



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
27 July 2000

Original: English

For action

United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Board

Second regular session 2000

18-20 September 2000

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

Recommendation for funding for a short-duration country programme**

Honduras

Summary

The present document contains a recommendation for funding from regular resources and other resources for the country programme of Honduras with a duration of one year to support activities that will lead to the preparation of a full-length country programme. The Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board approve the amount of \$876,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$900,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the year 2001.

* E/ICEF/2000/14.

** The figures provided in the present document are final and taken into account unspent balances of programme cooperation at the end of 1999. They will be contained in the summary of recommendations for regular resources and other resources programmes (E/ICEF/2000/P/L.27).

Basic data

(1998 unless otherwise stated)

Child population (millions, under 18 years)	3
U5MR (per 1,000 live births)	44
IMR (per 1,000 live births)	33
Underweight (% moderate and severe)	18
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births) (1997)	220
Literacy (% male/female) (1995)	70/69
Primary school enrolment (% net, male/female) (1993)	89/91
Primary school children reaching grade 5 (%) (1995)	60
Access to safe water (%) (1999)	78
Routine EPI vaccines financed by Government (%)	100
GNP per capita (US\$) (1997)	740
One-year-olds fully immunized against:	
tuberculosis	96%
diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus	97%
measles	99%
poliomyelitis	98%
Pregnant women immunized against tetanus	--

The situation of children and women

1. The 1996-2000 UNICEF programme of cooperation in Honduras was seriously disrupted because of the tremendous impact of Hurricane Mitch in 1998. UNICEF Honduras is seeking approval for a one-year, short-duration programme to allow completion of several programming goals, and to bring into harmonization the programming cycles of UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The programme would also consolidate plans for the next phase of cooperation with the Government.

2. Poverty and slow growth have been chronic in the Honduran economy. According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), between 1981 and 1990, there was negative growth in per capita gross domestic product (-0.8 per cent), with slight growth (0.2 per cent) between 1991 and 1999. Industrial development has been limited, and the country depends on exports of such commodities as bananas, coffee and wood. Hurricane Mitch destroyed much of this productive capacity, worsening the

poverty that affects more than 75 per cent of the population. Efforts at national recovery are largely oriented towards economic transformation and physical reconstruction: 1,280 kilometres of roads have been repaired, 21 metal bridges have been built, and an estimated 59,000 houses are under construction.

3. The impact of Hurricane Mitch on child health was severe. It destroyed 12 per cent of health installations, including 20 per cent of hospitals. The incidence of sanitation-related diseases increased, and there was a rise of 84 per cent in diarrhoeal disease, mainly affecting children under 15. Two years after the catastrophe, the infant mortality rate (IMR) once again ranks among the highest in the Americas and the Caribbean. Major childhood diseases — malaria, dysentery and upper respiratory infections — continue to be under-treated due to a lack of infrastructure and qualified personnel, and the inability of much of the population to pay for the medicines that are available. Recovery of the health infrastructure is advancing, with 105 primary health care services and 7 hospitals rehabilitated and functioning. Action has been taken to control cholera, dengue and malaria.

4. Malnutrition continues to be a major problem. According to government figures, almost 40 per cent of

children between the ages of 12 months and 71 months have insufficient height for age, and 25 per cent are underweight. Fourteen per cent of the same age group also suffer from vitamin A deficiency, and 30 per cent are anaemic. The national maternal mortality rate (MMR) is a concern, recorded at 221 per 100,000 live births in 1990 and at 147 in 1997. More positively, immunization coverage has been sustained at over 95 per cent, and no new cases of polio have been reported since 1994. The vaccination of women of child-bearing age with tetanus toxoid has increased from 41 to 88 per cent.

5. Hurricane Mitch also affected water systems. In rural areas, 30 per cent of the population is without access to water and 50 per cent without adequate sanitation. The Tegucigalpa water system is being reconstructed, with 35 kilometres of pipeline completed and a distribution network re-established. Aqueducts have been constructed in 46 urban and 1,700 rural areas. However, much work remains in these areas to bring water systems back to levels that existed before the hurricane.

6. Pre-school coverage for children 4 to 6 years of age increased from 17.1 per cent in 1990 to 38.8 per cent in 1999. However, early childhood care for children under the age of three remains extremely limited. Net primary school enrolment has gradually increased, but the quality of primary schooling is an issue, as indicated by the low completion rates: 46.8 per cent of students do not complete the full primary cycle. Following Hurricane Mitch, an estimated 25 per cent of all primary school classrooms and nearly all nonformal pre-school centres were destroyed. However, government, community and family efforts reduced the impact of this damage on enrolment. Government figures indicate that net primary school enrolment, at its highest in 1997 (87.3) per cent, was only slightly reduced to 85.7 in 1999. Pre-school coverage actually improved, increasing from 163,790 students in 1998 to 202,806 in 1999. Reconstruction of 472 schools has been completed; 747 classrooms, 19 schools, 160 pre-school centres and 6 high schools have been built; and more than 1,000 schools have received furniture and equipment.

7. Adolescents remain a neglected group. High school enrolment covers only 33 per cent of the target population. Urban migration and limited educational opportunities have brought an increase in juvenile and family violence. According to Ministry of Health data,

25 per cent of all deliveries in Tegucigalpa during 1998 were to adolescent girls between 15 and 19 years of age. The major causes of death in the 15-24-year age group are violence and suicide.

8. Based on Ministry of Health data, 10,866 cases of AIDS and 3,158 HIV-positive patients were registered in 1999. Taking into consideration the reality of under-registration, it is estimated that up to 40,000 Hondurans may be infected, most via heterosexual transmission. It is estimated that 42 per cent of all persons infected with HIV/AIDS are women; 4 per cent of all cases are found in the adolescent age group; and 73 per cent are found in the under-40 population. A total of 561 cases of HIV/AIDS was registered for children under 4, with almost all caused by mother-to-child transmission, and 167 cases were registered for the 5-14-year group. The Honduran Association of Persons Living with HIV/AIDS estimates that no fewer than 1,200 children are orphans due to HIV/AIDS. Forty-eight per cent of HIV/AIDS cases are concentrated in San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa.

9. The Government and civil society have made important strides in translating commitments of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into legislation, policy development and structural change. In 1996, Congress passed the Code on Children and Adolescents, and the Honduran Institute for Childhood and Family (IHNFA) was established. Honduras has undertaken a recent initiative — led by the First Lady and municipalities — to dramatically increase birth registration, as part of the regional “Right to a Name” movement.

Programme cooperation, 1996-2000

10. The 1996-2000 programme of cooperation aimed to support the fulfilment of children's rights through provision of basic services and strengthening of institutions that guarantee these rights. Social communication, advocacy and training were key strategies to build the capacity of government, civil society, communities and families to promote children's rights and extend protection measures to vulnerable groups. Hurricane Mitch had a severe impact on these goals, and the country programme was broadened to include support to government relief

and rehabilitation efforts — programmes that will also continue under the proposed programme.

11. Through the health and nutrition programme, in order to reduce maternal mortality, UNICEF provided support for social communication initiatives, training of traditional birth attendants (TBAs), provision of equipment for maternal birth delivery units, and development of norms and training for high-risk births. UNICEF cooperated with the National Associations of Salt and Sugar Producers, providing micronutrients for the first year of project implementation, to ensure that 87 per cent of nationally produced sugar is fortified with vitamin A and 86 per cent of salt for use in households is iodized. This last measure contributed to decreased incidence of goitre, from 4.5 to 3.5 per cent. UNICEF also cooperated with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Ministry of Health, municipalities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to promote HIV/AIDS prevention, with programmes reaching 150,000 adolescents.

12. As part of its response to Hurricane Mitch, UNICEF cooperated with the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Ministry of Health to promote breastfeeding in 16 shelters. UNICEF was the focal point for the United Nations system and the Ministry to provide guidelines for nutrition and special attention for severely malnourished children in shelters and public hospitals. These actions in turn catalysed coordination among all other agencies and NGOs. UNICEF assisted the Ministry of Health in the reconstruction and equipping of 140 health centres and maternal and child health clinics. Community and city sanitation was improved through the provision of equipment and supplies, and a national information campaign on cholera prevention was organized. The number of cholera cases fell from 280 in 1998 to 57 in 1999.

13. The water and environmental sanitation programme, supported by the National Water Authority (SANAA), sought to provide safe water to 152,000 people in poor urban settlements in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, and to 43,000 people in rural villages in western Honduras. UNICEF provided financial support for transportation, chemicals and basic equipment. Following Hurricane Mitch, UNICEF continued to be the United Nations focal point for water and environmental sanitation initiatives. In coordination with UNDP, chemicals for water

treatment were provided to SANAA and to the Ministry of Health, ensuring clean water for 1.4 million inhabitants in the main cities. Safe water was trucked to 750,000 residents of the capital, including 5,000 persons living in shelters. UNICEF provided materials, latrines and technical and logistical support to SANAA to rehabilitate 180 rural water supply and sanitation systems, benefiting 120,000 people. Wells and pumps benefited an additional 30,000 people in the three main Atlantic coast cities.

14. Through the education programme, in coordination with the Ministry of Education and with local government, UNICEF provided material support for primary and nonformal early childhood care and development centres (CEPENFs) in 189 out of 298 municipalities. This helped to promote the expansion of the CEPENF methodology by NGOs. Support was given to a new training programme for community educators designed by the National Pedagogical University, and 100 day-care centres were opened, benefiting 3,000 children, as part of a national IHNFA strategy. Following Hurricane Mitch, UNICEF cooperated with the National Pedagogical University and NGOs to implement a psychosocial rehabilitation programme for victims of the disaster, through a national network of volunteers. Based on the positive results from this effort, the methodology was later used in Kosovo. In coordination with other donors and national institutions, day-care services, CEPENFs and primary schools were established in shelters around the country. Training was also provided for volunteers in 14 shelters, to ensure health, food and hygiene security, community organization and vocational skills. Building supplies, furniture and educational materials were provided for 1,200 teachers and 25,000 children of damaged public schools, CEPENFs and day-care centres around the country.

15. The children's rights programme contributed to the passage in Congress of the Code on Children and Adolescence, through systematic advocacy and technical support. Another milestone was the creation of IHNFA to formulate, implement and coordinate public policies in favour of children and adolescents, emphasizing registration of newborns through national government registration offices. UNICEF supported the First Lady's child registration initiative with assistance in the area of communication. After the hurricane, the child's rights programme provided technical and logistical assistance to IHNFA to open offices in

shelters to protect the rights of children. Through the Ministry of the Interior, security points were established in and around shelters for the protection of women and children living there.

16. The local planning, monitoring and evaluation programme promoted the "Pact for Children" in 298 municipalities, to ensure self-governance and positive attitudes and practices concerning the rights of the child. Municipal Child Defenders were elected in 168 municipalities. Alliances with the private sector and the media allowed for fund-raising and for wider dissemination of information on children, adolescents and women.

17. Through the women-in-development programme, gender mainstreaming was incorporated in all UNICEF-supported education and social mobilization activities. This contributed to the creation of the National Institute for Women, responsible for formulating, implementing and coordinating programmes and policies for women. UNICEF cooperated with the Supreme Court and the Justice Department in training 1,500 judges, prosecutors and defence attorneys in the interpretation and application of national and international laws protecting women.

18. The advocacy, communication and social mobilization programme supported all programme areas through a cross-cutting information, education and communication strategy. This reinforced alliances with the media and political and civil society leaders to promote child rights. UNICEF led initiatives to mobilize private sector, NGO and media investment of an estimated \$6 million for child-related programmes. Knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) studies demonstrated the reach of communication activities: 79 per cent of the adult population received information on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and 92 per cent of municipal mayors were familiar with the goals of the National Plan of Action of the Pact for Children.

Lessons learned from past cooperation

19. UNICEF investment in mobilizing municipal governments and communities in the fulfilment of child rights was critical in initiating, expanding and strengthening the decentralization process. A continuation of these municipal capacity-building initiatives is necessary to support decentralization,

guarantee best utilization of government resources, and strengthen multisectoral and partner coordination.

20. Effective and timely responses to future emergency situations and reconstruction will require the development of a national emergency/disaster response plan. UNICEF will develop a corresponding contingency plan, combined with systematic internal (UNICEF) and external (government and NGO) human resource development initiatives in disaster prevention, life-saving interventions, child-family-environmental protection, and psychosocial rehabilitation.

21. The establishment of relevant, rapid and accurate information and communication systems among UNICEF country, regional and headquarters offices, and National Committees, in close coordination with government information systems, is critical for effective emergency response, particularly in terms of appropriate and timely fund-raising initiatives.

22. The present country programme, with 7 programmes and 19 projects, limits UNICEF capacity to effectively support counterpart implementation and undertake systematic monitoring and timely evaluations of UNICEF cooperation. While it is necessary for UNICEF to continue with this complex structure during the proposed short-duration programme, the 2000-2001 programme period will be used for developing, with counterparts, a more focused programme structure, within the framework of child rights and the life cycle approach.

Country programme preparation process

23. The process for the proposed short-duration programme was initiated with a request from the Technical Secretary of Cooperation (SETCO) to extend the current programme for one year, to allow further United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) development (based on the recently completed Common Country Assessment (CCA)), clarification of long-term government objectives and completion of existing post-hurricane commitments. Under SETCO leadership, consultations were carried out with other government institutions, United Nations agencies and donors to define priorities. This will allow UNICEF to harmonize its programme cycle with those of UNDP, WFP and UNFPA.

Recommended programme cooperation, 2001

Estimated annual expenditure

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	<i>Total</i>
Regular resources	
Children's rights	100
Health and nutrition	175
Education	145
Women in development	75
Water and environmental sanitation	75
Advocacy, communication and social mobilization	116
Local planning, monitoring and evaluation	90
Cross-sectoral costs	100
Subtotal	876
Other resources	
Children's rights	72
Health and nutrition	315
Education	63
Water and environmental sanitation	450
Subtotal	900
Total	1 776

Country programme goals and objectives

24. The programme will continue to focus on the achievement of 1996-2000 country programme goals, supporting the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and achievement of World Summit for Children goals. Further actions will also contribute to improving the situation of the poorest women and children — especially those affected by Hurricane Mitch — and indigenous groups in the west and south-west of the country.

25. Based on existing objectives, priority will be given to: (a) reducing under-five mortality due to diarrhoea and pneumonia; (b) increasing immunization coverage in areas where it is below the national average; (c) expanding initiatives for safe motherhood, particularly in six departments where MMR is highest;

(d) promoting HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention for youth in San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa; (e) promoting universal salt iodization and fortification of sugar with vitamin A; (f) improving the nutritional status of children under two years of age; (g) improving access to, and quality of, early childhood care and primary education in rural schools; (h) expanding water supply and sanitation systems in rural communities and urban slum areas; and (i) supporting implementation of the new Code on Children and Adolescents and related laws. UNICEF will also work to complete post-Mitch commitments, supporting the Government in rehabilitation efforts, in order to return to previous higher levels of achievement of World Summit goals.

Relation to national and international priorities

26. The proposed short-duration programme responds to national commitments to achieve international goals of the World Summit for Children, Education for All, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. The country programme also responds to priorities established in the national post-hurricane reconstruction plan. Proposed objectives and strategies reflect country commitments to emerging organizational priorities as described in UNICEF priority actions for children, the medium-term plan for 1998-2001, and Education for All efforts, especially in areas pertaining to early childhood and adolescence, within the life-cycle approach.

Programme strategy

27. The programme strategy remains essentially the same as contained in the 1996-2000 programme of cooperation, with a focus on the promotion, fulfilment and protection of children's rights. Strategies include: disparity reduction; convergence of activities in 9 departments (62 municipalities) in the south and western regions and peri-urban areas of Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula and La Ceiba; advocacy and social mobilization at national and subnational levels to increase the catalytic role of UNICEF in all programme areas; capacity-building at the municipal level to support government decentralization policies; community empowerment focusing on co-management of services and empowering families with knowledge, skills and values for healthful living; and development and strengthening of service delivery models and strategies, especially in response to emergency situations.

28. In the area of *children's rights*, UNICEF will contribute to implementation of policies that meet recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Components will include: enhancing national capacity through technical assistance and training in the process of legal reform aimed at congressional approval of the Adoption Law, the Labour Code and the Family Code; implementing an information system on adolescent offenders, with

government and NGO partners; expanding mobilization and communication activities to reduce by 30 per cent the number of children under 5 without a birth certificate; and advocating with the private sector, government authorities and NGOs, in coordination with the International Labour Organization (ILO), in implementation of the National Child Labour Eradication Plan.

29. The *health and nutrition programme* will continue to strengthen the integrated child health care strategy, through support to quality improvement of maternal and child health and primary health care services in nine departments. Specific objectives are to contribute to: (a) a 10 per cent reduction of infant and under-five mortality related to pneumonia and diarrhoea, and 10 per cent reduction of maternal mortality; (b) maintenance of, or improvement in, the 95 per cent child vaccination coverage; (c) a 10 per cent reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition in children under two years of age; (d) sustained iodization of 90 per cent of salt supplies, vitamin A fortification of 85 per cent of sugar, and iron fortification of 100 per cent of wheat flour; and (e) HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention for adolescents, and reduction of mother-to-child transmission.

30. To achieve proposed objectives, UNICEF will provide support for: in-service training of health workers, TBAs, parents and community health volunteers; training of local development council members in planning, monitoring and social mobilization; and provision of essential drugs. For specific nutrition project components, UNICEF will continue — in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (INCAP) — its cooperation with salt and sugar producers and the Ministry of Health to guarantee the availability of fortified food items. HIV/AIDS prevention activities, planned in coordination with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, will include training of teachers, health personnel, social communicators and adolescents/youths in basic concepts of prevention. Promotion of adolescent participation in HIV/AIDS issues will support their decision-making involvement and promote adolescent-to-adolescent awareness initiatives in high-risk cities.

31. The *education programme* will support increased access to and quality of CEPENFs and primary education programmes, involving more than 45,000 children under 12 years of age. Particular focus will be given to reduction of repetition and drop-out rates, especially for hurricane victims and ethnic minorities in the departments of Copan, Ocotepeque, Lempira, Intibuca and La Paz. UNICEF support will focus on: provision of education materials and equipment to damaged and/or closed pre-school and primary school services; expansion of training and technical assistance to strengthen the quality of educational services; and the development of high-quality educational materials for teachers and students. Advocacy and social mobilization efforts are envisioned to create public demand for increased investments in early childhood care for survival, growth and development, and family-focused care programmes. The psychosocial support programme for victims of the disaster will continue, through the involvement of the national network of volunteers established in 1998-1999.

32. The *women in development programme* (gender equity) will cover all programme areas to ensure consistency between existing legislation and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Emphasis will be given to capacity-building, social mobilization and communications. Technical assistance will be given to the Women's Bureau, Women's Congressional Commission and NGOs to accelerate legal reform and strengthen institutional capacity within the Convention framework.

33. The *water and environmental sanitation programme* will support SANAA in expanding the development of water and sanitation projects using low-cost technologies, and in community training in construction, operation and maintenance of systems, watershed protection and hygiene education. UNICEF support will contribute to the provision of water and sanitation facilities for 25,000 inhabitants of marginal areas of Tegucigalpa and 10,000 people in five rural departments in western Honduras. As United Nations focal point for the post-hurricane water programme, UNICEF will continue to coordinate assistance for the National Reconstruction Programme in this area and support specific projects jointly identified as United Nations-government priorities.

34. The *advocacy, communication and social mobilization* programme will be undertaken at all

levels to promote the rights of children and women, supporting UNICEF programmes to induce positive changes in attitudes, behaviour and values regarding women and children. Special attention will be given to communication strategies for the "Pact for Children". UNICEF will contribute to: (a) strengthening strategic alliances with the media to promote the well-being of children and women as a national priority; (b) encouraging positive behaviour and attitudes benefiting children; (c) promoting the enforcement of laws benefiting children; and (d) strengthening national, regional and local capacity to prevent and respond to emergency situations and natural disasters.

35. Through the *local planning, monitoring and evaluation programme*, assistance will be given to SETCO to strengthen institutional capacity to expand monitoring of Nation Plan of Action goals, and to sector information systems for decentralized data collection and planning. Through the National Mayors Association, technical support will be provided to 62 municipal development councils for the preparation of plans of actions related to children.

36. *Cross-sectoral costs* will be used to cover support staff costs (including salaries of the supply assistant, secretaries and drivers), temporary assistance, and operational expenses that cannot be covered within the support budget.

Monitoring and evaluation

37. The objectives of monitoring and evaluation in this one-year programme will be to ensure timely assessment of the needs of women and children, and to evaluate the relevance, scope and impact of UNICEF activities, including those developed in response to Hurricane Mitch. Indicators will include, inter alia, measurement of under-five and maternal mortality rates, immunization coverage, number of reported cases of HIV/AIDS, number of people served with new water and sanitation systems, and number of children benefiting from early childhood care and development services. The primary monitoring and evaluation strategies will include: joint field visits with government counterparts; revision and utilization of existing government information in areas related to UNICEF cooperation; internal project site visits on an average of five working days per month; at least two project review meetings with national and local counterparts by sector; and one annual review meeting,

organized by SETCO and held jointly with all counterparts.

38. The preparation of the new programme of cooperation will also provide critical information to assess the impact of UNICEF support during the past cooperation period. During 2000-2001, UNICEF will cooperate with SETCO to develop specific indicators and monitoring/evaluation strategies for the new country programme. Multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) results will provide disaggregated information to assist in the evaluation of achievement of goals. Municipal capacity-building initiatives will be undertaken to ensure improvement of local-level skills in monitoring and evaluation. The UNICEF representative will coordinate all monitoring and evaluation activities, with support from the senior programme officer.

conducted during the year. The country management team will meet periodically to monitor both programme and management performance through the use of quality management indicators.

Collaboration with partners

39. UNICEF will continue to strengthen United Nations co-ordination and elaborate the UNDAF. In every sector of intervention, UNICEF will work closely with bilateral agencies (the United States Agency for International Development, Canadian Agency for International Development and the Governments of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom) and multilateral organizations (World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, Organization of American States, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNDP and ILO), as well as with the NGO community, to conduct assessments and improve service delivery.

40. UNICEF will be actively involved with the Association of Municipalities of Honduras (AMHON) in all aspects relating to decentralization of services and mobilization of mayors. Cooperation with civil society and national and local media will be expanded as part of mobilization, public awareness and advocacy activities. As mentioned above, SETCO is the main government counterpart of UNICEF.

Programme management

41. Management of the country programme will involve a technical/steering committee comprising SETCO, relevant sectoral ministries and UNICEF. A programme review involving all partners will be

