Corso di Laurea magistrale in Relazioni Internazionali Comparate

Tesi di Laurea

Unicef – a new ethic of protection and care of children

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SINTESI

Il mio elaborato consiste in una ricerca sul processo evolutivo che ha portato all’affermazione del “diritto all’infanzia” come uno dei diritti fondamentali dell’uomo ed universalmente accettati dall’intera comunità internazionale.

Ma cosa si intende per diritti dell’umanità? Quali sono le loro caratteristiche? Su quali valori ed idee si fondano? Quando è iniziato l’interesse verso l’importanza per la protezione dei diritti del bambino? Di particolare importanza è, prima di tutto, una riflessione sul significato terminologico: sarebbe più corretto parlare di diritti dell’uomo o di diritti umani?

In alcune lingue il problema non si pone. In altre, i due termini riportano significati diversi. Oggi è chiaramente dominante l’espressione inglese “human rights”, ma fino all’adozione della Dichiarazione Universale dei Diritti dell’Uomo (1948), veniva utilizzata la terminologia “rights of men”.

Il cambiamento terminologico da “rights of men” a “human rights” ha rappresentato una tappa fondamentale: grazie all’adozione dell’espressione “human rights” si poté sottolineare che tali diritti non sono solo privilegi esclusivi del genere maschile, ma che appartengono all’intero genere umano, comprese le donne e i bambini. La Dichiarazione Universale dei Diritti dell’Uomo sottolinea questo concetto già dal suo primo articolo, che recita: “tutti gli esseri umani nascono liberi ed eguali in dignità e diritti”.


Oggi l’idea che l’ordine giuridico internazionale protegga i diritti dell’uomo nel senso generico del termine, includendo in se stesso il rispetto dei diritti dell’intero genere umano, è un principio solidamente affermato per gli specialisti di diritto internazionale.

Tuttavia, in passato l’idea di una protezione dell’uomo estesa anche a donne e bambini era considerata utopica, rivoluzionaria. L’internazionalizzazione dei diritti dell’uomo ha necessitato di un’evoluzione importante dell’ordine giuridico internazionale, ma anche di una rimessa in discussione delle caratteristiche del diritto internazionale che caratterizzò la prima parte del XX secolo. Non solo, fu necessario anche un mutamento profondo della concezione stessa della difesa dei diritti dell’uomo estesa ai bambini, accompagnato dalla consapevolezza che il bambino rappresenta l’umanità intera, il futuro adulto e il cittadino di domani.

In quanto tale, la figura del bambino racchiude in sé un potenziale prezioso per tutti i Paesi, che hanno il dovere di difendere i loro diritti non solo all’interno del proprio territorio, ma anche all’esterno dei propri confini, tramite la cooperazione dell’intera comunità internazionale.

Tutto ciò è quanto sostenuto con fervore da Unicef, la maggiore organizzazione internazionale a scopo umanitario che si concentra sulla protezione dei diritti dell’infanzia nella loro totalità. E’ soprattutto grazie al sostegno di Unicef che il processo evolutivo del diritto internazionale umanitario, ma anche la consapevolezza globale della necessità di difendere i diritti della fascia più debole della popolazione mondiale, ha seguito un’impennata così consistente come quella che ha caratterizzato la seconda parte del XX secolo.

I primi passi verso una vera e propria trasformazione radicale del sistema della difesa dei diritti dell’uomo, e di conseguenza più tardi anche di quella dei diritti dei bambini, sono avvenuti all’indomani della fine della Seconda Guerra Mondiale. Tuttavia, alcuni segnali dell’importante trasformazione avvennero anche prima di tale momento storico.
Già durante la Rivoluzione Industriale (XIX secolo) iniziò a manifestarsi una nuova sensibilità nei confronti dei bambini, sfruttati per lunghe ore di lavoro all’interno delle industrie, sottoposti a condizioni estreme e pericolosissime per la loro incolumità e salute psico-fisica. Una riduzione delle ore lavorative, lo svolgimento del lavoro in luoghi più sani e sicuri, e l’introduzione di nuove professioni rivolte alla difesa del bambino, furono i primi cambiamenti di un lungo processo di sensibilizzazione.

Dopo la fine della Prima Guerra Mondiale, l’attenzione rivolta alle vittime indirette di una guerra di tale portata evidenziò il grandissimo numero di bambini rimasti orfani, abbandonati al loro destino o addirittura feriti dagli attacchi di guerra. Il Comitato Internazionale della Croce Rossa, in collaborazione con il fondo “Save the Children”, sotto l’abile coordinazione di Eglantyne Jebb, resero possibile la creazione di “Save the Children Union”. Grazie all’Unione, venne adottata la prima versione della Dichiarazione dei Diritti del Bambino (1923), segnando una tappa fondamentale per l’avvio al processo di codificazione della protezione dei diritti dell’infanzia.

Nel 1924 la Lega delle Nazioni Unite, riunita per gettare le basi di un mondo libero dagli orrori della Grande Guerra, adottò la Dichiarazione di Ginevra. Tale documento, sebbene non giuridicamente vincolante, è di fondamentale importanza in quanto affermava per la prima volta l’esistenza di specifici diritti rivolti al fanciullo.

Come già specificato, un’intensificazione degli sforzi rivolti al riconoscimento formale dell’esistenza di diritti del fanciullo avvenne soprattutto dal periodo successivo alla seconda Guerra Mondiale. Durante il conflitto i diritti dell’uomo vennero invocati come il fondamento del sistema mondiale. L’Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite (1945) nacque con lo scopo di trasformare il sistema mondiale in un nuovo concerto di potenze in cooperazione per la promozione e lo sviluppo di rapporti pacifici, nel rispetto e nella fiducia reciproca.
Tuttavia, la nuova Organizzazione non prevedeva specifici provvedimenti indirizzati alla protezione del benessere psico-fisico del fanciullo: ICEF (International Children’s Emergency Fund) era l’unico mezzo previsto dalle Nazioni Unite, e consisteva in un fondo internazionale rivolto all’assistenza dei bambini nelle aree maggiormente colpite dalla guerra e dal nuovo spettro della Guerra Fredda. Tramite il “Relief and Rehabilitation Administration” (UNRRA), gli interventi venivano attuati a prescindere dalla posizione delle vittime da una parte o dall’altra della Cortina di Ferro, ma tuttavia dovevano avvenire solo per un limitato periodo di tempo che non si estendeva oltre i primi anni successivi alla fine del conflitto mondiale.


Nel 1953 Unicef venne formalmente riconosciuto come organismo permanente delle Nazioni Unite, con la conseguente adozione nel 1959 della Dichiarazione dei Diritti del Bambino che viene ricordata come la prima dichiarazione per i diritti del fanciullo voluta dall’unanimità.

Durante gli anni ’60 Unicef iniziò per la prima volta ad avviare campagne ben oltre il continente europeo, promuovendo iniziative in America Latina, Africa e Asia, concentrandosi soprattutto sulla particolarmente delicata situazione dei paesi in via di sviluppo.

Questa nuova prospettiva d’evoluzione di Unicef si focalizzava sulla necessità per i paesi in via di sviluppo di difendere i diritti dell’infanzia: in paesi in cui l’economia era fondamentalmente arretrata, sottoposti ai tentativi di dominazione coloniale da parte dei due blocchi capitalisti e comunista, e sconvolti internamente da guerre civili, Unicef decise di
intervenire (in collaborazione con partner importanti delle Nazioni Unite, come WHO, FAO, UNESCO, ILO) prima di tutto creando il noto report “Children of the Developing Countries”. Il report sottolineava che l’assistenza al fanciullo, specialmente nelle aree in via di sviluppo, non doveva limitarsi solo a livello nutrizionale e sanitario, ma doveva comprendere una serie di iniziative che promuovessero l’intero stato psico-fisico del bambino.

Negli anni ‘70 Unicef rivoluzionò i metodi d’intervento umanitario, introducendo il cosiddetto “Basic Services Approach”. L’idea di base è quella di creare un rapporto di partecipazione tra gli operatori Unicef e le donne e i capi di ogni comunità in cui intervengono, creando non solo una partecipazione dal basso che possa stimolare una maggiore coscienza del villaggio stesso, ma anche una maggiore accettazione dell’operazione. Unicef capì che la partecipazione popolare è cruciale, ed è un fattore fondamentale per la riuscita degli aiuti umanitari.

Nel 1979, uno nuovo evento segnò l’evoluzione di Unicef e della difesa dei diritti dell’infanzia in tutto il mondo: l’International Year of the Child, in occasione del ventesimo anniversario della Dichiarazione dei Diritti del Bambino, si fondava sull’idea che l’obiettivo principale dell’Unicef doveva tornare a una visione più globale, coinvolgendo bambini da tutto il mondo. L’evento fu accompagnato da un’attenzione mediatica senza precedenti, in quanto IYC scatenò la nascita di nuovi comitati nazionali in 148 paesi. I fondi a disposizioneuplicarono e più di 100 ONG ottennero lo status consultativo per Unicef. Il 1979 fu un anno di vero cambiamento di spirito, che rese possibile un aiuto a livello globale, specialmente nelle zone in cui la recessione e le conseguenze degli “structural adjustments” stavano causando le peggiori conseguenze, come mancanza di lavoro e l’inasprimento delle già criticissime condizioni familiari.
La coronazione di tale rinnovamento a cura per la tutela del fanciullo avvenne con la Convenzione sui Diritti dell’Infanzia, adottata all’unanimità nel 1989 mettendo fine ad un processo lungo di lavori preparatori durato quasi dieci anni. Durante l’adozione della Convenzione si registrò il record di paesi firmatari, confermando che la questione della difesa dei diritti del bambino non aveva mai raggiunto tale supporto. Oggi, infatti, ben 193 Stati parte hanno ratificato la Convenzione, rendendola l’accordo a scopo umanitario più ampiamente ratificato al mondo.

Il Comitato Esecutivo Unicef seguì l’onda di successo e sostegno per tale causa fissando una lista di obiettivi strategici da raggiungere entro la fine degli anni ’90, che vennero resi pubblici in occasione del World Summit for Children, tenutosi nel 1990.

Al Summit parteciparono 71 capi di Stato, 88 alti funzionari e altri 150 rappresentanti di paesi in tutto il mondo: non si sarebbe potuto ottenere un più alto impegno politico e finanziario a favore dei diritti dell’infanzia.

All’inizio del nuovo millennio, Unicef stava entrando in una nuova era: per mantenere alta l’attenzione al raggiungimento di quanto definito negli anni ’90, venne condotta un’indagine con lo scopo di valutare gli effettivi miglioramenti delle condizioni dei bambini di tutto il mondo. I risultati furono strabilianti.

Oggi Unicef persegue obiettivi fissati nel corso del UN Millennium Summit, noti come “Millennium Development Goals”. Unicef gode di un’ampissima rete di collaborazioni con altre agenzie a scopo umanitario, ONG, nonché il contributo dei singoli Stati e di un pubblico sempre più interessato a partecipare tramite donazioni volontarie. Le campagne sono supportate dal stimolante coinvolgimento attivo di Goodwill Ambassadors.
Unicef ha raggiunto un livello di professionalità e di efficienza tale per cui è in grado di muovere una macchina minuziosamente dettagliata e sostenuta da un personale qualificato. I metodi, gli obiettivi e la richiesta di fondi, oggetto della seconda parte del mio elaborato, permettono ad Unicef di specializzarsi sempre più efficacemente, e di intervenire in modo tempestivo in caso di emergenze a livello internazionale.

Mi sono inoltre soffermata sulla valutazione dell’intervento umanitario, problema di grande attualità, ancora in corso di perfezionamento e in continua evoluzione. Si potrebbe quasi affermare, secondo l’opinione di alcuni autori, che il processo di crescita della valutazione dell’intervento umanitario (e quindi la consapevolezza che gli obiettivi prefissati prima dell’operazione siano statiEFFETTIVAMENTE raggiunti in maniera soddisfacente) sia ancora nel suo “stadio infantile”. Ho riportato un esempio pratico di tale delicata operazione, e si tratta di una valutazione di una campagna in Kosovo durante la crisi del 1999 avviata da Unicef e dall’inglese Department for International Development (DFID).

La parte conclusiva della mia tesi è stata possibile grazie all’opportunità che mi è stata data di intervistare di persona la Presidentessa del Comitato Unicef di Treviso Mariella Andreatta e l’Ambasciatrice Unicef Deborah Compagnoni. Mi sono recata a Treviso nella Residenza di Compagnoni per discutere con entrambe di alcune questioni che non mi erano chiare o che suscitavano in me curiosità.

Le domande che ho redatto per l’intervista si dividono in domande pratiche e tecniche. Le prime, riguardavano le campagne svolte da Unicef Treviso, come vengono organizzate dalla presidenza di Andreatta e quale ruolo riveste l’attività dell’ambasciatrice Compagnoni. Le intervistate mi hanno parlato delle difficoltà che Unicef Treviso incontra, ma anche dei punti di forza e successi dell’Organizzazione. Le domande tecniche, invece, mi hanno aiutata a capire come
avviene la coordinazione tra l’ufficio Unicef nazionale di Roma e quello di Treviso, ma anche come avviene a sua volta la comunicazione tra Roma e l’Ufficio Internazionale Unicef.

Mi sono state descritte alcune dinamiche legate alla raccolta fondi e le difficoltà sempre maggiori a causa dell’assenza di fondi direttamente stanziati dall’Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite e la crisi che colpisce il nostro Paese.

Inoltre, mi sono stati forniti alcuni dati aggiornati molto interessanti, che chiariscono quale impatto abbia Unicef a livello internazionale: Unicef è presente in 192 Paesi e territori di tutto il mondo, attraverso 156 Uffici sul campo nei Paesi in via di sviluppo destinatari dei programmi, 36 Comitati nazionali nei Paesi industrializzati che raccolgono fondi (tra cui il Comitato italiano per l’Unicef), 6 Sedi internazionali, 8 Uffici Regionali. Il Comitato Italiano per l’Unicef Onlus rappresenta l’Unicef internazionale nel nostro Paese. Si costituisce di un Comitato Nazionale con sede a Roma, 20 Comitati Regionali, più di 100 Comitati Provinciali, 50 Punti d’incontro e 3000 volontari.

Unicef lavora in collaborazione con numerosi partner, tra cui i Governi (in particolare con capi di Stato, ministri, funzionari, sindaci, autorità locali e consigli di comunità); Organizzazioni non governative nazionali e internazionali, gruppi di giovani, organizzazioni femminili, gruppi religiosi, comunità e associazioni di famiglie; leader di tutto il mondo, donatori e Goodwill Ambassadors.

Per entrare nel dettaglio, Mariella Andreatta e Deborah Compagnoni mi hanno citato esempi di progetti ai quali hanno assistito. Mi è stato molto utile per comprendere le dinamiche che caratterizzano le campagne Unicef.

Grazie alla loro intervista ho colto l’importanza di Unicef in Italia, e il contributo che il nostro Comitato Nazionale offre, sia in termini di risorse umane (infatti il nostro Comitato nel
tempo ha avuto modo di distinguersi per l’abilità di individuare e realizzare iniziative strategiche per le attività di sensibilizzazione, rispetto e tutela dei diritti dell’infanzia e dell’adolescenza in Italia), sia in termini di risorse finanziarie: per esempio, dal 1° gennaio al 31 marzo 2014 Unicef Italia ha trasferito ai programmi sul campo 6.385.670,04 euro.

Lavorare per la scrittura della mia tesi mi ha aiutato a comprendere l’entità che l’Organizzazione Unicef rappresenta nel mondo.

La peculiarità di Unicef è di essere contemporaneamente Organizzazione non governativa (ONG), che nell’ambiente italiano va a collocarsi nell’ambito del Terzo Settore, e rappresentante di un programma inter-governativo delle Nazioni Unite. In quanto ONG, l’Unicef Italia gode anche dello status di Onlus - Organizzazione non lucrativa di utilità sociale.

Come affermato da Andreatta, Presidentessa del Comitato Unicef di Treviso, negli ultimi anni sono sorte tantissime organizzazioni che prefissano obiettivi simili a quelli che Unicef propone di perseguire: il benessere del bambino, condizioni favorevoli allo sviluppo psico-fisico, accesso ai beni di prima necessità, prevenzione di malattie endemiche e vaccinazioni in tutto il mondo e, in generale, la diffusione della cultura dell’infanzia e il rafforzamento del consenso intorno all’attuazione dei diritti dell’infanzia e dell’adolescenza.

Tuttavia, usando le parole della Presidentessa, “il punto di forza di Unicef sta nella continuità e nella formazione. Quando Unicef avvia un progetto, si assicura che venga portato a termine, non solo per il miglioramento delle condizioni di tanti bambini in tutto il mondo, ma anche per riaffermare ai donatori e al pubblico che i fondi sono utilizzati in concreto”.

Le mie intervistate hanno più volte affermato che la grandezza di Unicef è tale per cui l’intervento umanitario viene pianificato nei minimi dettagli, partendo dalle direttive di Ginevra,
passando per la gestione dei progetti a livello nazionale, arrivando fino all’attuazione del progetto prescelto con la collaborazione di tutti i Comitati. Deborah Compagnoni crede che “forse si dovrebbero unire le forze di tutte queste piccole associazioni sotto la guida di una grande organizzazione stabile, come quella rappresentata da Unicef”.

L’Organizzazione condivide da sempre gli sforzi per la difesa dei diritti del bambino con una rete di collaborazioni e sostegni che ne sorreggano le attività. Unicef, fin dal principio, non è mai stata concepita per essere isolata. Infatti, oltre a lanciare operazioni di sua spontanea iniziativa, Unicef ha sempre intrapreso campagne a sostegno di progetti già esistenti (siano essi di governi nazionali o di ONG), offrendo un importante contributo.

Grazie a questo lavoro, ho colto l’importanza che Unicef ha avuto, e ha tuttora, per la creazione di un mondo che fosse pensato anche a “misura di bambino”, a prescindere dalle divisioni politiche, etniche e sociali.

Sin dal momento della sua costituzione, Unicef si è evoluta, partendo come fondo specifico per le emergenze, fino ad arrivare a diventare una vera e propria agenzia di sviluppo, impegnata a proteggere e a soddisfare le esigenze dei minori in tutto il mondo e a fornire servizi integrati ai bambini e alle loro famiglie.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the whole international community has firmly accepted that children need to be considered as essential element of a national community and that they represent a proper category of global citizens which deserves consideration in their own right.
The importance of child well-being, child survival, child health, child safety, child victims of violence, child affected by warfare- and so on- is so strong, that it has achieved the status of an almost universally accepted norm. Nevertheless, the imposition of the respect and recognition of children as rights holders is not so long-lived.

How did the “children issue” obtain a different order of commitment? Why have children become so important? It is not easy to find the answer. It could be said that the “children question” became so prominent because of the interaction between long term changes in human awareness and moral responsibility, and the contribution of historical events and international organizations which placed the condition of children in a preferential position in economic, political, and humanitarian fields.

However, it is important to say that it is wrong to assert that the child has been completely neglected by policy makers in the past. The fact is that they used to consider children’s emergencies issue as confined to the humanitarian intervention. The reason is simple: during armed conflicts, political efforts where oriented towards international relations, military issues, political decisions and war management itself. The weakest and non-fighting section of population, included children, were placed behind war business\(^1\). Compared to the crucial importance of waging of wars, state budget resources and the price of oil, children’s well-being was almost completely ignored and set aside as least valuable\(^2\).

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PART ONE: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

To understand what changed and why children today are the target of much more serious attention in policy makers’ programs, we should recall the most important events which had led to the so-called “century of the child”\(^3\).

In the first part of the work, we will become more familiar with the concept of child, the origins of the concept and the first attempts to defend children. We will deal with the most important stages concerning the assumption of the rights of the children as universally accepted – the first version of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child in the aftermath of the First World War; the Geneva Declaration; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the Declaration of the Rights of the Child; the International Year of the Child; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the World Summit for Children; the World Declaration on Survival, Protection and Development of Children.

During this first part, it will be soon clear that all the stages of the evolution of the rights of children were supported by the stable and permanent presence of the most important organization concerning the protection of children all over the world: Unicef.

In the second part of the work, Unicef’s humanitarian interventions will be described underlying the practical application. Objectives, methods, provision of funds and tools of research are crucial features of humanitarian interventions, and they play a central role especially in crisis particularly acute or urgent.

In this section of my dissertation, humanitarian evaluation occupies a significant portion, due to its importance. Since humanitarian operations are planned to provide concrete assistance to children and their families, it is important to verify whether if the operations have fulfilled objectives or not. I provided a concrete example of joint humanitarian evaluation taken by a donor, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the United Nations Children’s Fund. The joint humanitarian evaluation occurred during the Kosovo crisis in 1999.

In the third part of my work, I describe my experience of interviewing the Treviso Unicef Committee Chairwoman Mariella Andreatta, and the Goodwill Ambassador Deborah Compagnoni. Through my questions and their answers I had the opportunity to understand in depth the Unicef system and the coordination between its International Office and National Committees. Listening to the points of view and experiences of my interviewees added to my dissertation a valuable contribution - it has been useful to see how every single person can contribute to the general system of the Fund. The United Nations Children's Fund is the result of Governments commitment, but it is supported by (and especially) from a wide network of connections that link donors, employees, volunteers, young people and Goodwill Ambassadors. Without a solid base of consensus, collaboration and predisposition for humanitarian aid, Unicef would not have the same degree of efficiency.

In the fourth and last part of my dissertation, some conclusive remarks underline the successes of Unicef and the changes in children’s rights protection. Thanks to the creation and the contribution of Unicef, today a child has better prospects in life than a child who was born in the past, before the adoption of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Even if Unicef mission is not yet concluded, the changes experienced by the international humanitarian system are the proof that common goals and shared efforts can drive real change for children on the global, national and local levels. Unicef, together with the contribution of the whole international community,
must to follow the same path that made possible the creation of the new ethic of protection and care of children – the same ethic Unicef invoked saving millions of lives throughout the world.

1.1 THE CONCEPT OF CHILD

Etymologically, the term “child” comes from the Latin infans which means “the one who does not speak”. At the time of the Romans, child was referred to the time between the birth and the age of seven years old.

The concept of child was characterized by a constant evolution, according to the passing of centuries and cultural differences. However, despite intellectual debates about the definition of childhood and cultural alterations about what the meaning of children is, there has always been a substantial degree of shared features.

The child, since his birth up to his adult age, raises a number of complex and delicate problems to those who are responsible for his growth. In countries with everything needed to ensure child’s material and moral life, those problems are solved thanks to the everyday interaction between family and community⁴. The birth, cares, feeding, education, and formation for professional life require a series of continuous efforts of both sides. Anyway, even in the best of cases, the result is never surely positive. Every mother, every father, every educator knows what it means to raise a child.

In the past, all the issues related to children care were almost exclusively labeled as “a family duty”. The community made interventions only indirectly, focusing for instance on building

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of schools and of medical centers. Gradually, the conditions of modern times changed and nations have begun to support children issues in close collaboration with parents.

The problems related to children are not summary details in the community life, but they are essential interests for the whole community itself.

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989, the child is defined more precisely in this way:

“[...] a child is any human being below the age of eighteen years, unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier”.

Childhood is conceived as the stage in which people are characterized by youth and vulnerability, possessing no means to protect himself. This is the duty of the whole international community, of Governments and adults, who have to protect children’s rights by providing material assistance and support to families.

The child deserves to be the focus of particular interest and must to be the object of a specific protection. In this perspective, the texts wrote to proclaim the protection of the child and his rights were adopted.

This is a brief summary of the overall action of Unicef, especially in helping governments to coordinate their national efforts to improve the fate of children. Unicef is, by its very existence, a means of reconciliation between the children of the world, because it represents the most diverse people in beliefs and lifestyles.

Interacting with Unicef, the Governments are united by a spirit of solidarity towards children and by sharing their experiences. Through solidarity towards childhood it has been gradually created a true relationships between countries, both developed and developing.
1.2 THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

The advancement of children as an issue began in the 19th century. It is exactly during the Industrial Revolution that a new sensibility spread among Europe and North America. The ignoble exploitation of children in mines and factories gave birth to a public awareness campaign to free children from the harshest conditions and the lack of a proper education. After many attempts and efforts, and thanks to the involvement of States and Governments, it became possible to fix a minimum working age, establish maximum hours children could work and heal the extremely dangerous places where children met injuries and even death.

Figura 1 Children working at the time of Industrial Revolution. Source: http://itsos.albesteiner.net
During the 19th century, new professions developed a specific attention to the well-being and safety of children: nursery school attendants, pediatricians, and child psychologists, that reached a considerable importance after the contribution of Freud, Piaget and Spock⁵.

In the aftermath of the horror of World War I, Eglantyne Jebb realized that the war and its casualties left thousands of children in a dire situation. In 1919, with the help of her sister, Dorothy Buxton, Jebb founded the Save the Children Fund in London so as to protect children who have experienced war. In 1920, with the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Save the Children Fund was organized and structured around the International Save the Children Union.

On 23 February 1923, the International Save the Children Union adopted the first version of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child during its fourth general assembly (The draft was later ratified during the fifth general assembly, on 28 February 1924). Through Jebb’s contribution, a new principle was established for the first time in the world: the international principle that there was no such thing as an “enemy child”. The 1924 Declaration made possible acknowledgement of five principles. Maggie Black, the author of “Children First: the story of UNICEF, past and present”, summarizes them in this way: the child’s right to the means for material, moral and spiritual development; to special help when hungry, sick, disabled or orphaned; to first call on relief in distress; not to be economically exploited; and to an upbringing that instilled a sense of responsibility towards society⁶.

⁶ Ivi p. 21.
Understanding the importance of the document, Jebb decided to send it to the League of Nations, affirming “we should claim certain Rights for the children and labour for their universal recognition.”

In 1924, the League of Nations (LON) adopted the *Geneva Declaration*, a historic document that recognized and affirmed for the first time the existence of rights specific to children and the responsibility of adults towards children. The document stated that “mankind owes to the Child the best that it has to give.” The idea of certain fundamental rights concerning the well-being of children was finally becoming reality, but even if the signatories promised to incorporate the principles of the document into their national laws, they were not legally bound to do so.

The 20th century is crucial and rich of fundamental changes, not only for the establishment of children protection, but also for the birth and development of the most important organization operating in this field: Unicef.

### 1.3 THE BIRTH OF ICEF

In the aftermath of Second World War, the creation of United Nations in 1945 was greeted as the beginning of a new era, characterized by a new international cooperation, a spirit of regeneration in international community, international security and social equity.

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However, in this newly institutionalized world order\textsuperscript{9}, originally there was no idea about the creation of a special commission focusing on behalf of children. In fact, the creation of ICEF - a UN International Children’s Emergency Fund – was the result of the Cold War echo in the world, and only one of several measures conceived for the most affected areas of the world. In the aftermath of the war, the world was facing the lack of proper food, shelter, fuel and clothing. With the purpose of reacting, the Allied powers in 1944 suggested the creation of the UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA).

\textbf{Figura 2} A 4-year-old survivor of Buchenwald sits on the running board of a UNRRA truck soon after liberation of the camp.
Source: http://sakuramochi-jp.blogspot.it

\textsuperscript{9} Niklas Bergström, Towards an integrated theory of communication in international relations: UNICEF and the need of a communications strategy. (Geneva: Institut universitaire de hautes études internationales 1988) p. 3.
At first, this was a plan conceived to help all countries devastated by the war, regardless of whether they were placed before or beyond the Iron Curtain. However, in the late 1946 the ideological competition between the two blocks of the world became unstoppable, forcing United States to refuse to delay the neutral financial support to both sides of the world.

The first open call for the need of neutrality towards children and young was launched form the delegates of Poland and Norway during the last session of UNRRA in Geneva. The post Second World War conditions were particularly bad for children, especially in those regions famine-affected, where only a tiny part of children could live beyond their first year of life. In the aftermath of the Second World War millions of children were suffering deprivation. The idea was the need of the creation of a special program focused on the supply of food, medicines and clothes to all children and mothers most threatened by hunger and disease. On 11 December 1946 the resolution number 57(I) of the UN General Assembly brought Unicef into being.

In the moment of ICEF creation it was not clear if that could have been a temporary action or not, but it was clear that a new perception of children was growing among UN members: in the great system of international cooperation, children deserve to be above the political diatribes. This was an exception of extraordinary importance during such a delicate period characterized by East-West confrontation. The Council of UNRRA recommended that the new created Fund must to be financed in part from the residual assets of UNRRA itself, and in part from the voluntary contributions of governments and individuals.

11 Ibid.
Unicef immediately applied its neutrality: the Organization intervened in Eastern Europe countries (Poland Yugoslavia, Romania), in areas affected by civil wars in Greece and China, but also in Middle East to relief assistance to Arab mothers and children during the creation of Israel and it brought support to the massive campaign of immunization against tuberculosis that was spreading throughout post war Europe.\(^\text{13}\).

In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, which represents “a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.”\(^\text{14}\). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance”\(^\text{15}\)” and describes the family as “the natural and fundamental group unit of society.”\(^\text{16}\).

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\(^{14}\) *Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948

\(^{15}\) *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948, article 25-1

\(^{16}\) *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948, article 16-3

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![Image of Eleanor Roosevelt holding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](http://legal.un.org)

**Figure 3** Eleanor Roosevelt showing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Source: [http://legal.un.org](http://legal.un.org)
The drafting of such a charter was committed by Eleanor Roosevelt, together with the support of a group composed by members from 18 countries. The Charter was drafted by Canadian John Peters Humphrey, and then revised by Frenchman René Cassin. None of the 56 members of the United Nations voted against the text, even if South Africa, Saudi Arabia and the Soviet Union abstained. The final text is the prove that there was a remarkable political consensuses.

However, children are seldom mentioned in this text, but it is a significant document because it was crucial for “the recognition of the inalienable dignity of human beings\textsuperscript{17} including children. Children’s rights are based on human rights.

The year of 1950 marked a turning point and was the beginning of an evolution that continued to go further, marking the willingness of officials to make the organization a “living organism” adapted to the needs of that time. When the time of ICEF was coming to the end, recognizing the need to continue child welfare, the General Assembly of the United Nations decided to extend the work of the Fund and to concentrate its operations in developing countries.

This moment is important not only for the recognition of the crucial importance of children safety, but also for the new attention paid to the word “developing” and to the conditions of those children affected by extreme poverty that lasts from generation to generation. It is particularly important the contribution provided by the delegate of Pakistan. As reported by Maggie Black, the author of “Children First: the story of UNICEF, past and present”, the delegate asked how could the task of international action for children be regarded as complete when so

\textsuperscript{17} Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948
many millions of children in Asia, Africa, and Latin America languished in sickness and hunger not because of war, but because of age-old poverty.18

1.4 FROM ICEF TO UNICEF

The future of Unicef was discussed by various UN bodies from the middle of 1949 to the end of 1950. Those discussions ended with the decision of UN General Assembly to extend the life of the Fund for three years (Res. 417 (V))19.

In October 1953 the Fund action was finally consecrated by the General Assembly Resolution 802 (VIII) who made it a permanent organism. The latter took the name of United Nations Children’s Fund. Even if the International (I) and the Emergency (E) were dropped from its title, the Fund maintained the previous acronyms UNICEF. This is the evidence that, within a few years, the name Unicef became very popular with millions of people and it was important to perpetuate the presence.20

Figura 4 Unicef’s logo. Source: http://www.childrights.org.au

Unicef was governed by an Executive Board of 30 government representatives which met annually. Ten members were bound to be elected each year for three-year terms by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In 1956 the UN General Assembly, through the Resolution 1038 (XI), adopted that ECOSOC had the task of electing the members “with due regard to geographical distribution and to representation of the major contributing and recipient countries”\(^{21}\).

In 1959, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. The demand of producing the new Declaration unanimously passed. The new Declaration marked the first major international consensus on the fundamental principles of children’s rights and highlighted the unique nature of childhood and thus the application of specific rights in order to ensure a specific treatment.

The text introduced several new rights, such as prohibition on discrimination “on the grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, or social origin, property, birth, or other status”; the right to name and nationality; the right of parents to support for children’s upbringing; children’s right to education, health care and special protection\(^{22}\). The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child stated that hunger, poverty, disease, discrimination and ignorance endured by millions of children was a violation of their basic rights. The idea that every child had the right to health, education, equality and protection was born.

In the 1950s and in the early 60s, following the idea of a new perspective of evolution, the Executive Council of Unicef started campaigns far beyond Europe, in regions of Latin America, Africa and Asia. The extension of international assistance of Unicef in countries outside Eastern


Europe and towards children suffering hard conditions not directly connected to warfare had crucial relevance.

### 1.5 UNICEF AND THE CONCEPT OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

In the 1960s, the newly decisive Unicef’s *mise en œuvre* was associated with the emergence of new independent countries, especially in Africa. This is the era of decolonization of the Cold War, in which new independent countries declared not to be allied with one of the blocks ruling the world and international affairs of that time. The April 1955 Asian-African conference in Bandung was inspired by the leaders of some Asian states (Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Burma, and Sri Lanka).

The Conference represented the biggest and most influential event took in the Third World during the colonial era, because it occurred in the moment of greatest hope in anticolonial new life.\(^23\)

In 1961, in order to intervene in the so-called “developing world” in a way as efficient as possible, the Executive Council of Unicef commissioned a special survey on the needs of children. This survey was the summary of specific researches undertaken by the United Nations together with their specialized agencies (World Health Organization on the health needs of children; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on their nutritional needs; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on their educational needs; the UN Bureau of Social Affairs on their welfare needs; the International Labour Office on work and

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livelihoods), but also the set of data provided by several governments. All that amount of data and partnerships brought into being the so-called report on **Children of the developing countries**. The report demonstrated the existence of a wide range of needs of children and that they vary from one to another region. Thanks to the report on Children of the developing countries, Unicef understood that what matters is not only health and nutritional needs, but also the entire physical and moral integrity of the child.

After President Kennedy had decreed the Sixties as the “Decade of Development” and Unicef turned fifteen, the survey on the needs of the child ensured the evolution of a new era: now the world needed to focused on the whole figure of child (taking care about both physical and psychological dimensions). Unicef was to provide more than just humanitarian relief, in fact in addition to nutrition and health, education and family issues became an additional focus. Unicef interventions were now to become a key to global development.

Through this important survey, Unicef drew the conclusion that children are not merely under-age adult or the weakest part of population that is exclusively a family duty. Children deserve guidance and economic support, provided not only by the family members, but also by Governments. Children are part of nation’s incipient human capital, they represent the future of the country, they are future electors, politicians, educators, workers, they are future consumers and customers.

In developing countries this issue is of particular interest since it will influence not only the proper functioning of the state machinery already working, but also the creation of new machineries, which will determine the future “development”. As a result, there is the need to

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integrate the problem of childhood (regarded as essential capital) in the national development plans.\textsuperscript{25}

1.6 THE BELLAGIO CONFERENCE

In order to help and guide in that direction the efforts of all of those in the world who are responsible for the faith of children, in 1964 the United Nations Fund for Children organized an International Conference in Bellagio. The conference was attended by Ministers for Planning, economists, experts, delegates representing the UN agencies interested in business childhood and youth.

At the conclusion of the Conference, the attenders concluded the establishment of the main needs of children that planners should consider in their forecasts programs. In short, the Conference explain how integrate the child into all projects, in all plans, for all sectors (not only the usual areas such as health, nutrition, career counseling and social services, but also with regard to broader areas, such as taking conscience of democratic and moral values, as well as links that exist naturally between all the world's children).

The Bellagio Conference studied plans and methods useful to arrive at an accurate calculation of the cost and profits of services for children, in the context of general economic development of nations. Unicef understood that millions of children lives could be improved with simple inexpensive strategies, such as providing micronutrients, iodine and vitamin A.

Planning for the "promotion of children" in each country should not be blindly, but as precisely as it would for an investment studied in relation to the opportunities and needs.

Finally, to confer on these recommendations a universal label, the Conference considered necessary the cooperation between Unicef, the United Nations and the specialized agencies who are interested in studying these problems. It was during this time that Unicef was formally recognized as part of the economic and social, rather than humanitarian, activity of the United Nations.  

The contribution of the United Nations Fund for Children and the importance of its work for the “promotion for children” throughout all areas in special needs had a considerable record of success. In particular, Unicef work was in the global spotlight mid-decade as the Executive Director Henry Labouisse acknowledged in 1965 by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo (the first ever received by an agency, not an individual).

Public support and funds for children through the national committees expanded, and the Greeting Card Operation flourished. The idea was to sell greeting cards to help children, and rapidly it made possible raising funds and Unicef global profile.

In 1972 the President of the World Bank Robert McNamara, expressed some words supporting the shift of attention from developed world to developing world issues. “Redistribution with growth”, “people-centred development” and “meeting basic needs” were key statements of his speech, launching a specific attack on poverty: he stated that developing countries’

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Governments should guide their politics in such a way to directly reduce the poverty of the poorest 40 per cent of their population.

In 1976 Unicef expressed its own alternative point of view, that is the so-called Basic Services Approach.

1.7 THE BASIC SERVICES APPROACH

The fundamental idea of this approach is that in those areas it is impossible to apply conventional Western forms of social infrastructures, because the developing countries cannot cope with maintenance of hospitals, schools, streets, credit institutions and waterworks through conventional methods of Western economic growth. What developing countries needed was “indoctrination” of ordinary members of village community, a “development from below” in order to create front-line workers in the spread of services\textsuperscript{28}. Popular participation is crucial. For example Unicef reached out to the abandoned poor training local women to provide cost effective community based-services and non-formal education to ensure basic literacy.

Even if it could be seen as efficient and (we could say) “democratic”, the new Unicef thinking was strongly criticized. Unicef was so determined to show that its work with children was only the tip of a much wider iceberg called “Basic Services Approach”, that it became less children focused. The extremely difficult “children universe” was already too large and complex, also without the enormous “developing world issue”. The NGO community criticized that the imposition of “development” as primary task was causing negative effects on childhood that lost its privileged position on humanitarian plans. Addressing all strengths to development question,

Unicef lost its original goals, such as special needs of childhood, the needs of certain disadvantaged child groups and, in general, children well-being. The NGO lobby convinced both UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim and the Unicef Executive Board about effectiveness of their point of view.

In order to promote awareness and to inspire states to act towards the protection and the assurance of children’s rights, in 1979 the United Nations promoted the “International Year of the Child”.

Figura 5 Stamps printed during the International Year of the Child. Source: http://www.stamps-for-sale.com
1.8 THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD

The IYC, International Year of the Child, was the opportunity for Unicef to rediscover a proper children-core work in 1979, the year of the 20th anniversary of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

The idea of this proposal came not directly from Unicef, but from other international children’s NGO, that suggested the necessity to come back to a work more focused on child, not only inasmuch “child living in underdeveloped areas”, but as a simple “child”. Perhaps the children issue have been eclipsed by political and economic policies related to the importance of decolonization, but as Henry Labouisse\(^\text{29}\) stated “children are above the political divide”, and that was the time to confirm that twice.

The UN General Assembly welcomed the IYC as the opportunity to put into practice Henry Labouisse belief system and to defend the weak category of humankind represented by children from fashionable debates and sophistry. Now it was clear that children deserve to be part of international agenda, as much as the waging of wars, the strength of the dollar and the price of oil.

The amount of media attention to children issues was unforeseen, because the IYC made possible the establishment of new national commissions in no fewer than 148 countries, where it was possible to begin new researches and programmes into children issues. Funding doubled: Unicef revenue is $211 million, exceeding a previously set $200 million target\(^\text{30}\). many countries reassessed their policies towards children and women. More than 100 non-governmental organizations now have consultative status with Unicef.

\(^29\) Henry Labouisse was Unicef second Executive Director from 1965 to 1979. Under his office Unicef could obtain an important role at the table of development cooperation and greater autonomy within the UN system.

\(^30\) http://www.unicef.org/about/history/index_milestones_76_85.html
“The International Year of the Child,” wrote Henry Labouisse in a report issued at the end of 1979 on the situation of children in the developing world, “was not intended to be a high point on the graph of our concern for children. It was meant to be a point of departure from which that graph would continue to rise.\(^{31}\)”

Commemorative stamps and coins were issued and the greatest stars brought rock and roll to the General Assembly in the first benefit concert of this kind ever.

New child-centred NGOs appeared in North and in the South, and the existing ones strengthened their positions and collaborations.

In the following years, thanks to the massive echo of the new collaboration between Unicef and its NGOs partners, it was possible to launch the Child Survival Revolution with GOBI. “G” stands for growth monitoring of all children under five to identify and treat malnutrition; “O” stands for oral rehydration therapy to treat diarrhoea-induced dehydration (in the 1980s diarrhoeal disease was the top killer of children under five); “B” stands for breastfeeding. Breastfeeding was a practice on decline in the developing world. By 1981 the value of breast milk over formula substitutes in reducing infant malnutrition and mortality rates is scientifically proven; “I” stands for immunization. Unicef joins WHO’s campaign to boost global vaccination rates against six immune-preventable diseases from 20 to 80 per cent by 1990 (tuberculosis, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio and measles)\(^{32}\).

Of the four GOBI components, the last one (referred to the immunization) was the element that captured most political and public interest. The result of this interest was the proposal of the UN Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar to reach the target of Universal Child

\(^{32}\) Ivi p. 17.
Immunization (UCI) by 1990. A large number of countries, especially in Africa and Latin America, started to feel identified with the children’s cause pushed by IYC and GOBI initiative. By 1986, some 75 developing countries accelerated politics towards immunization programmes. The result was a recession of measles, tetanus and polio. Unicef estimated that 1 million children’s lives a year were being saved. Without any doubt, the fact that measures suggested by Unicef were cheap, populist, easily verified (for example by dropping polio vaccine in live coverage TV), made the difference.

There are also other successes attributable to this event: the attention of media made possible to underline problems never touched before, such as vandalism, children in prostitution, abuse and drugs, leading to a veritable international echo also after the IYC.

That year saw a real change of spirit, as Poland makes the proposal to create a working group within the Human Rights Commission, which is in charge of writing an international charter called The Convention on the Rights of the Child.

1.9 FORCES THAT LED TO THE IYC

The promotion of International Year of the Child and the suggestion of a new Convention on the Rights of the Child legally relevant were crucial, because of the social stress and family breakdown due to the devastating consequences of the 1970s. In the meanwhile of IYC, the

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34 Ibid.
international community was suffering the consequences of rapid rates of industrialization and urbanization, together with recession, debt and structural adjustment\textsuperscript{35}.

In the 1970s and in the early 1980s, the Cold War superpower conflict in the Third World was at its peak. The conditions in the Third World in this period had reached such a crucial position that made conditions of Africa, Asia, and Latin America the focus of international affairs\textsuperscript{36}.

The oil boycott after the 1973 Middle East Yom Kippur War and African support for MPLA regime (People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola) in Angola were two indicators about the beginning of fragmentation of the very concept of Third World itself. The OPEC nations, which depended on revenue from oil sales, experienced severe economic hardship from the lower demand for oil and consequently cut production in order to boost the price of oil.

In political terms, the Third World was now more divided that united. The sign of it was the lack of political identification confirmed by the economic demands through the so-called New International Economic Order (NIEO), adopted by a UN General Assembly resolution in 1974\textsuperscript{37}.

NIEO was the way to underline that the Third World role in international arena was mainly that of raw materials producer. The direct consequence of this message led to diversity and encouraged the distinction between industrializing and non-industrializing Third World countries\textsuperscript{38}.

\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Ivi}, p. 334.
Even though in some areas of the Third World some countries experienced economic growth (such as South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Brazil, and Mexico, where their manufactured export was so impressive that they could compete in Western car and ship building markets, as well as in consumer electronics), large areas of poverty remained. The exploitation of workers and environment was intensified. Angola, Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Nicaragua experienced declining prices. The non-flexibility of their economic models made the crisis more severe\(^\text{39}\). The recession contributed to an enormous decline in the prices of raw materials causing brutal effects on Third World politics and international arena. In 1980 the debts of the developing world stood at $660 billion. In 1982, Mexico decided to suspend interest payments on an accumulating huge amount of debt and sparked off the debt crisis\(^\text{40}\).

The situation had such severe implications for the poor people that UNICEF first questioned the way debt crisis and structural adjustment was working in practice in a study commissioned by Deputy Executive Director Richard Jolly entitled, ‘The impact of world recession on children’. Whatever the advances in child survival, the 1980s had become known as a lost decade, a decade of development reversal. Richard Jolly was operating at the Institute of Development Studies in Sussex as development economist of the anti-poverty tendency.

The study, published in 1983, concluded that who were suffering the worst recession effects were especially poor children, and he formulated two basic recommendations: that adjustment policies recognize the need to preserve minimum levels of nutrition and household income; and that countries place a safety net under child health and basic education\(^\text{41}\). Few years

later, in 1987, Jolly organized a larger and more significant study entitled: **Adjustment with a Human Face: Protecting the Vulnerable and Promoting Growth.** The title was so strong, that it prompted as a slogan.

After the publication, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank made little attempt to fundamentally redesign adjustment packages but nonetheless acknowledged the need for some kind of safety net for the poor. This was another sign that Unicef’s advocacy was having an impact on global policy and that development was strongly influenced by the consequences that the current crisis was inflicting to children.

The recession and stagflation\(^{42}\) caused lack of employment, undermining family life – frequently were headed by almost invariably poor women alone, who forced their children to work on the streets. Living and working on the streets led to brutalization and criminalization of an increasing number of children. This phenomenon (similar to that experienced in Europe and North America in 19\(^{th}\) century) was particularly serious in Latin America, where the number of “street children\(^{43}\)” without any support from their families was terribly huge. Unicef forged a special label which included children victims of general consequences of poverty, exploitation, abandonment and criminalization – **children in especially difficult circumstances (CEDC).**

The new born ”children in especially difficult circumstances” was the affirmation of the category of children subject to special deprivation beyond physiological problems. The CEDC explored not only “difficult circumstances effects” but also “difficult circumstances causes” and preventive actions. The key international NGOs (such as DCI, Anti-Slavery International, Radda


Barnen, the International Catholic Children’s Bureau), together with Unicef intervention, were concerned with analyzing CEDC causes but also advocacy, legislation, and even direct intervention in implied countries.

The collaboration between the most important NGOs and Unicef itself paved the way towards the Child Rights Convention. The Unicef work, in this context, was greeted by the UN General Assembly, that expressed “deep appreciation” designating the Fund as the lead agency in coordination follow-up activities (UN GA Res. 35/79)\textsuperscript{44}.

\section*{1.10 Working at the Child Rights Convention}

On February 7\textsuperscript{th}, 1978, Poland suggested the idea of a United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In the absence of any legally binding text, it seemed difficult to effectively protect children’s rights. As above-mentioned, the Geneva Declaration did not force the signatories to apply its principles at state-level. Thus, in 1978, Poland proposed the idea of a Convention on the Rights of the Child that would be able to legally impose its content to all signatories nations. Poland thought that such a Convention on the Rights of the Child could be adopted from 1979 IYC onward. Defence for Children International (DCI) strongly supported the Poles in this proposal. Canada and Sweden too were particularly interested in this activity. Unicef did not behave as crucial promoter in this case, but it began definitively to move development issue to the background compared with child problems.

The charged working group was composed by an unlimited number of members, in collaboration with some NGOs, with United Nations Children’s Fund, and forty-eight state members of the Commission on Human Rights. During the first draft of the proposed convention the working team met once per year in Geneva.

In order to achieve unanimity and to satisfy as much as possible each government in the group, the system used was that of the consensus and political compromise.

In 1988, the legal bureau of the United Nations carried out a technical revision of the proposed Convention, so that the bill would be compatible with the other international instruments guaranteeing and protecting human rights. The bill consisted of nineteen articles, of which ten were legislative, and nine procedural. In contrast to the prior Geneva Declaration, this Convention was supposed to be binding for states.

1.11 THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is adopted unanimously by the UN General Assembly on November 20, 1989, as part of Resolution 44/25, putting an end to a process lasting almost ten years. The first day the text of the Convention was opened for signature at UN Headquarters, 61 countries agreed to put their signature. That was the first time that a human rights Convention received such a support, observing a record number of signatories\textsuperscript{45}. The Convention and its 54 articles represent one of the most comprehensive and innovative human rights instruments ever adopted by the International Community and coming at a time of

exceptional affirmation of democracy throughout the world\textsuperscript{46}. Today, 193 States parties have ratified the Convention, making it the most widely ratified human rights agreement in the world.

Signing the Treaty, Nations promised to accept basic standards in health care, education, protection and social services. They also grant to children the right to play – like health, education and protection – underpins every child’s emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child becomes an international treaty and enters in force on September 2, 1990, after being ratified by 20 states (enough to enter into International Law). Before and after the adoption of the Convention, United Nations organizations, bodies and specialized agencies participated actively to a number of meetings designed to promote the public awareness of the Convention itself\textsuperscript{47}.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{status-of-ratification.png}
\end{figure}


After the ratification, it has been started the procedure to establish the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the election of 10 independent experts to serve on the Committee. The Committee’s objective was to conduct a survey and check all reports deriving from States parties to the Convention. Signatories feedbacks were crucial because of the huge importance of the Convention, and because of great hopes that have been placed in its text. In fact, during the first three weeks of session, the Committee asked some questions and opinions about the organization, and conducted studies in order to understand how to perform the duties of the Convention.

At the first session, with all the indications coming from the Committee, States parties were asked to indicate the degree of fulfillment of the more than 40 substantive articles of the Convention. This obligation was essential to modify and adapt national law and policies to the Convention content, to verify benefits took by the adjustment and encourage public scrutiny of government policies. In this way, through the editing of the report, the Committee could gain knowledge of existing local institutions that could contribute to the implementation of the Convention.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child aimed at States members direct support, such as the expanded Convention principles within States parties territories, in order to make adults and children aware about the existence of such important human rights conquest. The entire population had to know what the Convention envisaged: protection of child against sexual and economic exploitation, abandonment and ill treatment. It also provided protection and support to children involved in armed conflicts and to those seeking refugee status. The Convention provides

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that both parents have the primary responsibility for the upbringing of the child and that children should not be separated from their parents. The Convention prohibits the practice of the torture and affirms that neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment may be imposed for offences committed by persons below 18 years of age\textsuperscript{49}.

What is interesting is that the Convention for the first time in the history of humanitarian literature recognized the right of the children to respect for their views\textsuperscript{50}. Obviously it is underlined that these views should be understood in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

Other crucial principles provided by the Convention are the principle of non-discrimination and the idea that all children should be treated without discrimination of any kind, such as parents’ race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status; the principle “the best interests of the child” already existing at the moment of the Convention but which needed to be reaffirmed; the principle that States Parties should put at the first place of their agenda the development and the survival of the child, because they are an important resource for the state itself.

Particularly important is the Article 41, that affirmed that “nothing in the present Convention shall affect any provisions which are more conducive to the realization of the rights of the child and which may be contained in the law of a State party or International law in force for that State”\textsuperscript{51}.

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Ivi}, p. 341.
With any doubt the Convention assumed the role of international cooperation to apply as best as possible the rights of the child. It affirms that “States Parties shall provide cooperation in any efforts by the United Nations and other competent intergovernmental organizations cooperating with the United Nations to protect and assist such a child and to trace the parents or other members of the family of any refugee child in order to obtain information necessary for reunification with his or her family”\(^\text{52}\).


To ensure international cooperation and technical assistance, the Committee has held eight sessions and analyzed reports submitted by States Parties. Through Committee’s involvement, cooperation and action have been encouraged, in order to respect all rights expressed by the Convention on the Right of the Child.

Unicef too, thanks to its work and support, played an important role on the respect for the Convention, its universal ratification and its implementation. Unicef has the merit of having encouraged and facilitated studies related to the rights of the children. Many of those studies have been carried out and compiled by Centre Innocenti – the Unicef research institute in Florence.

1.12 THE IMPACT OF CONVENTION ON UNICEF PROGRAMMES

After the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Unicef offices tried to understand the implications of this Convention for the work of the organization. Unicef Executive Board wanted to outline which measures it should took to promote implementation of the principles of the Convention as requested by Article 45. The Article states: “The specialized agencies, Unicef and other United Nations organs shall be entitled to be represented at the consideration of the implementation of such provisions of the present Convention as fall within the scope of their mandate”\textsuperscript{53}. Again, it affirms that “The Committee may invite the specialized agencies, Unicef and other competent bodies as it may consider appropriate to provide expert

advice on the implementation on the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their respective mandates"54.

The fact that the name of Unicef was specifically mentioned within the text of the Convention on the Rights of the Child made even more important Unicef role. Not only Unicef was explicitly mentioned by the Convention, but also by different important initiators of international human rights.

For example, in May 1991 Mr. Jan Martenson, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights, affirmed that “respect for human rights, and the rights for children in particular, must become an integral part of development planning, implementation and evaluation [...] The most revolutionary element of Unicef’s approach to the implementation of the Convention [...] is the integration of the principles of the Convention into country programmes and analyses. [...] For the first time the United Nations brings fully to bear on its practical activities, international standards of human dignity”55.

What the Organization needed at that time was long-term planning of Unicef’s work. To stimulate this kind of action, together with the great contribution of James Grant (who succeeded Henry Labouisse as Executive Director in 1980), the Board decided that Unicef had to follow the Convention indications by the reorganization of the Fund, promoting actions focused on children all over the world and involving more strong collaborations with institutions of developing countries.

55 Ibid.
In fact, through the powerful means that the Convention represented, Unicef could easily introduce itself in new countries relationships and in new field of cooperation that were important to translate the principles of the Convention into practical action for children.

In his annual *State of the World’s Children report* (the best known Grant’s advocacy platform), Grant launched an initiative known as *The Child Survival and Development Revolution* together with his collaborator Peter Adamson, a British development writer. The initiative’s goal was to reverse conventional wisdom: young child mortality and rates of infant had always been seen as indicators of the development of a country. Now, Unicef suggested that a direct attack on infant and child mortality might be an instrument of development. On writing the report Grant stated: “Not for a generation have expectations of world development, and hopes for an end to life-denying mass poverty, been at such a low ebb.”

To answer to all the formal requests of Unicef implication, the Unicef International Child Development Centre in Florence compiled a list of *Goals for Children in the 1990s* containing correspondence with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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## Correspondence between goals for children in the 1990s and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

The articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as listed below contain provisions which correspond to specific goals for children in the 1990s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Goals for Children in the 1990s</th>
<th>Rights of the Child as Embodied in the Convention</th>
<th>Relevant Article(s) of the Convention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reduce child mortality rate - Under-five mortality rate reduction</td>
<td>Right to life, Right to health</td>
<td>6, 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. MMR (Maternal mortality rate) reduction</td>
<td>Right to health</td>
<td>24.2(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Maturation</td>
<td>Right to health</td>
<td>24.2(f)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Universal access to water and environmental sanitation</td>
<td>Right to health and standard of living</td>
<td>24.2(c),(d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Universal access to basic education and completion of primary education</td>
<td>Right to education</td>
<td>20.3(a),32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Reduction of adult illiteracy</td>
<td>Right to education</td>
<td>20.2(a),(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances</td>
<td>Right to protection from: • violence, abuse, neglect • economic exploitation • drug abuse • sexual exploitation • sale, trafficking, and abduction • all other forms of exploitation • torture, inhumanity, the imprisonment and deprivation of liberty</td>
<td>19, 35, 36, 37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Refer to Appendix*

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The Executive Board discussed about new goals on the document called **Strategies for Children in the 1990s**, in which the text suggested “quantifiable goals the world should aim to reach by the end of the century”\(^{58}\).

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The goals have been suggested by (virtually) all Governments, the most relevant United Nations agencies such as the World Health Organizations (WHO), Unicef itself, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and a large number of NGOs.

The amount of new goals and the importance they had to the existence of millions of children all around the world demonstrated that Unicef was not merely a monitoring body for the Convention itself, but the tool to cooperate directly with Governments.

Unicef can help Governments to strengthen their ability concerning the collection of data, useful to take children situation under control.

As written in “The Convention: child rights and UNICEF experience at the country level”: “The Convention’s most fundamental impact on Unicef is that it broadens the framework for analyzing the situation of children and it stimulates new thinking about effective strategies for fulfilling the Unicef mandate”\(^5^9\). Unicef was able to transform charity-oriented approaches into national obligations.

Again Unicef started to proceed from the huge opportunity offered by the social mobilization on a large scale, helpful for raising public awareness and spur global solidarity with the poor, especially with children. The opportunity for visibility was made even more effective thanks to mobilization of Unicef’s Goodwill Ambassadors – notably Harry Belafonte, Liv Ullmann and later Audrey Hepburn – who gave their support for fundraising.

Today is common place to see celebrities speaking out on humanitarian issues. But in fact was Unicef that pioneered the idea when Danny Kaye (the popular American comedian and motion picture star) became an “Ambassador-at-large”, the world’s first celebrity spokesperson for a goodwill core. Travelling all around the world, Danny Kaye produced a 20-minute documentary film entitled “Assignment Children”, that had been seen by more than 100 million people.

1.12 THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR CHILDREN

The year 1990 is particularly important and noteworthy, because it represents the moment in which, partly by luck and partly by design took place the World Summit for Children.

As reported by Maggie Black, the author of “Children First: the story of UNICEF, past and present”, the World Summit for Children is a landmark, because “the Summit was a symbol of the way in which children had gained a new degree of prominence in public affairs”.

Led by 71 heads of state and government and 88 other senior officials, mostly at the ministerial level, the World Summit adopted a Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and a Plan of Action for implementing the Declaration in the 1990s. No higher level of political commitment could be given, because it was the first occasion in history when a Summit-level meeting was held exclusively to address children's issues.

The Summit was one of the most important moments of the history of Unicef, because it represented the moment in which children’s issues were placed at the peak of international

\[61\] Ibid.
agenda plans at the same moment in which Unicef was defending children’s rights with all his might, fighting against infant and maternal mortality, child under nutrition and illiteracy, improving the access to basic services for health and family planning, education and water sanitation. Moreover, Unicef and all its offices established all over the world, was preparing a wide network of specific national programmes of action, inspired by a set of child-related human development goals for the year 2000.

The previous signs of Unicef’s commitment for such a huge campaign for child survival and developed started in 1989, when the Unicef Executive Board discussed about “Strategies for Children” providing preliminary answers to questions asking if that strong preparation was conceived as a merely celebratory event or for a global intervention.

In the early part of 1989 the auspices for a World Declaration and a Plan-Action to recognize and protect the Convention on the Rights of the Child were strong. The idea was taking soundings in Washington and Moscow, and it was welcomed by most leaders in developing countries.

The contribution of Unicef in that moment was crucial: knowing the idea was greeted with empathy, Unicef began to use its regional presence to push for the Summit preparation. The most important Unicef intervention was by the summer of 1989 at the annual meeting of the Non-Aligned and Commonwealth Movements. Heads of Government were congregated and Unicef seized the opportunity, talking about children’s cause and encouraging support for favorable resolutions.
At the Francophone Summit in Dakar in May 1989, Presidents Traoré of Mali and Diouf of Senegal have openly shown their willingness stating that Africa wanted a World Summit for Children. Similar statements emerged from the OAU (the Organization of African Unity) in July and the Non-Aligned meeting in Belgrade in September\textsuperscript{62}.

From that moment, not only Mali but also Egypt, Pakistan and Mexico expressed active willingness to participate. The most enthusiastic of all was the Canadian Foreign Minister Joe Clarke, who offered both political and financial support for the Summit. These five countries and Sweden represented the “initiators group”, which was representing geographical regions from both North and South\textsuperscript{63}. The establishment of a “initiators group” was important, because in that way it was possible to guide the Summit preparations in an independent way. Outside the United Nations, it could be possible climb over the redundant diplomatic or bureaucratic mechanism, consisting of matters such as representation, accountability and consultative processes (which often impede initiatives that urgently require a prompt intervention)\textsuperscript{64}. In November 1989, UN Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar opened the doors of UN Headquarters for the Summit in New York.

In early 1990 the process for the establishment of the World Summit began. In the history of the rights of the child there was no previous Summit example to copy. By the Spring were already in circulation the first draft of the Declaration and Plan of Action, based on “Strategies for Children in the 1990s”. In the early 1990s, about US$136 billion per year were estimated to achieve universal coverage of basic social services (around US$70 billion to US$80 billion more

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., p. 28.
than actual spending)\textsuperscript{65}. Developing countries allocated on average about 13 per cent of their national budgets to basic social services; donors devoted around 10 per cent of the official development assistance (ODA) to finance these services. To face the situation and eliminate the financial shortfall, the commission working at the Summit decided to give birth to the World Summit for Social Development\textsuperscript{66} and to launch the 20/20 initiative\textsuperscript{66}.

The initiative focused on the delivery of basic social services, such as basic education, primary health care, nutrition programmes and safe drinking water and sanitation, to the vulnerable part of the society. Thanks to the 20/20 initiative, which was essentially coming from Jim Grant, Richard Jolly and Mahbub ul Haq\textsuperscript{67}, industrialized and developing countries were asked to allocate on average 20 per cent of ODA, including contributions from multilateral organizations and NGOs, and 20 per cent of national budgets (net of aid) to basic social services. Through the 20/20 operation it was believed to reach the amount needed to finance universal access to basic social services in developing countries\textsuperscript{68}.

Invitations to the Summit were sent by the UN Secretary-General in February. The most pessimists were sure that no more than 20 acceptances would be forthcoming. Many recipients inevitably held back until a great number of invitations had been confirmed\textsuperscript{69}.

Using its prospect as a stimulus for activity on behalf of children, Unicef country offices, National Committees and a large number of NGOs started to create allies around the Summit and

\textsuperscript{66} ibid.
\textsuperscript{67} Mahbub ul Haq (1934-1998) was a Pakistani economist and professor of microeconomics, who was involved in the human development theory (HDP) and in Human Development Report (HDR).
to promote Summit attendance through the use of media, religious leaders and professional groups, seminars with parliamentarians to put pressure to countries leaderships.

However, the prospects of a successful meeting were still doubtful until the summer of 1990. Hopes changed, when in June a meeting of The Group of Seven was held in Houston. During the meeting, the Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney managed to obtain promises of attendance from four key leaders: George Bush, Margaret Thatcher, François Mitterrand and Giulio Andreotti. Thanks to the meeting of The Group of Seven and the confirmation of attendance from the leaders, acceptances quickly became 65. As a consequence, the organization of the Summit suddenly became more complex. ECOSOC (the Economic and Social Council) decided to remodel the chamber in the way that Presidents, Prime Ministers and monarchs could sit non-hierarchically in a special circular table built for the occasion.

The day of the Summit, started on the evening of Saturday, 29 September, up to Sunday, 30 September 1990, the attention of the world was captured by the needs of children. In addition to the 71 leaders taking part to the Summit, other 150 countries representatives were involved. The celebration of such exclusive meeting was occurring not only in New York, but also all around the world: a lot of people expressed the hopes that the Summit would achieve the best results for children through thousands of candlelight vigils, religious ceremonies and special events.

To understand the euphoric atmosphere which pervaded the Summit, here there are some statements of leaders taking part to the event, taken from “Children First: the story of UNICEF, past and present”: the joint chairman Brian Mulroney spoke of a “better world for children”; Ingvar Carlsson (Prime Minister of Sweden) spoke of a “new era...a new commitment”;

President Carlos Salinas of Mexico talked about a “new age”, and invited leaders to “put a new look on the faces of the world’s children”; the President of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, assumed that the Summit represented a “new level of consciousness and a new dedication to the needs of the child”; Giulio Andreotti, Prime Minister of Italy, spoke of a “new solidarity” giving “life to a united and determined world coalition”.

Many South leaders underlined the existence of problems that undermined children but that were not strictly connected to them: the adverse global economic climate, heavy burdens of debt, structural adjustment, intractable wars, environmental stress. One of the most heavy statements was conceived by Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia, who said “A thousand times I have heard people defend their servitude to a hated regime by the argument that they were doing it only for the children – to be able to free them, to make it possible for them to study...How much evil has already been committed in the name of children?”. Yoweri Museveni of Uganda stated against political responsibility for child insecurity, affirming that in Africa child suffering is due to “the prevalence of authoritarian, top-down styles of government” and “the oppression of man by man”.71

At the closing session, the Prime Minister Brian Mulroney affirmed “the real work starts now”. Indeed, the high point of the Summit was the signing of both the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children (that included seven major goals, related to health, education and child protection and also 27 specific goals with specific disease control, service coverage and educational objectives72) and the Plan of Action for implementing the

72 Ivi, p. 31.
Declaration over the next decade. To obtain that result, it was necessary to pursue major national programmes of action.

1.13 KEEPING THE PROMISE

A set of mid-decade goals for children was established, and on the third anniversary of the Summit in 1993, the United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali organized a round table in New York known as Keeping the Promise to Children. Through the round table, the UN Secretary-General wanted to reinforce the world’s commitment to the children’s issue, including the universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Opening the Keeping the Promise round-table, Boutros Boutros-Ghali declared: “Of all the subjects of development, none has the acceptance, or the power to mobilize, as does the cause of children”.

Unicef played an important role in the post-Summit operations and in “Keeping the promise to Children” alive: in 1993 Unicef began publishing an annual report called The Progress of Nations, aimed at maintain awareness towards the goals. Unicef exposed the latest statistics on countries progresses on health, nutrition, education, responsible parenthood and women’s rights. What I noticed in “UNICEF, 1946-2006 Sixty Years for Children” is the shift Unicef made on fixing its key indicators: while in the 1980s the key indicator had clearly been child mortality, now in the 1990s what was monitored and targeted for improvement was a broad range of indicators related to the well-being of children and women.

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To Unicef, the World Summit represented one of the most important moments, because the Fund was able again to put itself in front of the “army” fighting for children respect, as it did in the 1970s and 1980s. Indeed, Unicef contributed to the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, and it contributed to the UN study on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children, by Graça Machel, a specialist on children in armed conflict. Unicef helped draft and promoted the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (signed in 1997 by two third of the world’s nations). In 1997 Unicef took part to the International Conference on Child Labour, that helped 29 countries to introduce education programmes aimed at preventing child labour.

Without Unicef, the post-World Summit agenda would have been much more difficult to maintain active. As affirmed in “Children First: the story of UNICEF, past and present”, the case of the World Summit for Children was “unusual in that a UN organization – Unicef – with a strong field presence in almost every developing country, and a National Committee in many industrialized ones, existed to take the post-Summit agenda forward”. Crucial in this sense was the figure of Jim Grant. Thanks to his exceptional leadership, Unicef could develop a strong network of partners, obtaining a huge credibility. Senior governments leaders trusted in Unicef, because it was able to coordinate strengths and financial assistance, achieving organized and efficient national programmes of action. No other UN organization had such a wide range of presence and governmental access. The author of “Children First: the story of UNICEF, past and present” wrote that “Unicef country-by-country support for the elaboration and implementation of NPAs not only helped accelerate action on behalf of children but offered a model of how an international body in
the UN system could promote real grass-roots progress as an outcome of commitments achieved at the international level”\textsuperscript{75}.

Jim Grant and his country representatives held over 100 meetings to follow up Summit Commitments and to promote Summit goals. According to a survey conducted by the International Child Development Centre in Florence, in 76 countries national programmes of action had been started, giving birth to a real “decentralization of the NPA process”\textsuperscript{76} also in the most problematic places in the world. For instance, in Mexico Governor Arturo Romo de Gutierrez of Zacateras launched a “new State policy in favor of child”; moreover, the President of Mexico Carlos Salinas de Gortari called his first “Meeting for Monitoring and Evaluating Summit Commitments”; other countries called for improvements for children, such as 24 state governors in Brazil, 60 city leaders in the Philippines, and 13 mayors of West African capitals\textsuperscript{77}.

Very important was for Unicef the support of NGOs, that gained great importance precisely in the post-cold war period. From the 1990s, NGOs increasingly emerged at the front line in emergencies but also in replacement of cutbacks in social service all around the world. In some areas of the world, thanks to the presence of NGOs, it was possible to establish democratic changes; NGOs became increasingly important source of human development funds in the face of ODA cut-backs. At the beginning of the 1990s, it has been estimated that the total contribution of NGOs to the development process worldwide was around $5 billion per year\textsuperscript{78}. Understanding the importance of their role, Unicef began to give to NGOs a wider range of tasks in both its programmatic and its advocacy work. Unicef invited more and more frequently NGOs to participate to meetings related to children’s issues. Unicef understood that the pressure coming

\textsuperscript{76} \textit{Ivi}, p. 276.
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Op. cit.} p. 287.
from NGOs, both in industrialized and developing countries, was influential and worthy for the programmatic involvement of Unicef itself.

1.14 TOWARDS 2000 AND BEYOND

When a new millennium begins, within Unicef too was coming to light a new era. For the first time the UN Children’s Fund had a woman at his head: Carol Bellamy. The new Unicef Executive Director presented herself in May 1995, talking about her experience as investment banker, then as Director and lawyer of the US Peace Corps. Jim Grant’s death happened four months before.

The Unicef post-Grant had the need to maintain the spirit of Grant’s leadership, but at the same time needed to begin a process of tidying and reinvigoration. At the first speech to Unicef, Bellamy affirmed: “I am fortunate to join an organization that already has clear goals, solid strategies and an overall agenda that will take us through the rest of the decade and into the next century. I want you to know that it is not my intention to steer Unicef in a new direction; I think that Unicef is headed in the right direction. What I see as my initial task is to keep the momentum going – accelerating it wherever possible – and helping to ensure that we get better mileage along the way”79.

In order to verify the accomplishment of World Summit for Children goals, in 2000 it was undertaken an exhaustive end-decade review. The review showed information about how precisely the world had followed it promises to children and women well-being.

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The publication focuses on results about a wide range of indicators related to children well-being and development, but I decided to analyze only some of them, for practical reasons: infant and under-five mortality; child malnutrition; safe drinking water; sanitation; primary education; maternal mortality; low birthweight, immunization, HIV/AIDS\textsuperscript{80}.

a) Infant and under-five mortality

The goal fixed during the World Summit for Children was to achieve between 1990 and the year 2000 reduction of infant and under-five child mortality rate by one third or to 50 and 70 per 1,000 live births respectively. Effectively, the result is that the average global under-five mortality rate (U5MR) declined by 11 per cent globally, from 93 deaths in the early 1990s to 83 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2000. Over 60 countries achieved the targeted one-third reduction.

However, in some areas of the world the situation is quite severe, (such as that of sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia but also Middle East and North Africa regions) where nearly 11 million under-five deaths occurred in 2000. In these areas, under-five mortality rate is associated with malnutrition\textsuperscript{81} and with HIV/AIDS and low immunization coverage due to their weak health care system.

It is important to underline that for industrialized countries the data come from vital registration systems, while for many other developing countries (where the majority of under-five deaths occur) the data are collected from censuses and household surveys.

\textsuperscript{80} UNICEF "Progress since the World Summit for Children" (Statistical Review, 2002), p. 1.
\textsuperscript{81} Ivi, p. 2.
**WHERE MOST UNDER-FIVES DIE**

![Diagram showing under-five deaths by region, 2000. Source: http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/about/sgreport-pdf/sgreport_adapted_stats_eng.pdf](image)


![Diagram showing main causes of under-five child mortality. Source: http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/about/sgreport-pdf/sgreport_adapted_stats_eng.pdf](image)

b) Child malnutrition

As decided during the World Summit, one of the most important operations to initiate in the post-Summit period was reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition among under-five children by half, especially in those regions where malnutrition was particularly strong.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where chronic malnutrition is highest</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korea, Dem. People’s Rep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
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<td>Afghanistan</td>
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<td>Yemen</td>
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<td>Ethiopia</td>
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<td>Madagascar</td>
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<td>Malawi</td>
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<td>Cambodia</td>
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<td>Guatemala</td>
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<tr>
<td>India</td>
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<td>Nigeria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congo, Dem. Rep.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesotho</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mauritania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
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<td>Rwanda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comoros</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Figura 11 Countries where stunting in under-fives is 40 per cent or more. Source: http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/about/sgreport-pdf/sgreport_adapted_stats_eng.pdf*

Underweight prevalence declined from 32 per cent to 28 per cent in developing countries.

The most remarkable progress has been achieved in East Asia and the Pacific. However, in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa the high level of under nutrition in children and women was still posing a challenge. Malnutrition put at a lower level resistance to infection,
making people more likely to die because of diarrhoeal diseases and respiratory infections[^82].

Figura 12 Countries where underweight prevalence declined by 25 per cent or more. Source: http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/about/sgepdf/sgepdf_adapted_stats_eng.pdf

c) Safe drinking water

To help improve child well-being and to reduce poverty, the proposed goal was universal access to safe drinking water.

During the decade after the World Summit for Children, global coverage rose from 77 per cent to 82 per cent. Nearly 1 billion more people gained access to improved drinking water sources during the 1990s.

Figura 13 Per cent of population without access to safe drinking water. Source: http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/about/sreport-pdf/sreport_adapted_stats_eng.pdf
Some million people in 2000 was still without access to drinking water, especially in poor rural areas of Africa. In several areas of Asia the situation became more severe due to the emergence of levels of arsenic in groundwater.\textsuperscript{83}

d) Sanitation

Access to sanitary means of excreta disposal was important because in 1990, 2.6 billion people lacked access to sanitary means of excreta disposal. It was crucial to obtain low-cost appropriate technologies and stimulate social mobilization through adequate campaigns.\textsuperscript{84}

\begin{figure}[h!]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{sanitation_map.png}
\caption{Lack of improved sanitation in 2000. Source: http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/about/sgreport-adapted_stats_eng.pdf}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{83} UNICEF “Progress since the World Summit for Children” (Statistical Review, 2002), p. 6.
\textsuperscript{84} Ivi, p. 8.
Global sanitation coverage increased from 51 per cent to 61 per cent during the decade up to 2000, improving the life of about 1 billion people. Many governments still did not give hygiene improvement high enough priority nor provide sufficient resources to reach the goal.

e) Primary education

By the year 2000, at least 80 per cent of primary-school-aged children of the world should had access to basic education and completion of primary school. At the end of the decade, the global ratio had increased to 82 per cent. 120 million of primary-school-aged children were not in school. 53 per cent of them were girls, 47 per cent were boys. The gender gap has been reduced, falling from 6 percentage points to 3 percentage points\textsuperscript{85}.

**WHERE CHILDREN ARE OUT OF SCHOOL**

\textsuperscript{85} UNICEF "Progress since the World Summit for Children" (Statistical Review, 2002), p.11.
f) Maternal mortality

Complications during pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death and disability among women of reproductive age in developing countries. An estimated number of women who die each year is 515,000. For these reasons, access to antenatal care and quality essential obstetric care must be made available to all women, reducing maternal mortality rate (MMR) by half, between 1990 and the year 2000.\textsuperscript{86}

Skilled care at delivery has increased across all developing countries, even in in some areas, where maternal mortality is highest (especially in sub-Saharan region) delivery care has not improved significantly.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Lifetime risk of dying in pregnancy or childbirth*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>1 in 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>1 in 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East/North Africa</td>
<td>1 in 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America/Caribbean</td>
<td>1 in 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia/Pacific</td>
<td>1 in 280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEE/CIS</td>
<td>1 in 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least developed countries</td>
<td>1 in 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing countries</td>
<td>1 in 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrialized countries</td>
<td>1 in 4,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>1 in 75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


g) Low birthweight

Low birthweight babies (weighing less than 2.5 kg) face a greater increased risk of dying during the early months and years. The risk of disease is very high, such as that of diabetes
and heart diseases, because children who survive despite their weight have impaired immune function. Other consequences of low birthweight are permanent malnourishment and a lower IQ and cognitive disabilities\textsuperscript{87}.

![Data on birthweight](http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/about/sgreport_pdf/sgreport_adapted_stats_eng.pdf)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage not weighed or birthweight unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East/North Africa</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia/Pacific</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America/Caribbean</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEE/CIS</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing countries</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least developed countries</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In order to avoid such important implications of long-term health and psychosocial development, has been set the target of reduction of the rate of low birthweight to less than 10 per cent.

The available data suggest that in the post-Summit period in 100 developing low birthweight rates are below 10 per cent. However, an estimated 18 million babies all around the world are born each year with low birthweight. 9.3 million of them live in South Asia, 3.1 million in sub-Saharan Africa.

\textsuperscript{87} UNICEF "Progress since the World Summit for Children" (Statistical Review, 2002), p. 21.
h) Immunization

Maintenance of a high level of immunization coverage, (against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis) at least 90 per cent of children under one year of age by the year 2000, was one of the most important goal declared by the World Summit for Children.

In the 1990s, through the support of the Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) formed in 1999 and born from the partnership of the Bill and Melinda Gates Children’s Vaccine Program at PATH, the Rockefeller Foundation, the World Bank, WHO, UNICEF, about 2.5 million children in developing world each year are saved\(^88\). Global immunization coverage with DPT\(^3\)\(^89\) has remained above 70 per cent since the 1980s.

\(^{88}\) UNICEF “Progress since the World Summit for Children” (Statistical Review, 2002), p. 23.
\(^{89}\) DPT refers to the combined diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus vaccine. The percentage of children receiving the third dose – DPT3 – is an indicator of how well countries provide routine immunization.
i) HIV/AIDS

The sub-Saharan Africa is the area the most devastated by HIV/AIDS. About 70 per cent of the world’s infected people and about 90 per cent of children orphaned by AIDS live in that region. The disease has rapidly spread in parts of Asia, Easter Europe and the Caribbean. Ignorance about the epidemic was high among young people that did not know how to protect themselves. The situation in 2000 was more difficult than the most pessimistic projections of the decade earlier. In fact, in 2000, 36.1 million of people was infected; 22

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90 UNICEF "Progress since the World Summit for Children" (Statistical Review, 2002), p. 28.
million of people died because of the disease; there were new 5.3 million of people infected (and 50 per cent of them were young people aged 15-24)⁹¹.

Due to the devastating consequences of HIV/AIDS, the world decided to create a common engagement. On 25-27 June 2001, Heads of State and Representatives of Governments met at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session dedicated to HIV/AIDS.

Also today, HIV/AIDS is denying millions of children of their childhood. In 2006 it has been
held a follow-up session to reaffirm the commitment endorsed at the United Nations General
Assembly Special Session of 2001. Progresses on the matter are very slow also because of the
factors that the disease itself is causing to millions of people: exclusion, poverty, undernutrition,
inadequate access to basic social services, discrimination and stigmatization, gender inequities and
sexual exploitation of women and girls\textsuperscript{92}.

The exhaustive end-decade review, of which I could bring only a minimal part, is an
example of the effort to collect the largest ever data collection in history of monitoring children’s
rights and well-being. Thanks to the World Summit for Children, the \textbf{multiple indicator cluster
survey (MICS)} has been created. This means has enabled many countries to produce statistically
sound and internationally comparable estimates of a range of indicators\textsuperscript{93}.

\textsuperscript{92} UNICEF “\textit{Progress since the World Summit for Children}” (\textit{Statistical Review, 2002}), p. 32.
\textsuperscript{93} http://www.unicef.org/statistics/index_24302.html
The end-decade MICS were conducted in 66 countries, in collaboration with national government ministries and a variety of partner. Among those partners, the contribution of The Demographic and Health Surveys is remarkable, because it provided relevant data for 35 countries, helping filling many lack of data related to children’s issue.

1.15 THE UN MILLENNIUM SUMMIT AND THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPECIAL SESSION ON CHILDREN

The MICS demonstrated that the post-Summit agenda has been profusely efficient and that it has been taken into account by the majority of Governments.

Actually, still very much needed to be done to ensure to each person fundamental rights and freedoms. Even if the success with the child survival and health agenda was positive, much of children related questions remained an open question. For instance, until the passing of years it could not be possible to verify whether such goals as “universal access to water and sanitation” or “universal access to basic education” were actionable at the same way.

To ensure the real recognition of a life of dignity, at this point of Unicef’s path the approach based on human needs converged with that based on human rights. The same approach which emerged during the UN Millennium Summit of 6 – 8 September 2000. In attendance were 149 Heads of State and Government and high-ranking officials from over 40 other countries.

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The main document, unanimously adopted, was the **Millennium Declaration**, which contained a statement of values, principles and objectives for the international agenda for the twenty-first century. Indeed, the document of Millennium Declaration adopted six core principles: freedom, equity, solidarity, tolerance, non-violence, respect for nature and shared responsibility\(^96\).

The Millennium Summit was clearly following the echo produced by the World Summit for Children, in the way that it imposed the so-called **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**, (eight specific objectives to be met by 2015) related to human development and quantifiable targets characterized by the same spirit of that of the World Summit for Children.

Moreover, the agenda adopted in 2000 and then reaffirmed at the 2005 World Summit, was strictly connected to children behalf. Every MDG is linked to children well-being, placing children again at the heart of the International Agendas. Moreover, within the section **“protecting the vulnerable”**, many of the obligations affirmed are similar to those adopted by States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Guided by the Millennium Agenda, Unicef strengthened its advocacy, in order to ensure as much as possible the fulfillment of millennium goals. Once again, Unicef operated actively, contributing to the drafting and promoting the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Both the Protocols were adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2000 and became effective in 2002 after being ratified by more than 80 governments. Very important was the involvement Unicef in securing the release of children from armed forces and other fighting groups in Afghanistan, Angola, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda\(^97\).


\(^{97}\) Ivi, p. 29.
In May 2002 Unicef found another guideline in the moment of the opening decade, the **UN General Assembly Special Session on Children (SSC)**. The Special Session took place in May 2002 and was meant to be another way to give to the World Summit for Children a compelling value. Taking part to the Special Sessions imply that the nations of the world were offering their commitment on respect of children’s rights and confirm all the results obtained in the post-Summit period.

At the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children, delegations from 190 countries decided to join their strengths on promoting healthy lives, providing quality education, protecting against abuse, exploitation and violence, and combating HIV/AIDS98. The Declaration and Plan of Action - A World Fit for Children (WFFC) - adopted at the SSC is the realization of the countries participating intentions in the special session. The statement “a world fit for children” is very powerful and rich of meaning, because it expresses what would have been the major contribution to the goals adopted by the international community at the Millennium Summit, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). More than 7,000 people participated, including 90 high-level national delegations, some 1,700 delegates representing NGOs from 117 countries, more than 600 children, and leaders from civil society, including cultural, academic, business and religious groups99. However, what make the Special Session so important and unlike is the fact that for the first time General Assembly delegations included children themselves as official members. Over 400 children from more than 150 countries took part at the Special Session and to the Children’s Forum, that lasted for three days.

The Children’s Forum was opened by the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, and closed with a ceremony presided over by Nelson Mandela, Graça Machel and Nane Annan. This event

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99 Ivi, p. 1.
was entirely ruled by the presence of children, in fact the only adults present at the ceremony were few interpreters and facilitators. Children organized some groups of work to discuss what they considered key issues, and then elected a group to come up with a common statement reflecting their views.

During the session, Gabriela Azurduy Arrieta, 13, from Bolivia and Audrey Cheynut, 17, from Monaco delivered to the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children a special message which has become famous around the world.

The message, taken from http://www.unicef.org was the following:

“We are the world's children.
We are the victims of exploitation and abuse.
We are street children.
We are the children of war.
We are the victims and orphans of HIV/AIDS.
We are denied good-quality education and health care.
We are victims of political, economic, cultural, religious and environmental discrimination.
We are children whose voices are not being heard: it is time we are taken into account.

In this world,
We see respect for the rights of the child:
• governments and adults having a real and effective commitment to the principle of children's rights and

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applying the
Convention on the Rights of the Child to all children,
• safe, secure and healthy environments for children in families, communities, and nations.

We see an end to exploitation, abuse and violence:
• laws that protect children from exploitation and abuse being implemented and respected by all,
• centres and programmes that help to rebuild the lives of victimized children.

We see an end to war:
• world leaders resolving conflict through peaceful dialogue instead of by using force,
• child refugees and child victims of war protected in every way and having the same opportunities as all other children,
• disarmament, elimination of the arms trade and an end to the use of child soldiers.

We see the provision of health care:
• affordable and accessible life-saving drugs and treatment for all children,
• strong and accountable partnerships established among all to promote better health for children.

We see the eradication of HIV/AIDS:
• educational systems that include HIV prevention programmes,
• free testing and counselling centres,
• information about HIV/AIDS freely available to the public,
• orphans of AIDS and children living with HIV/AIDS cared for and enjoying the same opportunities as all other children.

We see the protection of the environment:
• conservation and rescue of natural resources,
• awareness of the need to live in environments that are healthy and favourable to our development,
• accessible surroundings for children with special needs.

We see an end to the vicious cycle of poverty:
• anti-poverty committees that bring about transparency in expenditure and give attention to the needs of all children,
• cancellation of the debt that impedes progress for children.

We see the provision of education:
• equal opportunities and access to quality education that is free and compulsory,
• school environments in which children feel happy about learning,
• education for life that goes beyond the academic and includes lessons in understanding, human rights, peace, acceptance and active citizenship.

We see the active participation of children:
• raised awareness and respect among people of all ages about every child's right to full and meaningful participation, in
the spirit of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,
• children actively involved in decision-making at all levels and in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating all matters affecting the rights of the child.

We pledge an equal partnership in this fight for children's rights. And while we promise to support the actions you take on behalf of children, we also ask for your commitment and support in the actions we are taking, because the children of the world are misunderstood.

We are not the sources of problems; we are the resources that are needed to solve them.
We are not expenses; we are investments.
We are not just young people; we are people and citizens of this world.
Until others accept their responsibility to us, we will fight for our rights.
We have the will, the knowledge, the sensitivity and the dedication.
We promise that as adults we will defend children’s rights with the same passion that we have now as children.
We promise to treat each other with dignity and respect.
We promise to be open and sensitive to our differences.

We are the children of the world, and despite our different backgrounds, we share a common reality.
We are united by our struggle to make the world a better place for all.
You call us the future, but we are also the present.”

The reading of message was a landmark moment, because for the first time the children’s opinion found comprehension and attention, by practicing the right affirmed on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which provides for children the right to express themselves through their opinions and beliefs. The implications of the presence of children at one of the most important events related to themselves was a challenge for Unicef and for all the organizations child focused. The message delivered by the children was a inciting to develop and maintain the world’s commitment.

The message triggered a series of children’s active participations in the follow-up process. For instance, in Romania 125 children attended a special forum hosted by the President to discuss follow-up actions in the country. As a result of this meeting, a National Children’s Action Group for the NPA was established with links to 15 local groups of action; in Tajikistan, a Children’s Forum was held in November 2002 to discuss children’s involvement in the country’s NPA process. As a result of the meeting, a Children’s Reference Group will be set up within the government body responsible for coordinating the development of the NPA; in Bolivia, representatives of child-led organizations have participated in the process to develop child-related policies, including the NPA;
in Canada, child delegates on the official delegation to the General Assembly meeting met in August 2002 to discuss how children would play a meaningful role in the follow-up.

### 1.16 UNICEF MILLENNIUM AGENDA

Many regional organizations, civil society and NGOs, bilateral and multilateral agencies have supported follow-up by coordinating among member countries, by sharing information and by taking actions to strengthen their support, but the most important contribution is that of Unicef.

Unicef has been strongly engaged in the follow up to the Millennium Summit Declaration and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Together with United Nations sister agencies children-rights related, but also with the collaboration of the World Bank, Unicef developed medium-term strategic plan for the period 2000-2005. Unicef engaged itself on monitoring for the MDGs and the WFFC goals, playing once again a crucial role on the protection of children’s rights.

Moreover, in 2001, six important organizations focused on children - the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (now known as BRAC), Netaid.org Foundation, PLAN International, Save the Children, World Vision and Unicef – built the so-called Global Movement for Children. The Global Movement for Children’s goal was the mobilization of support to ‘change the world with children’. The campaign on support to the realization of Global Movement for Children’s agenda was “Say Yes for Children” and it was encouraged by prominent personalities, such as

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102 Ivi, p. 5.

Carol Bellamy strongly supported the need of intervention for the reconstruction of Afghanistan’s education system, in the aftermath of the conflict and the deposing of the Taliban. In 2002, the \textbf{Unicef “Back to School” campaign} helped on supplying educational materials, on opening the doors of around 3,000 schools across Afghanistan. This operation was the largest intervention of supply educational materials under emergency conditions it had ever undertaken.

Unicef has also the merit of being the leading agency and secretariat of UNGEI, the \textbf{United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative} launched in Dakar in 2000 by the UN Secretary-General at the World Education Forum. UNGEI was aimed at the elimination of gender discrimination and gender disparity in education systems. Thanks to the intervention of Unicef, UNGEI could act at global, national, district and community levels, promoting girls’ education in more than 100 countries.\footnote{\textit{Ivi}, p. 31.}

In that period of time, Unicef had a well-established and comprehensive plan of action which included a rapid assessment applicable to complex emergencies. For instance, Unicef was one of the first organizations that could respond to the Indian Ocean tsunami during the late 2004, providing support to the process of rebuilding. Unicef supported the restore of educational, water and sanitation systems. The organization scaled up psychological counseling for traumatized children and provided support for the reunion of separated children with their families.\footnote{\textit{Op. cit.}, p. 32.}

Unicef never abandoned the child protection and combating of HIV/AIDS. In 2005, the organization launched “\textbf{Unite for Children. Unite against AIDS}”, a global campaign to establish
specific strategies against HIV/AIDS. As described on Unicef website http://www.unicef.org/, the organization launched the campaign on 25 October because of the tragic data collected by that year: every day, almost 1,800 children under 15 became HIV-positive and 1,400 died of AIDS-related illness. Daily, more than 6,000 young people aged 15-24 acquired the virus. Young people were missing information: up to 90 per cent of HIV-positive people in developing countries are unaware that they are infected.

“Unite for Children. Unite against AIDS” included four strategies: the first is prevent mother-to-child transmission, the leading cause of HIV/AIDS in children under 15; the second is provide pediatric treatment; the third is protect and support affected children, who are often victims of the stigma attached to AIDS in their community; the fourth is stop new infections and care for all affected children.

The Unicef Millennium Agenda confirmed that over the decades Unicef was able to expand the range of actions related to children, without forgetting any kind of responsibility\textsuperscript{107}. In 2005, the conduction of the agency was assumed by \textbf{Ann M. Veneman} as Unicef’s Executive Director.

Ms. Veneman has soon emphasized the use of the MDGs as the right way for achieving meaningful results for children in the next 10 years, and focused on launching and re-energizing partnerships and campaigns\textsuperscript{108}. Veneman strongly supported the fulfillment of the eight millennium goals, thought to be achieved by 2015 year, to ensure peace and security, poverty reduction, environmental stability, human rights respect. The eight Millennium Development Goals are: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote


\textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
gender equality and the power of women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; global partnership for development. Through advocacy and action, Veneman organized Unicef to work together with partners, governments, NGOs, private sector, local policy makers and communities to realize the millennium development goals and to ensure child well-being.

The State of the World’s Children report for 2005 can seem positive looking forward into the future. In “UNICEF, 1946-2006 Sixty Years for Children”, the Organization shows some important data. For instance, If current rates of progress (those between 1990 and 2005) are steadily maintained, average world child mortality rates would dip below 10 per 1,000 live births in 60 years or so, around 2065\textsuperscript{109}. However, the current rate of progress on child mortality is unacceptably slow and would not see that target met until 2045. Unicef is so firmly and completely committed to the achievement by 2015 of the MDGs, which would transform hundreds of millions of children’s lives\textsuperscript{110}.

![Meeting the MDGs would transform millions of children’s lives in the next 10 years](http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/1946-2006_Sixty_Years_for_Children.pdf)


\textsuperscript{110} \textit{Ivi}, p. 36.
Even if the world had obtained many achievements, it is not acceptable to be fully satisfied, because the deprived or exploited children of today cannot be ignored simply because smaller proportions of children will face similar difficulties in 2015 or 2045.

As Unicef’s “The State of the World’s Children report for 2006” explained, there are still rights of children which are denied all around the world, and children whose rights are most neglected are probably also those who are hardest to reach and protect111.

Unicef pledges to strengthen its partnerships to accelerate achievements for the world’s youngest citizens.

PART TWO: UNICEF IN PRACTICE

The second part of the work is focused on “Unicef in practice”, meaning what the Organization plans in the moment in which a crisis is originated by a violent eruption and faces with urgent questions.

The Unicef Representative and country teams usually have to deal with a wide range of policy, advocacy and action issues that need to be outlined through programming guidelines and best practices to provide accessible information (necessary to assess a quick and proper response to humanitarian crisis).

Moreover, in the second part of this work, it will be possible to shift from the theory to the practice, thanks to the description of real cases faced by Unicef and the whole Organization Staff. Describing real cases already happened in the history of the Organization, it will be easier to

understand principles and strategies adopted in the midst of complex emergencies, but also operational and technical details developed “to address the suffering of children and women in humanitarian crises, and promote the rapid rehabilitation and recovery”\textsuperscript{112}.

2.1 PRE-EMERGENCY ACTION

When Unicef is confronted by an emergency, the first important action to operate is the communication with the local responsible government departments, the UN Resident Coordinator and other concerned agencies (UN and NGOs), in order to have clear the situation and collect all data available on the area and all reports on the current situation. It is important for Unicef to identify any gaps in the information available and, eventually, fill them participating in joint field assessment visits. The reason is due to the need to build-up an overview as complete as possible about the situation and the priorities.

In “Assisting in Emergencies: A Resource Handbook for UNICEF Field Staff (Ockwell 1986) priorities are defined as:

- The need to ensure that proposed interventions are clearly focusing on clear objectives, which consist in a coherent and integrated package of practical measures;
- Concentration on children situated in the most vulnerable places (for example single-parent families or unaccompanied children);
- For all the children situated in a structured family, the need to seek ways of increasing the capacity of families to care adequately for their children. Strengthen self-help capacities at

family and community levels, supporting women’s participation in the development and management of such solutions. The care of nutritional and physical needs are situated at the top of the emergencies priorities, as much as emotional and psychological needs;

- Assure protection against exploitation, violence, abuse, rape and recruitment into the army involved in the conflict, impede the growth of malnutrition and disease during the dangerous and chaotic early days of acute emergencies. Promote access to essential life-saving and life-sustaining services;
- Promote awareness among media and donor representatives of the situation and needs of children.

During the pre-emergency phase, the Organization launch actions to ensure efficient Unicef response and to defend the safety of Unicef personnel itself and equipment, in coordination with the UN Resident Coordinator linked to the New York Headquarter (NY HQ). If there are security risks, Unicef provides the best possible specifications for all supplies and personnel required, it keeps continuously informed HQ about the situation. If necessary, HQ can suggest temporary additional staff or efficient local financial arrangements (and cash flow) to support approved operations\textsuperscript{113}.

2.2 COMPONENTS OF THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

After having concluded the pre-emergency action and having defined the background and the context, Unicef assess the elements of the plan of action putting into being the intervention

strategies. The most known Unicef overall strategies are fundamentally three\textsuperscript{114}. The first one is known as “Family Focus”, because Unicef’s actions in emergencies are family centred.

The Organization recognize the primary responsibility of parents and families for ensuring children rights and well-being. The reinforcement of families is strictly connected to the support provided by national and local institutions upon which families depend. For this reason, Unicef works directly with local governmental institutions, especially where these are weak or non-existent.

The second one is the “Development Orientation”, referring to one of the most important principles of Unicef: the protection and care of children are the first step to build a solid and efficient society inside developing countries. The widest involvement of individuals, communities, and local institutions is the best way to start long-term country programme approach and its development orientation.

The last one is the well-known “Integrated Approach”, consisting in the promotion of care and protection of both children and women. This approach recognizes the importance of protection of women and mothers for children’s physical and emotional security, social and cognitive development, and health and nutritional status.

Strategies are supported by appropriate and flexible actions during all the stages of the emergency, guided and defined by the Conventions on the Right of the Child. First of all, care and service delivery activities are created to meet basic survival. Community-based system is the only way to implement the fundamental systems Unicef try to achieve: nutrition and family food security, ensuring sufficient and appropriate food, especially for infants, young children, pregnant and lactating mothers (in both long and short terms); access to potable water for hygiene and

domestic use at household level and for institutions and services benefiting children; environmental hygiene and safe excreta disposal, in order to prevent the spread of disease and promote the establishment of a safe environment (latrines or other arrangements for the safe disposal of human excreta minimize risks of contamination on the environment, especially water supplies, or the proliferation of vectors, such as materials, funds, sanitarians\textsuperscript{115}); creation of shelter and household functioning, essential to children and mothers (distribution of clothes and blankets for young children, basic household utensils); the ensuring of basic needs when displacement of populations are inevitable, and then help displaced people to return to their homes or, if necessary, to resettle elsewhere as soon as possible.

2.3 COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Unicef is one of the first agencies of United Nations system that understood no single humanitarian Organization is able to act efficiently without the cooperation with other agencies and organizations. For this reason, Unicef have always tried (successfully) to working closely with other UN agencies and international NGOs\textsuperscript{116}.

With regard to UN agencies, the coordination between Unicef and them is formalized through consolidated “interagency appeal process”\textsuperscript{117}. The partnerships with UN agencies are also developed through a “Memoranda Of Understanding” (MOE) which defines the broad parameters of collaboration. This is the way in which Unicef builds relationships with the major UN agencies involved in humanitarian interventions: UNHCR, in collaboration with Unicef for activities


\textsuperscript{117} Ibid.
concerning both refugees in countries, returned and displaced populations in their countries of origin; WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME, in supplementary feeding and assessment and monitoring of the nutritional need of children; WHO, in activities concerning maternal and child health and the rehabilitation of primary health care systems; UNESCO collaborates with Unicef in the re-establishment of education systems; UNDP in post-crisis rehabilitation of social infrastructures and in preventive development.

Unicef collaborates with Governments and this is what ensures that the policies and responsibilities of Unicef in their own country are well understood, especially the humanitarian focuses and the requirement of non-discriminatory use/distribution of Unicef assistance\textsuperscript{118}. The personnel of organizations and community leaders have to understand that Unicef’s resources and capabilities are limited. The Organization needs the support of the Government primarily in the most difficult emergencies. Unicef can apply assistance and resources only for selected and defined purposes and it cannot mobilize the same level of assistance in the long-term period, because this is the task of the Government itself.

Unicef, when starts to establish a collaboration with Governments, follows these five principles:

1. Unicef will supply its cooperation exclusively to the Governments which request it. To obtain this kind of collaboration with Unicef, the Government must organize a detailed Plan of Action specifying how the requested assistance will be used and underlying which will be his own participation.

2. The Governments assume full responsibility for their programmes.

3. Each country to which Unicef grants assistance must complete it by its own financial contribution, in order to ensure that the programme is firmly established in the country and that the Government intended to strongly support Unicef intervention.

4. Unicef ignores any political considerations. The Organization supports the idea that every child has the right to be protected and receive all the services that are essential to prepare him to the life, without any consideration of political belonging, race, nationality or belief.

5. Unicef support consists in long-lasting extensions. Indeed, if the Unicef collaboration is conceived to be developed in a limited period of time, the programme is however designed to be integrated in the public services of the country. It is important that children could gain benefits from the Unicef intervention also after the termination of the operation itself.

For minor “relief” inputs, Governments and the Organization communicate to understand the entity of the situation and to describe each other the essentials of the proposed action, specifying the nature and quantity of the Unicef inputs (and when and how they are thought to be applied). However, this operation of communications with Governments (often through letters) is useful and efficient only for early “relief” inputs and for interventions in which the operations are not strictly depending on significant commitments from Government or the community itself.\footnote{Ockwell, R., Assisting in Emergencies: A Resource Handbook for UNICEF Field Staff, (UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund New York (NY); Geneva: 1986), p. 43.}

In fact, for more significant interventions it must be used concise and specific \textbf{Plan of Action} with the responsible Government authority. The Plan of Action should ensure and confirm that all strategies are agreed and the means of implementation are assured. This time, the Government too must to provide complementary technical, financial and administrative inputs.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}}
In emergencies programmes the Plans of Action eventually proposing “supplementary funding”, in response to the emergency and any additional activities outside the framework of the regular country programme. Unicef “Emergency Financing” derives from the following five principles sources (except donations and offers). In the book “UNICEF and humanitarian crises: an overview of operational and programme strategies” are describes as:

- **Country programme funds**: the Unicef representative can transfer up to 50,000 US dollars from country programme resource to emergency activities, in order to provide immediate but limited US dollars crisis response. This need to be approved by the Director of Programme Division.

- **Reprogramming**: in case of emergencies that significantly weaken the relevance of the established country programme, the Unicef representative (together with the Government concurrence) can reprogramme resources. However, the modification have to receive the Headquarter approval.

- **EPF (Emergency Programme Fund)**: it consists in two-years allocation of 25 million US dollars. It is used in complex emergencies, when UN consolidates inter-agencies appeal for necessary cash flow for the initial response to the emergency.

- **CERF (Central Emergency Revolving Fund US Dollars)**: the OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) administered CERF consists in a cash flow mechanism of 50 million that is able to be renewed or replenished. It is used to financing the action plans of the operational agencies in the consolidated inter-agency appeals.

- **CAP (Consolidated Inter-agency Appeals)**: supplementary funds received through the CAP process are used to provide the bulk of funds for Unicef emergency operations.

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Unicef collaborates also with **NGOs**. NGOs may be particularly competent, and could offer their knowledge of the area, especially if they were already established in the region before the emergency with long-term programmes\(^\text{122}\). This kind of collaboration is guided by two principal types of agreements. In “**UNICEF and humanitarian crises: an overview of operational and programme strategies**”, the author affirms “the first is a set of global standby agreements with organizations, networks or centers of excellence for the provision of technical expertise in a wide range of fields including; radio communication, vehicle and equipment maintenance, and warehousing and logistics. [...] The second type, activity-specific agreements, are negotiated at the country level by the Unicef representative. These are based on a Unicef prototype NGO agreement that sets clear parameters for collaboration in various operational and programmatic fields”\(^{123}\).

### 2.4 UNICEF AND VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

Unicef welcomes the cooperation of all volunteer organizations. Indeed, their collaboration is extremely important to the improvement of well-being of children. Thanks to the presence of voluntary organizations, it is possible to address any intervention to a vast number of people who take care of children or to capture public attention. Even better, these organizations can (to a certain extent) influence the official optic of the United Nations Fund\(^{124}\). Moreover, voluntary organizations in many countries have a direct role of effective relationships with official authorities.

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The voluntary organizations that cooperate with Unicef could be divided in three groups:

- **International:** this group includes the international organizations that have established consultative relationships with the Executive Board of Unicef; other international organizations that are interested in Unicef and in its objectives; associations of NGOs which aims have a direct connection to those of Unicef.

- **National:** this group includes Unicef National Committees that are often asked (always with profit) to take part to the collaboration with national and local NGOs; national organizations which are involved in health, nutrition and well-being of children at the international level. This kind of organizations are generally affiliated to international bodies.

- **Local:** this group includes the NGOs affiliated or not to international or national organizations and people affiliated to international or national organizations.

All these organizations meet regularly with representatives of Unicef not only to exchange important information, but also for the realization of real common programmes. Moreover, these organizations are able to put into circulation new ideas and to develop new techniques and systems useful for further actions.\(^{125}\)

It is clear that voluntary organizations actively contribute to the protection and care of children. There are practical examples about this, for example in Burma the members of the Association of Burma Women bring their contribution to the “protection of maternal and child health center” allowing the center to receive a considerable number of mothers and children, helping Unicef monitoring their well-being. In Thailand, the collaboration between Thai Association for paralyzed children, the government and Unicef allows the Bangkok hospital to

increase the effectiveness of services dedicated to them. In Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, the organizations belonging to the Rural Women’s World Union encourage those women to participate in training sessions, thought to improve their alimentary education.

In “Les besoins de l’enfance et l’UNICEF” there is a list of NGOs collaborating with Unicef at the time of the writing of the book (1965). For this reason the list is not updated, but it is possible to verify that already at that time a large number of NGOs worked with Unicef.


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To understand the International Humanitarian System and trends in humanitarian assistance, it is useful to observe the figure contained in “Evaluating International Humanitarian Action” (Wood, A.). The figure shows the principal resource flows within the international humanitarian system and thereby the principal types of organization that comprise the system and their broad relationship.

The system consists in tax-derived and privately donated resources, principally from within the richer nations\(^{127}\). As reported by the book, the tax-derived resources are managed by bilateral donor organizations (that occupy a very influential position in the overall system).

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Intermediate organizations, such as United Nations agencies, NGOs, the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement (ICRC, IFRC, and national societies) channel to the beneficiaries within the affected population the resources. From wealthier and less affected sections of the society, assistance and resources flow within affected countries, even if such resources are very rarely measured and commensurate with the entity of the situation.\textsuperscript{128}

\section*{2.5 BUDGET}

Unicef, before proceeding with the setting up of humanitarian aid, evaluates the total, estimated budget for the programme. In case that operations are to be undertaken in different areas, the Organization prepares different budgets for each plus one for central functions. Moreover, it is prepared an overall, consolidated budget with the individual components attached.\textsuperscript{129}

Unicef representatives consider the following budget headings: programme supplies (listing items to be obtained locally or imported), transport supplies (fuel, spares and maintenance for trucks/boats), storage and handling (repair, construction, renting of warehouses and equipment and materials for use in warehouse), port charges, personnel (salaries, allowances and travel expenses for all personnel), short-term consultants (fees, travel expenses at international level or in-country), office establishments (office running costs, such as expendables, telephone, charges, equipment maintenance, etc.), personnel vehicles and contingency reserve.


In the budget for Unicef it has to be included also “operating costs”, referring to all the direct costs of Unicef’s own related operations, vehicle operating costs, staff appointments and travel and incidental expenses.

In the moment in which, based on a recommendation from the Representative, the Comptroller authorizes a **Special Imprest Bank Account**, an appropriate sole-signatory account is opened in the name of Unicef\(^{130}\). Where a **Special Petty Cash** is going to be opened, an account will be opened at a convenient location in his/her own name (that is, however, separate and distinct from any personal accounts)\(^{131}\).

The majority of the funds should be held in the bank, in contrast to separate, smaller amount that should be held in cash as a **cash float**. The cash float derives by the original account established at the start and replenished to the same amount at intervals. The amount is drained from the bank and it is equal to what had been spent in cash in the meantime. Any large payments are made by the account holder by cheque, not in cash.

The Representative, with the approval of the Comptroller, establishes the ceilings for both the overall account and the cash float. The country office makes transfers directly into the bank account.

Accounts are sent monthly to the Unicef country office in order to verify the amounts drawn from the bank account during the month. This operation is showed with original receipts/certified Petty Cash Disbursement Vouchers/slips. If the country officer, after having checked the list of deposits made during the month (all payment vouchers raised and the final

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\(^{131}\) *Ibid.*
balance) is satisfied with the accounts, he/she replenishes the bank account by transferring an amount equal to that drawn in the previous month\textsuperscript{132}.

The whole operation system requires a cash book, a bank book and a stock of standard Unicef payment vouchers (but also petty cash disbursement vouchers/slips to record individual, small payments to suppliers/workers not able to provide an invoice or official receipt)\textsuperscript{133}.

The cash book should consists in columns, as shown in the following figure extracted from “Assisting in Emergencies”.

\textbf{SAMPLE OF CASH BOOK}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>NATURE OF EXPENDITURE</th>
<th>AMOUNT RECEIVED</th>
<th>AMOUNT PAID OUT</th>
<th>BALANCE ON HAND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Petty Cash Disbursement Voucher should be like this:

\textbf{SAMPLE OF PETTY CASH DISBURSEMENT VOUCHER}

\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|l|l|}
\hline
UNICEF PETTY CASH DISBURSEMENT VOUCHER  \\
\hline
Number: ........ Date:....... Currency:......... Office:.......... Paid to:...........  \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

Expenditures as incurred below:


\textsuperscript{133} Ibid.
Account to be debited: 

Signature: 

Approved: 

The Bank Book should be like this:

**SAMPLE OK BANK BOOK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Voucher Number</th>
<th>Cheque Number</th>
<th>Paid to...... For.........</th>
<th>Amount paid in</th>
<th>Amount of cheque</th>
<th>Balance in bank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where no bank account is possible or no banking facilities are available in the area, petty cash funds will be derived from the nearest UN/Unicef office in cash and all transactions will be in cash. However it happens rarely, this could be possible, and in such cases only a cash book will be needed.

As explained in “Assisting in Emergencies”, during the preparation of the monthly accounts, “it may be useful to group receipt/payment slips corresponding to distinct categories of
activity/expenditure together attached to payment vouchers marked with that category and the total amount covered by the receipts concerned”\textsuperscript{134}.

### 2.6 HUMANITARIAN EVALUATION

During Unicef interventions some questions arise from within the Organization itself. Some of these questions are: are victims being reached? Does assistance and protection make the difference? Is performance improving? Again: are the programmes properly set up to address the task? Is the quality adequate? Is there duplication?

The humanitarian evaluation is a fundamental step, because it is necessary to become able to optimize the effort of the Organization to improve accountability, learning and performances of the humanitarian interventions. Indeed, over the last decade, evaluation is considered as the key tool used by donor organizations and humanitarian agencies to verify and assess the effectiveness of the evaluation process\textsuperscript{135}. A good evaluation process is not only necessary for the right develop of the humanitarian intervention itself, but also for the humanitarian organization, that obtain the status of “respectable organization” precisely thanks to the efficiency of the evaluation\textsuperscript{136}.

To understand how huge was the implementation of the process of evaluation during the “boom” of the nineties and its practical application, it is useful to take into account a case study undertaken during the 1999 Kosovo crisis. It is about a joint evaluation between a donor, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the United Nations Children’s Fund. The


\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.
description of the case study will be useful to understand how jointly selected teams with internal and external staff can work effectively\textsuperscript{137}.

Moreover, the study shows that problems can easily occur in such joint evaluations and it underlines that there is the need to keep all organizations parties informed about the basis on which it is carried out as a joint inquiry\textsuperscript{138}.

\textbf{2.6.1 UNICEF –DFID Joint Evaluation of Unicef’s Kosovo Emergency Preparedness and Response}

![Map of regions where the intervention took place. Source: Evaluating International Humanitarian actions. p. 172.]

Through the joint evaluation by the UK Department for International Development and Unicef concerning the response and preparedness by United Nations Children’s Fund during the 1999

\textsuperscript{138} Ibid.
crisis occurred in Kosovo, both the Institutions aimed at assessing whether the relevant programme objectives had been achieved. Moreover, their task was to identify the strengths and the weaknesses of Unicef’s performance. The evaluation intended to achieve a holistic view of operations, and thus to study Unicef’s preparedness and response to the crisis in general\textsuperscript{139}. Since the evaluation covered more than just programme issues, it were also examined the institutional role of Unicef in emergencies in a wider sense.

**THE SITUATION**

Before proceeding with the description of the evaluating process of the humanitarian intervention, it is important to explain what happened in Kosovo.

Kosovo have been characterized by massive forced population movements and violence, since the outbreak of the open conflict between the Kosovo Liberation Army and Yugoslav military and special police forces in early 1998. The situation broke down when in February 1999 the talk between Kosovar Albanian and Yugoslav representatives did not find any common solution. The first air attack occurred on 24 March from the countries taking part to NATO. The consequence of that difficult scenario was that, between April and May, over one million people fled from Kosovo\textsuperscript{140}. Some 800,000, belonging to the ethnic group of Albanian, found refuge in neighboring countries (Albania included), such as the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Federal Yugoslav Republic of Montenegro. In particular, it is estimated that 444,600 refugees fled to Albania, 244,500 to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 69,000 to Montenegro. The people who stayed within Kosovo had to run among isolated mountains, without any possibilities to satisfy the basic human needs (shelter, food, and basic

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{140} Ivi, p. 174.
\end{itemize}
survival supplies). Dozens of camps have been constructed by international agencies, governments, and Albania Force. Two-thirds of refugees in Albania and in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were hosted not in camps but within the local community as guests or paying for their own accommodation\textsuperscript{141}.

On 3 June, Yugoslavia accepted a peace plan, that required the withdrawal of all forces from Kosovo and the entry of NATO peacekeepers under a UN mandate. On 13 June Russian and NATO forces entered Kosovo, beginning the flowing of the humanitarian convos.

By the 14 June, many refugees decided to come back to Kosovo despite the badly damaged houses. This was the moment in which Unicef began to support the humanitarian efforts. Already before the exodus, in the region there were established a series of Offices. Country programme offices already existed in Albania, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia.

Before the massive spontaneous return to Kosovo, Unicef was focusing the efforts on finding internal refugees and displaced children, but also women in camps. In the post-return period, Unicef focused its attention to the establishment of new civil structures in the education, health and social welfare sectors\textsuperscript{142}.

\textit{EVALUATION TEAM}

It was decided that, for practical reasons, the evaluation would focus on the funded activities in Albania, Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Moreover, DFID


\textsuperscript{142} Ibid.
funding were also used in both Montenegro and Bosnia Herzegovina. Approximately, the whole evaluation lasted one month, and it was conducted by a team of four members, who proceeded with the evaluation through a multidisciplinary approach.

The team members were:

- A Finnish female Unicef emergency Officer with responsibility for operational support and institutional issues;
- A British female consultant specializing in psycho-social issues, education, mines awareness and “child-friendly spaces”;
- A British male doctor employed by DFID and based in Pristina as a health adviser with responsibility for health, nutrition, water and sanitation;
- An Irish male economist/social scientist consultant, This member was the Team Leader, author of the evaluating report within the book “Evaluating international humanitarian action”.

Every single member knew the region or had experience in the country, through collaborations with a variety of UN agencies, NGOs, donor humanitarian and human rights agencies.

The Team selection is fundamental, but at the same time the recruitment of the evaluation team represents a major risk. In fact, finding the right team is time consuming, because it can take months and it involves exploring networks of contacts to find people able to work in some important circumstances. Within the group, the presence of specialists with appropriate
knowledge is very important. The Team Leader plays an important role, and so it is important that the Team Leader too is a specialists able to guide the group and to withstand the pressure.

A second question related to the team is the balance between specialists and evaluation generalists. The general opinion of many authors is that having too many specialists can make it difficult to come to an agreed view and write a balanced report.

The origin of team members too have particular relevance in recruiting issues. In some cases, a mixed team of insiders and outsiders from the commissioning agency is the most effective recruiting way. In other cases, what the evaluating team needs is exclusively external members. In general, we can say that it is important that members do not have any personal or professional interests in the finding that the study reaches.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

First of all, the evaluating team fixed a list of Terms of Reference for the DFID – UNICEF joint evaluation of Unicef’s Kosovo emergency preparedness and response. As reported by “Evaluating international humanitarian action” (Wood, A.), the main purposes of the evaluation were the following:

- To assess the extent to which Unicef’s programmes met their objectives and to draw lessons from this assessment for future improvements;

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To assess the extent to which Unicef’s programme objectives were coherent or not with DFID’s overall strategy for the region.\(^{144}\)

The secondary purpose was to pay particular attention to:

- The effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of interventions;
- Local management and delivery capacity;
- The appropriateness of programme appraisal, design and implementation, and whether this matched or not Unicef’s perceived comparative advantage in the region;
- The cost-effectiveness of the contribution;
- Unicef’s level of coordination with other agencies, government, NGOs, and external links with other stakeholders;
- Quality of internal reporting to HQ and reporting to DFID and other donors;
- How Unicef adapted to the changing refugee caseload, including the return process;
- Any particularly significant social, economic and political impacts of programmes that were not explicit in the programme objectives. For example it was particularly considered the programmes’ impact on inter-ethnic relationships, relations between host and refugee populations, and impact on poverty and vulnerability in the area.
- DFID’s relationship with Unicef, focusing on what DFID could have done better.

The evaluating team drawn up many drafts before fixing the TOR (Terms of Reference) and nominated a Team Leader to control the extensive and demanding process of evaluation. Even though at the beginning of the process the only responsible was DFID, soon it became a joint effort.

It was clear enough that joint evaluations can be victims of multiple expectations, becoming “all things to all people”\textsuperscript{145}. For example, it was never completely defined and precise the role and the entity of the participation of both the organizations. This led to a certain level of vagueness which caused problems with some Unicef staff members and managers in the moment of the conclusion of the evaluation.

Also at the beginning of the evaluation process this led to some difficulties, leaving without any solution a series of significant issues and concerns (such as the planning of the drafting, editing and review processes). Moreover, a serious problem arise during the fieldwork: the meeting failed in planning in details the time required for collecting information. If the organizations had defined more precisely the role and the entity of participation, the lack of time for planning and collecting information would never have been so huge\textsuperscript{146}.

During evaluation processes it is easy to face the problem of excessive and unrealistic TOR. This kind of situation is the result of the application of “ordinary” evaluation questions in particularly new and difficult emergency conditions. However, in such complex emergency field conditions much of the information needed is not available.

In joint or multiagency evaluations the possibility to find these difficulties is high, due to the fact that all the agencies involved have their chance to contribute to the TOR and to add their primary focus to the work.

If TOR overload occurs, it is important to take into account all the information, without excluding any crucial detail. Nevertheless, the risk is to consider every single detail spreading


\textsuperscript{146} \textit{Ivi}, p. 177.
efforts and making a weak evaluation. In fact, it is possible to draw conclusions on the basis of limited data, or suggesting false accuracy\textsuperscript{147}.

The solution is to prepare the team staff previously, before the development of TOR. In this way, the members will be more prepared and informed, and it will be easier to review carefully their TOR and seek clarification and focus.

\textbf{METHODS}

The methodology the team applied was a commixture of Unicef’s evaluation guidelines and internal DFID humanitarian guidelines for organizational appraisal. Moreover, the team used also the guidelines of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and that of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

As reported by “\textit{Evaluating international humanitarian action}”, the methods the team used included:

- Preparatory generic literature and documentation search and review;
- Interviewing of programming beneficiaries, agency staff and partners;
- In case of people not available for immediate interviewing, connection through email and telephonic consultations;
- Short participatory workshop and group consultations with Unicef partners and staff;
- Coordination meetings;
- Field visits, including Serb enclaves in Kosovo.

The team leader, describing the evaluating methods, explained that those technics of collecting data demanded too much time. It demanded too much time and allowed repetitions, that reduced the utility of the tool. Using his words, the methods and technics of research were “overly time-consuming”\textsuperscript{148}. This confirm that when the staff of humanitarian organizations have to deal with important emergencies, it is important to adopt different methodologies, for example shorter and simpler.

However, within the team can arise differences of approach or methodology, generating stress. This happened to the evaluating team of Kosovo crises too. The difference among objectives and expectation of both members (related to Unicef or DFID) brought to different intentions and methods. Indeed, the donor agency (DFID) expected a “hard-hitting, accountability-focused evaluation”, while Unicef staff sought a “less contentious lessons-learned exercise”\textsuperscript{149}.

The evaluating team was able to fight approach differences by three elements. Because of “hard” quantitative data were sought initially by technical expert in particular (represented by the donor agency DFID) as a means of verifying achievements and effectiveness, the team arrived at the conclusions that: first, it was difficult to collect the hardest data, because they either did not exist or were impossible to get in such a short time; second, because of the emergence of such “no evidence of hard data”, the need for quantitative data diminished. The team focused on sufficient evidence to firmly support only important conclusions (consulting narrative documentation, or just from direct observation and from interviewing); third, dialogue, communication among team members reduced the possibility of more serious insurmountable differences. Thanks to the continual daily mutual consultation, it became possible to find more convergences than divergences, making the approach issue secondary rather than primary.

\textsuperscript{149} Ibid.
**FIELDWORK**

The fieldwork included five days in Albania, three days in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and seven days in Kosovo. Then, the Team Leader and the Unicef team members also continued discussions and interviews in New York (two days) and Geneva (five days).

The interviews provided insights and crucial information and recommendations about questions that had been emerging during the first part of the evaluation or about contradicting views of other interlocutors.

The fieldwork helped understand how much interventions and aid distribution reached people involved in the crisis: the result was that 60 per cent of the refugee population established in private accommodations did not receive aid. The mistake was the focusing only on camps and collective centres, missing a huge portion of refugees.

Thanks to interviews on fieldwork, it was possible to understand not only the importance of the aid itself, but also the way in which it is provided. For instance, one beneficiary spoke about the difficulties he found in crossing the boarders and finding international staff at the reception centres “working in a jovial, almost playful mood”\(^{150}\). This statement was full of meaning, reminding that the trauma of the population had to be sustained by “old-fashioned solidarity and empathy, equal to physical aid and protection”\(^{151}\).

Along the fieldwork, the Team Leader noticed a series of problems. First of all, the perspectives of those evaluated were, naturally diverse. The interviewing, developed office by office, showed different opinions and even recounting of the same facts. To solve the problem triangulation was required (comparing interviews), but the lack of time often did not allow for


\(^{151}\) Ibid.
sufficient follow-up. The consequence was that some value judgments have to be concluded in the absence of absolutely conclusive evidence\textsuperscript{152}.

During the journey, while it was easy enough to move from Albania to Macedonia, the logistics of entering Kosovo (and subsequently exiting) were more complicated and time-consuming. Albania and Macedonia, indeed, had no visa restrictions for the all-EU team. However, the Macedonia-Kosovo boarder was particularly difficult. For this reason, Unicef drivers from both sides had to negotiate hard to let members pass through the way, avoiding queues of people extending to tens of kilometers. It was clear that “logistics” should not be underestimated in the planning of evaluations.

Sickness too is an important factor that have to be included in the planning of evaluations. In fact, the lack of time was further exacerbated due to a succession of bouts of flu and gastro-intestinal upsets. The time required to rest and recuperation was precious time taken away from collecting data and work.

**TEAM DYNAMICS**

Even if the team was working in harmony and was characterized by a good friendship, during the final week in Pristina differences of opinion did emerge. The problem was in particular related to the overall strengths and weaknesses of Unicef in emergencies and the relevant weight to be given to them in the overall conclusions\textsuperscript{153}.

\textsuperscript{153} Ivi, p. 182.
As the Team Leader explained, the divergences laid at different perceptions of criteria and the relative aspects of the Unicef performance. A discussion among team members underlined that there were two school of thought: the first one saw the more classical emergency preparedness and response activities as fundamental and determinant to arrive to the overall conclusions; the second one, saw a real or potential strength in the development nature of the agency (Unicef has often been seen more as “development than emergency” agency, because of the fact that its mandate is based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, promoting development of a healthy and wholesome environment for children and women\(^\text{154}\)) and its focus on children and mothers. This important element played an important role and was different from the more classical emergency agencies. Using the Team Leader’s words, “the less visible relief to development and people-focused aspects of Unicef preparedness and response, it was argued, should have a significance equal to, or even greater than, more traditional emergency functions such as supplies and logistics”\(^\text{155}\). After an intense discussion, the second school of thought was adopted.

**FINALIZATION**

From the beginning of the mission it was agreed that every single member should have prepared and write up the sectors and issues assigned to him or her. However, at the moment of the concluding writing up, Unicef excluded that a right modus operandi could have been that of a sectorial format. The Unicef member explained that it was not “the most appropriate given the


\(^{155}\) *Ivi*, p. 182.
child rights framework which guides Unicef activities". Nevertheless, the report adopted a sectorial approach.

The decision came for two reasons. Unicef itself organizes its programmes and reports following sectorial categories, and this kind of approach represented one of the most practical way of organizing the report drafting (since it reflected the divisions of responsibilities within the evaluation team).

In the moment of the final writing, the challenge (especially for the team leader in charge for this operation) was to create a clear, accurate, incisive and informative product. The high quality was necessary, because the final report have to be used as a tool.

The most important operation was to minimize gaps and possible future misunderstandings, due to the fact that the report was mostly a text written from “cut and pasted”.

Every single member wrote personal and contradictory comments. In order to solve the situation, more time had to be spent on sharing drafts back and foreword within the team, because there was the need to reconcile the comments. This helped to avoid track losing and document authority.

Unicef saw this final part of the evaluation as particularly important. Senior staff was invited to go to Geneva to formally discuss about the review.

After the consultation, through email, telephone calls and additional interviews, a final review has been written.

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The team could finally resume the main conclusions and recommendation. The following figure represents the result of the team work, expressed in this box, taken from "Evaluating international humanitarian action".

**Box 10.2 Main conclusions and recommendations**

**UNICEF – general**

1. Based on its strengths, UNICEF has had, and should continue to have, an important role in emergencies. Greater clarity is required on the desired scale and specific expertise of that emergency capacity in UNICEF.

2. UNICEF’s strengths in emergencies need to be exploited and developed more systematically. Every country office should be capable of and required to engage in comprehensive preparedness measures, as an integral part of its country programme. Similarly, the quality of UNICEF’s guidance on core UNICEF emergency issues and the depth and systematic professionalism of its preparedness activities need to be improved.

Despite UNICEF’s declared objective to ‘mainstream’ emergency preparedness and response in its institutional capacities and general programming, this is far from having been achieved. A comprehensive review of all the major components of emergency preparedness and response is required. This should lead to an action plan for improving significant weaknesses that exist at the institutional level.

**DFID – lessons on evaluation in emergencies**

Evaluation of humanitarian aid is increasingly frequent, not to say fashionable. There are a number of lessons to be learned from this particular evaluation.

1. Though rarely conducted, joint donor/partner agency evaluations are feasible. The shared analysis can be enriching. A multi-disciplinary team including both ‘insiders and outsiders’ of both donor and partner agencies can produce a healthy mixture of perspective, knowledge and experience.

2. International relief coordination and management are increasingly complex, involving a multitude of increasingly interdependent actors. The effectiveness and results of any one actor depend on those of others. Additionally, overall impact can often be measured meaningfully only at the level of a particular situation.

Figura 29 Main conclusions the evaluating team concluded. Source: Evaluating International Humanitarian Actions. p.186.
3. *Ex-post* evaluations in emergencies are limited by the rapid loss of institutional memory. Rapid staff rotation compounds the problem. It is recommended that pilot ‘real-time’ evaluations be conducted. This would require the deployment of a small evaluation team in support of agencies during emergencies as a capacity for participatory analysis and strategy development with staff at all levels, especially the ‘deep field’.

4. Just as coordination among agencies in actual operations is important, so too is coordination of evaluations among donors. The Kosovo crisis has so far led to almost thirty formal evaluations. Joint efforts are potentially more efficient and less taxing on agency staff in that the effort is concentrated into a shorter time period.

**DFID – general** Catastrophe was avoided for the Kosovars in Albania and FYROM. Apart from the immense contribution of the refugees and those who welcomed them, the level of funding made available to a wide range of agencies during this emergency contributed to containing the crisis. It allowed for an unusual and welcome range of services to refugees (such as mobile phone calls for tracing relatives). UNICEF has played its part, including in Central Serbia, in favour of victims and refugees, in line with international humanitarian, refugee and human rights law, especially the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

1. It is expected by beneficiaries and practitioners alike that new ground has at least been broken in raising the standards of relief in emergencies and catastrophes worldwide. The very core of humanitarianism is that protection and relief benefit all victims irrespective of colour, creed, ethnicity and geographic (or strategic) considerations. Were this not to be the case, the lanmans emanating from the plethora of currently underfunded emergencies (in western Africa, India and the Caucasus, for instance) might lead to cynicism. Humanitarian values and basic human rights belong to all humanity, to be applied universally and transparently. The focus on Kosovars should not be to the detriment of other victims worldwide.

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**Figura 30** Main conclusions the evaluating team concluded. Source: Evaluating International Humanitarian Interventions. p.187.

It could be said that, from this evaluating experience, what matters is not the quantity but the quality of the team members.\(^{158}\)

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During its experience, the team agreed that it would seem to be essential for evaluators of humanitarian programmes to have the following skills (listed in “Evaluating international humanitarian action”):

- Analytical
- Knowledgeable about the people, and relevant languages, topic and geographical area
- Patient
- Skilled and experienced in evaluation methods and techniques, both qualitative and quantitative
- Good listeners
- Good communicators, including being good report writers
- Empathy and concern for others.

One of the most important conclusions, is that of the need of a very detailed plan of evaluation, especially in case of joint evaluations. It is particularly recommended that the plan of evaluation is well defined and based on TOR. However, after the beginning of the evaluation process, the Team believes that the plan should go beyond the TOR and become an annex to it.

Fundamental is the setting out of roles (modifiable during the development of the activity), approaches and schedules, but also practical matters and report-writing arrangements.

The final stage, should be outline the process of arriving at conclusions and finalizing the report.

As suggested by the Team Leader of the practical case of the study, “however, unduly detailed planning at start of an evaluation is neither feasible nor desirable, especially when the
team is still building up confidence in itself” and “a balance has to be struck, but one that ensures the adequate thought is given by all in the team to these issues”\(^{159}\).

During the development of the evaluation process of the humanitarian intervention, the Team understood that the designers of TOR have to pay attention, because they usually are overly optimistic about what can be covered. At the contrary, the important final phase (getting to detailed conclusions, drafting, review and revision of drafts) is often underestimated\(^ {160}\).

The rule that the Team considers as essential in evaluating humanitarian interventions is “listen to beneficiaries as soon as possible”\(^ {161}\). The reason is that it is useful to set a realistic framework for impressions and conclusions. Using Team Leader’s words, “in our case it did orient conclusions, especially the fact that the international actors addressed only a relatively small portion overall needs”\(^ {162}\).

Donor inputs, performance and agendas should play a central role and they need to be explicitly addressed in evaluations. The Team underlined that, in particular, political and geo-strategic agendas should be evaluated against humanitarian principles, as a real operational performance\(^ {163}\).

As regards the methods, skills, practices and general guidance, they need to be developed and labeled as soon as possible as a priority within the overall efforts to improve the evaluation expertise and capacities. The main reason why the evaluation process has to be made in a detailed way is the fact that it must to be clear to potential users. The easier the evaluation is to conduct, the easier it is to follow up.

\(^{160}\) *Ibid.*  
\(^{161}\) *Ibid.*  
\(^{162}\) *Ibid.*  
The potential experience originated by humanitarian evaluation is immense, due to the multiple variables involved. Each year hundreds of people are involved in undertaking this kind of study, and thousands of people are interviewed.

The quality of evaluations is influenced by agencies involved and field conditions. For this reason it is important to proceed with transparency and accountability, taking in considerations also those influences (that are often not simple and unidirectional). Especially in joint evaluations, indeed, there is frequently feedback, and the interaction between actors and between the team and field conditions can create potential variability\(^{164}\).

To sum up, the following boxes are about the characteristics of humanitarian evaluations, verified also during the description of the joint evaluation in the Kosovo crisis. The boxes consider all the elements constituting the evaluation process: characteristics of the study; evaluation team, operation of evaluation; reporting and dissemination. (The boxes are based on the book “Evaluating international humanitarian action”).

**Box 11.1 Characteristics of humanitarian evaluations**

**Characteristics of the study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of the study</th>
<th>Focus of the work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type: lesson-learning, accountability, internal, external, mixed</td>
<td>Emergency humanitarian assistance alone, wider emergency context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level: project, programme, policy analysis</td>
<td>Own performance or field partners' performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of agency commissioning the evaluation</th>
<th>Terms of Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single agency: UN agency, bilateral donor, IFRC</td>
<td>Range: broad, focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint agencies: DfID and UNICEF</td>
<td>Relative to resources: manageable, overwhelming guidance over method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple agency: JEEAR</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing of evaluation</th>
<th>Degree of autonomy for the evaluation team in the field</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relative to assistance: during ongoing relief, after relief activities</td>
<td>Field team: managed, free, controlled by circumstances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constraints to timing of evaluations: political, security, weather</td>
<td>Subject coverage: able to address areas team feels are relevant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale of study</th>
<th>Team composition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field area: extent of study area</td>
<td>Team interaction in general: tight team, loose net, series of independent consultants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time period: period of assistance being studied</td>
<td>During preparation, fieldwork and writing up: level and nature of interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agencies: number and diversity</td>
<td>Structure: core team, groups, viewpoints</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluation team**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team membership</th>
<th>Team operation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Origin: internal to commissioning agency, external to commissioning agency or mixed team</td>
<td>Team interaction in general: tight team, loose net, series of independent consultants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background: university-based researchers, freelance consultants, balance of these</td>
<td>During preparation, fieldwork and writing up: level and nature of interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience: evaluation specialist, development or emergency</td>
<td>Structure: core team, groups, viewpoints</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Operation of evaluation

**Preparation**
- **Time:** amount of preparation and desk study time
- **Support:** assistance in data preparation
- **Record/document:** availability and their use
- **Briefing of team members:** before fieldwork: amount, origin and context

**Methodological approach**
- **Methodology:** active consideration, implicit, coordinated among team, individual
- **Use of specific techniques:** timelines, checklist, conceptual model, analytical framework
- **Approach:** research orientation, consultancy orientation

**Length of assignment**
- **Time in field**
- **Time writing up**
- **Balance of field and write-up**

**Fieldwork**
- **Time:** length, share of total evaluation time
- **Timeliness:** relative to emergency assistance, relative to other variables affecting effectiveness
- **Field contacts:** beneficiaries; field actors, donors' representatives, agency headquarters
- **Structure of fieldwork:** single-stage, multi-stage
- **Division of responsibilities:** sectoral, country/area
- **Limits:** access, security, beneficiary recall, attrition of staff, availability of records

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### Reporting and dissemination

**Writing up**
- **Division of responsibility:** among team and load on Team Leader
- **Timing of write-up:** in field, post field, time pressure

**Follow-up**
- **Dissemination means:** published report, published summary, booklet or other dissemination means, or withheld
- **Follow-up:** board or parliamentary discussion and decisions, workshop or training activities, monitoring and review of use of findings

**Reporting**
- **Debriefing:** process and people involved
- **Reaction to report:** accepted, rejected
- **Selling of report:** activities by team to ensure report accepted

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Figura 32 Considerations about operation of evaluation. Source: Evaluating International Humanitarian Action. p. 199

The last box, regarding “Reporting and dissemination”, refers to one of the aspect of humanitarian evaluations that tends to be given insufficient attention. A Key aspect that can help ensure acceptance of the evaluation report, and the subsequent active follow-up, is the maintenance of relationships between the evaluation team and the commissioning agency. The dialogue between them could help ensure that the report meets agreed TOR and stimulate the interest in reading the case study.

Getting the report published may ensure a longer permanence of the evaluation, since within commissioning agencies evaluation reports are forgotten quickly\textsuperscript{165}. Especially once the report is no longer new, getting the report published is the way to form an active follow-up and make it more accessible.

\textbf{PART THREE: INTERVIEW}

La terza e ultima parte della mia tesi consiste in un’intervista preparata e redatta da me in persona.

L’intervista, che si è tenuta a Treviso, ha avuto una durata di circa due ore ed è stata rivolta a Mariella Andreatta, Presidentessa del Comitato Unicef Treviso, e all’Ambasciatrice Unicef Deborah Compagnoni, ex sciatrice alpina italiana e medaglia d’oro di tre differenti edizioni dei Giochi Olimpici Invernali.

L’idea era quella di poter rivolgere alcune domande tecniche a persone direttamente coinvolte nell’ambito delle operazioni di Unicef, con lo scopo di conoscere come avviene

l’organizzazione delle campagne Unicef in Italia, e come avviene la coordinazione tra l’Ufficio internazionale dell’Organizzazione e quello Nazionale.

3.1 CARATTERISTICHE DEL COMITATO ITALIANO


Nel corso degli anni, dopo la ripresa dalle devastazioni del conflitto mondiale, in Italia si cominciò a sostenere l’esigenza di creare un distacco tra l’AAI e la Pubblica Amministrazione, raccogliendo fondi e consensi tramite un’organizzazione specifica per l’assistenza nei paesi Terzomondisti.

La concretizzazione di queste nuove idee avvenne con la nascita ufficiale del Comitato Italiano per l’Unicef del 1974.

Il legame giuridico che lega il Comitato Italiano a quello dell’Organizzazione a livello internazionale si fonda sulla base di un Accordo di Cooperazione e di un Piano Strategico Congiunto delle Attività (conosciuto anche come Joint Strategic Programme (JSP)), rinnovato con cadenza triennale.

Ciò che contraddistingue Unicef Italia è il fatto di essere contemporaneamente Organizzazione non governativa (ONG) appartenente al Terzo Settore del panorama italiano, ma
anche programma intergovernativo delle Nazioni Unite. Lo status di ONG del Comitato Italiano Unicef prevede che il Comitato sia considerato anche Organizzazione non lucrativa di utilità sociale (ONLUS), e tale acronimo viene utilizzato nella denominazione e in tutte le attività di corrispondenza come segno distintivo per il pubblico. Tutto ciò che riguarda la forma giuridica e la denominazione del Comitato Italiano si trova all’interno dello Statuto dell’Unicef Italia: documento ufficiale del Comitato in cui vengono espresse le finalità, le relazioni tra organismi interni, le attività istituzionali, la composizione, le risorse del Comitato Italiano per l’Unicef Onlus. Lo Statuto gode di ufficialità, in quanto ritenuto idoneo e approvato dall’Assemblea nazionale dell’Unicef Italia (nella sua ultima versione del 3 aprile 2011), con conseguente ottenimento del visto di conformità Unicef.


Il Comitato Italiano è costituito da Membri Ordinari, ovvero il Presidente del Comitato Italiano, i Membri del Consiglio Direttivo, i Presidenti dei Comitati Regionali e Provinciali, i membri cooptati in Assemblea, gli ex Presidenti del Comitato Italiano e, per un triennio successivo alla cessazione del loro incarico o della loro nomina, gli ex membri del Consiglio Direttivo, gli ex membri cooptati in Assemblea, gli ex Sindaci già Membri del Comitato Italiano e gli ex Probiviri.

Esistono anche i Membri Fondatori, ovvero i soggetti che costituivano il corpo dell’Assemblea del Comitato Italiano tenutasi il 19 aprile 1986.

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166 http://www.unicef.it/Allegati/Statuto_UNICEF.pdf
Gli **Organi del Comitato Italiano** svolgono le funzioni di indirizzo e controllo, di gestione operativa, e funzioni politico-strategiche e di governo. Tali organi, elencati nello Statuto dell’Unicef Italia all’art. 12.2, sono: l’Assemblea (organo supremo del Comitato Italiano), il Consiglio Direttivo (operante in veste di organo collegiale deliberante nel miglior interesse del Comitato e a favore dell’Unicef e dei bambini del mondo intero), il Presidente (legale rappresentante del Comitato Italiano, attualmente Giacomo Guerrera), il Collegio Sindacale (vigilante sulle questioni di coerenza e osservanza dell’operario di Unicef con gli obiettivi presenti nello Statuto), il Collegio dei Probiviri (che provvede alla risoluzione in caso di controversia tra Membri del Comitato, o tra Membri e Organi del Comitato).

**GLI ORGANI DI GOVERNO DELL’ **UNICEF ITALIA **

![Diagramma degli Organi di Governo dell'Unicef Italia](http://www.unicef.it)

**Figura 34** Organi di governo dell’Unicef Italia. Fonte: http://www.unicef.it
L’assetto organizzativo del Comitato Italiano per Unicef si distingue in tre aree distinte di competenza. Tale distinzione ha lo scopo di rendere i processi operazionali più immediati ed efficienti, tenendo vivo lo spirito di continuo rinnovamento che ha da sempre caratterizzato Unicef. Il continuo processo evolutivo dell’Organizzazione è volto ad affrontare tempestivamente i cambiamenti degli scenari e degli stakeholder di riferimento. Nel sito ufficiale del Comitato Italiano Unicef l’assetto organizzativo del Comitato viene rappresentato in maniera chiara e diretta tramite l’organigramma seguente.

![Organigramma Comitato Italiano Unicef](http://www.unicef.it)

Figura 35 Organigramma Comitato Italiano Unicef. Fonte: http://www.unicef.it
3.2 COMITATO UNICEF TREVISSO

Unicef viene sostenuta da una fitta rete di contatti promossa dalla presenza dei vari Comitati Regionali e Provinciali stanziati su tutto il territorio nazionale. In quanto articolazioni decentrate, i Comitati Regionali e Provinciali non posseggono alcuna soggettività o personalità giuridica, tuttavia rivestono un ruolo di fondamentale importanza: permettono la promozione dei diritti dell’infanzia su tutto il territorio tramite una fitta rete capillare e una costante interazione con le Istituzioni.

Questo è il ruolo rivestito dal Comitato di Unicef Treviso, che opera in un contesto di armonia con il resto dell’Organizzazione, nel rispetto dell’advocacy e della mission di Unicef Nazionale e Internazionale. Il Comitato Unicef di Treviso è uno dei 110 tra regionali e provinciali parte dell’Unicef Italia.

Alla domanda: “Quali sono le principali attività svolte da Unicef Treviso?”, la Presidentessa Andreatta mi risponde: “Ci occupiamo di promuovere le campagne nazionali di raccolta fondi, di organizzare eventi al livello locale di raccolta fondi e di sensibilizzare sui temi dei diritti dell’infanzia e dell’Adolescenza, sulla base della Convenzione dei diritti dell’Infanzia e dell’Adolescenza; le istituzioni locali; le scuole della provincia; i donatori ecc.”.

Andreatta mi spiega che le sedi dei Comitati Provinciali spesso svolgono anche la funzione di Punto d’Incontro Unicef, nei quali si può trovare materiale informativo e promozionale sulle attività dell’Organizzazione, visionare filmati e documenti, iniziare a svolgere attività di volontariato, acquistare i prodotti con marchio Unicef per partecipare alla raccolta fondi ed effettuare offerte a sostegno dei progetti nel mondo in via di sviluppo. La loro presenza in veste di Comitato è molto forte, tanto che al 31 dicembre 2012 i Punti di Incontro Unicef attivi sul
territorio erano 50, e in generale le attività portate avanti da Unicef Treviso avvengono tramite contatti diretti con cittadini, scuole, enti locali e altre articolazioni territoriali delle istituzioni e della società civile.

Rispondendo alla domanda: “Come Unicef Treviso riceve direttive dall’Ufficio Internazionale e come mantiene la sua advocacy a livello nazionale?”, Andreatta risponde descrivendo il processo secondo il quale vengono scelti i progetti da avviare sul territorio. Andreatta, per prima cosa, mi illustra l’articolazione di Unicef Internazionale, organizzata in Uffici Regionali, Uffici sul campo e Sedi Internazionali, tra cui i “quartier generali” di New York e Ginevra, la Supply Division (il centro logistico globale dell’organizzazione) a Copenhagen e l’Innocenti Research Center (IRC), il motore degli studi e delle ricerche internazionali sull’infanzia, situato a Firenze.

E’ proprio dai quartier generali, in particolare da Ginevra, che vengono dettati a livello internazionale gli obiettivi da raggiungere entro un determinato periodo di tempo, ed è da Ginevra che vengono imposti degli standard di progetti in base alle esigenze di paesi in cui sono presenti. Il Comitato Nazionale seleziona alcuni dei progetti elencati da Ginevra, in base alla disponibilità finanziaria e in base a delle priorità che possono riguardare da vicino la situazione del territorio o che premono in modo particolare, anche se non direttamente collegate al territorio del Comitato (es: distribuzione di vaccini, piuttosto che costruzione d’ospedali o reparti di maternità, ma anche scuole, ecc.).

Dal momento in cui il Comitato nazionale ha scelto di contribuire per un certo numero di progetti, i Comitati Regionali e Locali iniziano la distribuzione dei compiti e degli obiettivi, iniziando la raccolta fondi (tramite donazioni volontarie, tramite l’organizzazione di cene con lo scopo di
raccogliere donazioni, ma anche costruzione di prodotti con marchio Unicef, come le Pigotte, tazze, o altri tipi di prodotti).

Durante l’intervista la Presidentessa mi racconta che esiste la possibilità che i Comitati possano avanzare delle richieste direttamente alle sedi internazionali di Unicef, come è avvenuto dopo il disastro del terremoto dell’Aquila del 2009. Il Comitato di Unicef Treviso chiese a Ginevra la possibilità di avviare un progetto per la costruzione di una scuola ad Onna, paese simbolo del terremoto, fortemente colpito dall’evento sismico. “Unicef Treviso è da sempre molto sensibile alla costruzione di scuole e in generale all’educazione dei bambini” racconta Andreatta, “abbiamo sempre cercato di intervenire in situazioni di particolare rilievo tramite la costruzione di scuole che permettessero che la vita dei bambini, sconvolta dalla presenza di guerre e povertà, potesse in qualche modo tornare alla normalità”. Il Comitato di Treviso rivolgeva quell’attenzione per l’educazione anche nei confronti dei bambini colpiti dal terremoto, in nome del principio secondo cui ogni bambino nel mondo merita di vivere secondo il rispetto dei propri diritti, a prescindere dalla nazionalità e dal Paese di provenienza. Tuttavia, Ginevra non autorizzò tale intervento perché era già stata stabilita una lunga serie di interventi a livello internazionale di maggiore rilievo. I Comitati Regionali e Provinciali, quindi, hanno poca autonomia decisionale, e sono quasi interamente sottoposti alle indicazioni provenienti dagli Uffici Internazionali di Unicef. Come affermato da Andreatta “anche per quanto riguarda il budget del Comitato, Ginevra detta delle specifiche regole di utilizzo: una parte del budget del Comitato è sempre riservata al Fondo di Emergenza. Negli ultimi anni il Fondo è stato utilizzato per la Siria, per il disastro delle Filippine al passaggio del tifone Haiyan, e anche per gli sconvolgimenti interni della Repubblica Centrafricana e il Sud Sudan”. Tutti i programmi umanitari sostenuti contribuiscono a realizzare interventi integrati per salute, nutrizione, accesso all’acqua e a servizi igienici, a misure di protezione dell’infanzia e per l’istruzione in condizioni di emergenza.
Nell’ascoltare le sue parole, una domanda sorge spontanea: “esiste un conflitto tra la promozione di interventi in Paesi in via di sviluppo e in una forte condizione di povertà, e quella di campagne per la raccolta fondi in Italia e a livello locale (provincia di Treviso per quanto riguarda il Comitato di Treviso)?”

In risposta interviene Deborah Compagnoni, “si percepisce molto chiaramente che questo è un momento storico difficile per la raccolta fondi, per le attività e la sensibilizzazione. La disponibilità è poca anche da parte di paesi che potrebbero dare molto. Non solo disponibilità economica, ma anche disponibilità a capire e ascoltare i progetti, per aiutare l’umanità. A noi interessa proprio che Unicef venga vista come associazione che si occupa invece anche di problemi più locali in Italia, che riguardano la povertà o altre questioni legate alla vita in famiglia”. La Presidentessa puntualizza che “purtroppo la crisi e la disoccupazione che stanno attraversando il nostro Paese stanno rendendo molto più austere le condizioni di raccolta fondi, ma stanno anche aumentando il numero di famiglie povere. Questo causa molti disagi, per cui anche qui nel nostro territorio ci sono tantissimi bambini poveri. La gente in questo momento è più sensibile per progetti che raggiungano i nostri compaesani”.

Per questo motivo Unicef Treviso lancia campagne che siano indirizzate alle famiglie del nostro territorio, come il progetto “Pane e Tulipani”, che consiste nella raccolta di generi di prima necessità per persone in difficoltà che sono sempre più in aumento nella provincia di Treviso. Tramite la collaborazione con le scuole e la partecipazione attiva dei bambini al progetto, Unicef Treviso punta alla realizzazione di un obiettivo più ampio, che è la costruzione di una consapevolezza sul disagio economico e sociale delle famiglie, e l’abbattimento di tabù.

Questo progetto è particolarmente caro alla direzione di Unicef Treviso, in quanto si basa su uno degli obiettivi principali che il Comitato si pone, afferma Andreatta, quello del rafforzamento dello spirito di solidarietà. Intervenendo a livello locale, stimolando la disponibilità
alla scoperta e all’ascolto dell’altro, contemporaneamente si rafforza una predisposizione all’intervento umanitario che andrà oltre i confini territoriali.

Il Comitato Unicef di Treviso individua ancora una volta nella “scuola” l’istituzione base dalla quale partire. Andreatta spiega che “è dalla scuola che il bambino deve essere educato alla diminuzione di richieste ed aspirazioni materiali. Il bambino deve comprendere che tutto quello che si ha non è scontato, e che a volte tutto ciò che si possiede è invece il massimo dell’aspirazione che qualcun’altro sogna di possedere. I ragazzi devono abbandonare una vita alla ricerca di sovrastrutture e oggetti di lusso”.

Per esempio in Tagikistan, Paese fortemente abbandonato dopo la dissoluzione dell’Unione Sovietica, Unicef Treviso ha avviato una campagna per la distribuzione di materiali didattici. Sono state organizzate classi temporanee allestite all’interno di tende, sono stati distribuiti libri, quaderni, lavagne, penne e matite per aiutare la comunità a ripartire da zero, alla ricerca di ottenere una vita dignitosa e “normale”.

Tuttavia, sottolinea Mariella Andreatta, tutto questo non può ostacolare la mission di Unicef: esistono delle priorità che non possono essere eluse. “La nostra mission è migliorare i diritti dei bambini, ma soprattutto dove c’è più povertà! Esistono delle priorità. Non possiamo permetterci di far finta di niente. Per farlo capire alla gente noi riportiamo i numeri: i numeri sono oggettivi e parlano riportando la realtà nuda e cruda. Quando ho iniziato io (a lavorare per Unicef) i bambini morivano ancora di poliomielite, ora la poliomielite è stata debellata. Questi sono i fatti che parlanolo”.
Alla domanda “Quali sono le difficoltà che Unicef Treviso incontra generalmente nello sviluppo di campagne e di progetti, oltre a quelle di cui abbiamo appena discusso?”, Andretta risponde “la nascita di tante piccole associazioni che interferiscono con il lavoro di associazioni leader nel campo, come quella che Unicef rappresenta”.

Le intervistate ritengono che il pubblico oggi sia più propenso a donare e a collaborare con associazioni molto più piccole e deboli di Unicef, offrendo donazioni volontarie a piccole associazioni locali, o donazioni materiali (come vestiti, o generi di prima necessità) portate direttamente nelle mani della parrocchia o del missionario in visita. Le piccole associazioni vengono viste come più libere e autonome dai problemi burocratici imposti dall’alto.

Compagnoni afferma che, dal suo punto di vista, tutto questo sia dovuto alla grande burocrazia che caratterizza tutte le grandi associazioni: i donatori hanno la percezione che i fondi donati a Unicef e a tutte le grandi organizzazioni a scopo umanitario siano donazioni dispersive, che si perdono nella generalità della grande macchina che l’Organizzazione rappresenta, dileguandosi in tanti piccoli canali umanitari senza poi concretizzare specifici progetti.

Al contrario invece, come spiega Andreatta, la specificità e il punto di forza delle grandi Organizzazioni, e di Unicef in particolare, è proprio il sistema organizzativo di raccolta e distribuzione degli aiuti (sia materiali, sia finanziari). Non solo questo, ma anche e soprattutto la continuità e la formazione del personale (sia per affrontare le questioni pratiche e sia per quelle che riguardano l’organizzazione manageriale).

Andreatta racconta che molto spesso è in contatto con missionari che partono per assistere alla realizzazione di progetti in Africa e in Europa Orientale. I missionari testimoniano che l’Africa è costellata di progetti incompiuti, come scuole non ancora concluse, pozzi per l’estrazione
dell’acqua mai utilizzati. La causa di questa mancata continuità sta proprio nella mancanza di una struttura organizzativa solida impostata dall’alto.

La burocrazia a volte può creare ostacoli, ma rappresenta anche una sicurezza aggiuntiva. Le piccole organizzazioni che negli ultimi anni stanno interferendo con Unicef mancano di continuità, sebbene possano agire in tempi molto più brevi. “Essere piccoli significa essere deboli” afferma Andreatta. “Queste piccole associazioni sono molto importanti perché confermano il fatto che la società civile sia disponibile all’intervento umanitario. Tuttavia sono molto più dispersive loro che Unicef”, sostiene Compagnoni, che aggiunge “per ottimizzare i tempi e le risorse, forse si dovrebbe pensare ad un’unione e a un sostegno reciproco tra Unicef e queste piccole realtà”.

E’ importante dare la conferma che i fondi raccolti vengano utilizzati concretamente nei Paesi destinatari. La continuità è essenziale, e fomenta la fiducia che i donatori hanno nei confronti dell’Organizzazione.

“Quali sono gli altri punti di forza che caratterizzano Unicef e che ne assicurano l’efficacia degli aiuti?” Le intervistate mi rispondono che in primis il loro punto di forza è la loro notorietà, non solo a livello internazionale, ma anche a livello nazionale e locale. E’ stata condotta un’inchiesta che aveva come scopo verificare quale fosse l’organizzazione a scopo umanitario più nota tra i bambini delle scuole medie d’Italia. Il risultato fu che la più conosciuta era proprio Unicef.

Il fatto che i minori sappiano cosa sia Unicef, di che cosa si occupi e a chi si rivolga, è estremamente importante. La diffusione della cultura dell’infanzia e il rafforzamento del consenso intorno all’attuazione dei diritti dell’infanzia e dell’adolescenza sono il principale impegno delle azioni di advocacy di Unicef Italia. Tutto ciò richiede un cambiamento della società nel suo insieme, partendo dalla partecipazione attiva dei bambini.
La soggettività dei bambini non solo rende accessibile la conoscenza dei diritti sanciti dalla Costituzione dei diritti del Bambino ai destinatari stessi di questi diritti, ma anche alla famiglia e a tutti coloro con i quali i minori sono in contatto. Uno dei punti di forza di Unicef è proprio questo: il bambino viene visto non solo come il “target”, ma anche come il “veicolo” di diffusione della mission dell’Organizzazione.

“Un esempio immediato a conferma dell’importanza della duplice funzione della partecipazione attiva del bambino è rappresentato dal lavoro che è stato compiuto nelle scuole elementari e medie per quanto riguarda la raccolta differenziata” afferma Compagnoni.

L’Ambasciatrice racconta che la generazione dei genitori di bambini della scuola elementare degli anni Novanta ignorava quasi completamente l’importanza del riciclaggio, che infatti non veniva considerato nel _ménage_ della vita quotidiana. Grazie alla forte campagna condotta nelle scuole elementari e medie di tutto il territorio nazionale, la cultura del riciclaggio si è imposta anche alle famiglie dei bambini (protagonisti dei progetti), stimolando il rispetto per la raccolta differenziata nell’ambiente famigliare. Il successivo intervento dello Stato a favore dell’imposizione del riciclaggio ha attecchito su un terreno già fertile, curato dall’educazione ricevuta nelle scuole dell’obbligo.

L’ascolto e il dialogo sono elementi molto importanti che caratterizzano l’advocacy di Unicef. L’attenzione e il dialogo con gli stakeholder sono molto significativi, sia a livello locale che nazionale, sia tra gli interlocutori interni che esterni.

Unicef Italia cura da molti anni un’ampissima rete di relazioni con il mondo delle istituzioni, sia con lo scopo di promuovere nuove attività con le scuole e le università, ma anche con le associazioni e il mondo dello sport per la realizzazione di attività ed eventi ma anche per le attività di lobbying in difesa dei diritti dell’infanzia e dell’adolescenza.
Tutti i Comitati presenti nel nostro territorio nazionale hanno una costante relazione con le istituzioni, i donatori privati e le aziende, coinvolgendo dunque la comunità nel suo insieme.

Il Comitato Italiano di Unicef ha compiuto una ricerca a proposito delle principali iniziative di coinvolgimento degli stakeholder all’interno del nostro territorio, e il risultato è stato rappresentato graficamente in una tabella che la Presidentessa ha estrapolato dal sito di Unicef.it.

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<th>Informazione</th>
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<td>Meeting dei volontari</td>
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<td>Bilancio Sociale</td>
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<td>Pubblicazioni mirate</td>
<td>Ufficio volontari</td>
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<td>Punti incontro e sedi UNICEF</td>
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Figura 36 Coinvolgimento degli stakeholder all’interno del territorio italiano. Fonte: http://www.unicef.it

Come si evince dalla tabella, il coinvolgimento e la partecipazione sono molto consistenti. Questo rappresenta uno dei punti di forza di Unicef Italia, in quanto permette di mantenere un rapporto diretto tra l’Organizzazione e gli stakeholder, motivando la nascita di ulteriori rapporti futuri.
Un altro punto di forza è la grande efficacia della collaborazione dei Goodwill Ambassadors che collaborano con Unicef. Gli Ambasciatori sono persone scelte per la loro notorietà, affidabilità, professionalità e credibilità, disponibili a donare parte del loro tempo per coinvolgere l'opinione pubblica sui temi dei diritti dell'infanzia, aiutando la mobilitazione di risorse e facilitando la creazione di partnership a beneficio dell’infanzia nel mondo. Il rapporto che lega Unicef e l’Ambasciatore è esclusivo e completamente gratuito.

I Goodwill Ambassadors dell’Unicef sono oltre 300 tra artisti, musicisti, attori e atleti. La loro fama viene posta al servizio del lavoro dell’Organizzazione, contribuendo in maniera significativa alla promozione dei diritti dei bambini a livello nazionale e internazionale.

Ogni Ambasciatore rimane in carica per tre anni, ma può continuamente rinnovare il suo coinvolgimento con l’Organizzazione plurime volte. Ad esempio, Compagnoni riveste la carica di Ambasciatrice Unicef da 10 anni, e le è anche stato proposto di far parte dell’attuale Consiglio Direttivo.

La proposta, mossa dal Presidente del Comitato nazionale Unicef, è stata però respinta: Compagnoni mi racconta che si sente di dover essere coinvolta completamente nella causa per la promozione dei diritti dei bambini di tutto il mondo, ma purtroppo problemi famigliari e organizzativi non le permettono di potersi dedicare quanto vorrebbe. Compagnoni si rende conto che far parte del Consiglio Direttivo rappresenta un’importante evoluzione nel ruolo di un Ambasciatore Unicef, e non deve essere sottovalutato: “il ruolo dell’Ambasciatore è quello di essere una figura stimolante per l’opinione pubblica, ma deve essere curato il più possibile”.

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“Come ha deciso di diventare Ambasciatrice Unicef e in quale occasione?” è la domanda che rivolgo all’Ambasciatrice per scoprire come si avvia un rapporto di cooperazione tra l’Organizzazione e gli Ambasciatori stessi. L’Ambasciatrice mi racconta che fu contattata direttamente da Unicef Treviso, che stava avviando un progetto nell’ambito dello sport applicato all’infanzia, e in particolare nell’ambito dello sci. Lo scopo di tale progetto era quello di stimolare una maggiore attenzione per la sicurezza del bambino sulle piste da sci. Inoltre, il progetto prevedeva la stesura di un decalogo di norme per la sicurezza del bambino, prima pubblicato a livello regionale, ma poi esteso anche a livello nazionale con il nome di Carta della Sicurezza dei Bambini sulle piste. La Carta, che veniva distribuita sugli impianti di risalita, elencava una serie di comportamenti adeguati e inadeguati che riguardavano il bambino e la sua protezione. In particolare, non si trattava di regole imposte esclusivamente al bambino, ma piuttosto di regole che gli adulti dovevano rispettare per la difesa del bambino nelle piste.

Dopo la realizzazione del progetto, il Presidente del Comitato nazionale allora in carica, Giovanni Micali, propose a Deborah Compagnoni di entrare a far parte del gruppo di Goodwill Ambassadors che offrivano il loro sostegno all’Organizzazione.

Compagnoni afferma che, sin dal primo momento in cui ha iniziato a collaborare con Unicef, si è resa conto delle difficoltà che ostacolano il lavoro dell’Organizzazione. “Anche per la semplice diffusione di un fascicolo di regole, come quelle contenute nella Carta della Sicurezza dei Bambini sulle piste, si sono verificati problemi di coordinamento tra regioni e istituzioni italiane. Il progetto doveva essere applicato a livello nazionale, ma poi l’applicazione o meno di tali norme dipendeva dalla volontà degli impianti delle località sciistiche. Il mancato controllo dell’applicazione di queste semplici norme da parte delle istituzioni regionali e provinciali ha complicato la realizzazione del progetto stesso”.
Alla domanda “Cosa pensa del contributo portato dagli Ambasciatori Unicef?”, la Presidentessa Mariella Andreatta risponde affermando che il ruolo rivestito dagli Ambasciatori è di fondamentale importanza. Gli Ambasciatori sono una risorsa per la comunicazione diretta tra l’Organizzazione e il pubblico, che riceve il messaggio in modo chiaro e diretto. Gli Ambasciatori sono dunque un metodo comunicativo efficace, che raggiunge un target molto più esteso di persone. La Presidentessa spiega che è per questo motivo che ogni Comitato Nazionale per l’Unicef identifica e nomina i propri Ambasciatori, che li accompagneranno e li sosterranno per la realizzazione di diversi progetti. La continuità che gli Ambasciatori offrono nella creazione di nuovi progetti e per l’avvio di campagne per la raccolta fondi è ineguagliabile.

Per quanto riguarda il caso specifico di Deborah Compagnoni, Andreatta si sente di ringraziarla dicendo “per noi Deborah è importantissima, e incarna ciò che gli Ambasciatori dovrebbero rappresentare: l’immagine positiva. L’Ambasciatore deve essere, come lo è Deborah, una persona positiva e corretta, che ha dato il meglio di sé ed ha sacrificato una parte della sua vita per la sua passione e in onore del nostro Paese”.

Il pubblico si sente rappresentato in quanto “italiano”, e sente un legame d’appartenenza che li lega ai personaggi famosi che hanno mantenuto alto il nome dell’Italia. Questo simbolo crea empatia e sensibilizzazione nei confronti delle cause per le quali questi personaggi si battono e si impegnano, stimolando la partecipazione attiva del pubblico.

Secondo Deborah Compagnoni, ciò che rende ancora più efficace e stimolante il ruolo del Goodwill Ambassador è il viaggio verso le mete che prevedono la realizzazione di determinati progetti. “Gli Ambasciatori come me devono collaborare per progetti che non siano solo locali, ma che seguano la mission di Unicef, che prevede appunto di operare per il rispetto dei diritti di tutti i bambini del mondo”. Grazie all’intervista rilasciatami da queste due donne, ho compreso che
collaborare con Unicef significa intraprendere prima di tutto un viaggio all’interno di se stessi, per poi applicare sul campo la grinta necessaria al compimento del vero viaggio che la missione richiede di intraprendere. Sono d’accordo con Compagnoni nel momento in cui afferma “è necessario che l’Ambasciatore tocchi con mano la realtà nelle quali si andrà ad operare, e che entri nel pieno del proprio ruolo”.

Andretta specifica che il ruolo dell’Ambasciatore è anche mediatico: spetta all’Ambasciatore rilasciare interviste che possano permettere la divulgazione dei progetti. Non solo, l’Ambasciatore che si reca nei luoghi d’emergenza è accompagnato da un’equipe di giornalisti che preparano reportage o “diari di viaggio”. I protagonisti molto spesso sono gli stessi Ambasciatori, proprio per innescare un processo di identificazione che stimola ulteriormente la sensibilizzazione del pubblico.

Le mie intervistate riportano molti esempi di Ambasciatori che hanno condotto efficacemente campagne ed eventi per la raccolta di fondi.

Nel giugno 2013 Andrea lo Cicero, campione del rugby azzurro e testimonial per la Campagna UNICEF contro la mortalità infantile “Vogliamo Zero”, insieme al Direttore generale dell’UNICEF Italia Davide Usai e a Chiara Curto (ufficio Campagne & Partnership di UNICEF Italia) è stato in missione in Eritrea per visitare i progetti che l’UNICEF sostiene in cooperazione con il governo di Asmara, con particolare attenzione a quelli sulla sopravvivenza e sul sviluppo della prima infanzia finanziati in questi anni dai donatori italiani (l’Unicef Italia ha trasferito 850.704 euro al progetto).

Nel 2005 Lino Banfi ha scelto di unirsi alla missione di Unicef prestando la sua voce come Lucanòr il Mago, uno dei personaggi del cartone animato "L’isola degli smemorati", tratto da una storia scritta da Bianca Pitzorno. Il mezzo che il cartone animato rappresenta è di immediata
ricezione, e fa parte del linguaggio che viene recepito più velocemente dai bambini, i veri destinatari delle campagne Unicef.

Nel 2013 Francesco Totti è protagonista del video-appello per promuovere il numero solidale a sostegno della campagna di raccolta fondi congiunta UNICEF-World Food Programme per l'intervento umanitario a seguito del tifone che ha devastato le Filippine. Francesco Totti, è fra i più noti Goodwill Ambassador dell'Unicef Italia.

Nel 2010 Roberto Bolle, étoile del Teatro alla Scala di Milano promuove il "Roberto Bolle Gala for Unicef 2010". L’evento è stato concepito per celebrare il 21° anniversario della Convenzione ONU sui diritti dell’infanzia e dell’adolescenza, ed ha permesso di radunare oltre 2000 spettatori.

Dopo aver discusso sul ruolo dell’Ambasciatori, mi accorgo che tutte le iniziative promosse dagli stessi per Unicef si rivolgono principalmente per missioni all’estero. Gli obiettivi si concentrano sulla vaccinazione, la malnutrizione e la mortalità infantile. “Quali sono gli obiettivi principali che il Comitato Nazionale si pone e che quindi, di conseguenza, sono perseguiti anche dai Comitati Regionali e Provinciali?” Andretta risponde che in Italia i problemi principali sono quelli legati principalmente all’educazione (specialmente l’accesso alla scuola primaria). Unicef cerca di diffondere il più possibile i diritti e i doveri sanciti dalla Convenzione dei diritti del Bambino.

Il secondo grande obiettivo che Unicef Italia e Unicef Treviso perseguono è il diritto alla partecipazione. Le amministrazioni comunali si impegnano a collaborare con Unicef allo scopo di facilitare il perseguimento di tale scopo, tramite incontri giovanili che stimolino all’apprendimento e all’introiezione dei principi dell’educazione civica.
Compagnoni interviene sostenendo che “il rapporto con i giovani è importante, perché sono loro i destinatari dell’operato di Unicef. Purtroppo c’è sempre maggiore distacco tra la realtà dei giovani e le istituzioni giovanili”. Secondo le intervistate, la causa è da individuare nella sfiducia che loro definiscono “cronica” dei giovani nei confronti delle istituzioni italiane. “Le istituzioni sono viste sempre di più in modo negativo” afferma Compagnoni, e Andretta aggiunge “serve fiducia nella società e nel Paese (convinzione che il Paese sia democratico), e che ci sia il rispetto dei vari ruoli che si coordinano tra di loro in modo efficiente e per un senso di appartenenza”.

Unicef Italia cerca di coinvolgere i giovani con uno specifico gruppo di volontari, Youniecef. I ragazzi e le ragazze di Youniecef si propongono di essere promotori della partecipazione attiva, sostenitori del contributo che i giovani possono portare per lo sviluppo della comunità di appartenenza. La mobilitazione giovanile porta allo sviluppo di strumenti necessari per una effettiva collaborazione ed interscambio, che possa raggiungere i giovani in maniera più efficace e diretta.

Unicef ha colto che solo con la partecipazione dei giovani è possibile dar voce ad una generazione che offre nuove idee e progetti, che possono rivoluzionare in positivo la crescita culturale, morale e sociale della comunità.

Youniecef intende raggiungere una mobilitazione giovanile tale per cui possa risultare in grado di incidere sul dibattito culturale, creando occasioni di attivismo tra i giovani e gli adolescenti ed essere così un’opportunità in più di aggregazione ed incontro.

Youniecef si rivolge a tutte le ragazze e i ragazzi di età compresa tra i 14 ed i 30 anni che riconoscono di essere in possesso delle potenzialità sopra descritti, e che intendono abbracciare la causa di Unicef.
Grazie ad Unicef, e a tutti i cittadini che collaborano per la promozione dei diritti dei bambini, è stato possibile divulgare i diritti sanciti dalla Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti dell’infanzia, all’interno della quale Unicef individua le linee guida del suo operato e i principi cardine del suo lavoro: ogni bambino ha il diritto di essere protetto; ogni bambino ha il diritto di ricevere un’istruzione che gli permetta di vivere una vita dignitosa; ogni bambino ha il diritto a godere di una buona salute ed usufruire di cure mediche adeguate, ma anche di avere un nome e una nazionalità; ogni bambino ha il diritto di partecipare alle decisioni che lo riguardano e il diritto di non essere discriminato.

Unicef si mobilita per la difesa di tali diritti non soltanto all’interno dei parlamenti delle grandi città nel momento in cui vengono indette nuove leggi, o vengono attuate nuove politiche e bilanci, ma anche nelle piazze a stretto contatto con i cittadini. In questo modo il pubblico che viene raggiunto dalle campagne Unicef non è solo quello delle grandi capitali, ma anche quello delle piccole comunità.

Unicef sa rinnovarsi e mantenere un certo grado di modernità per raggiungere in modo più efficace i suoi obiettivi. Per esempio si serve di un metodo comunicativo che si affida in gran parte al mondo del Web: è possibile seguire passo dopo passo cosa accade durante la realizzazione dei progetti che i cittadini contribuiscono ad attuare, grazie ai report pubblicati online, alle photogallery, ai video e ai foto diari facilmente raggiungibili navigando in Internet. Questo è un metodo efficace per raggiungere un gran numero di followers interessati ad Unicef e alle sue iniziative, per confermare l’effettiva utilizzazione dei fondi ricevuti, per verificare il raggiungimento o meno degli obiettivi prefissati per ogni iniziativa, e per comunicare con i giovani che sono i primi destinatari delle a mission di Unicef.
Figura 37 L'incontro con l'Ambasciatrice Unicef Deborah Compagnoni.
PART FOUR: CONCLUSIVE REMARKS

Since the end of World War II Unicef played a crucial role in the system of international relations and humanitarian interventions. Not only the Organization did help to improve the conditions of millions of children and women, (reaching important objectives the world would never have imagined to reach), but Unicef also radically changed the methods of international humanitarian operations.

Differently from any other type of humanitarian sister-agency, the United Nations Children’s Fund realized the need of a new method of communication that could have been integrated with the modern world of rapid technological diffusion. Today, as in the past, since the moment when the Fund started to intervene beyond European borders, Unicef informs the public opinion about its activities and reason to exist. Since the Organization realized the major part of its funding has to be raised from voluntary donations, Unicef labeled the “public relations” as particularly important to help improving the lives of children worldwide and to contribute to the achievement of a strong public support from the whole international community.

Due to Unicef belief that the media represent the most powerful means for promoting general awareness, the Organization (for the first time in history of international humanitarian interventions) today is still the United Nations agency that stand above and apart from its sister agencies167.

Thanks to the presence of Unicef and its massive campaigns that reached the awareness of public opinion all around the world, the Convention on the Rights of the Child did not remain

167 Niklas Bergström, Towards an integrated theory of communication in international relations: UNICEF and the need of a communications strategy. (Geneva: Institut universitaire de hautes études internationales 1988) p. 82.
only theory, but became practice and has been adopted concretely for children-focused operations.

The creation of the Fund has produced significant results: more children than ever before are surviving past their fifth birthdays. An impressive number of children received vaccinations against diseases such as polio, which is nearly eradicated. The Organization cooperates with Governments to improve access to education, sanitation, water and nutrition. More youth are participating in matters affecting their own lives and taking an active role on the promotion of the rights of the child.

Despite the fact that today there are still children who continue to need the intervention of Unicef for their well-being, these gains are important. Using the words of Anthony Lake, the Executive Director of Unicef, “We cannot claim that children’s rights are being upheld when 17,000 children under the age of 5 die every day, largely from causes we know how to prevent”\textsuperscript{168} but the changes that the international humanitarian system faced are the proof that common goals and shared effort can drive real change for children on the global, national and local levels\textsuperscript{169}.

The widespread ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is one of the greatest triumphs of the past quarter century. Now the universal ratification of the Convention has to be achieved to ensure an even greater application.

This November marks 25 years since the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Unicef ponders about its experience and takes the opportunity to ask itself: what should the international community do to continue making the world a better place for children? the Executive Director of Unicef answers: “the best interests of

\textsuperscript{169} \textit{ivi}, p.4.
the child shall be a primary consideration, so we have a responsibility now ... to put equity and children’s rights at the centre of an agenda of action for all children”\textsuperscript{170}.

Since the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child many progresses have been made in the world: despite the fact that a child born today has better prospects in life than a child who was born in 1989, it is important to understand that this is not true for every child in the world. The lives of millions of children have improved since 1990, but millions of children continue to live in extreme poverty. As reported in “25 Years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Is the world a better place for children?” also today children born to poor parents, children of ethnic minorities, children who live in rural areas, and children with disabilities all remain particularly vulnerable; despite progress, millions of children are still deprived of access to safe drinking water; the 9% of children of primary school age remains without access to education; levels of birth registration remain below 50% in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia; in the least developed countries, nearly one in four children is engaged in labour; even if the prevalence is declining, child marriage is still common, especially in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Worldwide the situation is still critical, but even just the awareness of problems that affect the well-being of children represents a sort of “victory”: during the past 25 years, the quantity and quality of data on children have increased tremendously. The critical gaps that characterized researches before the mid-1990s are strongly reduced. The availability of statistics on children and women improved after the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the advent of the World Summit for Children goals for 2000 (that happened in 1990\textsuperscript{171}).

Such a development on collection of data has been possible due to the regular modification of tools of data collection, analysis and dissemination. This process of constant

\textsuperscript{171} Ivi, p.40.
renewal is known as “development data revolution”, and it is considered one of the most important success of the post-2000 development agenda\textsuperscript{172}.

However, the agenda for child rights is far from complete. Especially because of the recent phenomena that we experience today. The frenetic speed of global change, trauma and toxic stress due to the environmental pollution, the challenge of widening disparities, the digital revolution and a multipolar world, widespread economic crisis represent an obstacle to the fulfillment of human rights obligations, the magnitude of the violence of countries destroyed by conflicts characterized by indiscriminate attacks that affect children (in the Syrian Arab Republic, in the Central African Republic, in South Sudan, in Iraq and in Gaza) are all events that during the advent of the Convention were not envisaged.

The power of the Convention cannot be measured in ratifications, national laws or government intentions. The real test is whether or not its existence make a difference in the lives of children.

For these reasons, today the real challenge could be seen as the fulfillment of Governments obligations under the Convention, that is fundamental for a further realization of children’s rights. This is the opinion of Professor Kristen Sandberg, a Norwegian jurist and expert on the rights of children. She is the current Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and she applies her experience and preparation trying to understand the future path Unicef (and the whole international community) has to walk.

With support from Unicef and other partners, the Committee is developing a more detailed framework for accountability that will help countries monitor and evaluate their implementation of the Convention, thus promoting the general realization of children’s rights.

States parties to the Convention are obliged to submit reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child every five years; after having received the countries’ reports, the Committee provides the State with its concluding observations. Providing observations, the Committee is dependent on a State’s own motivation to address the concerns and recommendations listed in the observations of the Committee, and on independent national human rights institutions, children’s ombudspersons, Unicef and civil society – including children – to advocate to the State for addressing violations of the Convention.\textsuperscript{173}

Anyway, political engagement (even if it is crucial for children issues) it is not sufficient. What the world need to maintain a certain level of protection of children is the mutual contribution between the civil society and the political power. Today, binding human rights standards are integrated into national legislation in many policy areas in countries across the world, but the key issue is: how to move beyond laws and institutions to concretely improve people conditions?

The answer is suggested by Kevin Watkins, the Executive Director of the Overseas Development Institute in the United Kingdom: “In the case of the Convention, as for other human rights instruments, the answer to that question is dictated by the three ‘As’: accountability, activism and advocacy.”\textsuperscript{174}

The concept is the same of Unicef advocacy, that is children must to be activists and advocates for the Convention, in order to support the political assistance and to spread the need for the protection of children’s rights as wider as possible.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{173} UNICEF (2014) “25 Years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Is the world a better place for children?”, p.66.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{174}Ivi, p.95.}
As affirmed by Watkins, “Activism and advocacy by children for children could provide a political impetus that makes the Convention a more powerful force for change”\(^\text{175}\).

The ultimate task is that of Governments but, to maintain the promise of the Convention, children will require active engagement by citizens and civil society worldwide. This is the only way to ensure rights for every child, as Unicef always did.

The equity approach continues this tradition and holds the promise of helping realize children’s rights everywhere to a degree never before possible. Unicef was never meant to be here today in the first decade of the 21\(^{\text{st}}\) century. Yet today a world without Unicef is unimaginable.

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