



UNICEF

COMMITTEE OVERVIEW FOR THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

READ TO DISCOVER:

1. Why is education so important?
2. Why does UNICEF help mothers in addition to children?
3. Why is it important to have countries from all the different regions on the executive board?

The **United Nations Children's Fund**, or **UNICEF**, is a United Nations organization that helps children and mothers around the world. It was founded on December 11, 1946 to provide emergency help to children in the wake of World War II. At first, it was known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. Later it was renamed to its current United Nations Children's Fund, but people continue to refer to it by its old acronym, UNICEF.

The goal of UNICEF is to make sure that every child in the world is healthy, happy, and safe from harm. UNICEF does this in several ways. One thing it does is to send doctors to places where there are not enough doctors to take care of the sick. These doctors bring with them medicines called **immunizations** that help keep children from getting sick. UNICEF also helps children be able to go to school because **education** can help children get better jobs when they grow up. Finally, UNICEF tries to create a **protective environment** for children safe from violence, exploitation, and abuse.

In addition to working with children, UNICEF also runs programs to help mothers. When you offer health care and improved nutrition to a mother, the benefits are also passed on to her children. All studies also show that higher levels of education for mothers improves the life and support they are able to give to their children. Also, UNICEF is able to strengthen the home and family lives of children by offering aid to their mothers. Children in safe, stable homes are more likely to live happy, healthy lives.

All of the money that UNICEF uses to bring aid to mothers and children all around the world comes in the form of **voluntary donations**. These donations come from different sources, allowing groups and individuals to give as much or as little as they can. Some governments are able to donate millions of dollars to UNICEF while



David Beckham, UNICEF
Goodwill Ambassador

others offer much less. Private organizations and individuals also give money to UNICEF. Programs such as Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF offer children a way to help, too. This campaign offers children a chance to raise money for children around the world who need help.

Some celebrities offer their time and talents to help raise awareness of the work that UNICEF does. These celebrities are called UNICEF Goodwill Ambassadors. For example, Ricky Martin, Shakira, and David Beckham all help bring attention to the children and families around the world who are in need of help.

UNICEF distributes the donations it receives to programs around the world. A group called the **executive board** decides which programs will be given funding and how much money they will get. There are 36 countries that have representatives on the executive board. The members of the board serve three-year terms. This means that the members on the council change and all countries can have a turn to be on it. However, there are always a certain number of countries from each region on the council. This way, the needs of the various regions are always represented. The board meets three times a year at the UN Headquarters in New York.

www.unicef.org