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## Major Agencies of the United Nations

### Scope of Syllabus

UNICEF, WHO and UNESCO-functions only.

The United Nations Organization (U.N.O.) is concerned with maintaining world peace, promoting social progress, better standards of life and unrestrained freedom. It also helps to remove diseases and poverty from the world.

The U.N.O. has **18 Specialised Agencies, and 14 Major Programmes and Funds** for social and economic development and human welfare. Functions of some of the United Nations Agencies, (as prescribed in the syllabus), are discussed below:

#### (a) United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF was set up by the General Assembly in **1946 A.D.** It then aimed at giving relief to the children and their mothers as an emergency measure after the Second World War. In 1950, its programme was extended to provide long range benefits to children of all developing countries. But its work was continued thereafter to improve the quality of life of the children and their mothers. Its objective is the realisation of the opportunity for every child to enjoy the basic rights as a child by providing low cost community based services in maternal and child health, nutrition, immunisation, etc. For instance it has encouraged the children to make greeting cards and to buy these to raise funds for its work. It is able to generate 100 \$ million through the sale of cards of the UNICEF. Later in 1953, its name was changed to the **United Nations Children's Fund**. However, its acronym UNICEF continued.

#### UNICEF



UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
Established	1946
Reason	To provide emergency food and health care to children in countries devastated by World War II.
Headquarters	New York [USA]
Current Focus	Child survival and development, Basic education and Gender Equality, Child protection from violence and abuse.

The UNICEF has its headquarters in **New York (USA)**. It has more than **200 offices** in developing countries. It works through an **Executive Board** consisting of **41 members** designated by the **UN Economic and Social Council**. It is **financed** by voluntary contributions from governments, persons and organizations. Fund raising campaigns and sale of greeting cards are other sources of income.



## MAJOR ACTIVITIES OF UNICEF



UNICEF is currently focused on five primary priorities : Child Survival and Development, Basic Education and Gender Equality (including girls' education), Child protection from violence, exploitation, and abuse, HIV/AIDS and children, and Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights. Related areas of the UNICEF action include early childhood development, adolescence development and participation, life skills based education and child rights all over the world.

### UNICEF

The United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) works for children around the world. It provides health care and health education in many developing countries and plays a vital role in looking after children orphaned or injured by war.



The UNICEF provides protective food to children.

**Main Functions :** Its main functions include :

1. To assist countries in providing protective food like milk, meat, fish, fats, etc. to the children and to train nutritionists.
2. To take care of the women and pregnant mothers.
3. To provide funds for training of health and sanitation workers and creche workers.
4. To undertake **Child Immunization Projects** in order to prevent diseases.
5. To provide consultancy service, supply medicine and equipment and to conduct research in the areas of child development programmes, and also to monitor these.

6. To support programmes to prevent trafficking in women and children, and to prevent crime by them and against them.
7. To get clean drinking water in villages; it supplies pumps and pipes to the countries.
8. To provide basic education and supply paper to publish literature relating to child.
9. To provide instant help to children and women in a natural disaster like earthquakes or an epidemic.
10. To prevent exploitation of the child and to protect him against neglect and abuse.
11. To support AIDS education and help AIDS affected families and communities.

The UNICEF has launched a *four point programme* : immunization, oral rehydration, advocating breast feeding and monitoring growth.



The Universal Child Immunization against preventable diseases by 1990 was one of the leading goals of the UNICEF. It had immunized nearly 80% of the world's children against six killer diseases – *measles, diphtheria, tetanus, TB, polio and whooping cough* by the end of the year, 2000. The infant mortality rate in India declined from 110 deaths per 1000 live births in 1981 to 70 in 1999.

UNICEF celebrated 1979 as the 'International Year of the Child' to focus attention on the rights and welfare of children.


### (b) World Health Organization (WHO)

Established on 7th April, 1948, the WHO consists of the **World Health Assembly**, (has 192 member states) the Executive Board and the Secretariat. "**Health for all by the year, 2000**" had been the goal of the WHO. To achieve this objective, it adopted a global strategy which required efforts to be made in the fields of primary health care, clean drinking water, nutrition, sanitation and health education. Its headquarter is at **Geneva, (Switzerland.)**

**Main Functions/Programmes** : Its main functions include :

1. To promote and co-ordinate research in the field of health, to finance research projects in their priority areas, namely communicable diseases, mother's and child's health, mental health, cancer, blindness, diabetes, and heart ailments.

2. To set international standards for food, water, biological and pharmaceutical products such as drugs, medicines and vaccines.
3. To bring about improvement in standards of nutrition, housing, sanitation, work-conditions and environmental hygiene.

WHO	
	
WHO	World Health Organization  'Health' is defined as a state of complete well-being and not merely the absence of disease.
Formation	7th April, 1948
Headquarter	Geneva (Switzerland)
Official languages	Arabic, Chinese, English, French and Russian
Type	Specialized agency of the United Nations
Objective	To combat diseases, especially key infectious diseases, to promote the general health of the people of the world, to foster development and to promote health education.

### ACTIVITIES OF THE WHO



Smallpox was eradicated due to efforts of WHO.



The WHO aims to eradicate polio within the next few years.



The WHO carries campaigns to discourage tobacco use.



The WHO has drafted, a global plan of action on workers' health to protect and promote health in the workplace.



4. To assist Governments (on their request) to provide safe drinking water to the nations of the world. The 1980s (1981-1990) was designated as "International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade" by the WHO.
5. To fight diseases throughout the world, to prevent their spread at the source. It launched programme to immunise children against six major diseases – Measles, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Tuberculosis, Polio and Whooping Cough. It also monitors outbreak of infectious diseases such as SARS, Malaria and AIDS.

- A coverage of over 80 per cent of immunisation has been achieved.
- Diarrhoeal deaths have reduced significantly.
- The infant mortality rate dropped from 107 in the 1980s to 32 per 1000 in the 2008 in India.
- Cholera and plague epidemics are rare occurrences now.
- Leprosy is being managed better.
- Smallpox has been eradicated.

It organized *malaria* and *polio eradication programmes* globally. In February 2000, India and the entire South-East Asia were officially certified as free from Guinea worm disease.

6. For medical and scientific information, it has built a splendid library on Medical Sciences at Geneva. It promotes co-operation among scientific and professional groups which contribute to the advancement of health.
7. It also publishes an illustrated magazine/journals to inform people about the state of health programmes.
8. It organizes Seminars, Conferences and Workshops to train personnels in their areas of specialization.


### (c) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

UNESCO was established on November 4, 1946, with headquarters in **Paris**, having an independent Secretariat of its own, headed by a **Director General**. It also has a **General Conference**, and an **Executive body of 50 members**. The year 1979 was proclaimed as the International year of the child.

The primary aim of the UNESCO, as specified in its Constitution is to contribute to peace and security in the world through :

- (a) Educational advancement
- (b) Scientific development and technology
- (c) Cultural Interchange and Preservation of Cultural Heritage.

The UNESCO Constitution lays down, "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defence of peace must be constructed." Hence, to build these defences of peace remains one of the main objectives and functions of the UNESCO.

UNESCO	
	
Established	1946
Organization type	Specialized agency of the United Nations (UN)
Headquarter	Paris (France)
Objective	To contribute peace and security by promoting international collaboration through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the UN Charter.

**Main Functions :** Its main functions include :

#### (a) Educational Advancement :

1. To work for *universal primary education, distance education and open school system* and also *adult education* for the removal of illiteracy. The UNESCO and Lok Jumbish (an NGO) started a project in Kaman Village in Rajasthan to help disabled children to get admission in neighbouring schools.



2. To give advice and financial assistance for the education of the disabled children, the girl child and women.
3. To give advice and expert assistance in school building construction; preparation of courses of study and textbooks, encouragement of science education by providing regional training centres.
4. To provide *fellowships, study-grants* to *teachers* to do *research* in theories and methods of teaching and evaluation. It has set up an International Institute of Educational Planning at Paris for this purpose.
5. To hold book fairs at national and international level.
6. To develop libraries with financial help. The Delhi Public Library was established in 1951 with financial assistance from the UNESCO.
7. To promote education as an instrument for international understanding.

**(b) Development of Science and Technology :**

1. To provide financial assistance and promote research in mathematics, geology, physics, oceanography, engineering and technology in developing countries.
2. To organize seminars, regional and world conferences of scientists, engineers and technologists.
3. To inform all countries about the progress in science through bulletins, exhibitions and journals. "**Courier**" is the official monthly magazine of the UNESCO.
4. To encourage the study of social sciences with special reference to the study of the topics like factors causing violence and conflict, violation of human rights, the future of the human race, improving the status of women, helping the youth in solving their problems, methods of **conflict-resolution** and **tolerance-promotion techniques**.

**(c) Cultural Interchange and Preservation of Cultural Heritage :**

1. To help member states to preserve their cultural heritage, encourage translation of rare manuscripts, to protect monuments of historic or artistic interest.
2. To encourage cultural exchange, it gives travel-grants to writers and artists under the Project Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values.
3. To encourage countries to buy books from other countries under its scheme of Book-coupons.
4. To promote artistic creation in literature and fine arts.
5. To spread and distribute knowledge about human rights.
6. To undertake projects in the field of mass-communication like Radio, Television, Films News Agencies, etc.

**(d) Communication : UNESCO** develops communication for dissemination of information.

1. It has set up regional networks, and deals with both hardware and software aspects of informatics.
2. It improves the quality of the Press, the films and video services. It upholds the freedom of the press and independence of the media.

**India** has been a member of the **UNESCO** since 1948 A.D. India has set up a National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO. Since 1949 it promotes the UNESCO's programme.

The UNESCO provides funds and expertise for the protection of many historical monuments.

UNESCO is collaborating with the French Rhone-Poulene Institute. UNESCO is helping restore the Taj Mahal by reversing the process of its marble yellowing and its disintegrating sandstone.



## **Conclusion**

The Specialized Agencies of the U.N. have actually done good work over the years in their respective fields of work, whether it relates to development work, settlement of refugees, child care and health; fighting hunger and malnutrition,

disease; promoting public health, education and culture and funding development projects in the underdeveloped countries.

Similarly, the United Nations (U.N.) has also good achievements to its credit in the political field and in solving disputes amongst countries.



Answer the following:

1. Write the full form of the following:  
a) UNICEF , b) WHO c) UNESCO.
2. State the functions of the UNICEF.
3. What is the composition and functions of WHO?
4. Give the functions of the UNESCO.