

THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN 1988



United Nations Children's Fund
(UNICEF)

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1988

Oxford University Press, Walton Street,
Oxford OX2 6DP
Oxford New York Toronto Delhi Bombay Calcutta
Madras Karachi Peaseing Jaya Singapore Hong Kong
Tokyo Nairobi Dar-es-Salaam Cape Town Melbourne
Auckland and associated companies in Beirut Berlin
Ibadan Nicosia

Oxford is a trade mark of Oxford University Press
Published in the United States by Oxford University
Press, New York

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

The state of the world's children 1988.

1. Children—Care and hygiene

613' 0432 R7101

ISBN 0-19-261723-0

ISSN 0265-718X

The Library of Congress has catalogued this serial
publication as follows:—

The state of the world's children—Oxford

New York: Oxford University Press for UNICEF v.:ill.;
20cm. Annual. Began publication in 1980.

1. Children—Developing countries—Periodicals. 2.
Children—Care and hygiene—Developing countries—
Periodicals. I. UNICEF.

HQ 792.2.S73 83-647550 362.71'091724

UNICEF, UNICEF House, 3 U.N. Plaza, New York,
N.Y. 10017 U.S.A.

UNICEF, Palais des Nations, CH. 1211
Geneva 10, Switzerland.

Cover and design: Miller, Craig and Cocking, Woodstock, U.K.

Charts and tables: Stephen Haskins, Oxford Illustrators, Oxford, U.K.

Typesetting and Printing: Burgess & Son (Abingdon) Ltd, U.K.

Edited and produced for UNICEF and Oxford University
Press by P & L Adamson, Benson, Oxfordshire, U.K.

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United Nations Children's Fund
(UNICEF)

PUBLISHED FOR UNICEF

Oxford University Press

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THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN

A grand alliance for children

The promotion, in the 1980s, of low-cost ways of protecting children's lives and growth is now preventing approximately 2 million child deaths each year. This achievement is the result of a growing alliance of social resources for putting today's health knowledge at the disposal of today's parents.

page 1

Alliances in action

World-wide, the greatest hope for advances in health lies in supporting the majority in applying what is already known. In the developing world, the main testing grounds for this approach, so far, have been the promotion of immunization and ORT. Successes here can accelerate progress towards primary health care.

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Children and recession

This potential is threatened by economic recession and by adjustment policies which weigh most heavily on the poor – and their children. 'Adjustment with a human face' will depend on a renewed commitment to the poorest – and renewed support from the industrialized world.

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Family knowledge

A scientific consensus now stands behind a body of knowledge which could enable parents to combat the main threats to the health of their children. All families therefore have a right to today's information about: timing births, safe pregnancy, breast-feeding, promoting growth, immunization, diarrhoeal disease, respiratory infections, hygiene, smoking, alcohol, and AIDS.

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Partners in the alliance

The alliance of resources which can put such knowledge and support at the disposal of the majority of families includes: the health services, the school system, business and labour, organized religion, the mass media, the voluntary agencies, and members of the public.

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Support for women

Community health workers can help give parents the knowledge, and the confidence, to use new methods. In particular, it is the women of the developing world who need more support – from all levels of society.

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Conclusion

The world is well started on the way to realising an extraordinary potential. The key is the participation of all possible organized resources in a Grand Alliance for Children.

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https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_6344

