

UNICEF and Israel

1948 -2005 Fifty Nine Years of Service to Children - Milestones

UNICEF founded by the U.N. General Assembly on 11th December.	1946
Agreement signed between UNICEF & the State of Israel.	1948
Technical Assistance from UNICEF to Israel.	1948-65
U.N. General Assembly adopts the Declaration of the Rights of the Child.	1959
UNICEF awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.	1965
Zena Harman, Israel's Representative to UNICEF's Executive Board, serves as its Chairperson.	1963-65
Israel Committee for UNICEF established at the request of UNICEF's Executive Director.	1969
International Year of the Child.	1979
Israel issues a Postage Stamp and Souvenir Leaf in honour of UNICEF.	1989
Adoption of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child by the U.N. General Assembly.	1989
World Summit for Children at U.N. Headquarters in New York.	1990
Israel ratifies the International Convention on the Rights of the Child.	1991
UNICEF's 50th Anniversary and Universal Ratification of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child; Israel Postal Authority issues special overprint to mark the jubilee of UNICEF.	1996
UNICEF launches the Global Movement for Children.	2001
Israel Natcom initiates partnership with Ashdod – as a UNICEF and child friendly city.	1999-2005
UNICEF collects millions of pledges on behalf of children in the <i>Say Yes for Children</i> campaign.	2001
Special Session on Children at the U.N. General Assembly.	2002
Israel transferred \$60,000 of state funds and \$18,000 from private donors to UNICEF – altogether, Israel donated \$78,000 in 2002.	2002
Israel Natcom launches the <i>Say Yes for Children</i> campaign in Israel and implements a Day of Broadcasting on Children's issues in the National Israeli media.	2003
Israel Natcom initiates a joint fundraising campaign with the Tel-Aviv University Student Union for the children affected by the Tsunami in South-East Asia, raise over NIS100,000.	January 2005

Israel and UNICEF have a significant history of mutual cooperation. Israel's ties with UNICEF began with the establishment of the State in 1948. Between the years 1948-1965 Israel received from more than a \$1.5 Million from UNICEF which went towards purchase of food to over 200,000 orphaned children who survived the Holocaust as well as refugee children who immigrated to Israel from North Africa and the Middle East in the 1950's. With this aid money Israel purchased vaccinations for children and initiated a nation-wide anti-tuberculosis vaccination operation, assisted in the recovery of children who were affected by Polio and helped establish the Mother and Child health service practice in Israel. This initiative reduced child mortality from 52:1000 births to 21:1000 births.

While the official ties commenced in 1948, the Jewish connection to UNICEF began two years earlier with the end of WWII. Ludwig Reichmann, a Polish Jew, established an organization aimed at providing assistance to the children of Europe, regardless of their nationality, who were deeply affected by the war. At the core of Ludwig's initiative lay the belief that every child, homeless or orphaned, regardless of his origin and nationality, is entitled to support and a solid base for survival. Later that year the UN adopted this initiative and on December 11, 1946 established UNICEF which vowed to implement and broaden Reichmann's initial efforts.

Between the years 1963-1965 Zena Harman, Israel's Representative to UNICEF's Executive Board, was appointed to serve as the organization's Chairperson. In 1969 the Israel Committee for UNICEF was established at the request of UNICEF's Executive Director.

The close ties between UNICEF and Israel represent the maturing process of the State of Israel. Within less than 20 years Israel evolved from a state in need of UNICEF's support to one of the 37 countries which operate a National Committee (Natcom) in support UNICEF - contributing funds towards UNICEF activities.

The Israel National Committee works to raise public awareness to the needs and rights of children internationally and locally, fundraises for UNICEF and contributes towards the education of children in Israel. The Israeli Natcom also works to initiate partnership with schools and cities such as Ashdod and Holon which were declared UNICEF and child friendly cities.

In 1989, Israel issued a Postage Stamp and Souvenir Leaf in honour of UNICEF. In 1991 the State of Israel ratified the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. In 1996, to mark UNICEF's 50th Anniversary and Universal Ratification of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, Israel Postal Authority issued a special overprint to mark the UNICEF jubilee.

Funding for UNICEF stems from two main sources: two-thirds of its budget is received as a direct donation from established countries and a third is received from the National Committees, such as the Israeli Natcom. The Israeli Natcom's financial contribution to UNICEF has been consistently on the rise. The main efforts of the Israeli Natcom focus on fundraising for UNICEF's main projects. As such, the organization recently launched an emergency fundraising campaign for the children affected by the Tsunami in January 2005. The Israeli Natcom joined forces with the Tel-Aviv University Student Union, placed numerous stands around the Tel-Aviv University campus and executed a week-long successful fundraising campaign which raised more than NIS100,000 for UNICEF.