

SAY YES

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF UNICEF TURKEY

WINTER 2004

A GOLDEN YEAR!

For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY

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IN THIS ISSUE

Cover photograph:
Mahmut Oral

DR. RECEP AKDAĞ TALKS TO UNICEF

UNICEF has a long history with the Ministry of Health stretching from the first project in 1951 to the present campaigns to eliminate Measles and the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding.

Shortly after the launch of the Measles Immunisation campaign, Minister of Health, Dr Recep Akdağ spoke to UNICEF about the issue of Mother and Child Health and his personal feelings about the well-being of children in this rapidly developing country.

See **A Golden Year for Health**, pp 4 & 5

Below: Minister of National Education, Dr Hüseyin Çelik and UNICEF Country Representative, Mr Edmond McLoughney look on as Minister of Health, Dr Recep Akdağ administers the first vaccination in Turkey's drive to eliminate Measles by vaccinating 20,000,000 children and young people during a twelve-month period.

ELIMINATING MEASLES

The Ministry of Health, together with the Ministry of National Education and UNICEF launched Turkey's campaign to eliminate Measles in December. A total of 9.5 million school children were vaccinated against the disease in a two week nationwide drive covering every school in the country.

With the successful completion of this initial phase, Turkey is the first country in the World Health Organisation's European Region to have initiated a Measles elimination programme. Measles causes more childhood deaths than any other vaccine-preventable disease — every year, more than 700,000 children die from complications related to the disease. It is expected that the entire European Region should be free of Measles by 2010.

A second 'mop-up' phase of vaccinations for pre-school infants and children who are not at school is planned for 2004. By the end of this year, virtually all children between nine months and fourteen years of age will have been given the vaccine.

Read **Measles Vaccination**, pp 6 & 7



A CHILD FRIENDLY MEDIA NETWORK

A 'Measles Immunisation in Turkey' seminar involving UNICEF, the Ministry of Health, İstanbul University, the Association of Parliamentary Correspondents and members of the press was held between the 4th and 6th of December 2003 in preparation for the Measles Immunisation campaign. The seminar focused on media perception of children and offered a platform for various sectors to discuss the issue and to make suggestions for development.

One of the most immediate outcomes of the seminar has been the establishment of a Child-Friendly Media Communication Network which will focus on current issues in the protection of children's rights. A website targeted for the media, offering a forum for the exchange of views and information regarding implementation of international conventions, is in preparation.

It is expected that the network will greatly enhance awareness of children's rights and help to prevent violations of those rights.

Child Vaccination for the Media, pp 8 & 9

THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN 2004

UNICEF's annual report, The State of the World's Children 2004, was launched globally in December. This year the focus of the report is on the issue of girls' education as the foundation for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The report eloquently summarises the complex challenge which education presents to every sector:

- Finance: allocation of funds to make schools affordable;
- Health: the provision of adequate services, water and sanitation;
- Labour: establishment of protection for working children;
- Justice: making schools safe;
- Planning: enabling local communities to oversee the services they need for their children to survive and thrive;

Girls, Education & Development pp 10 & 11



Measles is the deadliest of all vaccine-preventable diseases. Every day, two thousand under-five-year olds die from complications caused by the disease — a total of over 700,000 child deaths per year. The magnitude of such a loss is staggering, not only for families and communities but for countries which can ill afford the loss of the human potential these children represent.

Yet there is absolutely no reason for children to die or to be disabled from Measles when a simple, effective and inexpensive vaccine has been available to combat the disease for more than thirty years.

In December 2003, the Ministry of Health, in close cooperation with the Ministry of National Education, launched a campaign to vaccinate all primary schoolchildren under fourteen years of age in Turkey — the first step in a drive to eliminate Measles in the country. The campaign was a resounding success with 97 per cent of children — a total of about 9.5 million — receiving the jab at school during the last three weeks of the year. Counting parents, families, teachers and other members of the community, probably half of the country's population was touched by this remarkable mobilisation effort.

However, major challenges to the successful elimination of Measles in Turkey remain: later this year phase two of the campaign will focus on children between nine months and six years of age and those who are out-of-school. While the numbers will be approximately the same, this group will be more difficult to reach and the mobilisation effort involved in administering the vaccine to these children will need to be even greater if a high success rate is to be achieved.

A further challenge will be to sustain the effort in the long-term by stepping up the coverage rate for routine immunisation. Although campaigns of this nature are vitally important, *routine immunisation* of every child at nine months of age against Measles is the bedrock of an effective immunisation system.

Turkey was declared Polio-free in 2002 and experience gained from eliminating the disease has taught us a great deal. Confidence is high among all sectors that with the fine results achieved in phase one of the current Measles Elimination campaign, Turkey is well on the way to repeating that success with Measles.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Edmond McLoughney'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

Edmond McLoughney
UNICEF Representative, Turkey

Note: We very much like to hear readers reactions to the newsletter, so please feel free to contact us with your comments and suggestions.

A GOLDEN YEAR FOR HEALTH

In the post of Health Minister, Paediatrician Dr Recep Akdağ has taken up an immensely important challenge to ensure the health, care and development of Turkey's 24 million children and young people. Immediately following the end of the initial phase of the Measles Immunisation Campaign, UNICEF talked to Dr Akdağ about the Ministry of Health's work in Maternal and Child Health, their plans for the future and his personal feelings on these issues.

"We can achieve a great deal working with UNICEF in the field of Maternal and Child Health. Apart from funding resources and assistance, I believe UNICEF is the right organisation to work with in terms of developing appropriate policies.

"Together with the support of UNICEF and the Ministry of National Education, our 'Measles Immunisation Campaign' was successful in reaching virtually all school children. The campaign went very well and we achieved quite high immunisation rates because our target group was clearly identified. At the end of the campaign we were able to document those who could not be reached so it will be easier for us to follow-up on them in the next phase.

"In Turkey, Measles doesn't occur in massive epidemics but we do see regular outbreaks. We are in both the WHO and UNICEF's European Region and both organisations have targeted the eradication of measles by 2010 — which fully coincides with our national plans — and I believe that we can stop further outbreaks of Measles in Turkey.

"This year's target is to repeat the same success with pre-school children that we had with the School Immunisation Days in December 2003.

"During the last epidemic in 2001, close to thirty thousand children came down with Measles and only seven deaths were reported. Considering some defects in the existing

recording and reporting system, we can assume that the actual number of deaths was higher than this. Measles can be especially threatening to children with malnutrition and rickets or a Vitamin D deficiency. We can eradicate Measles in the same way that we eradicated Polio. Our previous work with Polio proves that we can achieve this.

"In our work with UNICEF, we should inform the public about what is going on and efforts must be made to include the media as a partner through strong communication strategies.

"For example, the media contributed much to the success of the School Immunisation Days — their role is essential in reaching every family and informing them about major child health issues.

"Maternal and Child Health takes first place in our Government's priority action plan because mothers and children constitute the most vulnerable group in terms of public health. Since taking office, I have placed specific importance on in-service training for health workers and four times more personnel have been trained than in previous years. But there is no room for complacency: we must break out of the classic structure of Maternal Child Health and adopt a fresh approach.

"We are also exploring other areas: information brochures about family planning and safe motherhood will be distributed to newly married couples at the registry offices.

"Our most important goal is to introduce a system through which we can monitor all pregnant women. This will involve improvements to primary health services and sending additional personnel to those areas that are under-staffed.

"To improve motivation, staff in health centres who successfully expand coverage of family planning, immunisation and monitoring of expectant women and newborn babies will be entitled to a financial bonus.

"2004 and 2005 will be golden years for Mothers and Child Health and we want to see UNICEF together with us on this issue."



DR RECEP AKDAĞ

During the early months of 2004, we will send 11,250 health workers and about 1,500 doctors to needy and deprived areas of the country. The new remuneration system will enable us to pay these doctors and staff over and above the usual rates. The object is to make needy areas more attractive to health workers and doctors and to better facilitate progress.

“With the Family Doctors project all doctors will have closer contact and communication with their patients. Also, with this project, teams will be trained to accurately monitor pregnancies, ensure that labour wards are properly equipped and resuscitate newborns if necessary.

“Another plan of ours is to offer financial support to expectant mothers when they visit health centres for regular check-ups and also for families who take their children for regular check-ups. We hope that this initiative will be especially effective in the eastern and southeastern regions. Financial support will also be offered to mothers who give birth in maternity wards. This will prove to be beneficial in several areas such as ensuring birth registration, informing families about effective methods of family planning and making contraception available free of charge.

“Most infant deaths occur during the first twenty-four hours following birth so it’s important to ensure that all births at health centres are attended by trained health workers. During 2003, the Newborn Resuscitation Programme quadrupled the number of trained health workers in this area and our target for 2004 is much higher.

“With 1.5 million births each year, Turkey has the highest number of newborns in Europe, yet the number of paediatricians specialising in obstetrics is quite limited so we should encourage our paediatricians to specialise in this field.

“Exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months is critically important for the physical and cognitive development of children. By the end of 2004, we will make all hospitals ‘baby-friendly’ and so increase rates of exclusive breastfeeding.

“This year again, supplements will be offered to control iron deficiency and anaemia in

infants — a simple intervention that will do much to safeguard the mental development and coordination skills of children.

“We are very keen on the issue of family planning and building public awareness in this area is critically important. Our work in this direction will need to be woven into the cultural fabric of our society.

“We will achieve much in Maternal and Child Health during 2004 and 2005 and we want to see UNICEF on course with us.

“At present we are working with the Ministry of National Education on the development of a new curriculum for health education in schools that will offer easy-to-learn health information in a way that will be interesting to students.

“Family and child training and child health are inter-related, inseparable issues and it’s essential to have teachers, as well as health workers, who are trained in the field of child health. So UNICEF’s support in child education and health is both relevant and very much appreciated. I believe that we are going to achieve great things through our partnership. I have had a great deal of respect for UNICEF since my earliest years as a doctor because I love children very much and this has had a direct influence on my career. This chat takes me back to the days, early in my career, when I was a practicing doctor in Karabük. My professional life then was entirely focused on the well-being of children.

“I hope that as Minister of Health I can do much more in contributing to reductions in maternal and child deaths and the better health of this and future generations.”

“Since my first years, practicing medicine, I have valued UNICEF as a vitally important organisation because I love children...”



MEASLES VACCINATION

In December, the Ministry of Health launched the first phase of their 'catch-up campaign' to eliminate Measles in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. Within three weeks 9.5 million school children between the ages of six and fourteen years of age were given the Measles vaccine. The campaign is supported by UNICEF, the World Health Organisation and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and, together with a similar drive in Iran, constitutes the most ambitious Measles elimination campaign the world has yet seen.

A further ten million pre-school children will be vaccinated during 2004 along with those who are not attending school in a second phase 'mop-up' campaign. The national target is to eliminate the disease by 2010 in line with the World Health Organisation's drive to make the European Region measles-free.

The Measles Vaccination campaign will have long-lasting implications for both children and the Turkish public health system.

The Ministry of Health's comprehensive programme for 2002-2010 calls for national vaccination among all children between the ages of nine months and fourteen years. The routine double dose vaccination coverage rate is targeted to exceed 95%.

The first phase, enlisting support from the media, health professionals, schools, local communities and parents, was a resounding success as seven million

children were reached with one dose of vaccine during the first ten days of the campaign alone.

The scheduling of the campaign was timely since infections of Measles mostly occur during late Winter and Spring and outbreaks are common amongst school children in Turkey where thousands of cases are observed every year. Since the disease is highly contagious, a child with Measles can spread infection to others within a period of four days before manifesting any symptoms himself.

The UNICEF Representative in Turkey, Edmond McLoughney applauded the collaboration between the Ministries of Health and Education in aiming to reach ten million children during the first three weeks of the campaign. Mr McLoughney added that "Although deaths from Measles



... NO MORE TEARS

have been reduced by two thirds all over the world within the last ten years, over 700,000 children died of the disease for the sake of not being immunised. This is unacceptable when you consider that a single dose of the vaccine costs only 25¢.”

Mr McLoughney went on to say that following the immunisation of 9.5 million school children, Turkey’s immunisation campaign would so far be the most successful in the European Region.

According to the World Health Organisation, deaths from Measles constitute between 50% and 60% of the estimated worldwide total of childhood deaths attributed to vaccine-preventable illnesses.

Measles kills more children than any other vaccine-preventable disease because it weakens the immune system and allows life-threatening opportunistic infections such as pneumonia and encephalitis to take hold. In developing countries where children rarely have access to adequate healthcare services,

complications from diarrhoea such as dehydration can prove fatal. For those who survive, Measles can also lead to permanent disabilities such as brain damage, deafness and blindness.

The successful elimination of Measles in Turkey will boost the country’s routine immunisation programme and lead to an unquestionable strengthening of the public health system.

The vaccine is quite safe and highly effective and it has been used in Turkey since the ‘70s. There is a minimal occurrence of side effects, which are not serious, and these can be treated with paracetamol.

UNICEF Executive Director, Carol Bellamy said that “There is absolutely no reason that children should die or be disabled from Measles when we have simple, effective and inexpensive vaccines. The Government of Turkey has shown commendable leadership in its efforts to eliminate this deadly disease”.

All children are to be given the Measles vaccine even if they have been immunised before or if they have already had a Measles episode.



Photograph: Mahmut Oral

CHILD VACCINATION ...

Journalist, Mahmut Oral, in Diyarbakır with UNICEF: "At a village school, the children gathered around us. The girls were hanging further back in a group. Most of them were between seven and ten years of age, holding babies ..."

The media has a unique and important function in the promotion of the rights of the child. For instance the *Haydi Kızlar Okula!* slogan, if it is to succeed in promoting the issue of girls' education, must reach people living in the remotest villages and towns where the issue is critical and the media enables us to communicate the message. In this way, the media can be a positive force in support of issues relating to the health, care, education and development of children.

However, an 'issue' becomes a point in question in the public eye because opinions conflict and parties differ. Some are of the opinion that we do not need to educate our girls and far too many see the HIV/AIDS virus as only the remotest threat to the stability and comfort of our lives. The big, sensational, headlines grab our attention instead. So how do important, but at the same time *everyday*, issues such as girls' education or HIV/AIDS awareness compete for the public's attention?

Sensationalism is an infection not unlike Measles: when one organ of the media catches a big story, the infection spreads through every limb of the press and television and when the public is scandalised, we have a situation of epidemic proportions.

Last October, the media had a very serious episode of sensationalism over the case of a schoolboy in İzmir who is HIV positive. While the entire country fell into a fever of controversy, virtually all of the child's rights were compromised or violated in one form or another. His photograph was published, and for a time he was kept out of school. Thankfully the Ministry of National Education took a laudable stand and enforced his right to attend school. The fever abated and hopefully the nation has since learned that the HIV/AIDS virus is not a bogeyman but something which needs to be dealt with responsibly. The boy and his family were left with the scars.

So strong communication between the media, public and private sectors and governmental and non-governmental organisations is vital in order to avoid episodes such as this. For instance, prior to the launch of the Measles Vaccination campaign, the Ministry of Health and UNICEF placed a focus specifically on media involvement and support for public information during the campaign. It was considered vital that the public fully understood and were aware that all children should get two doses of the vaccine — consequently accurate and comprehensive media coverage had to be ensured.

The *Measles Vaccination Campaign Briefing* which was held between the 4th and 6th of December 2003 included representatives from UNICEF, the Ministry of Health, İstanbul University, the Association of Parliamentary Correspondents and the press. Apart from the priority of developing a communication strategy for the imminent vaccination campaign, the meeting served as a platform for the broader discussion of the responsibilities of various sectors to promote and uphold children's rights.

One of the most significant outcomes was the initiative led by journalists from the Association of Parliamentary Correspondents to set up the *Child Friendly Media Communication Network* and two days after the seminar, the *Child Vaccine for the Media* strategy was launched to enhance awareness of the state of children and children's rights in the media.

The strategy will hopefully 'immunise' the media against outbreaks of misinformation and misunderstanding on the issue. A website focusing on media coverage of children's issues will be set up to monitor and facilitate implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The network will be an autonomously controlled media organ and it is expected that it will develop into a forum for debating and exchanging views and opinions, and that it will ultimately be an essential tool to enhance awareness of children's rights and prevent violations of those rights.

... FOR THE MEDIA

The seminar identified the following problems and solutions:

PROBLEMS

- Most sectors and groups in Turkey choose the easy option of undermining the reliability of the media rather than engaging in more constructive self-criticism. Mutual communication should be enhanced in order to benefit from media cooperation.
- For its part, the media tends to overlook news on crucially important health issues in favour of wider coverage of commercially popular news items.
- The media fails to pay sufficient attention to the social benefit and relevance of news relating to health and children.
- Legislative measures to protect the rights of the child are not fully implemented.
- The media is not sufficiently informed on children's issues.
- Relevant academic studies conducted by universities are mostly unknown to the public at large.
- Although governmental organisations expended sincere efforts in the context of the Measles Immunisation campaign, media support in communication planning was unavailable.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SOLUTIONS

- The establishment of a communication network enabling the media to exchange information and experience with other sectors of society in issues relating to children and health.
- Ensuring openness and transparency of all organisations in children's and health issues including the Measles Campaign.
- Closer contact and communication between the Ministry of Health and the media should include training on health issues.
- Supporting the media in branch specialisation on issues relating to health and children's rights.

- Ensure the active participation of local opinion leaders, the media and local authorities in activities which focus on children's rights and health issues.
- Ensure closer cooperation between the media, professional and non-governmental organisations on children's rights.
- Encourage both governmental and non-governmental organisations to promote academic studies on children's issues with the support of the media in order to raise public awareness.
- Extend professional support and expertise to governmental organisations for projects and campaigns building information on children's issues and the promotion and protection of their rights.

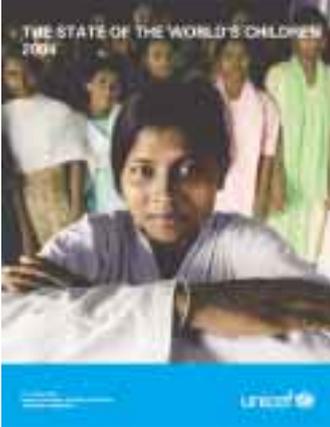
The joint effort of the *Measles Vaccination Campaign Briefing* paid dividends in the success of the campaign itself when over 9.5 million children were successfully vaccinated in the last three weeks of December. In the region of two hundred and fifty articles and references to the Ministry of Health's drive to eliminate the disease appeared in the press along with almost one and a half hours of nationwide television coverage of the campaign.

"... At that age, they were child-mothers, responsible for looking after their younger brothers and sisters. At that moment I realised that the media, like Turkey in general, is not sensitive to children, especially the education of girl children."



Photograph: Mahmut Oral

GIRLS, EDUCATION ...



UNICEF'S annual report, *The State of the World's Children 2004* was launched in Ankara on December 16th. The report is a call to action which argues that realisation of the Millennium Development Goals agreed by world leaders at the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000 rests on the foundation of achieving gender parity in education. Each year, many more girls than boys are excluded from the school system worldwide. In Turkey, the report was introduced to the press with a panel discussion addressing field experience of the *Haydi Kizlar Okula!* education campaign from a variety of perspectives.

Girls are the focus of the report because they are the ones who are usually left behind, because what benefits them will also benefit boys (the reverse not always being the case) and because they are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation when left uneducated.

Gender parity in education is considered to be so vitally important that the scheduled worldwide completion date for the goal is 2005 — ten years in advance of the other Millennium Development Goals.

Unfortunately some 65 million girls continue to be excluded from education around the world — a figure roughly equivalent to the entire population of Turkey — and 1 per cent of those girls are living in Turkey itself.

Since June, 2003, the Ministry of National Education and UNICEF

have been leading the *Haydi Kizlar Okula!* campaign in a drive to increase school enrolment and attendance rates for girls in basic education. This year, the campaign will be extended to include a further twenty-three provinces, including İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir in addition to the first ten to reach over 300,000 girls who are out-of-school. *Haydi Kizlar Okula!* is far-reaching in its objectives and it is expected that the benefits will extend beyond the immediate welfare of girls to positively affect boys, families and society as a whole.

At the launch of the campaign in the eastern province of Van, UNICEF Executive Director, Carol Bellamy said that "Education is the right of all children. Fulfilling the right of every girl to a quality, basic education is the key to promoting true equality between boys and girls and men and women. Turkey can make no better

The State of the World's Children 2004 argues that gender discrimination and the failure to recognise education as a basic human right are at the top of a long list of reasons why girls are systematically excluded from school the world over



Speaking at the UNICEF Mid-Term Review in December, Prime Minister, Mr Recep Tayyip Erdoğan praised the efforts of both the Ministry of National Education and UNICEF to get girls into school with Haydi Kizlar Okula!

investment in preparing for the EU than investing in education”.

“We don’t want to waste half of our human resources for lack of education,” said Minister of National Education, Dr Hüseyin Çelik at the time, “we should make the message clear that education is for all”.

The campaign involves children and families from the remotest regions of Turkey, their teachers, community leaders and officials right up to the highest echelons of government. But there remains a great deal to be done in order to succeed. As Songül from Diyarbakır, one of the first ten target provinces put it: “For me, there is no difference between girls and boys and for that reason, I’m calling for all parents to let your daughters study — one day, they could be doctors, engineers or lawyers.”

A major block to girls’ education is that families often keep their daughters working at home and to arrange early marriages for them. Songül spoke from personal experience of the issue: “Because my friend’s older sister got married this year her father intends to take her out of school next year. He says ‘why should girls go to school?’”

School space is also at a premium and the lack of facilities presents problems for even the most willing students and their communities, as Songül describes: “There was no teacher in my school to take the fifth class so for a time I stopped going. My father wanted to send me to school but there was no teacher. When a teacher came, I carried on with my studies. In fact, I knew that I would go back to school.”

This year, the scope of the campaign will not just be broadened geographically but also in operational terms with more intensive media coverage at local and national levels. UNICEF Turkey will work with local media in all the provinces to ensure that the message that *education is for all* gets across.

The State of the World’s Children 2004 closes by saying that: “The rights of children around the world are abused daily ... ensuring the rights of girls to an education is the bridge to safety and protection for all children.”

THE SITUATION IN TURKEY

- 600,000 girls are out of school;
- 250,000 of these girls live in ten of the eastern and southeastern provinces;
- *Haydi Kızlar Okula!* aims to achieve gender equality in primary school enrolment through the provision of quality basic education in 53 provinces where the enrolment rate of girls is lowest, by 2005;

EARLY RESULTS IN TURKEY

- Siirt 19% improvement in girls’ enrolment rates;
- Van 11.5% improvement in girls’ enrolment rates;
- Muş 7% improvement in girls’ enrolment rates;

INFORMATION FROM THE STATE OF THE WORLD’S CHILDREN REPORT:

THE GOAL FOR EDUCATING GIRLS

- Universal education;
- Gender equality and the consequent empowerment of women.

THE VALUE OF EDUCATING GIRLS

- Enhanced economic development;
- Education for the next generation;
- Reduction in infant and child mortality;
- Healthier families;
- Fewer maternal deaths;

THE COST OF NOT EDUCATING GIRLS

- Girls will be more vulnerable to poverty and hunger;
- Girls will be more at risk of HIV/AIDS infection, sexual exploitation and child trafficking than boys;

The State of the World’s Children 2004 concludes “We cannot walk any deeper into the 21st century with this piece of 20th century business left unfinished.”



Photograph: Mustafa Ertekin



HAYDI KIZLAR OKULA!

OUR GOALS FOR 2005

- To ensure that rates of enrolment for girls in primary education are on a par with rates of enrolment for boys;
- To reduce the Infant Mortality Rate from 42.7‰ to 20‰;
- To reduce the Maternal Mortality Rate by 50%;
- To increase rates of exclusive breastfeeding;
- To eliminate Iodine Deficiency Disorders in children;
- To extend knowledge of essential daily childhood care and development in three million families;
- To improve awareness of HIV/AIDS and other STIs and promote methods of protection amongst adolescents;
- To significantly minimise the ratio of children in need of special protection;
- To ensure that Turkey's legislation is fully compliant with CRC/CEDAW;
- To mobilise all sectors and resources for the better implementation of children's rights;
- To respond to the needs of children and women during and after emergencies.

- Educated women and girls have better opportunities and life choices;
- Educated women and girls have a greater voice in family and community affairs and are more likely to participate decision making;
- Educated girls are more likely to marry and have children at a later age — because they choose to;
- Educated girls have better job opportunities and are more able to contribute to the family's economy;
- Educated mothers are more likely to send *all* their children, both boys and girls, to school;
- Educated girls tend to have fewer and healthier children — child mortality rates drop with higher levels of female education;
- Educated girls are more aware of health issues — rates of HIV/AIDS infection are significantly reduced by higher levels of female education;
- Educated girls have healthier pregnancies, resulting in lower maternal mortality rates;
- Attention to girls also benefits boys — programmes focusing on girls have proven to be equally beneficial to boys;



CONTACT US

UNICEF Turkey Country Office:

Tel: +90 (0) 312 454 1000

Fax: +90 (0) 312 496 1461

Email: ankara@unicef.org

The Turkish National Committee for UNICEF:
Ankara

Tel: +90 (0) 312 290 3390

+90 (0) 312 290 3391

Fax: +90 (0) 312 290 3388

Email: unicef.natcom@unicefturk.org

The Turkish National Committee for UNICEF:
İstanbul

Tel: +90 (0) 212 252 5222

+90 (0) 212 249 6686

Fax: +90 (0) 212 252 9727