



UNICEF

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is a special program of the **United Nations (UN)** devoted to aiding national efforts to improve the health, nutrition, education, and general welfare of children.

History

- **UNICEF** was created in **1946** as International Children's Emergency Fund (ICEF) by UN relief Rehabilitation Administration to help children affected by World War II.
- UNICEF became a **permanent part** of the [United Nations](#) in **1953**.
 - The name was shortened to **United Nations Children Fund** but it is still referred to as UNICEF.
- It is **mandated by the United Nations General Assembly** to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.
- UNICEF is guided by the **Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989**.
 - It strives to establish **children's rights** as enduring **ethical principles** and **international standards** of behaviour towards children.
- Awarded the **Nobel Prize for Peace** in 1965 for "**promotion of brotherhood among the nations**".
- **Headquarters:** New York City.
 - It works in over 190 countries and territories with **7 regional offices**.

Scope of Work

- After 1950, the UNICEF directed its efforts toward general programs for the improvement of children's welfare, particularly in **less-developed countries** and in various emergency situations.
 - It eventually expanded its scope to the struggle of women, especially mothers, in the developing world. For example, it launched its '**Women in Development Programme**' in 1980.
 - In 1982, UNICEF commenced a new **children's health program** that focused on **monitoring growth, oral rehydration therapy, advocating breastfeeding and immunization**.
- The work of the UNICEF includes:
 - Child Development and Nutrition;
 - Child Protection;
 - Education;
 - Child Environment;
 - Polio Eradication;
 - Reproductive and Child Health;
 - Children and AIDS;
 - Social Policy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation;
 - Advocacy and Partnership;

- Behaviour Change Communication;
- Emergency Preparedness and Response.
- UNICEF **mobilizes political** will and material resources to help countries, particularly developing countries.
- UNICEF is committed to ensuring special protection for the most disadvantaged children — victims of war, disasters, extreme poverty, all forms of violence and exploitation, especially those with disabilities.
- UNICEF works with all its partners towards the attainment of the **sustainable human development goals** adopted by the world community.
- The realization of the vision of peace and social progress enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Structure

- UNICEF is governed by an **Executive Board** consisting of 36 members that are elected to terms of three years by the **United Nations' Economic and Social Council**.
- The following countries are home to UNICEF Regional Offices.
 - The Americas and Caribbean Regional Office, **Panama City, Panama**
 - Europe and Central Asia Regional Office, **Geneva, Switzerland**
 - East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, **Bangkok, Thailand**
 - Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office, **Nairobi, Kenya**
 - The Middle East and North Africa Regional Office, **Amman, Jordan**
 - South Asia Regional Office, **Kathmandu, Nepal**
 - West and Central Africa Regional Office, **Dakar, Senegal**
- Each region that UNICEF serves is allocated a number of seats on the Executive Board, so all regions are represented.
- There are also **36 national committees** across the globe, which are non-governmental organizations that help promote the rights of children and fundraise.

Funding

- The national committees are an integral part of UNICEF's global organization and a unique feature of UNICEF.
 - Serving as the public face and dedicated voice of UNICEF, the National Committees work tirelessly to raise funds from the private sector, promote children's rights and secure worldwide visibility for children threatened by poverty, disasters, armed conflict, abuse and exploitation.
- UNICEF is funded exclusively by **voluntary contributions**, and the **National Committees** collectively raise around one-third of UNICEF's annual income.
 - This comes through contributions from corporations, civil society organizations and more than 6 million individual donors worldwide.
- It also rallies many different partners – including the media, national and local government officials, NGOs, specialists such as doctors and lawyers, corporations, schools, young people and the general public – on issues related to children's rights.

UNICEF and India

- UNICEF **began its work in India in 1949** with three staff members and established an office in Delhi three years later.
 - Currently, it advocates for the rights of India's children in 16 states.
- **Nodal Ministries:** Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- Work done by UNICEF in India includes:
 - **Census support, 2011:** Gender issues were mainstreamed into the training and

communication strategy for the 2011 Census.

- This helped 2.7 million enumerators and supervisors collect quality disaggregated data as part of the UNICEF contribution to the joint United Nations support to the Census.
- **Polio Campaign, 2012:** Polio cases in India fell from 559 in 2008 to zero cases in 2012.
 - The Government, in partnership with **UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Rotary International** and the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** contributed to almost universal awareness of the need to vaccinate all children under five against polio.
 - As a result of these efforts, India was removed from the list of endemic countries in 2014.
- **Reduction in MMR, 2013:** UNICEF's support to the **National Health Mission (NHM)** and the second phase of the **Reproductive and Child Health programme** resulted in increased access to institutional and community-based maternal, neonatal and child health services.
 - This contributed to a reduction in the **Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR)** to **130** (2014-16), and the **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)** to **34** (2016). (Data Source: NITI Aayog)
 - **MMR** is defined as the proportion of maternal deaths per 1,00,000 live births.
 - **IMR** is the number of deaths per 1,000 live births of children under one year of age.
- **Call to Action, 2013:** This initiative was launched to reduce under-five mortality.
 - It has brought together state governments, development partners, such as UNICEF, NGOs, the corporate sector and other key stakeholders under the umbrella to ensure harmony in efforts to accelerate inroads in child survival.
- **Maternal and Child Nutrition, 2013:** The **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)** successfully launched a nationwide communication campaign on **Maternal and Child Nutrition** with UNICEF Ambassador promoting nutrition for children.
 - This was one of the largest public service campaigns in the country, reaching people across India, through diverse means of communication in 18 languages.
- **India Newborn Action Plan, 2014:** This is first of this kind in the region, builds upon the existing commitments for newborn under **Call to Action, the RMNCH+A (Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child Health + Adolescent)**.

Strategic Plan (2018-2021)

- The plan will help realize and protect the rights of all children through five goal areas, which are linked to both the **Sustainable Development Goals** and **the Convention on the Rights of the Child**:
 - every child survives and thrives;
 - every child learns;
 - every child is protected from violence and exploitation;
 - every child lives in a safe and clean environment; and
 - every child has an equitable chance in life.
- The plan also includes two additional areas that cut across all of the other goals:
 - gender equality
 - humanitarian action
- It promotes synergies across goal areas to address early childhood development and adolescent development, and to support children with disabilities.

The Future of the Child (The Child in 2030)

- **Foresight for action:** It is the methodologies, practices and processes that help UNICEF to navigate uncertainty and better prepare for the future.
- Foresight identifies emerging trends and the changing circumstances that could impact the future of the child.
- It allows UNICEF to look beyond what is probable and prepare for what is possible.
- To demonstrate the utility of foresight, UNICEF analyses five megatrends that are of growing importance for children:
 - global health crises
 - inequality and the middle-income trap
 - the changing nature and scale of the conflict
 - global migration
 - the effects of technology on work and education

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