

Progress and Achievements of UNICEF

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UNANIMOUS votes are rare in the General Assembly of the United Nations, but on October 6, 1953, every hand was raised in favour of a resolution authorizing the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to continue its work indefinitely on the lines laid down in earlier Assembly resolutions.

For seven years this phase of United Nations activity has contributed to the health and welfare of millions of children throughout the world. It is at present assisting more than two hundred projects in seventy-five countries and territories.

The Fund was established by resolution of the General Assembly in December 1946, with the primary purpose of providing assistance for children in war devastated countries. As the more urgent needs of the post-war period were met, the problems of the under-developed areas with their chronic and recurring needs claimed a larger and larger share of the attention of the United Nations. This change of emphasis was reflected in an increasing number of requests to UNICEF for assistance in developing children's programmes with long term benefits in under-developed countries. In 1950 the General Assembly instructed UNICEF to give priority to projects of this kind and to continue its work for a further period of three years. The result has been that while up to 1950 76 per cent of UNICEF aid was for emergency programmes, in 1953 less than 20 per cent was voted for this purpose.

Long Range Programmes

Long range programmes take various forms. They may attempt the control or elimination of certain diseases to which children are particularly susceptible; they may assist in carrying out demonstration projects; in training personnel; in improving the milk supply or in equipping rural health and welfare centres. At present over one half the programmes are mass health campaigns against such diseases as malaria, tuberculosis and yaws. About one fifth are in the field of maternal and child welfare, one fifth deal with child nutrition and the remainder are emergency programmes to meet unforeseen disasters, such as famine, flood and earthquakes.

As the scope of the programmes increased so too did the number of countries receiving assistance. The seventy-five countries and territories being assisted at the present time include fifteen in Africa, nineteen in Asia, eleven in the Eastern Mediterranean, five in Europe and twenty-five in Latin America. The Asian group receive about 40 per cent of the present allocations.

UNICEF is designed to assist governments in developing their own services for children. Every country applying for UNICEF aid must be prepared to invest an amount at least equal to the UNICEF contribution in the

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