



United Nations Children's Fund  
Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance  
Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia

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PROFILE:

AUDREY HEPBURN,  
UNICEF GOODWILL AMBASSADOR

Audrey Hepburn, the world-famous actress and Academy Award winner is no stranger to childhood suffering and deprivation. "I can testify to what UNICEF means to children," the internationally celebrated actress has said, "because I was among those who received food and medical relief right after World War II." As a child in Arnhem, The Netherlands, during the 'hunger winter of 1944-45, Miss Hepburn suffered severe malnutrition. "I have a long-lasting gratitude and trust for what UNICEF does," she added.

Audrey Hepburn was appointed a UNICEF Special Ambassador on 9 March 1988, and then Goodwill Ambassador in 1989. She joined a distinguished group of celebrity supporters: Peter Ustinov, Liv Ullmann, Tetsuko Kuroyanagi, Harry Belafonte, and Sir Richard Attenborough. The longest-serving Goodwill Ambassador was Danny Kaye who died in 1987, after 35 years of international humanitarian service to UNICEF and children.

Announcing Ms. Hepburn's appointment, UNICEF Executive Director, James P. Grant said, "We are indeed fortunate that people of reknown, like Audrey Hepburn, with huge talents, are prepared to give so generously of their time and energies. During recent ad hoc missions for UNICEF, including appearances at benefit events in Tokyo and Macao, she has demonstrated her remarkable talents as an advocate for children."

Audrey Hepburn was born in Brussels, Belgium in 1929, of a British father and a Dutch mother; she has two brothers. Her early childhood was spent between Belgium and England. At the outbreak of war in 1939, following the divorce of her parents, she and her mother were living in Arnhem, in The Netherlands, where they were forced to remain during the German occupation. Her older brother fought in the Dutch army, her younger joined the Resistance.

Young Audrey was sent to elementary school to learn Dutch, and temporarily took her mother's name to cover her English identity. During those years she started to study ballet and music at the Arnhem Conservatory of Music, near the famous bridge where the British were defeated in one of the bloodiest battles of the war.

In 1948, she went to London to continue dance studies on a scholarship from the Rambert School. She supported herself and her mother with a series of jobs in revues, bit parts in movies, cabaret, etc. and won an audition to "High Button Shoes," a U.S. musical, playing at the Hippodrome Theatre in London.

Soon after, a small part in a French film led to an invitation from the French writer, Colette, to play the title role in "Gigi," her new play about to be produced on Broadway. That same summer, Miss Hepburn won a major role in "Roman Holiday," with Gregory Peck. The rest is movie history: "Sabrina," "Funny Face," "War and Peace," "Breakfast at Tiffany's," "Charade," "My Fair Lady," "Two for the Road," were among her starring roles (see attached list).

In 1966 she retired from her acting career in order to devote herself to her home and family. She has two sons, and now lives in Switzerland. Her older son, Sean, is working in film production, and Luca, the younger, is completing secondary school in London. With Luca's schooling almost completed, Miss Hepburn agreed to commit herself to volunteer service for UNICEF.

Often asked whether she misses the glamour and the pace of her years as a star, Audrey Hepburn responds that since leaving the cinema her life has been one of happiness and contentment. This is typified by the name of her home, "La Paisible" (the Peaceful). With journalists and other visitors, she speaks warmly of her home, her garden, her family-oriented existence: a life which for two decades has been private but far from reclusive.

ETHIOPIA (14-18 March 1988)

Following her appointment as UNICEF Ambassador in March 1988, the first mission the British actress undertook was to drought-stricken Ethiopia, which she visited on behalf of the U.S. Committee for UNICEF. She was accompanied by Lawrence E. Bruce, Jr., U.S. Committee President, and UNICEF officials from New York and Addis Ababa.

From the capital city they flew to the provinces of Eritrea and Tigray, which were among the worst-affected by the drought of the early 1980s. Again hit by a series of drought years and a situation exacerbated by civil strife, the provinces were once more the focus of relief and rehabilitation efforts. Partners in these activities included the Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, United Nations agencies, and non-governmental organizations.

In November 1987, UNICEF had launched an appeal for \$22 million to help children and women face and overcome the effects of the Ethiopian emergency. Most of it had been raised, but as the drought and civil strife continued, the needs grew. In addition, UNICEF was seeking \$95 million for its five-year regular programmes in Ethiopia. Ethiopia is the largest UNICEF country programme in Africa, as befits the nation which is not only among the world's poorest, but which is also among the lowest per capita aid recipients.

The Hepburn party first flew to Asmara, the provincial capital of Eritrea, on a Belgian Hercules aircraft, which also carried 18 tons of Canadian dried milk for drought victims. In the city she learned about the transportation and logistics operations, the heart of any relief programme. She also saw water being distributed by truck to inhabitants and to displaced people throughout the city. The regular piped water supply system was in the process of being renovated and upgraded with UNICEF assistance.

Around Mekelle, in Tigray province, the activities Miss Hepburn visited included a food distribution centre, an orphanage for 500 children and a food-for-work dam building project. From there she went to northern Shoa province where she saw other UNICEF-supported projects, including reforestation, terracing and sheep-breeding; carpet and clothing manufacturing which are being developed, using the wool from the sheep.

As the UNICEF Ambassador pointed out later at a London press conference, "Ethiopia is better prepared to cope with the drought this time, because of its early warning system." (This involves a constant monitoring of factors such as the weather, crop prices and children's health). "Nevertheless, unless clean drinking water is supplied and young children receive vitamins, high-protein food, immunization and other care, Ethiopia's future could still be grim. Drought in Ethiopia is recurrent; famine need not be. If, when the rain fell in 1986, the country had the means to retain the water, we would not be here today."

The London briefing was one of many press conferences and meetings which took place following the visit to Ethiopia. Miss Hepburn undertook a schedule of activities on behalf of children that included as many as fifteen print and broadcast interviews a day, in the U.S. (where she also met with important members of Congress), Canada, Switzerland, Finland, Italy and the Federal Republic of Germany. Following the final interview in Los Angeles, she and Gregory Peck were reunited, as "presenters" at the Academy Awards ceremony. The New York Times referred to their presence as "visiting royalty."

TURKEY (23-26 April 1988)

At the end of April of 1988, Miss Hepburn represented UNICEF in Turkey as honored guest for the celebration of the 10th International World Children's Day. She joined Prime Minister Turgut Ozal in receiving 786 child delegates from 36 countries.

In Ankara, Miss Hepburn visited institutions providing mother and child-care and a health centre where she talked to staff and mothers, and administered oral polio vaccine to several infants. She also received a briefing by UNICEF officials on the country's successful immunization programme, which has reached four million children in the last few years.

At one of her press interviews Miss Hepburn stated, "Turkey has always been a strong supporter of UNICEF, both internationally and nationally through its own monumental and highly successful immunization programme, its strong national education system, and its efforts to combat diseases and provide better health care to its rural areas."

VENEZUELA (15-18 October 1988)

In October of 1988, Venezuela welcomed the Goodwill Ambassador for her first official visit to Latin America. Miss Hepburn had been invited to Venezuela by the Cavendes Foundation, with whom UNICEF cooperates on educational programmes.

In the southern area of the country, she visited Barinas and learned about community participation and the Foundation's mother and child-care projects. In this rural community, a centre has been inaugurated for pre-school activities, as well as for adult training courses, meetings and social occasions.

In a poor area of Caracas, a center for the child and the family was visited. Here a home in the neighborhood was adapted to receive fifteen to twenty children under six years of age daily. In this UNICEF-supported programme, they are cared for by a mother previously trained in pre-school care by a teacher-specialist.

Then President Jaime Lusinchi received Miss Hepburn, along with senior officials for a two-hour meeting on children's issues, including the critical problems of poverty and its effect on children, and possible solutions for the most critical situations.

At a ceremony commemorating the fifth anniversary of the Cavendes Foundation, Miss Hepburn made a statement stressing the importance of working for children and the need to mobilize national resources to attend to the needs of children, especially in the poorer sector of society.

ECUADOR (19-29 October 1988)

Miss Hepburn traveled from Caracas to Quito, Ecuador. Here the first stop was the urban-marginal community, "Lucha de los Pobres," where the Ministry of Social Welfare maintains a pre-school programme with the assistance of UNICEF. As she had seen in Venezuela, private homes are used for pre-school education, as well as health care, nutrition, and early stimulation activities for children up to six years of age,. In the same neighborhood, Miss Hepburn visited another centre for pre-school education where, in addition to child-care services, training takes place for voluntary workers.

One evening, she visited "Acción Guambras," an open service to children living on the street. This programme offers several integrated services to these children who work in various ways to support themselves since they maintain very little or no relationship to their families.

In a ceremony in which Miss Hepburn participated, President Rodrigo Borja inaugurated the PROANDES Project. This sub-regional programme aims to increase the fight against the deteriorating quality of life, and provide basic services in the Andean region of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.

This sub-region, made up of 82 million indigenous people, includes 24 million living in absolute poverty (unable to meet their basic needs). PROANDES proposes intervening with additional resources in specific areas where critical poverty is particularly severe on women and children, complementing and extending regular UNICEF programmes of cooperation.

Miss Hepburn had witnessed the effects of the economic crisis on the welfare of women and children and expressed her appreciation for the PROANDES project and collaboration of the five Andean countries saying, "One cannot wait until the crisis is resolved to take care of the problems of children. They cannot wait."

Afterwards at the Government Palace, President and Mrs. Borja, and Miss Hepburn discussed the cooperation that UNICEF is giving to various institutions in Ecuador, and the efforts of the new government to bring basic services to all pre-school children.

#### GUATEMALA (5-6 February 1989)

February 1989 found Audrey Hepburn again in Latin America, this time in three Central American countries and Mexico. Her field exposure began in Guatemala, with a difficult two-hour trip to the mountain village of Panibaj, above Lake Atitlan. The remote community had just completed construction of a drinking water system, which UNICEF's Goodwill Ambassador inaugurated, amidst flowers, a marimba band and dancing children. Miss Hepburn congratulated the people and said, "It is wonderful to know that all these little girls won't have to walk those many kilometres as their mothers had to, because you now have water. Water is life and clean water means health."

The return trip included a stop at a rural health center where she talked with children and their mothers. Later in Guatemala City, there was another chance to talk to mothers and children during a visit to the urban slum area of El Mezquital, as they walked down "Calle de UNICEF" (UNICEF Street).

In the evening Miss Hepburn was introduced by Vice President Roberto Carpio Nicolle at a ceremony launching the 1989 State of the World's Children (SOWC) Report. The Vice President cited improvement in education and basic services for children as necessary steps toward peace in Latin America, and indicated that Guatemala would support the call for a Presidential Summit on Children, and for the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. He closed his statement with, "There can be no peace without children's rights being protected."

HONDURAS (7-8 February 1989)

In Tegucigalpa, Honduras, Miss Hepburn was met at the plane by UNICEF Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean, Dr. Teresa Albanez, and the Area Representative, Mr. Agop Kayayan. Together they went to the Presidential Palace for a meeting with President José Azcona. He was presented with a copy of the 1989 SOWC Report, autographed by Miss Hepburn. She invited him to participate in the Presidential Summit on Children and to support the Convention of the Rights of the Child. The planned half-hour meeting extended to an hour as the President became more interested in the report's statistics, particularly those on immunization. He promised that the situation in his country would be improved.

The next project site visited was an urban marginal community, "21 de Febrero," with its new economical drinking water system. It was learned that the monthly cost of this new system for a family is 12 lempira (about \$6); previously the people had to buy water from vendors at 88 lempira per month,

which is one-third of the average family's income. The water system has a tank on top of a hill with individual lines going to water points, even to some homes. A community water committee handles maintenance and administration. The system is so successful it produces income for the community, prompting international donors, such as The World Bank, to plan duplication of this project in other communities.

In another urban area, the Barrio Villafranca, UNICEF has assisted in the construction and furnishing of day-care centres, operated by local women who have been trained with UNICEF assistance. There was also an opportunity for Miss Hepburn to meet with "Voluntarios por la Salud de los Niños" (health volunteers) who, after a six-month training course, receive a graduation diploma and a T-shirt, printed with the UNICEF logo and their new "volunteer" designation.

One evening, she spoke at a ceremony presenting the 1989 SOWC Report. At the same time together with President Azcona, Miss Hepburn presented the National Media Awards, initiated by UNICEF to honor journalists and media organizations for their work informing about children's problems and programmes throughout the year.

EL SALVADOR (9-11 February 1989)

A children's chorus greeted Miss Hepburn's arrival in El Salvador where the first stop was an important session with President José Napoleon Duarte, at the Presidential Palace. President Duarte later told journalists, "Miss Hepburn has asked me to be the spokesperson at the upcoming meeting with Central American Presidents, and to ask for a Summit for Children. I agree that this is a good idea because to speak of children is to speak of peace."

Miss Hepburn had an opportunity to see various self-help projects in health and education. In the urban community of Trujillo, in San Salvador, where people displaced by the 1986 earthquake have settled, Miss Hepburn

followed community health volunteers as they visited families in their homes, examining babies, weighing and measuring them. She also participated in a public health session where mothers were vaccinated against tetanus, and she herself administered oral vaccine to children. Mothers also learned about the importance of breastfeeding, responsible parenthood, and proper hygiene and health practices for the entire family.

She then traveled to the rural community of La Libertad on the Pacific coast and witnessed the "Literacy by Radio" programme in action. Through special radio broadcasts and workbooks, this project provides reading and writing skills to illiterate people in urban slums as well as remote areas of the country. Miss Hepburn met a 63-year old woman who is one of the local teachers, and she congratulated several men and women who proudly demonstrated their learned reading skills.

On the final day in El Salvador, she again launched the 1989 State of the World's Children Report and then the National Media Prizes. The Minister of Health appealed to the media to support the upcoming "days of tranquility" for the vaccination campaign so that all children, even in areas of conflict, could get protection against the crippling and killing diseases.

#### MEXICO

On the short stop-over in Mexico City, Miss Hepburn gave a television interview and then continued south to Acapulco and the State of Guerrero. There she flew in a small plane, along with several health officials and the wife of the Governor, to the mountain town of Tlapa, and then by helicopter to Chaucingo. It was a big day for this small village -- banners thanking UNICEF floated in the air, and a band was playing as the ceremony in the village square began. A band from a neighboring community joined the celebration in support of their own request for water. Miss Hepburn cut the ribbon inaugurating the new water system, and for the first time in its long history, the village had its own clean drinking water.

There was also a visit to the village's new health centre where she helped to demonstrate the mixing of oral rehydration salts against dehydration from diarrhea, and she also administered oral polio vaccine to two babies. At this centre "health auxiliaries" are trained for visits to outlying homes in the dispersed mountain communities, and the treatment of children living there.

A press conference was organized the following day in Acapulco and attended by thirteen journalists as a follow-up to the project visits, with an additional television interview some days later at the airport in Mexico City. At both meetings with the press, Miss Hepburn referred to the 1988 joint UNICEF/WHO/PAHO Declaration of Cocoyoc, which calls for a commitment to the health of women and children, and setting regional goals for the reduction of infant, child and maternal mortality. She also appealed, especially, for active participation in the upcoming vaccination campaign.

In Acapulco, she gave a keynote speech to an international conference of major company chief executives. Her presentation centered on the effect of the debt crisis on children, and the need for greater international efforts to protect children and their families. She then taped a 20-minute segment for a major U.S. television programme, interspersed throughout the interview was film footage from the just-completed UNICEF field trip.

In April 1989 Miss Hepburn was invited to testify at hearings of the House Foreign Operations Sub-Committee and the House Select Sub-Committee on Hunger. She also met with President and Mrs. Bush at The White House, and with several senators and representatives.

#### THE SUDAN (12-14 April, 1989)

Miss Hepburn visited the Sudan from 12-14 April to witness Operation Lifeline Sudan. She began her activities with a very cordial courtesy call on the Prime Minister. She then waved good luck to the first barge of food and medical supplies leaving on the Nile from Khartoum en route to Kosti, and the first 18 wagons of a train of provisions from Rabak station.

There were also visits to camps for displaced persons in Muglad and El Mereim, where Miss Hepburn clearly saw the plight of the displaced in the Sudan. The Governor of Kordofan and the Minister of Social Welfare accompanied her on these visits. Miss Hepburn stressed in press conferences and to the UNICEF Executive Board immediately following her return "that progress has been made but there is still much more to be done."

April 1989

A SELECTION OF STATEMENTS

by AUDREY HEPBURN

1988-1989

On Career and Family

"I had to make a choice at one point in my life, of missing films or missing my children. It was a very easy decision to make because I missed my children so very much. When my elder son started going to school, I could not take him with me any more and that was tough for me, so I stopped accepting pictures. I withdrew to stay home with my children. I was very happy. It is not as if I was sitting at home, frustrated, biting my nails. Like all mothers, I am crazy about my two boys. My eldest son is in Mexico where he is an assistant director on a film. My youngest son is 18 and is finishing school this year. He wants to go to art school next year." (March 1988)

On Her Own Childhood

"I was in Holland during the war, during the German occupation, and food dwindled. The last winter was the worst of all. By then, food was scarce, and whatever there was went to the troops. There's a big difference between dying of starvation and malnutrition, of course, but I was very, very under-nourished. Immediately after the war, an organization, which later became UNICEF, instantly came in with the Red Cross and brought relief for the people in the form of food, medication and clothes. All the local schools were turned into relief centres. I was one of the beneficiaries with the other children. I've known about UNICEF all my life." (March 1988)

On Injustice

"Since the world has existed, there has been injustice. But it is one world, the more so as it becomes smaller, more accessible. There is just no question that there is a moral obligation for those who have, to give to those who have nothing." (March 1988)

On Stardom

"If people are still interested in me, if my name makes them listen to what I want to say, then that is wonderful. But I am not interested in promoting Audrey Hepburn these days. I am interested in telling the world about how they can help in Ethiopia, and why I came away feeling optimistic."  
(March 1988)

On Ethiopia

"I came from Ethiopia feeling exhilarated and optimistic. I went with so many people telling me how harrowing and dreadful it would be to see the extent of the suffering, the death and the despair. Certainly, I saw children in an advanced state of malnutrition, although they are not dying in masses as happened before. But I also witnessed how much is being done to help and how just a small amount of aid can assist in treating the sick, irrigating the land and planting new crops. I came to realise that Ethiopia's problems are not insoluble if only the world will give a little more." (March 1988)

On Breakfast with Members of the U.S. Congress

"They were charming, and it was not easy to field some very difficult, unexpected questions about Ethiopia, dealing with the political situation, over coffee and grapefruit -- but I was very gratified to hear that after this meeting the United States had augmented funds for Ethiopia." (March 1988)

On UNICEF

"I have seen not only the work of the United Nations, but of nations united to overcome the crisis. Long-term development aid, so little at present, must be increased. UNICEF has a wonderful long arm, trying to reach the most wounded, and UNICEF works in a marvelous way to help people retain their dignity. Given a spade, which UNICEF provides, they can dig a well. We must now make sure that they do not have to dig graves for their children."  
(March 1988)

On Working for Children

"Recently visiting Ethiopia I saw the faces of children --faces of pain and suffering and despair. But here we are surrounded by so many young lives full of health and happiness -- and energy, which is indeed the greatest reward for all those who unite to work for a better world and for a happier childhood." (April 1988, International Children's Day in Turkey)

On Speaking for Children

"Let us never forget those children who do not know peace, who do not know joy and do not smile. It is for these children that I speak, children who cannot speak for themselves." (April 1988)

On Helping Children During an Emergency

"One cannot wait until the crisis is resolved to take care of the problems of children. They cannot wait." (October 1988)

On Clean Water

"Anyone who doesn't believe in miracles is not a realist. I have seen the miracle of water which UNICEF has helped to make a reality for a village in Central America, where for centuries young girls and women had to walk for miles to get water. Now they have clean drinking water near their homes. Water is life and clean water now means health for the children of this village." (February 1989)

On Human Resources

"There is no deficit in human resources, only a deficit in human will." (April 1989, National Press Club, Washington, D.C.)

On A World of Peace

"We cannot envisage a world of peace and compassion until children are no longer suffering from disease or are mutilated and neglected. Children cannot wait until the debt crisis passes, we must help them now." (April 1989)

On Recognition of the Name UNICEF

People in Ethiopia, the Sudan, etc. don't know Audrey Hepburn, but they recognize the name UNICEF. When they see UNICEF, their faces light up, because they know that something is happening. In the Sudan, for example, they call a water pump "UNICEF." (April 1989)

MAJOR FILMS  
STARRING AUDREY HEPBURN

- 1953 "Roman Holiday," with Gregory Peck; directed by William Wyler  
(Academy Award for Best Actress)
- 1954 "Sabrina," with Humphrey Bogart, William Holden; directed by Billy Wilder  
(Academy Award Nomination for Best Actress)
- 1956 "War and Peace," with Henry Fonda, Mel Ferrer; directed by King Vidor
- 1957 "Funny Face," with Fred Astaire; directed by Stanley Donen
- 1959 "Green Mansions," with Anthony Perkins; directed by Mel Ferrer
- 1959 "Love in the Afternoon," with Gary Cooper; directed by Billy Wilder
- 1960 "The Nun's Story," with Peter Finch; directed by Fred Zinnemann  
(Academy Award Nomination for Best Actress)
- 1960 "The Unforgiven," with Burt Lancaster; directed by John Houston
- 1961 "Breakfast at Tiffany's," with George Peppard; directed by Blake Edwards
- 1961 "The Children's Hour," with Shirley MacLaine; directed by William Wyler
- 1963 "Charade," with Cary Grant; directed by Stanley Donen
- 1964 "Paris When It Sizzles," with William Holden; directed by Richard Quine
- 1964 "My Fair Lady," with Rex Harrison; directed by George Cukor
- 1966 "How to Steal a Million," with Peter O'Toole; directed by William Wyler
- 1967 "Wait Until Dark," with Richard Crenna; directed by Terence Young  
(Academy Award Nomination for Best Actress)
- 1967 "Two for the Road," with Albert Finney; directed by Stanley Donen
- 1976 "Robin and Marian," with Sean Connery; directed by Richard Lester
- 1979 "Bloodline," with James Mason, Ben Gazzara; directed by Sidney Sheldon
- 1981 "They All Laughed," with Ben Gazzara; directed by Peter Bogdanovich
- 1989 "Always," with Richard Dreyfuss, Holly Hunter; directed by Steven Spielberg