



unicef

UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION

DPR KOREA

DONOR UPDATE 4 FEBRUARY 2002

DPRK CHILDREN STILL IN GREAT NEED OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

- UNICEF appeals for US\$ 10.4 million
- Severe risk of child deaths and malnutrition if health care and clean water not addressed along with food deficit

1. EMERGENCY OVERVIEW AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

New UNICEF DPRK Appeal for 2002

UNICEF has appealed for US\$ 10.37 million as part of the DPR Korea 2002 Consolidated Appeal. Finalized in collaboration with the Government line ministries and other partner agencies, this programme has the following components:

Project	Budget (US\$)
Expanded Programme on Immunization	2,220,750
Essential drugs	3,790,500
Maternal and child health	1,092,000
Emergency nutritional rehabilitation, prevention of malnutrition and control of micronutrient deficiencies	1,564,500
Water and environmental sanitation	1,176,000
Basic education	530,250

Further information on the 2002 Appeal can be found at <http://www.reliefweb.int>.

Increased risk of child deaths and malnutrition

Young children in DPRK face increased risk of death and malnutrition not only due to food shortages. Already weakened by inadequate diets, they are more susceptible to diarrhoea and other gastro-intestinal diseases, and to pneumonia, which is very prevalent during the long sub-zero winter. Food alone cannot alleviate this problem. Without greater attention to basic health services, clean water and sanitation, even if there is increased food availability, children's lives are still at risk and their growth and development during vital formative years will be impaired.

Alarming statistics

Recent Government statistics indicate that the mortality rate for children under five years of age rose during the 1990s from 27 to 48 deaths per 1,000 live births. Infant mortality rose from 14 to 23 per 1,000 live births. Meanwhile, the per capita gross national product dropped from US\$ 991 to US\$ 457 in the same period. A nutrition survey conducted by the Government in 2000 indicated that 45.2% of children under five are stunted (too short for their age) or suffering from chronic malnutrition. These figures represent a very worrying trend in the situation of DPRK children and are an indication of their extreme



vulnerability. A new Government nutrition survey, in collaboration with UNICEF and WFP, is planned for this year. This will give a better picture of the situation of children and women.

The slow economic recovery also contributes to acute power shortages that affect essential services such as the refrigeration of vaccines and water pumping systems. More resources are needed to provide back-up systems and explore appropriate technologies less reliant on electric power.

2. UNICEF RESPONSE: ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

With limited funds, UNICEF has concentrated on supporting the most essential life-saving and growth-enhancing strategies. These include immunization and micronutrient supplementation to prevent disease and nutritional deficiency, treatment of common illnesses amongst young children, provision of essential maternity care for women, rehabilitation of severely malnourished children, and improvement of drinking water supplies. UNICEF continues to support areas of highest priority and on more sustainable strategies. The following are highlights of cooperation during 2001.

“Health days”

A highly successful feature of the programme has been special days, organized by the Ministry of Public Health with WHO and UNICEF, in which preventive health measures are implemented in a campaign mode. These have been done on three occasions in 2001: on 22 May, children were given vitamin A supplements and de-worming pills; on 20 October, they received polio vaccinations; and on 22 November, all three were combined. Given the Government’s high capacity for social mobilization, these “health days” achieve extremely high coverage, estimated at around 95 percent or almost 2.5 million children below five. The inclusion of other areas for preventive and promotive health is under consideration. These “health days” are equally a focus for inter-agency collaboration on monitoring. Teams composed of embassy donor representatives (Sweden, Italy, Germany and UK), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), NGOs and UN agencies (WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, WHO and UNICEF) visited all provinces in the country to witness these remarkable gatherings of children.

Cold chain assessment

An assessment of the national immunization cold chain was concluded in November. Carried out jointly by the Ministry of Public Health, UNICEF and WHO, this will result in the preparation of a medium-term plan for revitalization of the national cold chain system - essential to ensure that all vaccines used in the immunization programme remain fully potent right up to the time of administration.

Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI)/Global Alliance for Vaccines & Immunization (GAVI)

On 1 October 2001, with the support of UNICEF and WHO, the Government submitted an application to GAVI for funding of immunization service strengthening, support for injection safety and the extension of immunization to include Hepatitis B vaccination. The application is being reviewed by the GAVI Board. A five-year EPI plan of action has been formulated, and an inter-agency working group established in March 2001 is functioning.

Successful UNICEF advocacy for breastfeeding

In August, a joint Government/UNICEF seminar on nutrition looked at ways of heightening awareness of the nutritional problems in the country and possible responses: awareness of multi-sectoral causes of malnutrition and the need for action at family and community level. In-depth discussions were held on breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices, feeding schedules, home care versus nursery care and the difficulties in achieving best child care practices. Subsequently, UNICEF organised a series of nutrition briefings for humanitarian agency staff in Pyongyang and a seminar for members of the public. Government officials stated that a policy change in 2001 to promote “exclusive breastfeeding up to six months of age” was the result of UNICEF advocacy.

Water and environmental sanitation (WES) sectoral meeting

The National Coordination Committee for UNICEF facilitated a Ministry of City Management (MoCM)-led meeting of WES partners on 20 September. This is the first time that a line ministry in DPRK has chaired a sector-wide meeting. The Government’s policies and priorities in the sector were presented and discussed. MoCM reconfirmed that sanitation/water quality is amongst its highest priorities. A follow-up meeting will be held in early 2002.

Flood response

UNICEF and IFRC were amongst the first international agencies to respond to the immediate needs in Kangwon province following the 9-10 October flooding. UNICEF provided 40 basic hospital medicine kits, oral rehydration sachets, water containers and 160,000 water purification tablets for 40 ri hospitals in the most affected areas of the province. In the following days, additional medicine supplies were provided to five county hospitals and 100 clinics. UNICEF fielded four brief missions in the province in the two weeks following the flooding to assess the health, water and sanitation situation. UNICEF continues to follow the situation closely, coordinating responses with other partners.

Distribution of iodized salt

Field monitoring in October confirmed that the distribution of iodized salt, recently provided by UNICEF using the Italian Government’s contribution to 2001 CAP, is going well. This iodized salt, supplied as an emergency measure to meet part of the

shortfalls in national supply, is being provided to households in the five provinces most affected by iodine deficiency, as well as to all baby homes, boarding schools and orphanages nationwide. Iodine deficiency is the most important cause of mental impairment of children worldwide.

Training for DPRK statisticians in Australia

A four-member delegation from the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) has returned from a two-month intensive course on modern statistical techniques at University of Sydney. The training will further enhance the capacity of DPRK officials to undertake a more contemporary approach in data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination, and increase their capacities in evidence-based planning and evaluation. The participants in the course are now preparing course materials for local-level training.

HIV/AIDS study visit to Thailand, 22-25 October 2001

The UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office in Bangkok, Thailand hosted a two-member DPRK delegation from the National Coordinating Committee for UNICEF for a study visit on HIV/AIDS. According to Government reports, there is yet no HIV in DPRK. However, the delegation acknowledged that the general situation of the AIDS epidemic in Asia warranted a better understanding of the disease in order to effect policy development and to deter a serious potential spread of HIV in the country. The delegation met with Thai NGOs, UNAIDS, and Thailand's line ministries for health, education, and social welfare. Topics of discussion covered counselling and support, testing and treatment, multisectoral approaches for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission, affected orphans, programme funding, AIDS rights and discrimination issues as well as monitoring, geographical and social mapping. As a result of the visit, the Government aims to develop focussed prevention activities in 2002, including relevant proposals for supplementary funding, in cooperation with the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS.

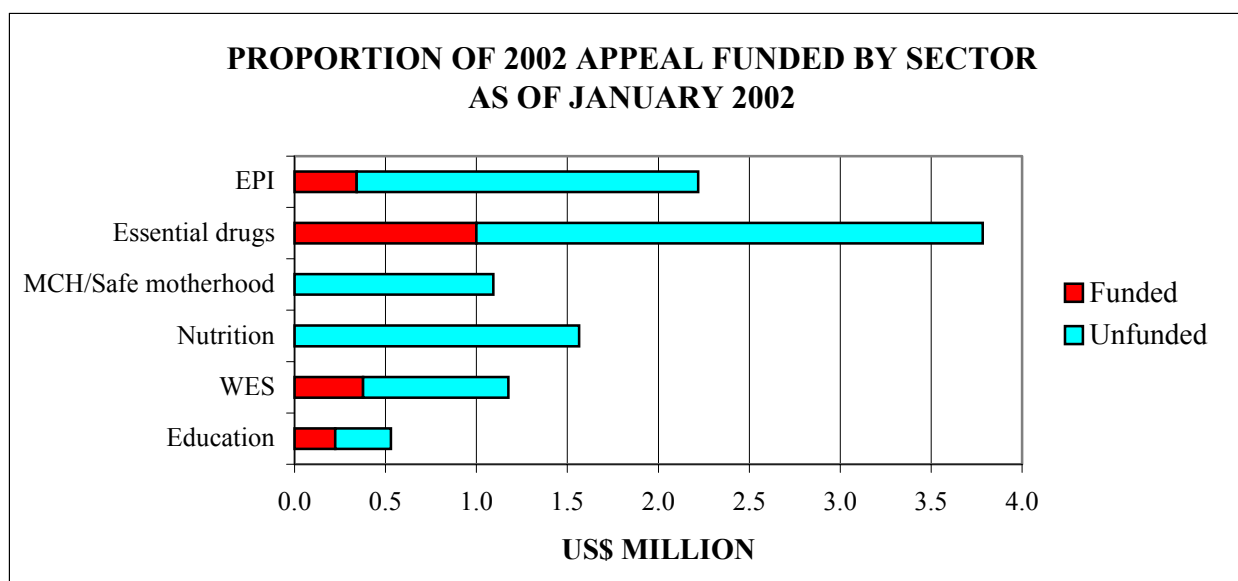
Field visits

During the period of August-November 2001, UNICEF staff undertook several field visits outside Pyongyang, concentrating on the north and east of the country, where the situation of children is most acute. These visits confirmed, for instance, that UNICEF supplies of essential drugs cover at best requirements during only three-four months of the year. As is the case for other UN agencies, UNICEF currently has access to 168 out of 211 counties. This represents an increase of one county since the last update.

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 and Norway, and Diakonie Emergency Aid (Germany), allowing UNICEF begin early implementation of 2002 project plans of action.

TABLE 1: 2002 APPEAL REQUIREMENTS AND FUNDING BY SECTOR AS OF JANUARY 2002				
Sector	Target (US\$)	Funded (US\$)	% Funded	Unfunded (US\$)
Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI)	2,220,750	342,857	15	1,877,893
Essential drugs	3,790,500	1,007,101	27	2,783,399
Maternal and child health	1,092,000	0	0	1,092,000
Emergency nutritional rehabilitation, prevention of malnutrition and control of micronutrient deficiencies	1,564,500	0	0	1,564,500
Water and environmental sanitation	1,176,000	377,142	32	798,858
Education	530,250	223,720	42	306,530
Total	10,374,000	1,950,820	19	8,423,180



The following table and graph indicates the contributions received for the Appeal, by donor. As indicated, largest contribution to the Programme has been received from the United Kingdom (GBP 1.2 million).

Donors	Income/Pledge (US\$)*	Purpose
United Kingdom	1,714,284	Essential drugs, EPI, WES
Norway	223,720	Education
Germany (Diakonie Emergency Aid)	12,816	Essential drugs
Total	1,950,820	

*Only against CAP contribution – additional US\$ 1.9 million funded from 2002 regular programme and carry-overs from 2001.

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 back the impact of greater food availability. Children's survival, growth and development do not rely on food alone, 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. **Under-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.

Project	Beneficiaries/coverage	Amount Required (US\$)
1. 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
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. 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
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 	786,000

Details of the UNICEF DPRK Programme can be obtained from:

Richard Bridle
UNICEF Country Office
DPR Korea

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

David Bassiouni
UNICEF EMOPS
Geneva

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

Dan Rohrmann
UNICEF PFO
New York

Tel: + 1 212 326 7644
Fax: + 1 212 326 7165
E-mail: drohrmann@unicef.org