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4m children saved thru' low cost methods

By A Staff Correspondent

The lives of over four million children all over the world have been saved in the last five years through adoption of low cost methods protecting child health. The methods include Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT) immunization birth spacing breast feeding and improved weaning which can save seven million world's children a year.

Mr James Grant Executive Director of UNICEF has set out a new idea in the state of the world's children 1987 released by UNICEF Representative in Dhaka on Wednesday. Today the world no longer allows millions of its children to die in drought or famine anywhere on the planet which means a change in global morality the report says. Forty years ago no such ethics prevailed and in the early 1940s over three million people starved to death in India and Bengal but the world knew little and did less the report cited as example.

Incidentally UNICEF observes its fortieth founding anniversary today (Thursday) with a message to the world. "The time has come to take the next step". Even during the African crisis of the last two years more children have died in India and Pakistan than in all 46 nations of Africa together it said. The greatest emergency facing the world's children today is the unpublicised "silent emergency" of infection and undernutrition. It said. Every week about 280 000 children die of infection and undernutrition but no drought, no famine no flood has ever claimed such a huge toll of human lives anywhere it said.

Those dying from such hazards as famine drought or flood have been described as "loud emergency" as such situation quickly draws mass media attention meaning efforts to prevent mass deaths it said.

The promotion of immunization and ORT alone, says Mr James Grant has saved the lives of 1.5 million children in 1986. Every year 14 million world's children die while millions more live on

in malnutrition and ill health. "It is therefore time says UNICEF for "morality to catch up with capacity". It is time for the international community to say that it is also intolerable for 40 000 of its young children to die every day and for millions more to be malnourished, blind, brain-damaged and disabled in "silent emergency of infection and malnutrition". The world has already proved its capacity to prevent on a significant scale and at a manageable cost the mortality of children and mothers, the report stated.

Mr Anthony A Kennedy, UNICEF Representative in Bangladesh appreciating the progress achieved immunization in the eight selected upazilas launched here last year, said "much more has to be done". The prevailing immunization coverage in Bangladesh is only two per cent while in the selected upazilas where it was launched the coverage has reached 68 per cent he said.

Mr Kennedy said that UNICEF has a budget of US dollar 14 million for Bangladesh programmes till 1990. Mr Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, Director General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs also briefed the Press regarding UNICEF activities in Bangladesh.

ERSHAD'S MESSAGE

BSS adds: President Hussain Muhammad Ershad on Wednesday lauded the 'pioneering role' of the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) in the survival (See Page 10 Col. 3)

4m children

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and development of children throughout the world.

In a message on the occasion of the 40th founding anniversary of UNICEF, the President recalled "a better and happier world a better and happier future" the invaluable assistance UNICEF provided in different projects in Bangladesh.

He reaffirmed Bangladesh's total commitment to the objectives and activities of UNICEF and said, "We will rededicate ourselves in the fulfilment of these noble goals to make the world a better and happier place for our children."