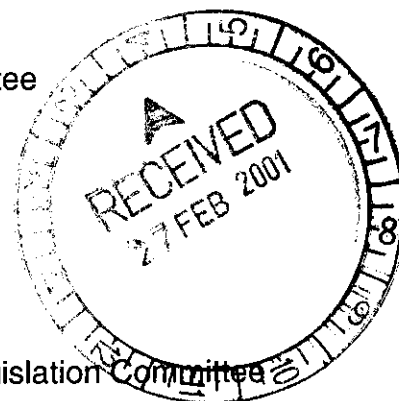




Mr Paul Barsdell
Secretary
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence & Trade Legislation Committee
Parliament House
Canberra



Dear Mr Barsdell

I am writing to clarify a response I provided at the Senate Legislation Committee hearing on 22 February 2001.

Senator Hogg asked for information concerning current and planned Australian aid programs in Irian Jaya. In my response I omitted to note that one UNICEF program, supported with Australian aid funding, is currently providing assistance in the area of maternal and child health in Irian Jaya. Details of this program are attached.

Please bring this information to the attention of Senator Hogg and members of the Committee.

Scott Dawson
Assistant Director General
East Asia Branch

26 February 2001

Australian Support for UNICEF Safe Motherhood Program

The Government of Indonesia and UNICEF have a cooperative program agreement to address Safe Motherhood throughout Indonesia. The program aims to reduce the incidence of maternal mortality, by improving the quality of and access to maternal and neonatal health care services; strengthening the coverage and capacity of village midwives and traditional birth attendants; empowering communities to recognize difficulties during pregnancy and delivery and to take appropriate action to assist the mother and new-born child; and by strengthening the capacity of local government to plan, implement, manage and monitor safe motherhood programs

Australia is supporting the UNICEF program in three provinces, West Java, Maluku and Irian Jaya, with funding of \$13.2 million over three years from 1998. Other donor funding is also being provided for the program. Activities in Maluku have been suspended indefinitely due to continuing civil unrest. Australia is discussing the possibility of providing further support for the program, after the completion of the current agreement.

UNICEF proposes to disburse approximately \$2 million on the Safe Motherhood Program in Irian Jaya in 2001, in the districts of Jayapura, Jayawijaya and Biak. The program will focus on:

- using contracted local NGOs to support village-based bottom-up planning for Safe Motherhood activities and undertake IEC activities;
- giving special attention to Jayapura District capacity-building activities;
- organising a special workshop to prepare activities for the Jayawijaya district, involving local NGO agencies, government churches and international organisations;
- modifying Safe Motherhood IEC campaign messages to emphasise the importance of early childhood development programs for the interests of women and children.
- supporting village health workers to promote Safe Motherhood activities in the village health centres and linking this to the work of the midwives and traditional birth attendants.
- strengthening the capacity of districts and sub-districts to manage emergency obstetric care:
- upgrading standard medicine and equipment needs of village health centres and village midwives; and
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