



unicef

UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION

DPR KOREA

DONOR UPDATE

29 MAY 2002

ACUTE FUNDING SHORTFALLS PUT ENTIRE HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMME IN JEOPARDY

- ◆ **Imminent risk of rupture in WFP's grain "pipeline"**
- ◆ **Local production of fortified therapeutic and complementary foods may be curtailed with severe implications on rehabilitation of malnourished children**
- ◆ **Less than 30 per cent of Appeal funded**

1. EMERGENCY OVERVIEW AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Substantial food and nutrition aid shortages

The capacity of the World Food Programme's emergency operation to assist the most vulnerable people in the DPR Korea beyond June is limited. With only 25% of the requirement met, the prospects for continued WFP assistance to the most vulnerable groups – young children and pregnant and nursing mothers – is looking increasingly grim. Should no new pledges be confirmed immediately, WFP will be obliged to reduce ration levels and/or exclude or reduce the numbers of certain beneficiary groups. Assessed vulnerability of the beneficiary categories will be the main criterion used.

Both WFP and UNICEF also face shortfalls in contributions for local production of fortified foods. UNICEF has so far received only US\$ 104,998 against an appealed amount of US\$ 1,564,500 for nutrition related activities in 2002. The emergency rehabilitation of 10,000 severely malnourished children, and prevention of malnutrition and control of micronutrient deficiencies among 2.5 million children under five and some 930,000 pregnant and nursing women are at risk. Of the appeal amount, US\$ 510,000 was earmarked for purchase of vitamin and mineral pre-mix for the fortification of locally produced therapeutic and complementary foods.

International and inter-Korean developments

In early April, President Kim Dae Jung's special envoy visited Pyongyang to urge a resumption of dialogue between the DPRK and the RO Korea and between the DPRK and the USA. A joint declaration issued on 6 April committed both sides to renewed talks, family reunions, completion of road and rail links and further economic cooperation. The third round of family reunions took place at Mount Kumgang on 27 and 28 April. Talks between the DPRK and Japanese Red Cross Societies, the first for over two years, took place at the end of April. Contacts between the DPRK and the USA have resumed in New York, and the visit to



to renewed talks, family reunions, completion of road and rail links and further economic cooperation. The third round of family reunions took place at Mount Kumgang on 27 and 28 April. Talks between the DPRK and Japanese Red Cross Societies, the first for over two years, took place at the end of April. Contacts between the DPRK and the USA have resumed in New York, and the visit to

Pyongyang of a US envoy is expected shortly.

National budget

The Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK passed the annual budget at the end of March. In the social sector, increases in spending of 6.3% for education, 5.1% for public health and 6.1% for social insurance and social security were approved. During the previous fiscal year, the total outlay on implementation of the free education, free health care, social insurance and social security system amounted to 38.1% of the national budget. In the economic sphere, the accent is on broadening of trade and economic relations through joint ventures, and on modernization of industry with a continuing push on information technology.

Whatever the ultimate effect of these decisions, the situation of the national economy is very grave and will remain so for some years. In the meantime, the precarious state of the country's food supplies and its deteriorating infrastructure are leading to heavier burdens on the vulnerable sections of the society.

2. UNICEF RESPONSE: ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

The UNICEF's emergency programme continue to respond to the most essential humanitarian needs, focusing on the most vulnerable children and women, while at the same time looking for opportunities to assist in the country's "preparation for development".

Essential drugs supply: Ensuring that clinics are able to treat sick children and women

The availability of simple medicines such as antibiotics and Oral Rehydration Salt (ORS) in health clinics can be life saving for many children, especially for those who are already vulnerable due to malnutrition. Improving the availability of the most essential medicines for children and women has, therefore, been given a high priority for the programme this year. Unfortunately, the widespread shortages that were common in 2000 and 2001 continued into the first four months of this year. In the two-thirds of the country relying on UNICEF assistance, health facilities have been out of stock of basic medicines since late last year and unable to properly treat life-threatening problems such as respiratory infections (pneumonia) and diarrhoea. Residual medicine stocks from 2001 were recently provided to 73 county hospitals and almost 500 clinics in three provinces (Ryongyang, North Hamgyong, South Hwanghae) and Pyongyang but no other provinces have received medicines from UNICEF this year. Local production of ORS has been stepped up but is still insufficient – 400,000 sachets produced in the past four months. With early funding from the UK Government and the Korean Committee for UNICEF, new medicines are now arriving in the country and deliveries to provinces will restart from next month. Provinces will thus soon receive medicine kits every three months for the remainder of the year, but low funding means that only 12 medicines classed as "very vital" can be provided in these kits.

National child health days: Reaching most young children

Identified as one the most successful features of the programme, a "national child health day" will again take place on 20 May, and plans have now been finalized with the Ministry of Health to ensure another success. On that day almost all children under five years of age around the country – around 2.5 million children – will receive a supplementary vitamin A dose (for 6 months to 5 year olds) and de-worming medicine (for 2 years to 5 year olds). As usual, this will be an opportunity for inter-agency collaboration on monitoring with over ten teams made up of embassy officials, Red Cross, EU, UN and NGO staff visiting clinics and nurseries in all provinces on that day.

Immunization programme: Services continue

Vaccine deliveries continued to arrive in the first quarter of the year and there have been no interruptions to the programme – all provinces providing vaccinations for at least one week each month. According to Ministry of Health reports, more than 85% of infants (or around 370,000) were fully immunized in 2001. A national survey is being planned for later this year and will give an opportunity to confirm the national immunization coverage.



Nutrition rehabilitation: Funding shortfalls may prevent treatment

Since the beginning of the year an estimated 4,000 severely malnourished children have been treated in 25 referral centres (12 paediatric hospitals and 13 baby homes) around the country. These treatment centres have sufficient high-energy milk in stock, funded from the 2001 budget, to treat additional children until mid-year. No new funding has been received for this component in 2002 and considering the procurement lead times of three to four months, a gap in treatment for severely malnourished children can be expected in the second

half of the year.

Control of micronutrient deficiencies: Local fortification may have to be interrupted

The fortification of locally produced foods with essential vitamin and minerals may have to stop mid-year because of lack of funding. Through the Government-WFP-UNICEF joint project, five locally produced foods are fortified to provide supplementary vitamins and minerals for young children in nurseries, severely malnourished children in hospitals, children in primary schools as well as for pregnant women. In response to low funding in 2001, this year's plans already scaled back fortification to those foods for young and malnourished children only, but even this may have to stop unless additional funding is urgently identified.

A new effort to reduce the high levels of anaemia in pregnant and breastfeeding women has just been launched. The Ministry of Health's iron supplementation policy is now being reviewed, and 56 million iron/ folic acid tablets are being provided to all health facilities to meet the needs until early 2003. Latest available data shows that over 30% of pregnant and breastfeeding women are anaemic, with a significant number severely so.

Water and Environmental Sanitation (WES): Further progress

So far in 2002, 13 new wells with handpumps were installed in 13 children's institutions. This is lower than the 30 new borewells planned – spare parts and fuel availability delayed the start of drilling this year – but it is expected that this annual target can still be reached through increased activity over the remainder of the year. Chlorine powder and spare parts were provided to 15 functioning water treatment stations to maintain clean water supply to vulnerable urban populations. Intensive training activities were organized during the early winter months, and so far this year 30 provincial and county technicians received training in leak detection and water quality testing. A second WES sector meeting was organized by the Ministry of City Management with UNICEF support. The meeting, chaired by the Ministry, brought all sector partners including NGOs together to discuss current activities and progress. Such meetings are rare in the DPRK and this approach in the WES sector may be a model for other Ministries to follow. Funding for the project is low, and additional funding must now be identified if activities are not to be negatively affected in the second half of the year.

Basic education: Students receive basic school materials, textbooks and world cup footballs

Basic school materials, including over 1 million pencils, erasers and rulers, are now being distributed to schools serving especially disadvantaged children. All orphanages (12) and boarding schools (13) countrywide as well as branch/primary schools in the four east/northeast provinces of Ryanggang, North and South Hamgyong and Kangwon will receive these basic student items. Distributions will be completed by end-May. The new school year started on 1 April. Some 2,000 footballs, provided by the Korean National Committee for UNICEF, are now being distributed to many of the same schools. For the remainder of the year, the education programme will focus attention on helping the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with UNESCO, to prepare its longer-term education sector plan. The first phase will focus to increase Ministry of Education's knowledge in several technical areas with in-country studies, consultancies and overseas training visits planned.

Field visits

So far this year, UNICEF staff have undertaken field visits to health facilities (hospitals and clinics), children's institutions, primary schools, nurseries and other specific project sites in 8 of the 12 provinces/cities countrywide. The remaining four provinces will be visited in May.

Main findings include:

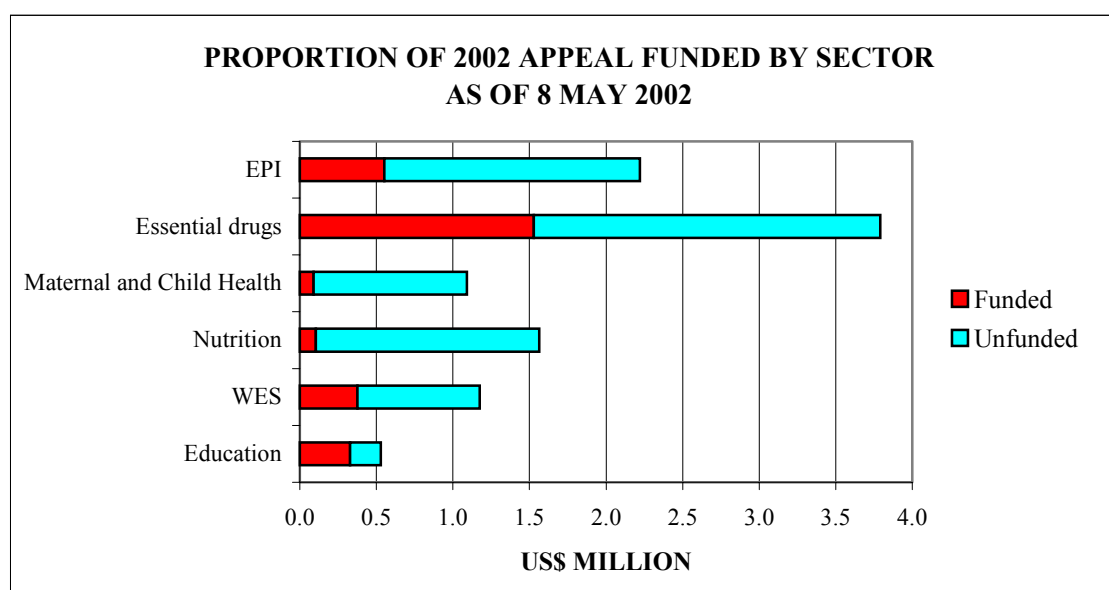
- Acute respiratory infections (pneumonia) and diarrhoea are still the most common illnesses in children.
- Moderate malnutrition is widespread, severe malnutrition is seen occasionally
- Almost all health clinics lack stocks of basic essential medicines for treatment of children

UNICEF, as is the case for other UN agencies, currently has access to 163 of 206 counties.

3. APPEAL REQUIREMENTS AND RECEIPTS

UNICEF appealed for US\$ 10.37 million to implement the 2002 DPRK Emergency Programme. The table and graph below show the current funding status of the Appeal, by sector. Timely contributions have been received from the Governments of the United Kingdom, Sweden, Finland and Norway, the Korean Committee for UNICEF and Diakonie Emergency Aid (Germany), allowing UNICEF to begin early implementation of 2002 project plans of action. The sector with the largest shortfall is nutrition, which is extremely worrying given the high rates of malnutrition in the DPRK.

TABLE 1: 2002 APPEAL REQUIREMENTS AND FUNDING BY SECTOR AS OF 8 MAY 2002				
Sector	Target (US\$)	Funded (US\$)	% Funded	Unfunded (US\$)
Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI)	2,220,750	552,844	25	1,667,906
Essential drugs	3,790,500	1,529,483	40	2,261,017
Maternal and child health	1,092,000	90,000	8	1,002,000
Nutrition	1,564,500	104,574	7	1,459,926
Water and environmental sanitation (WES)	1,176,000	377,142	32	798,858
Education	530,250	328,294	62	201,956
Total	10,374,000	2,982,337	29	7,391,663



The table below indicates the contributions received for the Appeal, by donor. The largest contribution to the Appeal has been received from the United Kingdom (US\$ 1.7 million).

TABLE 2: FUNDS RECEIVED FOR 2002 APPEAL BY DONORS AS OF 8 MAY 2002		
Donors	Income/Pledge (US\$)*	Purpose
United Kingdom	1,714,284	Essential drugs, EPI, WES
Sweden	469,050	Education, essential drugs, nutrition
Korean Committee	300,000	EPI, MCH, essential drugs
Finland	262,467	EPI, essential drugs
Norway	223,720	Education
Germany (Diakonie Emergency Aid)	12,816	Essential drugs
Total	2,982,337	

*Only against CAP contribution – additional US\$ 1.9 million funded from 2002 regular programme and carry-overs from 2001. US\$ 500,000 allocated from UNICEF Regular Resources set-aside for early childhood development.

4. IMPACT OF UNDER-FUNDING AND CURRENT PRIORITIES

Strong donor support in 2001 through WFP and other channels to alleviate DPRK's chronic food crisis is gratefully acknowledged. This needs to continue. However, additional resources are also urgently required to maintain and back the impact of greater food availability. Children's survival, growth and development certainly rely on sufficient availability of food, but also on adequate basic health care, proper nutritional management, increased availability of clean water and quality primary education. UNICEF DPRK is seeking funds for its emergency projects in health, nutrition, water and environmental sanitation and education. **The shortfall in funding prevents UNICEF from providing adequate support and puts children at greater risk of death and malnutrition.** The table below outlines the urgent priority requirements in 2002.

TABLE 3: PRIORITY REQUIREMENTS AS OF MAY 2002		
Project	Beneficiaries/coverage	Amount Required (US\$)
1. Nutrition rehabilitation control of micronutrient deficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children below 5 years of age (approx. 2.5 million) • 480,000 pregnant and 450,000 lactating women • 10,000 severely malnourished children referred to 42 facilities • Whole population for iodized salt 	1,564,500
2. Essential drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 million people in UNICEF-designated areas and child care institutions nationwide 	2,740,500
3. Immunization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 470,000 children under the age of one year • 480,000 pregnant women • 2.5 million children under five years of age for polio National Immunization Days (NIDs) 	1,860,750
4. Water and environmental sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,500 children in 39 children's homes and 100 schools • million people in targeted counties • Whole population through an increased knowledge and awareness of hygiene and disease prevention information 	786,000

Details of the UNICEF DPRK Emergency Programme can be obtained from:

Richard Bridle
UNICEF Representative
DPR Korea

David Bassiouni
UNICEF EMOPS
Geneva

Dan Rohrmann
UNICEF PFO
New York

Tel: + 850 2 381 7234
Fax: + 850 2 381 7676
E-mail: rbridle@unicef.org

Tel: + 41 22 909 5501
Fax: + 41 22 909 5902
E-mail: dbassiouni@unicef.org

Tel: + 1 212 326 7009
Fax: + 1 212 326 7165
E-mail: drohrmann@unicef.org