

UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION

DPR KOREA

DONOR UPDATE

12 MAY 2006

UNICEF REQUIRES US\$ 10,267,072 TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND MOTHERS IN THE AREAS OF HEALTH, WATER & SANITATION AND EDUCATION

- Situation of children and women remains fragile
- Government and UNICEF review cooperation in 2005 and agree on the need to enhance capacity building



The boundaries and names shown do not imply official UN endorsement.

1. ISSUES FOR CHILDREN

Democratic People's Republic of Korea had achieved remarkable progress in human development in terms of key social indicators – access to health, water and sanitation, educational achievements, mortality rates. But there is little hope of achieving the goals in the area of reduction of child mortality and improving maternal health, without major investments in the social sector.

Over the last decade, considerable progress has been made in catering to the immediate needs of the population as illustrated by the results of the nutrition surveys conducted in 1998, 2002 and 2004. However, chronic malnutrition (37%) and underweight (23%) are still high by WHO standards (greater than 30% for chronic malnutrition, and greater than 20% for underweight). Moreover, some one third of mothers were found to be malnourished and anaemic, as was the case in 2002. This indicates that assistance to the most vulnerable groups, such as young children and mothers needs to be sustained.

The country still suffers a widespread shortage of essential medicines and basic equipment due to the continued deterioration of social services and the low technical and managerial capacity. About 20% of children under the age of two suffer from diarrhoeal diseases caused by contaminated water and poor hygiene practices. Shortages of textbooks, school materials and fuel for heating during the long sub-zero winters remain another concern. Learning methods have also not evolved in step with international standards. All these factors have combined to affect negatively the quality of education.

With the government's decision to discontinue humanitarian aid programmes in late 2005, large scale assistance has been interrupted and this may compromise the progresses already made.

2. UNICEF RESPONSE: ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS (JAN-APRIL 2006)

DPRK-UNICEF Annual Review of Cooperation in 2005

In November 2005, an expanded annual review of the programme was conducted in view of the formulation of a new Country Programme for 2007 to 2009. Specific key results for children planned for and achieved with UNICEF support in 2005 included:

- Immunization coverage of children and pregnant women for all antigens (except DPT) was sustained at more than 93%. DPT3 coverage increased from 68% in 2003 to almost 80% in 2005. 50 counties received new cold chain equipment and 25 counties received transportation means for supervision and supply delivery.
- The quarterly distribution of essential medicines was sustained reaching 2,737 health facilities which benefit more than 15 million beneficiaries, 65% of the total population of the country. As a result, more than 834,000 under 5-year children were treated from diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory tract infections.
- The logistics capacity of the Ministry of Public Health has improved, which contributed to meeting the increased distribution load efficiently. More than 13,500 medicine kits in 2005 were distributed compared to 9,942 in 2004 (37% increase) and more than 340 tons of therapeutic milk were provided to 156 rehabilitation centers nationwide;
- More than 27,000 severely malnourished children were treated (68% of the estimated total 40,000 severely malnourished children nationwide), marking a significant increase from 7% in 2002, to 14% in 2003 and 33% in 2004
- In selected areas, women (25-28 years old) received iron and folic acid supplementation before pregnancy and on a national scale, all pregnant women received multi-micronutrients during the first trimester of pregnancy. In collaboration with WFP, about 2 million children and 300,000 pregnant/lactating women received processed food fortified with minerals and vitamins.
- About 80,000 people, including 6,500 children, have benefited from clean water and rehabilitated sanitation facilities in schools and hospitals and about 5 million more have gained access to treated clean water in urban areas. 1,000 families have now access to improved household sanitation facilities.

By providing essential medicines and vaccines to protect children against common diseases, nutritional complements for malnourished children, clean water and other basic inputs for children, the UNICEF supported programmes have contributed to improving the lives of children. There is a need, however, to strengthen government capacity at all levels to further improve the quality of inputs delivery and project implementation.

UNICEF activities in 2006

Addressing malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies

A core group of 15 pediatricians/nutritionists from provincial pediatric hospitals, baby homes and the Institute of Child Nutrition were trained on the treatment of severe malnutrition based on the WHO standard guidelines. They will then train others in their respective provinces.

In 2006, supplementation of multi-micronutrients to pregnant women is extended to the first six months of pregnancy as the provision of fortified food was interrupted due to the scaling down of WFP's operations. Distribution, which was initially limited to Pyongyang in 2004, is now extended nationwide. For 2006, multi-micronutrient tablets are planned to cover the total needs of 258,152 pregnant women (80% of the total pregnant women) in the accessible counties.

Supplementation of iron/folic acid before pregnancy for prevention of anemia is on-going. In 2006, about 225,883 women aged 23-28 years are targeted for the supplementation. The supply procured last year is expected to meet this requirement.

The production of locally produced blended food, a joint project between WFP and UNICEF, is scaled down in terms of the number of target beneficiaries and geographical coverage. The operation is expected to start from June 2006. The fortified food will be distributed to 361,996 children attending nurseries and kindergartens, children in hospitals, and 52,896 pregnant and lactating women. In 2006, it is estimated that 12,736 MT of fortified food will be produced. Minerals and vitamin premix procured last year will be adequate to cover the total requirement for 2006.

Major focus has been placed on the psychosocial development of young children – holistic development of children in nurseries through the provision of stimulating play materials and introducing the concept of learning through play. An exhibition on toy making by care givers from the locally available materials was conducted at the central level and planned for the provincial level. Efforts are continuing to promote the involvement of parents and communities on child caring practices in the model nurseries of six focus counties. The care practices applied by the model nurseries will be expanded to rural nurseries through exchange visits and training.

Supply of essential medicines and equipment

There are sufficient quantities of vaccines up to October 2006. At least one vaccine carrier for each rural health clinic has been ordered. More than 5,000 EPI service providers are trained in proper handling of vaccines.

During the first quarter of 2006, the Central Medical Warehouse (CMW) distributed more than 3,500 medicine kits to 2,933 Ri (village) clinics/hospitals and district/county hospitals in six provinces and Pyongyang city and to 22 specialized pediatric and maternity hospitals nationwide. Midwifery kits were distributed to rural clinics and hospitals of six focus counties. Four provincial maternity hospitals and six focus county hospitals received emergency obstetric (EmOC) kits.

A total of 1,150,000 oral rehydration salts sachets (ORS) were produced locally between January and March. This represents almost double the amount produced during the same period in 2005. The project is targeting 5 million sachets in 2006 or more than 60% of the local needs.

The programme will continue to support further strengthening of the logistic capacity of the Central Medical Warehouse and the Provincial Medical Warehouses, standardizing the management of essential medicines, sustaining regular quarterly medicine distribution, and upgrading the knowledge and skills of health staff on treatment of diarrhoeal diseases, acute respiratory infection, safe motherhood and delivery of immunization services.

During the first quarter of 2006, five monitoring visits by UNICEF Health Officers were conducted, as well as joint field visits with government counterparts. These are particularly useful in improving efficiency of distribution and use of essential medicines, and strengthening the managerial and technical capacity of the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH).

Maternal and child health

As a result of advocacy of UN agencies, the Ministry of Public Health has established a core group "taskforce" for coordination of reproductive health. A first joint Government-UNICEF-WHO-UNFPA meeting on reproductive health was held on 21 January 2006. Printing of a total 300,000 sheets of partographs for use in monitoring the progress of labour and 300,000 ante-natal cards for 2006 is ongoing. Additional midwifery kits for 150 rural clinics, as well as emergency obstetric care kits for seven focus county hospitals and four provincial hospitals have been ordered.

After one year of implementing the second phase (early Implementation) of Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) in two counties in North Hwanghae and South Pyongan provinces, UNICEF will work with the MoPH

and WHO in 2006 on the evaluation of the second phase and preparation of plans for the extension. The evaluation should take place in June with the help of an external consultant from WHO regional office.

Extending clean water supply and sanitation

The major activities in the sector in the first quarter of the year were to complete the ECHO-funded projects initiated since 2003 in Hyesan and Hoeryong counties, and since 2004 in Unryul, Yonsan and Rinsan counties. All supply items were delivered to the project sites and an official inauguration of these projects is planned for June 2006. Limited amount of water treatment chemicals and spare parts for the pumps stations for 5 provincial capitals were ordered at the beginning of 2006 to maintain quality of water supply in these project areas.

A review of UNICEF WES projects was conducted at the beginning of the second quarter of the year, jointly with the Ministry of City Management, under the technical guidance of an international consultant to review progress, constraints and lessons learned with an aim to strategize future directions of cooperation in the sector. The review report is due in May 2006.

Improving quality of education for children

At the national level, a pilot project on improving quality of education for children has been initiated. A workshop on learning assessment techniques was organized for a learning assessment team of the Ministry of Education. Data collected during the first quarter of the year covering 1,800 children was analyzed. The report and its findings will be presented at a Regional Meeting in Shanghai in June 2006. 100 tons of printing papers for text books for primary schools has been ordered, which meets about 10 % of the total annual requirement.

At the focus county level, rehabilitation of physical facilities in two kindergartens and one primary school was initiated as part of the activities related to improvement of education environment. Student desks and chairs were procured to benefit about 9,000 children in seven primary schools where physical rehabilitation of buildings was carried out during the current programme cycle.

3. APPEAL REQUIREMENTS AND RECEIPTS

Funding remains a constraint. In the absence of the Consolidated Emergency Appeal (CAP), UNICEF is seeking funds through the Humanitarian Action Report. To date, only \$932,928 or 8.3% of the total requirement of \$11,200,000 has been met. UNICEF would like to take this opportunity to express gratitude to the Government of New Zealand and the Government of Australia for their positive responses to support the programmes. There are also positive indications from other donors against the requirements, such as the Governments of the Republic of Korea, Sweden, Norway and the Korean National Committee. The tables below show the current funding status of the requirements, by sector and donor.

TABLE 1: FUNDS RECEIVED AGAINST REQUIREMENTS BY SECTOR AS OF 9 MAY 2006				
Appeal Sector	Requirements by Sector (US\$)	Funds Received (US\$)	Unmet requirements	% Unfunded (US\$)
Health and Nutrition	7,315,500	182,928	7,132,572	97.5%
Water and Environmental Sanitation	3,184,500	750,000	2,434,500	76.4%
Education	700,000	0	700,000	100%
Total	11,200,000	932,928	10,267,072	91.7%

TABLE 2: FUNDS RECEIVED BY DONOR		
Donor	Funds Received (US\$)	Sector
Australia Government	750,000	Water and Environment Sanitation
New Zealand Government	182,928	Health and Nutrition (safe motherhood, essential medicines)
Total	932,928	

4. IMPACT OF UNDER-FUNDING AND CURRENT PRIORITIES

Carry-over from 2005 has allowed the country office to sustain crucial activities during the initial part of the year. However, at the moment, key projects are on hold and remain unimplemented due to the shortage of funds. **Should contributions fail to materialize soon, UNICEF may be forced to revise the size and scope of its planned activities, thus preventing UNICEF from providing adequate support and putting children at greater risk of death and malnutrition.**

UNICEF expresses its gratitude to donors who have contributed to its programme of interventions in the past and hopes to receive additional support soon. Funding is needed to provide for the coming months. The table below outlines the most urgent priority requirements:

Project	Beneficiaries/coverage	Amount Required (US\$)
1. Child Health: provision of essential medicines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More than 13 million people in seven provinces/cities• Children and pregnant women referred to provincial hospitals in three provinces and one city	3,000,000
2. Safe-motherhood : provision of emergency obstetric care equipments and safe delivery kits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 180,000 Pregnant women in five provinces	500,000
3. Expanded Programme on Immunization: vaccines, vaccine devices and cold chain equipment for one quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 400,000 Children under one year old• 420,000 Pregnant women• Nationwide	600,000
4. Water and Sanitation in one focus county	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 150,000 people	800,000
5. Education: textbooks and basic school materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 600,000 girls and boys in the most vulnerable provinces (north-east) as well as in orphanages in all provinces countrywide	150,000
Total Priority Needs		5,050,000

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