

# UNICEF Inter-faith Action

## What is UNICEF?

UNICEF – the United Nations Children's Fund - is the only global organisation working specifically for children. UNICEF works with local communities and governments in 158 countries to help every child reach their full potential, ensuring that they have the essentials for a healthy start in life.

UNICEF spends less than 3% on administration and, receiving no direct funding from the United Nations, is reliant upon voluntary income to fund its work.



UNICEF/India/2004

## UNICEF and faith organisations

UNICEF is a non-religious, apolitical organisation; however faith based organisations are important partners in UNICEF's work. Religious leaders enjoy close and regular contact with communities, their voice is highly respected and they can be vital in influencing change.

Worldwide, UNICEF and partners from different faiths are acting together as advocates for children on a wide range of programmes. In the UK too, we want to work in partnership with all faith groups who share our goal and vision for a world fit for children, and invite the Jain community to take part in UNICEF's Interfaith Action to raise vital funds to support UNICEF's work for children in India.



UNICEF UK/2003/Laura Boardman

## UNICEF's work in India

India is home to 414 million children and 26 million more are born every year – more than in any other country. UNICEF is fully committed to working with the Indian Government to ensure that each child born in this vast and complex country receives the best start in life and thrives to develop his or her full potential.

## Early Childhood Health



One of the most serious concerns across the whole of India is the survival of young children. Almost a quarter of India's children die before they reach their fifth birthday. More than 2 million children die every year from preventable infections. Infant mortality is as high as 64 per 1,000 live births and maternal deaths are similarly high.

UNICEF is working to immunise children against the six major killer diseases, as diphtheria, measles, polio, tuberculosis, tetanus and whooping cough, as well as train birth attendants in safe birthing practices and provide resources and training for health centres in the poorer parts of India.

UNICEF/1999/Edward Carwardine

**£120 will immunise 10 children against the 6 killer diseases**

## Malnutrition in Gujarat



UNICEF/2001/David Bull

One third of malnourished children in the world live in India, and in Gujarat nearly half of the children are seriously underweight. Malnutrition limits a child's capacity to develop and learn. The problem is not related to food intake alone; it is also influenced by access to health services, care for children and pregnant mothers, and good hygiene practices.

In 2000, 75% of adolescent girls in the Vadodara district were found to be anaemic. UNICEF and the state government provided iron and folic acid tablets to over 64,000 girls in over 400 schools, reducing the prevalence of anaemia to 53%. This programme is now being implemented across the state. UNICEF also trains health workers and provides essential nutritional supplies for communities in Gujarat.

**£54 will pay for nutrition kits for 60 children in Gujarat for 30 days**

## Education in Rajasthan



UNICEF/HQ95-0774/Laura Hess

Almost a quarter of children aged between 6-10 years old are not attending school in Rajasthan. The education system faces a shortage of resources, schools and teachers, and because of the pressures of poverty, many children drop out before they complete primary education.

The absence of safe drinking water and toilets in many schools in Rajasthan caused children to fall frequently ill and seriously affected the enrolment and retention of students, especially girls.

In 2000, UNICEF, with the state government, launched a project to address sanitation and hygiene education in schools in the Alwar district. Toilets were built and drinking water was provided. Students were also educated about how to handle drinking water safely, dispose of wastewater, excreta and garbage and act as 'sanitation scouts' in their communities. Involving children as agents for change helped transform the mind-set of communities and facilitated widespread adoption of hygienic practices.

UNICEF aims to extend this initiative across Rajasthan, as well as work to encourage children to stay in school by making learning interactive, motivating and fun.

**Just £12.50 will send two children to school in Rajasthan, including the cost of books, classroom materials, teacher's salary and training**

### How you can help!

People of different faiths share a common concern for peace, justice and the welfare of children. UNICEF would like to work with the Jain community in translating this concern into action for children.

Please support UNICEF's work in India, helping to give children the best start in life.

Cheques can be made payable to UNICEF and sent to:

UNICEF Jains Interfaith Appeal, FREEPOST, Billericay, CM12 0BR

or call 0870 606 3377 or email [helpdesk@unicef.org.uk](mailto:helpdesk@unicef.org.uk) for more information.

*Thank you!*