas which it would like to see emphasized by individual countries in the future. This report should also provide an opportunity to ascertain periodically whether the conclusions of the preceding reports have been taken into account.

29. Specific measures with a view to associating the Internal Audit service with certain monitoring and evaluation operations

Obviously, one of the essential conditions of the success of monitoring and evaluation exercises is that they should be conducted by the persons who are responsible, in national or

local services and in the UNICEF secretariat, for the implementation of the programmes. When the populations concerned are associated with the preparation of the programmes and projects, it is of fundamental importance that they should also be associated with the task of monitoring and evaluation.

A policy of this kind does not, of course, exclude the use of specialists; in this respect, we recommend that - at least at the regional level - UNICEF should strengthen its technical capacity as regards planning and evaluation methods by appointing regional advisers in these fields; these measures stem from the structural implications of the set of recommendations made in this report (see chapter VI).

A more specific measure might be to make some use, at the request of those concerned, i.e. the national services and UNICEF field offices, of UNICEF's internal audit services. If the amount of normal auditing work which must be carried out is such that the entire body of auditors cannot be systematically assigned to monitoring or evaluation, it should nevertheless be possible to envisage the specialization of, for example, two of the present members of the internal audit service so that, after a period of training in these methods, they could be used to monitor and evaluate a number of projects.

An arrangement of this kind would make it possible to employ staff trained to be exacting in their normal work for limited operations which might later serve as a model for the officials of national services and UNICEF programme officers unused to methods of this kind. It might also make it possible to assist countries using these methods to train specialists for their own needs.

The use of a few specialists of the Internal Audit to assist national services in monitoring and evaluation matters could be envisaged.

Chapter IV

PROBLEMS RELATING TO THE CONTINUATION AND
DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH

30. The measures advocated in the two preceding chapters are essentially of a methodological nature. However, the systematization which they recommend, far from freezing methods at a certain stage of their development, should on the contrary help to encourage and develop the efforts aimed at substantive research undertaken by UNICEF since its inception. In particular, the preparation of situation analysis, the study of the lessons to be drawn from evaluations and the continuation of exchanges of experience among countries should make it possible to refine the kinds of answers which can be given to the enormous problems which remain to be solved in relation to the health, education and welfare of children in a large number of countries.

UNICEF's research efforts should be continued and developed.

In many respects, UNICEF may be compared to a university with research centres in every country. Through the seminars which are organized, the reports prepared for the Executive Board on global problems (women, education, the urban poor, responsible parenthood, nutrition and so forth), and publications such as *Assignment Children*, the analysis of the results obtained in some countries and the lessons drawn from the experience gained are described and subjected to a critical examination as a result of which progress can be made in the definition of methods and strategies. These efforts should be continued and developed.

31. One of the problems to which attention should be paid is that of the relationship between social and economic development. In its work on behalf of children, UNICEF is naturally concerned primarily with social aspects (health, education, water supply, nutrition, etc.). We have already welcomed as a major step forward the affirmation of the economic productivity of social development and the possibility of attaining a relatively satisfactory level of social development without waiting to reach a very high level of economic development. Nevertheless, broadly speaking, the struggle against poverty is at least as much an economic problem as a social problem. One of the recurring concerns in almost all UNICEF studies and research on women, the urban poor, nutrition, basic education, methods of community development combining education and work, and so forth, is the possibility of organizing "income-generating" activities, particularly for women. A concept of this kind becomes really meaningful only in the context of comprehensive economic study. Unless limited to mere charitable activities, the struggle against poverty cannot be won without offering the poor the means of having an income and of increasing it. This does not mean that UNICEF should replace the other international organizations responsible for co-operating with countries in the search for a solution to their economic problems. But it does mean that UNICEF should continue

The studies on "income-generating" activities should lead to an in-depth examination of the environment of the problems related to health, nutrition, education, etc.

developing its efforts aimed at a better understanding of the economic context of the problems of health, nutrition or education which it is striving to help to solve.

32. Research of this kind should necessarily lead to the identification of various kinds of situations. The problems faced by the poor in the shanty towns of large cities are certainly of a different order from those to be overcome by the rural poor in a subsistence economy. It may also be assumed that, in a rural environment, the methods used to combat poverty in areas where everyone can have access to a reasonable amount of arable land are not the same as in areas where a large proportion of the rural population cannot have any land at all (areas of commercial agriculture, for example). The situation may also vary considerably according to systems of family, community or political organization.

Research of this kind should also lead to the identification of the various types of situations.

This orientation of research towards the identification of types of situations and of problems, which would also undoubtedly make it possible to identify types of solutions, has already been suggested in our previous report. The systematic development of situation analysis and in-depth experiments undertaken in the programme concentration areas, as well as the development of experiments, with public participation in the definition of programme objectives, should provide the raw material essential for research of this kind.

33. At a more general level, the continuation of UNICEF studies and research should naturally take place in collaboration with the countries themselves and with international organizations specializing in related problems. UNICEF is already working in close co-operation with the countries themselves, but it might be possible to make greater use of the framework offered by technical co-operation among developing countries by combining research and training to an even greater extent. In particular, the development of the programme concentration areas might offer the possibility of exchanging personnel and of sending the trainees of various countries from one area to another, while attempting to discover similarities and differences between situations in each area. In this way, the specific research done in the context of the various experiments undertaken could be usefully developed. As regards the other international organizations, the method of tackling economic problems by starting with social problems could certainly lead to a new kind of fruitful collaboration not only with UNESCO and WHO, but also with FAO, ILO, the World Bank and the United Nations Department of International Economic and Social Affairs. Here again, the concentration areas could usefully be considered as true research laboratories.

In the fields of research and training, UNICEF could give a greater contribution to technical cooperation among developing countries.

It is nevertheless clear that this development of research again calls for efficient and reliable methods of collection of basic data.

Chapter V

Information on the Situation of Children

34. Difficulties of the problem

The unsatisfactory nature of the information available in countries concerning the situation of children is generally recognised both by UNICEF staff and by national administrations. However, awareness of this inadequacy is accompanied, particularly in UNICEF, by a certain uneasiness on the question of information problems in general and statistics in particular. This uneasiness should be analyzed: it seems to stem from a number of conflicting factors and attitudes. Attention may be drawn to the following:

A certain uneasiness exists concerning the problems of information on children.

- The over-abundance of documentation which is often badly presented, outdated or useless: in order to find needed information, which frequently does not exist, it is necessary to wade through a great number of studies, documents which often reproduce data from the same information sources, findings of research which has been carried out on particular topics and which is of no value, etc.;
- The publication of data without any indication of the methods used to collect them or an evaluation of possible margins of error: all too often, the authority of tables containing official figures is given to data which specialists know are unreliable and which do not even make it possible to obtain orders of magnitude;
- The apparent unduly technical nature of the statistical problems thus posed;
- The absence of simple methods of determining, in the various areas affecting children, which data are really essential for the formulation of policies and programmes; the difficulty of determining the levels of information required and whether more qualitative or more quantitative information is needed; the false impression which specialists may have that they are sufficiently well acquainted with the problems, because of their personal experience; in the final analysis, the absence of specific agreement among the users of information as to their real needs;

- Wide-spread and often unfounded theories concerning the cost of information;
- The difficulty of determining, as between the various governmental agencies, international organizations, etc., responsibility for the collection of information; in some cases, this causes undue confidence to be placed in unreliable information, and in others, the carrying out of superfluous and scattered studies;
- Lastly, with regard to UNICEF, the lack of a clear definition of the Organization's rôle with regard to the collection of information and the provision of assistance to governments in this field.

It is essential to overcome this disquiet and to clarify the situation.

35. Reasons why an exceptional effort is needed

In my opinion, one way in which this can be done is, first of all, by stressing the importance of the problem. The three preceding chapters have brought out the fact that without the machinery needed to obtain reliable and accurate data that is sufficiently recent and, in certain cases, is collected at regular intervals, it is quite simply impossible:

- to make an overall diagnosis without running the risk of committing serious errors;
- to formulate a general strategy and specific policies and programmes in the various sectors; in particular, to define objectives at the level of results hoped for, as close as possible to the "impact", and to establish clear relationships between the various levels of objectives;
- to monitor the execution of the programmes;
- to evaluate the results achieved and to draw lessons from them for the future;
- to continue the studies in a useful manner.

At all the vital phases of these efforts, therefore, correct methods cannot be applied, owing to the absence of adequate information. In other words, this constitutes a bottleneck and an exceptional effort in this field is therefore needed.

UNICEF cannot make further progress in any field if the bottleneck constituted by the inadequacy of information is not eliminated.

An exceptional effort is therefore needed.

An in-depth survey on the state of knowledge on the conditions of children was conducted in eight countries.

36. Surveys conducted in eight countries

In order to try to obtain a clear picture of the situation in the various countries, we conducted a survey in eight of them, with the assistance of the UNICEF secretariat. These countries were chosen in such a way as to offer a representative picture of the various types of situation. We finally decided on three African countries: Upper Volta, Sudan and Kenya; three Asian countries: Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Indonesia; one Middle East country: the United Arab Emirates; and one Latin American country: Ecuador.^{20/}

A very detailed questionnaire was sent to each of the UNICEF offices indicating for each of the "fields of co-operation" concerning children (education, health, drinking water, sanitation, nutrition, housing, etc.) and for sociological environmental conditions (income and poverty, family and community structure, etc.), the main types of information (data or indicators) generally regarded as useful in these fields, and requesting in respect of each whether the information existed or not, in what form it existed, its degree of reliability and an indication of the sources utilized. The questionnaire also dealt, in respect of each category of problem, with the policy pursued by the Government, the ongoing programmes and their financing; lastly, it requested, in respect of each point, the view of the UNICEF representative in the country. A second part of the same questionnaire concerned the organization of statistical services in the country and the opinion of the local UNICEF office on the information situation as a whole. Visits were made by the author of the report to two countries (Kenya and Bangladesh). A visit had also been made previously to Sudan but it had not been concerned solely with the information system.

The replies to the questionnaire (sent in August 1979) were received between October and December 1979. They were accompanied by a large amount of documentation which indicated most of the sources utilized by the UNICEF services. A tribute must be paid here to the very substantive work performed in the local UNICEF offices in completing these questionnaires and collecting the documentation. The limited time available made it difficult, however, to analyse all the replies, some of which arrived late. A detailed analysis of these replies might result in a lengthy report. It was thought necessary, in order to facilitate the work of the Executive Board, to summarize in a few paragraphs the essential points of the survey's findings.

^{20/} Two of the above-mentioned countries were selected because, to our knowledge, they had the best machinery for obtaining information concerning children.

37. Essential features of the situation in the eight countries: (a) Country-by-country description

A country-by-country review of the situation makes it possible to classify the countries as follows:

Country A. This country has a vital statistics system whose margin of error is considered not to exceed 4 per cent; the last population census (1971) is thought to have produced valid results. The country has had a national sample survey system since 1979, has a good school census system, and has conducted a large number of ad hoc surveys. This is therefore a country with exceptional advantages. However, the UNICEF representative has reservations concerning the quality of the information at the regional or district level and believes that there has been a deterioration in the quality of information over the past few years. We were unable to find sufficiently accurate information to prepare useful maps on many subjects, which confirms the inadequacy of the information available at the local level.

Country B. This country has no system of vital statistics. Its National Statistics Bureau is very well organized and the detailed school census system seems to function properly. The most recent population census data are for 1969. Detailed data from the census conducted in 1979 are not yet available. A permanent sample survey system has been set up in the Statistics Bureau. This system, which is the result of a project in which UNICEF participated, is even regarded as a model and it has undeniably rendered useful service. With regard to the questions of interest to UNICEF, it provided information on literacy and nutrition, but it was not used in other areas. The shortcomings in respect of statistics concerning births, mortality, morbidity, housing, drinking water supply and sanitation have not been overcome. In spite of voluminous studies, some of which have been good, and health statistics indicating the situation with regard to medical care facilities, the main requirements for information concerning children have been met only to a very small extent, particularly at the local level. The existing machinery is now being improved: the sample survey system is being set up at a lower level (district). However, it is not certain that these efforts will make it possible to fill the gaps in information concerning children so long as a system of vital statistics has not been developed.

Country C. This country's situation is characterized by an over-abundance of documentation. Dozens of very thick volumes providing data on children have been produced. Unfortunately, the quality of this documentation is highly questionable. The population census (1974) is considered to have produced fairly good results. There is no civil registry system (only a few pilot experiments have been carried out at the local level). The National

The description of the situation in these countries shows that there are serious deficiencies in the data collection mechanisms.

Generally speaking, the situation of children is not at all well known.

Statistics Service has a large staff, but it is generally recognized that its functioning should be improved. The school census system operates poorly and yields doubtful results. The health statistics are very poor. For many studies ad hoc sample surveys were carried out by university, national and other institutes (there are about a score of these), but no national sample survey system has been developed. It is not possible to describe the situation of children in respect of the essential points at a satisfactory geographical level. Much progress will therefore have to be made. This might be achieved by improved co-ordination of activities in this field, in which there are a great number of decision-making centres (including those in the United Nations system).

Country D. In this case, too, there is very abundant documentation. A statistical profile on children is published annually with the co-operation of UNICEF. There are, for example, maps, by district, showing mortality rates, but an examination of the figures published shows that these data are not sufficiently reliable. There is no registry system (pilot experiments are under way). The last general census was conducted in 1971 and is considered to have produced doubtful results. School censuses are carried out, but it is difficult to evaluate their margins of error. The health statistics are of the conventional type but are not very useful. There are sample surveys but there is no co-ordinated sampling system. There are a great many ad hoc surveys, but they do not cover the main problems of concern to UNICEF. There is therefore insufficient information on most of the questions concerning children.

Country E. In the case of this country, seemingly very detailed documentation exists on certain topics. For example, there are detailed district maps showing infant mortality rates, but an examination of the figures published shows that this information is not sufficiently reliable. There is also, in theory, a civil registry system; in fact, it does not function fully in the towns and does not function at all in most rural areas. The 1974 general census is considered to have produced useful results. The school census system provides fairly comprehensive information but its reliability is questioned by specialists in the country itself. On the whole, this is a typical case of a statistical situation which appears to be satisfactory, but there is no guarantee of reliability. A critical examination of all the machinery used is needed.

Country F. The information provided by the civil registry system, which is about 80 per cent effective in the towns and about 50 per cent in the rural areas, is not usable. The 1975 general census results are apparently not too far removed from the facts. The school census system seems to function correctly. The birthrate and

mortality figures have no reliable bases. There is no national sample survey system. Apart from information on formal education and on immunization, very little is known about the situation of children.

Country G. All the results of the general census, held in 1973, have not yet been published and their validity is considered to vary from one district to another. A civil registry system has just begun to operate in the towns. The school census system is said to be functioning correctly. The health statistics are of a conventional type and do not provide information on the health conditions of the population in general. Many ad hoc surveys that have varied in usefulness have been conducted. There is almost no information on the situation of children in many fields.

Country H. A civil registry system is operating in principle but in such an incomplete manner that it is not usable. The results of the 1976 census have not been published. There are many statistical publications, but the information they contain is on the whole inadequate or of no value. The results of the school census are published in such a manner as to be of no use. In the final analysis, no meaningful information on the situation of children is available.

38. Characteristics of the situation: (b) Information on the main categories of problems

The situation in the eight countries, recapitulated for several categories of problems, is as follows:

Formal education: This is the sector in respect of which the greatest amount of information should be available because of the simplicity of the school census mechanism; in fact, the existing information seems to be reliable in only three countries; in the case of the others, the data are either furnished in a global manner, or are inadequate, in particular with regard to repeaters and drop-outs. Information on the staff, equipment and resources can be found in most cases but this requires an analysis of complex documents. There are no "school maps" showing all the educational establishments. The studies on the sociological environment are, except in the case of one country, inadequate (explanation of the causes of drop-outs, etc.) and those on the quality of education and adaptation of the curriculum to development needs are also very incomplete.

Health: Information on the health situation and health problems (morbidity, mortality, causes of deaths, etc.) are more or less satisfactory in the case of one country and may be estimated and deduced from certain data in the case of one or two other countries. In the case of the remaining countries, because of the lack of civil registry statistics and of surveys of the causes

*Analysis of
deficiencies
by category
of problems.*

of illnesses, the preventive measures that can be taken are very empirical in nature. On the other hand, there is some information on medical facilities (hospitals, health centres, number of beds, etc.), but the information on medical staff is not sufficiently accurate.

Nutrition: Nutrition surveys have been carried out in many countries but so far, except in the case of the country where a global effort has been made, they are very limited in scope. No country seems to have an adequate system for a continuous monitoring of the situation. The statistical methods used, although improved recently (measurement of the circumference of the arm, weight/height, height/age, etc.), do not yet seem to provide readily usable information. Progress is being made (use of health cards), but it will be some time before useful results are obtained.

Responsible parenthood: The lack of reliable civil registry statistics and the questionable nature of the results of surveys and studies on the sociological aspects of the problem generally make it difficult to establish appropriate policies in this field.

Water supply, sanitation, housing: Data on the breakdown of households according to source of drinking water, distance from sources, type of sanitary equipment and kind of housing are becoming available but continue to be very inadequate. There is no description of the methods used to collect such data.

39. Characteristics of the situation: (c) Machinery for the collection of information

In the final analysis, the quality of information concerning children depends on the quality of the machinery used to collect such data. However, this vital machinery continues to function in a very irregular and frequently inadequate manner.

(i) General population censuses are in principle conducted every 10 years and usually have the political support of governments, because of the importance attached to their results. However, this mechanism provides in most cases only a rather small amount of information; its degree of precision is usually regarded as acceptable but in fact is not well known; it is probable that a large number of children, in particular those without families, are not recorded in these operations. Processing of the data obtained is very lengthy and often requires several years, with the result that the information furnished is often outdated or has to be readjusted by means of projections. The eight countries studied have all conducted a census within the past 10 years.

The quality of information concerning children depends on the quality of the data collection machinery.

(ii) Civil registry systems, which ensure the regular recording of marriages, births and deaths do not as a rule exist in the developing countries. Of the eight countries studied, only one had a system that could be regarded as providing reliable information (i.e. with acceptable and calculable degree of precision). The lack of such systems has the result of making extremely questionable not only all estimates of birthrates and mortality but also all calculations involving estimates of the ages of persons considered (for example, calculations concerning school attendance ratios).

In the absence of registry systems, estimates of birth and mortality rates are extremely hazardous.

(iii) Administrative data collected by the competent ministries. In this connection, it is necessary to distinguish between the following:

- The school census system: This is a relatively simple mechanism which consists in having a questionnaire completed by each school, providing essential information on the number of pupils per class, the number of teachers, etc. As it is not difficult to organize and is carried out with the assistance of staff with a good level of education, it should, in principle, provide very useful and detailed information on a large number of topics concerning children attending school. We have noted, however, that the information is frequently distorted and improperly used.

School censuses could function better.

- Systems providing statistics on hospitals and medical establishments: These are also based on the answering of questionnaires. To be of any value these should be answered sufficiently frequently (at least once a month). These systems require the co-operation of health service personnel who usually have other things to do besides answering questionnaires. Consequently, the information obtained is often incorrect and incomplete. Moreover, the questionnaires provide information only on persons who visit health care establishments (in areas where they exist) and these are generally only a very small proportion of the country's population. Very serious errors may result if the findings of these systems are not used with extreme caution.

Health statistics do not usually provide usable information.

- Budgets and plans, where they exist, are useful sources of information on the policies pursued. However, the figures they contain are often fairly far removed from reality and require a considerable amount of interpretation.

(iv) Special ad hoc surveys: This is one of the means most used in countries where there is a lack of basic information. Such surveys generally deal with limited topics or are confined to areas which are very small (e.g., villages) and are therefore considered suitable for study to make up deficiencies in information. They are carried out by organizations of all kinds, including international organizations and national,

Too many ad hoc studies...

... are conducted in a disorganized manner and lack scientific precision.

foreign and university institutes, as well as private institutions. This disorganized effort is generally very costly; it provides only a limited amount of information which is often of little use and becomes outdated very rapidly. With regard to these surveys, a distinction must be made between those which are carried out by a variety of different methods and those which are based on sampling. If the selection is carefully made, the interviewers are well trained and supervised, the questionnaires are well prepared and the subject matter is well defined, useful information may be obtained from these surveys. However, these conditions are very rarely found to exist, since the time allowed for the surveys is generally too short, the interviewers are recruited too hastily and the resources used are not commensurate with the objectives of the exercise. Certain other kinds of survey may also produce results if they are conducted by competent personnel: these are investigations of the sociological environment (explanation of motivations and attitudes, etc.) but in this case also the scientific quality of most of the results obtained is often questionable.

Permanent national sample survey systems might help to fill many gaps.

(v) Permanent national sample survey systems: Systems of this kind, of which there are now two examples among the eight countries studied, seem to represent the type of solution which might make it possible to eliminate most of the costly and useless special surveys which the countries are still financing, either directly or indirectly, and to fill many gaps. It still remains to be proven that such systems can remedy the shortage of information in essential fields, and probably in the field of mortality. UNICEF, after having supported the first experiment in Kenya, which is being expanded and refined, is continuing to carry out a number of efforts along these lines, particularly in East Africa.

The National Household Survey Capability Programme, which is supported by the United Nations system, should help to make such information systems more widespread in the long term.^{21/}

^{21/} The Joint Inspection Unit requested Mr McGranahan, former Director of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development at Geneva, to prepare a technical paper on ways and means of improving information on the situation of children. This paper, which forms Annex II to the present report, has been reproduced by UNICEF under the symbol E/ICEF/CRP/80-8. It can be made available to persons wishing to study it. The paper brings out particularly clearly some examples of the difficulties encountered in using various mechanisms for the collection of information concerning children, including national sample survey systems (when they are used, for example, to calculate infant mortality rates). The paper provides a description of some technical problems with regard to these rates. It ends with proposals for which the consultant assumes responsibility but which are not at variance with the recommendations made in the present report.

40. Need for UNICEF to assist in solving these problems

On the whole, therefore, the information available concerning children is, with a few exceptions, very inadequate although there is frequently an over-abundance of useless or simply erroneous documentation. The foregoing analysis indicates, however, the lines along which efforts should be made to improve the existing mechanisms. It also shows that the situation varies considerably from country to country and that in each case the action to be taken should be adapted to the local problems. The formulation of an overall policy should therefore take account of this diversity.

This situation in respect of statistical information concerning children is only one aspect of a more general situation relating to statistics in the developing countries. Although statistics continue to be published in all countries and on all topics, awareness of the unreliability of the bulk of these figures has fortunately grown and the statistical offices of many international organizations have undertaken programmes in an effort to find remedies. The most important programme is certainly the "National Household Survey Capability Programme" which is officially defined as the first systematic effort to help the developing countries to obtain the essential information they need for their national development plans and programmes. This system is based essentially on the continuous use of household sample survey methods (cf. Economic and Social Council resolution 2055 (LXII) of 5 May 1977). However, mention may also be made of the work of FAO and WHO on monitoring the nutritional situation, the work of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities on population and housing census programmes, the initiation of research by WHO aimed at ascertaining the extent of primary health care activities, the work of UNESCO on educational and literacy programmes and the research of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) on measures taken at the local level. Many of these efforts are modest in scope or are only at an initial stage, but a step has undeniably been taken in the right direction. Moreover, UNICEF has not remained inactive. It already has its own programme. It has secured for its headquarters the services of a statistical adviser seconded from the United Nations Statistical Office; a regional statistical adviser has been working for three years in the East Africa regional services at Nairobi. Projects of different magnitude aimed at improving statistical data have been undertaken in a few countries.

The reasons why it is essential that UNICEF should increase its efforts are the following:

The need for UNICEF to contribute to the overall efforts of the international organizations...

is all the more urgent as the cause of children must be defended,...

and as the programmes of the United Nations system, including the National Household Survey Capability Programme, do not meet all the requirements concerning information on children.

It would be necessary:

- to define precisely the requirements of users,*
- to facilitate the use of existing information,*

(a) UNICEF cannot remain outside the overall movement just described. It is the only organization concerned with all problems relating to children, although the cause of children must be defended in all action undertaken by the United Nations system and by governments. The collection of information on children poses specific problems some of which have been described here.^{22/} It would be illogical not to draw attention to these problems, particularly since the natural tendency of collective enterprises is to forget those who do not make their voice heard. The National Household Survey Capability Programme is no exception to this rule.

(b) The above-mentioned programmes may also be insufficient to solve all the problems concerning information on children, even if they are given an important place in them. The permanent sample survey systems will certainly be extremely useful, but they do not meet all the requirements for information concerning children. UNICEF should therefore study and promote the methods and the use of mechanisms required for this purpose.

There is an urgent need to improve the situation with regard to information concerning children; it is not possible to wait until the various programmes envisaged, which will cover the developing countries as a whole only in the very long term, have borne fruit.

41. What should be done?

A detailed examination of the existing problems and discussions which we have had with specialists has led us to conclude that UNICEF should endeavour:

(1) To define precisely the requirements of users, i.e., those who draw up the programmes for children, to explain the nature of these requirements and thus to guide the work of statisticians and staff entrusted with the task of collecting information. We shall see that this task of definition should be facilitated by the fact that the requirements of users are, with minor differences, the same everywhere in respect of the essential points and can be formulated very precisely;

(2) To make a very clear distinction between the problems of making use of existing information and those of improving information methods for the future. These are two very different types of problems: the former is concerned with the immediate and day-to-day activities, which must not be delayed by the need to await the results of surveys or the

^{22/} See also Annex II in this connection.

application of new methods; it is essential to make the best possible use of the data available, and the relevant technologies already exist. The latter problems relate to the future: how to develop programmes which, within a reasonable period, will provide better working bases; these are steps which are of greater interest to specialists, who require a new approach and are calling for the development of a methodology. Consequently, it is necessary:

- (a) to formulate clear guidelines that will facilitate the use of existing information by national agencies and field offices,
- (b) to compile, with a view to improvement of the available data in the medium term, a compendium of the methods to be used and to prepare an implementation plan to encourage their use by the countries which desire improvements in this field.^{23/}

(3) To seek ways of making greater use than is done at present of the participation of the populations concerned in the collection and utilization of information.

42. Determination of users' needs

The difficulties of the dialogue between the users of information (ministers, planners, those responsible for programme formulation and execution at the national and at the local level) and statisticians or information specialists in general have frequently been discussed and explored. Some improvement in the situation has certainly been achieved through these efforts, but many problems nevertheless remain. Among the reasons for these difficulties the following two points should be emphasized:

- first, users have not produced exact lists of their basic needs for developing policies and programmes for children;

- second, relatively recent changes in strategy and policies (e.g., in the field of health) have led to changes in the nature of information requirements, for which methods of data collection have not yet been adequately developed.

The inadequacy of the health data collected has already been mentioned. Virtually none of the data regularly published in the existing statistical yearbooks (number of hospital establishments, number of hospital beds, number of doctors, etc.) is of any use for developing primary health care policies. The data vitally needed for

- to assist countries in improving their national capacity for information gathering,

- to encourage the participation of the populations concerned.

Users' needs have not yet been determined with sufficient precision.

In the various fields, such as ...

^{23/} There is undoubtedly a clear relationship between the two operations thus recommended, but we have thought it essential to make a distinction between them.

health...

the establishment of such policies are mortality and morbidity rates, causes of illness and death, the exact geographical distribution, if possible, down to district level, of types of illness, level of child nutrition, relationship between environmental conditions (water, sanitation, housing) and the causes of illness and death, geographical distribution and skills of health workers, etc. In the case of most of the developing countries, the information collected in hospitals and other principal health care establishments does not provide this type of data. The hospital statistics, whose frequent incompleteness or inaccuracy has already been mentioned, when taken as representative of the general situation in the country, produce misleading data, which result in the development of policies unsuited to the actual problems.^{24/} It is important to recognise that the range of information needed for drawing up policies and programmes of this kind and for the evaluation of their results is in fact limited to certain data which are of the same nature for all countries.

*responsible
parenthood...*

Responsible parenthood. This is a vital problem in a great many developing countries, and here the same deficiencies are found in the statistics of births, marriages and deaths as in health statistics. The users have of course indicated that they want to know the birth rates, but it seems that the orientation of studies and research on the reasons for the existing situation has not been sufficiently precisely determined. The studies we have seen are more often concerned with the causes of refusal to use or non-use of information about contraceptives. In this connection it is always found that the section of the population possessing a certain level of education is more receptive than is the illiterate population, but it is hardly necessary to carry out elaborate research to make that kind of discovery. It would seem on the contrary much more important to gain a better understanding of attitudes to life (family structure, age at marriage, community system, economic or religious motivation, attitude towards the life and illnesses of children, etc.) by showing a genuine interest in the matter and acquiring a deeper understanding of the culture of the populations concerned. A completely new approach needs to be worked out for collecting useful data by methods which respect the cultures being studied and ensure maximum participation by the population concerned.

*education,
etc...*

Education. It should certainly be possible to enhance considerably the value of the findings of school censuses if the basic and elementary requirements (data on repeats and drop-outs, etc.) were sufficiently emphasized to those organizing these operations. The primary requirement is to obtain

^{24/} Cf, in particular the present contents and presentation of WHO's World Health Statistics Annual, which provides data that are largely of no use for implementation of the health strategies and policies currently recommended by that Organization.

a few types of data without which rational programmes for educational development cannot be drawn up. It would also be desirable to have some machinery for collecting information on children not attending school.

We cannot here review every sector of activity nor attempt to define the users' basic needs. What we have sought to illustrate by the above examples and to emphasize, in general, is that:

- the types of basic data essential for policy making are everywhere the same, since even if the approach adopted for achieving the aims vary according to the line of development chosen, the long-term objectives are the same in all countries;
- it is therefore possible, through research and a concerted effort by users, to draw up an indicative list of the data needed for formulating primary policies and objectives.

43. Preparation of an indicative list

An essential point to be noted here is that any indicative list must be developed at the policy formulation level (which is also the level for evaluation of results), i.e., at the basic policy-making level. A list of such a kind is not concerned with the details of programmes and projects, for which various specific types of data are required that vary considerably from project to project and from country to country.

The preparation of such a list calls for quite a substantial research effort but can be carried out fairly speedily if a team of two or three persons can be assigned to consult a selection of competent users of data. The work would consist of:

1. Drawing up a list of fields in which research has to be carried out. UNICEF has already defined various areas as "fields of co-operation"^{25/}, but no official list has yet been established. There are several different lists in the various documents published by UNICEF. I feel that the following list might be used as a basis for discussion which might lead to official definition:

^{25/}The definition of this term in paragraph 10 of Annex 1 to document E/ICEF/670, "An overview of UNICEF policies, organization and working methods", is as follows: "Fields of co-operation (or categories of co-operation) refers to sectoral or other assistance groupings (e.g., child health, emergency relief) discussed in UNICEF documentation and for which commitment and expenditure figures are given (see chapter VIII). Within these fields, there may be sub-fields or sub-categories (e.g., "water supply" under child health or "non-formal education" under education)."

It is important and urgent to identify indicators or basic data which are necessary for policy and strategy definition.

This task should be facilitated by the fact that long term objectives are the same in all countries.

The preparation of an indicative list of necessary data would call for the establishment of a list of fields in which research has to be carried out...

- (a) Fields of co-operation for which there are ministries or other competent administrative bodies in the country concerned, or for population categories in need of special attention: (1) Education (including infant pre-primary education, non-formal education, problems of the school-age population and "youth"); (2) Health (including immunization, primary health care and maternal and child health); (3) Water; (4) Nutrition; (5) Sanitation; (6) Housing; (7) Responsible parenthood and family planning (including demography); (8) Community development and social welfare services; (9) Emergency relief and rehabilitation; (10) Women and young children; (11) Handicapped children and other special groups, child exploitation and child delinquency; (12) Special problems of the urban poor, children of migrant populations.
- (b) Categories involving a knowledge of special conditions which must be taken into account in defining policies and projects: (13) Structure of family and community; (14) Project support communication systems; (15) Economic conditions, employment, income and development; (16) Administrative structure, finance and budget.

2. For each field or category, a list of the data needed for policy development is required, this list must distinguish between the following types of data:

- data needed to determine the nature, scale and location of problems;
- data needed for identification of constraints and opportunities for action, and for the determination of policy objectives;
- general data needed for programming, limited to the most general level for the main programmes implemented in the various countries, not going into the detail needed for individual projects;
- possibly a fourth category to cover types of data needed for project monitoring and evaluation, although in most cases this might simply be a repetition of the data included in the first three sections (with the addition only of some indication of periodicity).

Then, for each field a list should specify the information necessary for the determination of problems, constraints and policy objectives, for monitoring and for evaluation.

3. A consultation of users on the content of this list should be organized: such a consultation might first involve the UNICEF programme officers and, at a later stage of further elaboration, national users in selected countries and international organizations working in the fields concerned (including UNESCO and WHO, and possibly also ILO).

44. Preparation of a minimum list of basic data - "Core minimum list"

The preparation of the indicative list should result in the enumeration, for each sector, of a fairly large number of data or indicators of varying usefulness to users. Such a list should be as complete as possible and is likely therefore to be quite long. It seems important to have also a very short list of absolutely essential data: this list, which might be called a "Core minimum list", should in my view include:

A. The essential data needed for formulation of policy objectives concerning children at as close a level as possible to the "impact", and also for evaluation of the results obtained (e.g., infant mortality rate, birth rate, primary school attendance ratio, by sex, etc.).

B. The essential data concerning the principal means of dealing with the problems encountered (e.g., detailed description of the available medical and paramedical personnel, including the number of primary health care workers, traditional midwives, and teachers, and their levels of qualification).

C. The basic data concerning the sociological environment (e.g., income distribution, land distribution, qualitative data on the family and community structure).^{26/}

The preparation of a list of this kind should be the responsibility of the users themselves, who could compare their experiences in consultation, of course, with the statisticians. A reasonable objective might be to identify some 40 basic indicators. It might not be too easy to reach agreement, but the task is important enough for a genuine effort to be made. Not too much account should be taken, in preparing the list, of the current difficulties with regard to statistical machinery. The list should rather express the needs of those who have to devise policies, and in the most difficult cases, should merely specify the types of substitute data which might be considered satisfactory in the absence of the fundamental

The preparation of a "core minimum list" comprising some forty indicators should be the responsibility of the users themselves.

A list of this type would be both a working tool...

^{26/} The author could easily have given more examples, but has refrained from doing so in order to leave those made responsible for this research complete freedom.

*and a means for
the defense of
the interests
of children.*

data (for example, when the infant mortality rate cannot be ascertained, the types of data which might suffice provisionally to start developing a health policy for infants). Such a list should not of course be limited to quantitative data but should include a description of the essential qualitative information (with particular reference to the sociological environment). Most of the data included would probably require to be collected at regular intervals and on as specific a geographical basis as possible. The minimum frequency of reporting and the geographical level would need to be determined for each item.

The advantages of agreement on such a "Core minimum list" seem to me very considerable. The list could become a basic document which might be readily publicized and it would permit concentration of efforts on the vital matters. It would help in presenting UNICEF's standpoint more effectively in negotiations with national or international organizations responsible for the collection of statistics. It should help the beneficiaries of UNICEF programmes to screen the data at their disposal. Lastly, and more generally, it would provide all users with the necessary terms of reference for the preparation of policies and programmes and give statisticians some guidance as to the principal objectives in the development of machinery for collecting data concerning children.

45. Preparation of a manual on the use of existing data

As the eight-country survey has shown, the inadequacy of existing data lies in the fact that they either do not cover the essential matters or are too old or of doubtful and non-measurable reliability. Depending on the particular defect, the problems involved in their use and interpretation therefore vary considerably. All the experts agree however that, with some experience, it is possible to interpret and make some use of incomplete data. Some manuals dealing with this point are already available to statisticians.^{27/} There can be no question of reproducing or up-dating such a work here, but the following points may be mentioned:

*Guidelines on the
interpretation of
incomplete or
insufficiently
reliable data
should be embodied
in a book of the
manual.*

- the manual should list the data which are of real use for the preparation and evaluation of policies and programmes. This objective could be achieved if the manual reproduced, for each sector, the indicative list referred to in paragraph 43 above;

^{27/} Such as the manual published by the Statistical Office of the United Nations entitled "Methods of Estimating Basic Demographic Measures from Incomplete Data" (ST/STAT/Series A/42).

- it should show against the main data groups the methods by which they are generally obtained (more detailed and specific description of the methods in general use (cf. paragraph 39 above) and their advantages and drawbacks); the angle from which the data are to be presented and the interpretation required (such as the distinction between the crude ratio and the net ratio of school attendance) the questions which those producing the statistics have to be asked wherever the data are not accompanied, as is too often the case, by information on the sources, the methods of collection, any corrections that have been made and the probable margins of error;

- it should refer to the principal methods of using other available information, where data are missing, incomplete or obviously incorrect, and to methods of interpreting such substitute material. The manual should indicate, in particular, how and in what circumstances it may be useful to call for ad hoc studies when this appears to be absolutely necessary.

46. Expansion of programmes to help countries to develop their national data-collection capacity

The medium-term and long-term improvement of machinery for collecting data on children is not a problem which can be dealt with separately from general improvement of the national capacity for collecting statistical information in all fields. UNICEF's special concerns should not however be neglected even in the course of developing such machinery. Action by UNICEF should aim at:

A. Contributing to a collective support effort to help countries seeking to develop their capacity to collect statistics in all fields and encouraging discussion, at the national level, between statisticians and users. The preceding paragraphs have made it clear that the most effective approach to the problem of obtaining accurate information about children is not a proliferation of ad hoc studies but the establishment of continuous and reliable data-collecting machinery. The main components, especially the general components, such as ten-yearly population censuses, standing arrangements for sample surveys, systems for the registration of births, marriages and deaths, etc., serve to collect information of all kinds, economic as well as social. It is therefore essential to co-operate with all those who, whatever their specific interest in particular categories of data, seek to contribute to development of the national capacity in these general applications. This means the national services, bilateral aid arrangements and the organizations of the United Nations system. UNICEF should as far as possible take part in the overall effort outlined in paragraph 40 above and endeavour, wherever the opportunity occurs, to encourage the co-operation of all the services concerned at the country level.

Assistance to countries seeking to build up their capacity to collect information must be directed primarily to the reinforcement of the main data gathering mechanisms.

Participation in this overall effort should not prevent UNICEF from supporting its own particular concerns related to children. It is essential, in this connection, to give attention to civil registry systems.

B. In the overall efforts thus encouraged and stimulated, it is however UNICEF's duty to support its own particular concerns related to children. UNICEF should therefore bear in mind that the machinery to be developed should at the earliest possible moment be applied to children's needs. It seems essential in this connection to emphasize the need to develop permanent national sample survey systems, since this is undoubtedly one of the most useful approaches, but also that, with particular reference to children, special attention must at the same time be given to civil registry systems, which seem the best source of reliable data on birth and mortality rates. It is worth noting that experiments of civil registry systems relying on sampling zones have been carried out (in India, cf. Annex II).

If the necessary attention is to be devoted to children's problems, it is also essential to:

- continue methodological work on those problems; and
- strengthen the resources in specialist personnel.

Work on methodology should lead to the preparation of a publication on how a country can obtain reliable data concerning its children.

Support for work on methodology should lead to the preparation and publication of a pamphlet or handbook which might be entitled "How a country can obtain reliable data concerning its children". Such a publication should describe not only the various systems which may be used to collect data on children (detailed description of the machinery and its use, of which a very summary outline was given in paragraph 39), but also current experiments, including permanent arrangements for the conduct of sample surveys. It should also provide information on the cost of the various methods and their value. An outline should be given of possible model data systems adapted to the needs and the development level of different countries. Such a publication (which might also constitute a chapter to be incorporated in the manual recommended in the preceding paragraph) could serve as a guide for national services having responsibility for children and for UNICEF experts assisting countries to develop their methods of collecting data concerning children.

The specialist personnel resources should be strengthened by:

The strengthening of the specialist personnel resources is also essential.

- The creation of posts of regional adviser in information and statistics. Such advisers would be included in the three-man advisory teams mentioned in paragraph 30, which are the subject of a detailed proposal in paragraph 50 (b) of the following chapter. In order to help countries in these fields, there must be qualified consultants who can help to establish diagnoses and make recommendations appropriate to specific cases;

- The inclusion in plans of operation of projects aimed at developing statistical methods. Such projects are already being carried out in a number of countries. They generally involve provision to the country of the services of a competent expert for a number of months, once the problem of statistical information relating to children has been diagnosed. The number and importance of these projects should be systematically increased during the next five or six years.

47. Participation of the population in the collection and use of data

Increased participation by the population in the formulation and execution of the projects mentioned in paragraph 24 above should enable valuable support to be given in many countries to the expansion of information on children. Populations cannot be asked to participate in the formulation of their objectives without their becoming specifically aware of the problems that call for a solution. This implies that they should be the first to be concerned in establishing the basic data. However, techniques of participation in data collection must be developed. It is necessary to determine the topics on which interest can be aroused and to describe how those responsible for collecting the data will be appointed and trained. All these problems are rather similar to those involved in developing primary health care. Assessors must be trained and then the regular collection of data and its analysis must be organized. There appears to be no doubt that the participation of the population in the collection and subsequent utilization of basic data is a method which, in conjunction with a system of continuous sample surveys, could (particularly in the fields of health, nutrition, sociological environment and responsible parenthood) provide an effective, reliable and economical means of improving methods of collecting information concerning children. As a first step, a number of specific experiments should be set up, for example in a few programme concentration areas in both urban and rural districts. The lessons drawn from these experiments would make it possible progressively to establish a methodology (similar to that to be applied in the registration of births, deaths and marriages, although covering a much wider field).

Participation of the population in the formulation and execution of projects should also contribute to the collection of essential informations.

Chapter VI

Implications of the Measures Recommended

48. The chief implications

In order to implement the series of measures advocated in the preceding chapters it will be necessary to draw up a plan of action, to allocate the necessary means and resources and to make structural changes. Before deciding on the measures themselves, the Executive Board must have a general outline of the various implications.

49. Execution of a work programme

A number of the recommendations in this report deal with non-repetitive and mainly short-term operations: the up-dating and systematization of guidelines, the production of a manual on the utilization of existing data, the production of a work on statistical techniques, etc.

It should be possible for these operations, which extend over a period of not more than two years, to be carried out by UNICEF staff with the assistance of consultants who are, as far as possible, fairly familiar with UNICEF's methods. For example, the drafting of guidelines for all the fields not at present covered, the up-dating of out-of-date sections, the compilation of a simplified field manual, etc., implies the appointment of a person responsible for recruiting consultants, distributing the work and supervising its execution. More or less the same comments apply to the work recommended in the area of manuals and publications dealing with statistics and data on children. Studies and research could also be organized in the same way.^{28/}

In view of the scope and the technical nature of all these short-term tasks, particularly those involving study and research, consideration might be given to the setting up by the UNICEF secretariat of an ad hoc committee to supervise the implementation of the work programme. This committee might include (in addition to some members of UNICEF's secretariat) several persons recruited on an individual basis, for example from the universities and government services of certain countries. The nature of the subjects dealt with might also lead to the establishment of specialized sub-committees. The committee could prepare an annual report in which it would report to the Executive Board on the progress being made with this work.

^{28/} Consideration might be given to the setting up of "task forces" composed of UNICEF staff and consultants, each of which would be given a specific task.

A short-term work programme should provide the framework for the implementation of the non-repetitive tasks recommended in this report.

Use could be made of consultants, and an ad hoc committee might supervise the implementation of the work programme.

50. Structural implications

Improvements in the concept and practice of methods of programming and evaluation and the continuation in the medium term of the special action in the field of information and statistics will require more prolonged efforts and a more extensive reorganization. These efforts should be made at the country level, at the regional level and at UNICEF headquarters. Steps must be taken to ensure the continuing execution of tasks including both field activities and consideration of means of making these activities as effective as possible. That might correspond very roughly to a division of work between the field offices on the one hand, the UNICEF headquarters and the regions on the other. In practice the problem is more complex in as much as, in UNICEF, thinking about methodology commences at the field level and the organization's headquarters and regional staff play an active part in field activities. It would seem, however, that to ensure that these tasks are carried out more effectively than at present, and having regard to the recommendations made in chapters II to V of this report, it is necessary:

- progressively to strengthen UNICEF's field presence in countries where its representation does not seem adequate to ensure really useful co-operation in the formulation of policies and programmes and in evaluating results;^{29/}
- to strengthen, at the same time, the capacity of the regions to help the field teams in the essential areas of programming, information and evaluation; and
- to strengthen the capacity for methodological initiation and study at the headquarters level.

For this purpose, I think that the required reorganization exercise should include:

51. A special examination of UNICEF's capacity to act in countries where its permanent representation is very limited or non-existent

Thus, for example, in Africa, there are about 10 countries where UNICEF has no permanent representative at the professional staff level and representation is effected

Improvements in programming and evaluation methods and the medium-term efforts in the fields of information and statistics have some structural implications...

such as:

- *the review and possible reinforcement of UNICEF's representation in a few countries...*

^{29/} This strengthening should of course be carried out in agreement with the governments of the countries concerned which should in every case be consulted with regard to the desirability or necessity of the proposed measures.

only through a series of visits by programme professional staff from other countries or by consultants or local officers. There are also a few countries in the same position in Asia, the Middle East and Latin America.

Furthermore, it was found that differences in programme level and in the number of field office staff do not appear to be dictated either by differences in the child population or by differences that may exist in the level of development. Thus, for example, the UNICEF programme in Sri Lanka costs an average of \$3.5 million a year and the office staff includes three international professional staff and one local officer, whereas the programme for Kenya costs only \$0.95 million a year and the staffing for the country consists of the part-time services of one international professional officer and one local officer. Yet the two countries have virtually the same per capita GNP and both have about 6 million children.

A review of UNICEF country representation may therefore be essential. Furthermore, the criteria for allocating programme funds and the corresponding staff should be either applied more rigorously or revised. A special effort should be made to provide UNICEF representation in all places where it is at present clearly insufficient to enable the organization to provide the countries concerned with the co-operation, particularly in programming, that they are entitled to expect.

52. The inclusion in regional adviser teams of experts in programming, information (including statistical data) and evaluation

- the setting-up
of teams of
regional
advisers in
programming,
evaluation
and statis-
tics...

To improve the preparation of programmes and evaluation and to make a special effort with regard to statistical data will require work by teams of experts in these subjects to assist field offices and governments in diagnosing the situation, particularly during crucial periods when concerted effort is needed.

The clearest example that can be given of the usefulness of such teams is certainly that of the small team of four persons set up a few years ago at UNICEF headquarters under the acronym PAES (Programme Analysis and Evaluation Section). I have already described in a previous report the results which this team managed to achieve. The same model should now be copied at the regional level since what remains to be done can no longer be left to a single small team stationed at headquarters. The results obtained by the very few advisers of this type already employed (two for programming and one for statistics) prove that their more general employment is the answer to current needs. It might take the form of setting up in each region (or perhaps at a subregional level when there are too many countries in the region) teams of three experts:

- 1 for planning and programming,
- 1 for evaluation, and
- 1 for information and statistics.

These teams would naturally keep in close touch with the headquarters Programme Group on the one hand and with the countries on the other.

The main problem is recruitment. The necessary qualifications include a good knowledge of UNICEF affairs as well as sound technical training in each of the specialisms concerned. This combination makes the task of the recruitment service no easy one. Particular attention should therefore be paid to this problem.^{30/}

53. Reorganization of the headquarters Programme Division

It appears from the description in document E/ICEF/Misc.158/Rev.3 (Organization of the Secretariat of UNICEF) that the functions of the headquarters Programme Division are not very clearly or accurately defined. The distinction between the functions of the geographical sections and those of the programme analysis and evaluation sections, for example is not clear cut. Furthermore, analytical functions which are already very important and which will become much more so if the proposals in this report are approved, do not have the necessary staff to undertake them properly. These functions, which correspond to preparation and updating of guidelines, consultation with field offices and liaison with regional teams of expert advisers, organization of exchanges of information between countries and training, should cover:

- and, finally,
the reinforcement
of the headquar-
ters Programme
Division's capa-
city to carry out
the analytical
functions enu-
merated here.

^{30/} The problems are different for each of the three specialisms:

- Statistics and information relate to an existing discipline: the need is to find statisticians with experience in the field of social statistics, particularly relating to children, and in sample survey methods.

- Planning and programming are more recent disciplines in which there are various schools. Candidates must be acquainted with both economic and social planning and national accounts and have a certain degree of practical experience.

- Evaluation is too recent a discipline for it to be easy to find truly qualified experts. In this case it would be preferable to recruit programming experts who have gained some experience of evaluation.

- (a) planning and programming, special attention being given to:
 - methods of programme and project preparation in general;
 - assistance to be given to national administrations in the preparation of situation analyses and long-term forecasting;
 - identification of impact of objectives and determination of the hierarchy of objectives;
 - problems of the programme concentration areas;
- (b) problems relating to the implementation of programmes;
- (c) monitoring and evaluation, special attention being paid to:
 - preparation of collaboration between UNICEF and national institutions in the countries in the work of monitoring and evaluation;
 - methods of analyzing the project implementation control charts and lessons to be drawn from them;
- (d) research and sectoral problems including:
 - the problems already being studied by technical advisers (problems of poor urban populations, women, nutrition, etc.);
 - the economic dimension of social problems;
 - problems of typology of situations;
 - technical co-operation among developing countries;
 - training;
- (e) problems relating to information and statistical data, including:
 - identification of user requirements;
 - utilization of existing information;
 - development of information systems relating to children;
 - cartography problems;
 - general documentation which should be made available to users.

It seems clear that a substantial proportion, perhaps the majority of the Programme Division's staff should be engaged in the functions described above. This means that qualified personnel should be assigned to the principal tasks listed. All the activities of the division should be readjusted as a result.^{30 bis/}

54. Cost and effectiveness of the measures proposed

It is not in my view paradoxical to assert that all the measures recommended in this report will not require additional funds: all that is required is to transfer within the existing budget allotments amounts representing only a small percentage of the total. In the main, what is needed is a slight strengthening of staff in strategic areas at the possible expense of reducing the amount allocated to supplies. That seems to me to be consonant with the present evolution of UNICEF and to affirm its character as a development agency.^{31/}

The measures recommended in this report would not require additional funds...

The exact amount to be transferred cannot be precisely estimated until a detailed plan of action has been worked out. But generally speaking, it is possible to predict that:

- the cost of the short-term work described in paragraph 49 will not exceed \$300,000 (it is an exceptional, non-recurrent expenditure);
- the structural reforms outlined in paragraph 50 should involve internal transfers not exceeding 2% of UNICEF's annual expenditure;
- the special effort to improve information and statistics, insofar as it relates to the inclusion in programmes of information projects, should not exceed 1% of the total expenditure on programmes.

but only internal transfers of resources representing about 3% of UNICEF's expenditures.

A change in the present programme and budget trends which affect at most 3% of the total cannot be regarded as a very marked change in UNICEF's financial policy. But I believe that the effectiveness of UNICEF's activities would be considerably enhanced by it. Furthermore, it should make it possible to introduce a system

^{30 bis/} This readjustment would of course have to take into account a number of other problems, in particular concerning the geographical units, which have not been dealt with here.

^{31/} Expenditure on supplies in relation to total expenditure in UNICEF currently runs at about 60%. In UNDP it is about 30%. There is no question of adopting the UNDP model for UNICEF: merely a smaller readjustment.

of measuring that effectiveness through development of the evaluation machinery. The institution of systems of measurement at the impact level will make it possible to begin measuring the effects of programmes carried out by governments, partly through the co-operation provided by UNICEF, in terms of reduced death rates or increased school attendance. These are the type of indicators which should be used to measure the effectiveness of methods recommended in this report.

55. Staff problems: recruitment and training

A study should be devoted to problems of recruitment and training of professional staff in view of the increasingly complex tasks it is called upon to perform.

We have already mentioned, in connection with the recommendation to recruit regional advisers in planning, evaluation and statistics, the difficulties of finding staff with the necessary level of qualifications. This observation can be applied to the entire problem of recruiting and training of all UNICEF programme professional staff. In view of the increasingly complex and sensitive work which UNICEF staff, particularly programme professional staff are called upon to perform, special attention must, in my opinion, be devoted to the present methods of recruiting and training. Work should be undertaken on this question as soon as possible.

Chapter VII

Principal Recommendations

The principal recommendations of the report are summarized below:

RECOMMENDATION No. 1. Systematization and presentation of UNICEF guidelines on programme development

An effort should be made to organize as soon as possible a more comprehensive and clear system of guidelines on UNICEF programming. This effort must include:

- Integrating the existing system of manuals and circulars;
- Issuing detailed guidelines in sectors not covered at present;
- Withdrawing existing instructions which are no longer relevant to current needs and harmonizing or simplifying any instructions which may overlap;
- Continuously updating and harmonizing the system both as regards presentation and substance;
- Prior consultation with regional offices and field offices concerning new instructions of particular importance;
- Issuing a detailed manual in several volumes and a summary of the whole in a smaller volume (not more than 300 pages) giving the essential points with which programme officers and UNICEF staff generally should be acquainted;
- A system of continuous training for UNICEF staff (also available to the staff of national agencies in those countries which desire it) based on these directives

(See paragraphs 14 and 15 above).

RECOMMENDATION No. 2. Long-term prospects and scheduling in the areas of planning, programming, monitoring of execution and evaluation in the field

As far as possible, the programming cycle should be based on the following principles:

a) UNICEF should encourage Governments to make long-term forecasts (15 to 20 years) for their policy relating to children and should assist Governments in this task;

b) Plans of operation should be drawn up for medium-term periods (4 to 6 years) which should coincide with the development planning periods in countries where such planning exists;

c) The timetable for the preparation of these medium-term programmes should extend over periods of 12 to 18 months;

d) A distinction should be made between recurrent and non-recurrent operations;

e) In the most difficult cases, methods should be developed for the establishment of a general framework for a medium-term programme, with precise implementation schedule for shorter periods within it.

(See paragraphs 16 and 17 above).

RECOMMENDATION No. 3. Conception, format and updating of situation analyses

UNICEF should encourage all countries to produce analyses of the situation of children in order to facilitate the preparation of programmes.

These situation analyses might include:

- A description of the essential points concerning the situation of children;
- An assessment of the reliability and comprehensiveness of the existing information, concluding with recommendations for improvement of the information-gathering machinery;
- An outline of a general strategy, justifying the orders of priority between the various sectors and regions of the country;
- Chapters on the major sectors of child concern and on the programme concentration areas, including an analysis of constraints and justification of the proposed objectives.

(See paragraphs 18 and 19).

RECOMMENDATION No. 4. Identification and relative priority of objectives in plans of operations

As far as possible, programme objectives should be set as close as possible to the desired impact (reduction of mortality, increase in school attendance, etc.). Other levels of objectives (service coverage, objectives, product objectives) should be clearly identified and persistent efforts should be made progressively to develop a set of techniques and methods to facilitate establishing a clear-cut relationship between the various levels of objectives.

(See paragraph 20).

RECOMMENDATION No. 5. Investigation of means of overcoming constraints

An overall survey of the various types of constraints existing in different countries should be made in order to determine whether UNICEF might not endeavour to provide or to encourage global answers for some of them, particularly in the area of training national personnel dealing with problems affecting children.

(See paragraph 21).

RECOMMENDATION No. 6. Programme concentration areas

Specific guidelines should be developed by UNICEF for co-operation with national agencies in identifying in each country concentration areas for children's programmes and methods to be used in such areas.

(See paragraph 22).

RECOMMENDATION No. 7. Project identification

Specific guidelines should be developed for the identification of projects within programmes in order to arrive at generally applicable rules.

(See paragraph 23).

RECOMMENDATION No. 8. Popular participation in the collection of information and in the planning, execution and evaluation of projects

- (a) UNICEF should systematically encourage efforts to secure popular participation in the planning, execution and evaluation of projects and reports concerning the methods used should be published and disseminated. Such efforts might be pursued in projects relating to concentration areas in particular.
- (b) They should provide an opportunity to encourage popular participation in data collection. Methods of selecting and training assessors should be developed at the same time.

(See paragraphs 24 and 47).

RECOMMENDATION No. 9. Recommendations submitted to the Executive Board

The recommendations submitted to the Executive Board should in future indicate the overall progress made in programming. The following, in particular, should be improved:

- The definition of objectives at the impact level;
- The indication of the relative degree of priority of objectives;
- The identification of concentration areas;
- The identification of projects.

(See paragraph 25).

RECOMMENDATION No. 10. Organization of project monitoring

It should now be possible for the organization of programme and project monitoring to enter an active phase. UNICEF should assist the national agencies, at their request, in developing their monitoring system and in establishing project implementation control charts, by project and by objective, and in keeping them up to date. Summaries of these charts could be annexed every two years to the reports sent by the field offices to the headquarters of UNICEF.

(See paragraph 27).

RECOMMENDATION No. 11. Organization of evaluation

- (a) Selective plans should be drawn up in each country by the national services, in collaboration with UNICEF, to decide which programmes evaluation work should concentrate on first.
- (b) A biennial report could keep the Executive Board informed of evaluation work carried out in the different countries (concerning programmes implemented with the co-operation of UNICEF). The report should endeavour to draw lessons from this evaluation work as a whole and to examine periodically whether the conclusions of previous reports have been taken into account.

(See paragraph 28).

RECOMMENDATION No. 12. Association of the Internal Audit Service with monitoring and evaluation operations

Consideration might be given to making use of some members of the Internal Audit Service, at the request of national services and field offices to help in some monitoring and evaluation operations.

(See paragraph 29).

RECOMMENDATION No. 13. Continuation and development of studies

Within the framework of the studies currently being carried out or supported by UNICEF on a great many problems affecting children, an effort should be made to improve the analysis of the economic environment of the problems which UNICEF endeavours to assist in solving, and to compile a typology of different categories of situations, using data made available by the analyses of the situation of children in various countries and the results of experiments in programme concentration areas. The framework offered by technical co-operation among developing countries may be used to service such research.

(See paragraphs 30-33).

RECOMMENDATION No. 14. Identification of users' information requirements: preparation of an indicative list and a core minimum list

An effort should be made to identify rapidly and clearly the requirements of users (planners and those responsible for framing policies and programmes for the benefit of children). To this end the following lists should be drawn up:

- a) An indicative list of the principal types of data and indicators useful in framing policies for children in the various fields of co-operation;
- b) A core minimum list of about 40 basic indicators required in the great majority of countries.

(See paragraphs 42, 43 and 44).

RECOMMENDATION No. 15. Preparation of a handbook on the use of existing information

A handbook should be prepared to facilitate the use of existing data by national services and UNICEF programme officers, and generally for those in charge of programmes for children.

(See paragraph 45).

RECOMMENDATION No. 16. Preparation of a publication on methods of collecting data concerning children

A publication explaining how countries can improve their capacity to collect valid and useful data concerning children should be prepared to help the various countries to review and improve the methods currently used.

(See paragraph 46).

RECOMMENDATION No. 17. Increase in the number of projects directed to the improvement of the countries' capability in gathering statistical information

The inclusion in plans of operation of projects directed to the improvement of the countries' capability in gathering statistical information should be systematically encouraged over the next five or six years.

(See paragraph 46).

RECOMMENDATION No. 18. Strengthening of UNICEF's capacity to act in countries where its permanent representation is small or non-existent

UNICEF's capacity to act in countries where its permanent representation is small or non-existent should be systematically examined and the necessary steps should be taken to ensure sufficient representation to help such countries frame their policies and programmes for children in accordance with the methodology recommended by UNICEF.

(See paragraph 51).

RECOMMENDATION No. 19. Inclusion in teams of regional advisers of programming, statistics and evaluation experts

Advisor posts in planning and programming, statistics and evaluation should be established at the regional level (or possibly at the subregional level) in order to facilitate UNICEF's local offices in their tasks of cooperating in the formulation and evaluation of programmes for children and of advising with regard to knowledge of the situation of children.

(See paragraph 52).

RECOMMENDATION No. 20. Strengthening and reorganization of the Programme Division at UNICEF headquarters

In order to improve the performance of many analytical functions, consideration should be given to the possibility of reorganizing the Programme Division at UNICEF Headquarters and strengthening its capacity to undertake these activities.

(See paragraph 53).

RECOMMENDATION No. 21. Review of staff recruitment and training

In order to cope with the new and difficult problems which UNICEF must increasingly face, the organization's staff recruitment policy, particularly for programme officers, should be re-examined and the necessary studies on the subject should be carried out as rapidly as possible.

(See paragraph 55).

Note: Suggestions regarding the methods of using maps appear in annex I to this report.