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[www.10yearsIYF.org](http://www.10yearsIYF.org)  
[www.civilsocietynetworks.org](http://www.civilsocietynetworks.org)  
[www.20yearsIYF.org](http://www.20yearsIYF.org)

## **Quarterly Bulletin of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family**

March 2017, No. 101  
Deadline for contributions: 30.06. 2017

**Vienna NGO Committee on the Family** ✉  
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Dear Readers of Families International,

This 101<sup>st</sup> issue focuses on the 55<sup>th</sup> Commission for Social Development (CSD) of the United Nations, which convened in New York from February 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> 2017. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), accredited with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations, have the opportunity to submit written statements, which become part of the official documentation of the CSD. CSOs also have the opportunity to make oral statements to the deliberations of the CSD. Included in this issue is a selection of written statements, submitted to the CSD 2017, by eight CSOs, including the International Federation for Home Economics, the International Federation for Family Development, Make Mothers Matter, and the Service and Research Institute on Family and Children, all of which are member organisations of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family, as well as COFACE Families Europe, which is a member of the online network [www.civilsocietynetworks.org](http://www.civilsocietynetworks.org) maintained by the Committee.

The Vienna NGO Committee on the Family is organising an International Forum, within a Full Committee Meeting (FCM), on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2017, at the United Nations Vienna International Centre, to observe the International Day of Families 2017. The Forum will include a presentation by Dr. Corinna Peil, from the University of Salzburg entitled: 'Internet Use and Domestic Communication Cultures'. The Programme of the Forum and the Agenda of the FCM is included in this issue. Further included is a list of recent and upcoming events.

Sincerely,

Peter Crowley Ph.D.

Editor

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*From the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family*

VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY



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## **FULL COMMITTEE MEETING**

UNITED NATIONS  
VIENNA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

**Monday June 12<sup>th</sup> 2017**

CONFERENCE ROOM CO237

**UNITED NATIONS**

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES 2017**

**INTERNATIONAL FORUM**

10.00 – 12.30

**'Internet Use and Domestic Communication Cultures'**

**Dr. Corinna Peil**  
**University of Salzburg**

Coffee Break  
11.00 – 11.30

Discussion with Presenter & Participants  
11.30 – 12.30

Lunch  
12.30 – 14.00

**14:00 - 15.30: ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION**

- (i) Approval of the Agenda
- (ii) Approval of the Minutes of the Full Committee Meeting November 7<sup>th</sup> 2016
- (iii) Report of the Chairperson
- (iv) Plan of Action 2017
- (v) Financial Report
- (vi) Report of the Auditors
- (vii) Budget 2017
- (viii) Reports from Member Organisations
- (ix) Any other Business
- (x) Date and Place of next Full Committee Meeting: November 6<sup>th</sup> 2017

## VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY



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### **ANNUAL REPORT 2016**

Projects of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family have been supported since its inception in 1985 by:

- ❖ Austrian Federal Government
- ❖ Bank Austria Creditanstalt
- ❖ Berndorf Gruppe
- ❖ Country Womens Association in Lower Austria
- ❖ E.F.T. Transportagentur GmbH
- ❖ European Commission
- ❖ Government of Germany
- ❖ Government of Liechtenstein
- ❖ Government of Luxembourg
- ❖ Government of Spain, Catalonia and the Balearic Islands
- ❖ INGOs
- ❖ Lower Austrian State Government
- ❖ Niederösterreichische Versicherungs AG
- ❖ OMV

- ❖ Rotary International
- ❖ Schoeller-Bleckmann Oilfield Equipment AG
- ❖ Shell Austria AG
- ❖ Siemens
- ❖ United Nations Trust Fund on Family Activities



### Vienna NGO Committee on the Family



#### **PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES**

In two Full Committee Meetings representatives of the 40 International Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), who are members of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family, and 22 associate member organisations, discussed various institution-building projects and activities and approved the Plan of Action for 2016. The Board of the Committee worked out a schedule for its implementation, which was realised in co-operation with the support of the member organisations of the Committee and their representatives. The world-wide network of civil society organisations, research and university institutes, government agencies and individuals, continues to be, not only a beneficiary of interactive exchange, but is in many cases, directly involved in the work of the Committee. The Committee understands itself as a bridge between families-oriented Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), The United Nations, Governments of Member States of the United Nations and Academia, as well as between CSOs themselves, through the various networks created by the Committee, as outlined below.

#### ***The following projects were realised in 2016***

##### **1. Families International**

Issues, Nos. 97 - 100 of the Quarterly Bulletin of the Committee were published online at [www.viennafamilycommittee.org](http://www.viennafamilycommittee.org) Special features included: Follow-Up to the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United Nations International Year of the Family; 'The United Nations International Day of Families 2016'; Family Issues reflected at the 54th United Nations Commission for Social Development 2016; The proceedings of an International Forum organized by the Committee held on Nov.7<sup>th</sup> 2016 at the United Nations Vienna International centre entitled: Family Poverty – Causes, Consequences, and Solutions, published in the special jubilee issue No. 100 of Families International, which also included a paper on Involved Fatherhood. Over three hundred readers of 'Families International' are informed by the Secretariat of the Committee by e-mail, when the latest issue is available to download.

## **2. International Forum: Conditions of Reproduction Lessons from China and Japan**

The Committee organised an International Forum, which was held during a Full Committee Meeting, at the United Nations Vienna International Centre on May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016, with the theme: Conditions of Reproduction – Lessons from China and Japan, including a presentation by Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Mazal from the University of Vienna.

## **3. International Forum: Family Poverty – Causes, Consequences, Solution.**

The Committee organised a further International Forum, which was held during a Full Committee Meeting, at the United Nations Vienna International Centre on November 7<sup>th</sup> 2016. A presentation was made by Dr. Michaela Moser, researcher and lecturer at the Ilse Arlt Institute of Social Inclusion Research at the University of Applied Sciences in St. Poelten, Austria. The text of the presentation by Dr. Moser has also been published in 'Families International' Issue Nr. 100.

## **4. Co-operation with the United Nations Organisation**

The Board of the Committee circulated the Message of the United Nations Secretary-General on the occasion of the International Day of Families (IDF) on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2016, to the various networks of the Committee and kept these networks informed with documents of United Nations Resolutions and Reports of the United Nations Secretary-General pertaining to family issues.

A background note prepared by the Focal Point on the Family, Division for Social Policy and Development, (DSPD), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations Secretariat entitled: 'Families, healthy lives and sustainable future, which was the theme chosen by the United Nations for IDF 2016, as well as the programme of a panel discussion on the theme, held at the United Nations in New York, were also included in Families International.

Further included was the text of a draft resolution from the United Nations General Assembly, Human Rights Council on 'The Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development.'

The full 80 page report of the update of a study entitled: 'Documenting Contributions of Civil Society Organisation to the Well-Being of Families' by Dr. Peter Crowley, Secretary of the Committee, in cooperation with the United Nations Focal Point on the Family, is available on the United Nations website at:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/family/international-day-of-families/2014-3.html>

## **5. Websites of the Committee**

[www.viennafamilycommittee.org](http://www.viennafamilycommittee.org)

The homepage of the Committee had 34.152 visitors in 2016. This website is, amongst others, the main vehicle to publish our quarterly bulletin 'Families International'. Issues Nos. 97 to 100, which were published in 2016, may be downloaded from our website without cost to the reader, or to the Committee.

[www.10yearsIYF.org](http://www.10yearsIYF.org)

This website continues to experience interest and was visited 31.097 times in 2016. [www.10yearsIYF.org](http://www.10yearsIYF.org) is a resource archive for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF) in 2004, with many relevant links to other sources, and resulted out of the participation of the then Chairperson of the Committee in a consultative meeting of international and regional Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) set up by the United Nations Secretariat in New York, in 2002, to implement a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly to observe the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF) in 2004, where it was agreed to prepare a study, under the chairmanship of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family on: 'Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Well-Being of Families' since 1994. The original study was published in book form with the financial support of the United Nations Trust Fund on Family Activities in 1994, under the title: 'Documenting Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Well-Being of Families', edited by P. Crowley and submitted to the members of the special session of the 59<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the United Nations on Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> 2004, to officially observe the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

The United Nations Secretary General referred to the above publication in his Report to the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly (A/59/176, 2004). The contents of the book, which also includes a comparative perspective of international, national, and local family-oriented civil society organisations enhancing social justice, are also available online at: [www.10yearsIYF.org](http://www.10yearsIYF.org)

[www.20yearsIYF.org](http://www.20yearsIYF.org)

To facilitate the implementation of an update of the study originally carried out at [www.10yearsIYF.org](http://www.10yearsIYF.org) a further website was set up at [www.20yearsIYF.org](http://www.20yearsIYF.org) to gather data entered by the participating CSOs in the study-update, from seventeen countries in four continents. The website further offers a knowledge resource of family issues for visitors to the website, by creating a so-called 'Cyber Street' of websites of families-oriented CSOs which deal with eight categories relevant for families: 'Children; Economic-Financial; Education; Gender; Health Issues; Organisation; Parents and Subsistence-Services.' This website, which was visited 16.232 times in 2016, also includes a series of links, inter alia, to the United Nations Focal Point on the Family.

[www.civilsocietynetworks.org](http://www.civilsocietynetworks.org)

An Interactive-Internet-Forum for civil society organisations world-wide, including local, national and international CSOs, as well as academic and research institutions, was set up at the request of many organisations from around the globe, and went online in August 2004 at [www.civilsocietynetworks.org](http://www.civilsocietynetworks.org). This Forum had 143 member organisations from 25 countries in 2016. The network originally incorporated the Interactive-Forums the Committee had already set up with civil society organisations in Eastern African and in Central and Eastern European Countries, and which was then extended and opened to a world-wide membership. Civil Society Organisations can join this Forum, free of cost, by contacting the Committee at: [contact@viennafamilycommittee.org](mailto:contact@viennafamilycommittee.org)

Each organisation receives an individual User-Identity and Password and is able to enter and change data as necessary. The Forum also includes a discussion board, internal e-mail and online conference facilities. The website also includes a newsletter function for each individual member organisation of the forum. The website was visited 7.475 times in 2016.

## **6. Total Number of Visitors to the four Websites maintained by the Committee**

The four websites maintained by the Committee had a total of 88.956 visitors in 2016. That corresponds to an average of over 243 visitors per day to one of the above four websites.

These figures reflect perhaps the momentum created by the observance of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations International Year of the Family in 2014, as well as the ever increasing interest generated by issues related to families. These figures also speak for themselves, with regard to the continued, interest in the endeavours world-wide of the Committee, which observed in 2016, the 31<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its inception in 1985.

#### **7. Elections to the Board of the Committee for 2016 - 2019**

The following representatives of member organisations were elected to the board of the Committee during a Full Committee Meeting at the United Nations Vienna International Centre on November 7<sup>th</sup> 2016:

**Board Officers:**

Chairperson: Mag. Wolfgang Engelmaier, Kolping International,  
Deputy Chairperson: Dr. Gertraud Pichler, International Federation for Home Economics,  
Dr. Pichler in the meantime resigned, for personal reasons,  
Deputy Secretary: Dr. Peter Crowley, International Council of Psychologists,  
Treasurer: Ceja Gregor-Hu, International Inner Wheel,

**Board Members:**

Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Mazal, University of Vienna,  
Joy Orton, LDS Charities,  
Dr. Maria Riehl, Women's Federation for World Peace,  
Dr. Eleonora Teixeira Da Costa Rossoll, Federation of Catholic Family Associations.

#### **Vienna NGO Committee on the Family**

January 2017

*From the United Nations*

United Nations

E/CN.5/2017/NGO/11



## **Economic and Social Council**

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### **Commission for Social Development**

**Fifty-fifth session**

1-10 February 2017

**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and  
the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:  
priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to  
achieve sustainable development for all**

### **Statement submitted by International Federation for Home Economics, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council**

*The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.*

#### **Statement**

#### **Territorial and Family orientated Strategies are required to end Poverty**

##### Introduction:

Eradicating poverty in all its forms remains one of the greatest challenges facing humanity

##### Objective:

The different forms of poverty and hunger result from various political, economic and ecological causes and effects.

##### Purpose:

As an advocate for families and households the IFHE highlights its main suggestions to eradicate poverty.

##### Overview of the Issue as it relates to our work:

Home economics has always been dealing with quality of life for families, sustainable living and a responsible use of resources. Home economics is considered the original field of research focusing on economic, social and ecological aspects of everyday living all of which take place in the

household. Households are the basic and essential building blocks of societies and economy, where members make decisions regarding their behaviour, consumption and economic actions.

The main and basic aim of households is to meet the needs of their household members. Basic needs are physiological such as air, food, water, clothing and housing. In addition, every human being endeavours to feel safe. Safeness includes physical safety, which is not destroyed by occurrences like wars, natural disasters, political instability or violence. Even financial security as well as health and well-being are the most important basic needs of all individuals. Household members combine internal household resources (time, competencies, manpower and much more) with external resources (nature, market goods, political rights etc.) and frame conditions to reach each household member's needs and subsistence goals.

Based on a home economics perspective there are two main contributing factors to the state of poverty. One of the main factors is the unstable framework conditions for accessing and combining basic resources, which is a reality in many

countries in the world. Poverty often results from lack of employment opportunities, lack of economical rights, reduced social security (especially for women), unstable political conditions, wars and disasters. A household interacts with social, political, economic and ecological surrounding to meet its needs; therefore their performance is strongly dependent on this socio-economic framework.

Based on results of case studies and experiences poverty and hunger often have territorial dimensions, which cannot be eradicated by a strategy developed only on a national level. Each territory has its specific economic, social structures and conditions. These different territorial challenges require policy makers and stakeholders on all levels to develop strategies that:

- follow multi-sectoral and integrated approaches
- require multi-level governance and institutions
- require improved territorial information systems for evidence-based poverty eradication, food security and poverty policies
- and link social policies with competitiveness agendas

The second factor for household performance is dependent on the individual and specific characteristics of the household members, their attitudes, competencies and education as well as their relationship to each other. These issues influence a household's economic and social standard. In both, industrial and developing countries, many problems of households occur from poor interpersonal skills as well as improper management and application of household resources. There is often an underappreciation of the need for household's finances, health, nutrition, housing and shopping needs to be managed in a responsible way to establish and retain the family's and household's success.

The act of refocusing families and household members to overcome poverty is based on the content and context of the education of all people in the management of their everyday lives. When the conditions of the framework are present, it establishes the grounding or basis to overcome poverty and conduct sustainable lifestyles as a desirable pattern for quality everyday life and reduce the incidence of family poverty.

Only strong and educated family members with access to material and non-material resources will have the power to care for their families and to participate in society, community and economic processes. Empowerment in everyday life management leads to valuable results for development through educating and advising families and individuals in home economic issues.

This can include food production, maternal and family health as well as capacity building. This education is pertinent for rural people, urban poor, unsettled immigrants, economically dispossessed victims of political and instability, the older population that may not have adequate arrangement for post-employment periods of their lives.

Policymakers who are the primary owners of development resources are key to understanding these issues and must seek to put systems in place to alleviate these deficiencies in the social development of territorial sectors.

Powerbrokers for education, fundamental survival information, community living and environmental education, health and well-being, economic, conflict free and human rights propagation are only some of the critical areas for immediate attention to tackle the urgent need to end poverty in families.

Analysis of the current situation of marginalised families that suffer from poverty strongly suggests a focus on improving framework conditions adapted to the territorial needs and focus on empowering families, households and individuals as a strategy to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG)

(1) Specific examples of accomplishments by the NGO and remaining challenges:

Home economists around the world are contributing to the reduction of poverty every day through their professional work, which is multifaceted.

All over the world home economists are working on research and education programs such as financial literacy programs to avoid over-indebtedness, to generate income and develop own businesses.

As debt counsellors and family advisers, home economic professionals show ways out of poverty and give active support to families that are in financial trouble and face social exclusion.

The IFHE promotes the contribution of home economics to eradicate poverty through several statements to the UN and national governments and through workshops, conferences etc.

A way forward: expectations, specific recommendations for policymakers from the perspective of IFHE

Based on a home economics point of view the performance of individuals living in households and communities are the fundamental units of a functioning society and economy without poverty. Women are of high importance as they are often responsible for caring for the family. Households need framework conditions for poverty prevention and for overcoming poverty.

The IFHE recommends focusing on following priority actions for poverty eradication:

- Households and communities as key for the eradication of poverty.
- Improving access to sustainable livelihoods, entrepreneurial opportunities and productive resources; especially for women.
- Addressing the disproportionate impact of poverty on women; providing universal access to basic social services and security.
- Strengthen education in everyday life management in both, developing and developed countries for persons of all ages.
- Develop social protection systems to support those who cannot support themselves such as the elderly.
- Establish stable economic, politic and social framework conditions.
- Intensifying international cooperation for poverty eradication.

It is extremely important that governments set economic, social and political frameworks which enable individuals and families to use their full potential and overcome poverty.

Conclusion:

The International Federation for Home Economics suggests that development strategies and measures focus on individuals and families as the core units of the society and the economy. We encourage empowering them to improve their quality of life and achieve well-being. In the current political, social, cultural and economic conditions home economics education (educating and advising individuals and families in management of resources and improvement of their everyday life) is key to sustainable development and overcoming poverty as drivers of development and critical to the success of the new global goals.

United Nations

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## Economic and Social Council

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### Commission for Social Development

#### Fifty-fifth session

1-10 February 2017

**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all**

### **Statement submitted by Organisation mondiale des associations pour l'éducation prénatale and Make Mothers Matter, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council**

*The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.*

#### **Statement**

L'Organisation Mondiale des Associations pour l'Education Prénatale (OMAEP) and Make Mothers Matter (MMM) wish to raise awareness of the necessity for all countries to take a trans-generational perspective on poverty.

UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank have highlighted the central role of education and early childhood development across all UN Sustainable Development Goals. No child should be left behind. As such, it is a critical factor for enabling societies to alleviate poverty by improving productivity through the formation of human capital. The logic is simple: alleviating poverty in societies is linked to economic prosperity, which requires a productive population, which in turn is dependent on quality education.

Unfortunately this cause and effect chain works in both directions. While education is key to the eradication of poverty—hunger, malnutrition and ill health, often tied to poverty, obstruct education—and this in turn limits human productivity growth and perpetuates poverty.

A solution to this conundrum requires a trans-generational perspective on poverty. A trans-generational perspective looks at the cause and effect

chain across generations. It examines how interventions in one generation can avoid harm being perpetuated in future generations. And nowhere is the evidence more conclusive than interventions providing support and education for mothers during pregnancy and throughout their children's early years.

If the importance of a healthy lifestyle, good nutrition and health during pregnancy and early childhood is well recognized, the potential impact of a mother's mental and emotional health on her children's future outcome is not yet fully acknowledged and integrated enough into policymaking. Neurosciences have recently confirmed that a baby's brain development is shaped by their earliest experiences, including during pregnancy. In particular, a baby's exposure to stress from any cause within the family, such as parental mental illness, neglect, mistreatment, domestic violence or simply poverty-related stress, can significantly affect their brain development. On the other hand, loving relationships and care, nurture and early stimulation support a healthy brain development and increase the chances that the child will achieve their full potential later in life.

In other words, early parenting and early child care and education can have a lifelong impact on a child's mental and emotional health and affect their physical, social and intellectual development —starting with their readiness for pre-school. Evidence in developed countries shows that a child who is not ready for pre-school education is less likely to succeed later in primary and secondary education.

Further, in addition to benefiting children (and their parents), the benefits of early education extend to society as a whole. Such so-called "positive externalities", include reductions in crime, and lower expenditures on health care and on remedial education.

A number of economic studies have shown that investing in early parenting and early childhood care and education is 5-6 times more effective than intervening to solve problems later in life. A recent prospective analysis of comprehensive preconception care found that for every \$1 spent on preconception, \$1.60 is saved in maternal and foetal care costs. Other studies have shown that preconception care can save as much as \$5.19 for every \$1 invested (In *Healthy Pregnancy and Healthy Children: Opportunities and Challenges for Employers* —The Business Case for Promoting Healthy Pregnancy —AOL's WellBaby Program, USA.).

More recently in October 2016, The Lancet launched a new Early Childhood Development Series that highlights the high cost of inaction —an estimated 250 million children aged under five are now at risk of suboptimal development —and the need to support families to provide nurturing care from the very start of a child's life.

Early parenting is key since parents, both mother and father, or caregivers, provide the immediate physical, emotional and cognitive environment that will be the foundation for a child's development.

The conclusion of a recent study states: "it is imperative that we place the child's best interests

as our highest priority, and we need to be mindful of the science that underlies child development — that children require consistent, sensitive caregiving from the start ..."

"The effects of early life adversity on brain and behavioral development" —Charles Nelson, Ph.D. (Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School, Harvard Center on the Developing Child). Moreover, women's empowerment matters: the 2007 UNICEF "State of the World's Children" Report notes that "gender equality produces a double dividend: It benefits both women and children. Healthy, educated and empowered women have healthy, educated and confident daughters and sons".

Therefore, OMAEP and MMM calls on all governments to:

1. Recognize the importance of these critical early years for child development, especially between conception and age 3, and make it an investment priority for governments
2. Develop national policies educating and supporting mothers and fathers in their caring roles, especially during pregnancy and these early years, to ensure that babies benefit from protective, loving, nurturing and stimulating environments and relationships.

To this effect, OMAEP and MMM have developed a "Mother and Child Manifesto" that comprises 7 Childhood and Early Parenting Principles (CEPPs), a roadmap for governments to raise awareness, educate, promote and integrate early parenting and nurturing care into policies and evidence-based interventions across all relevant sectors. Investment in Early Parenting and Childhood Care and Education is the best investment a country can do. Not only it is a matter of child rights, but it will be key to the realization of the 2030 Development Agenda, Starting with Goal 1: Eradicating Poverty.

United Nations

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## Economic and Social Council

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### Commission for Social Development

#### Fifty-fifth session

1-10 February 2017

**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all**

### Statement submitted by Service and Research Institute on Family and Children, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

*The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.*

#### Statement

Strategies for Eradicating Poverty to Achieve Sustainable development for all

Introduction, objective and purpose of the statement: This statement highlights the coexistence of debilitating effects of poverty on the individual and family as a social entity and inherent possibilities of enhancing prosperity through enlisting the assets in stable family life which currently lie dormant.

SERFAC makes an ardent plea to governments, the United Nations and other stakeholders to engage in poverty eradication strategies to achieve sustainable development for all, and discuss how such combined efforts can be realized in this potential for all peoples.

SERFAC believes that empowering families as a social entity is a profound and workable way of arriving at sustainability. Such an approach promotes the stability, security and wellbeing of families. This approach is inclusive, interdisciplinary and sustained and has at its centre "Family as a social entity".

In two recent consultations held in India in July 2016 "Cooperation for Human Development" organized by SERFAC, the concluding statements indicated and called on all stakeholders to play a vital role in the eradication of poverty as a serious and socially devastating human experience and

to play an equally socially constructive role in development of all peoples.

These pleas are expressed in the following recommendations:

The most urgent need is for Governments and concerned stakeholders to collaborate towards developing long term plans and projects for economic independence for families and their members. There is a need to identify and develop, revise and rebuild systems, by providing for and ensuring adequate support systems to family health, education, social services and employment. It is critical for the family to face up to and withstand any form of social change without succumbing to pressure and thereby constructively contribute to sustainable development.

Furthermore there is a need to recognise the urgency of integrating all corporate and social institutions to contribute to the advancement of family support measures. This can be achieved by building up robust social responsibility programmes and projects and enabling pro family policies to create humanizing work conditions and better work-life balance for their employees, thereby contributing to building up sustainable family and community life systems through strategies and philanthropy.

It is also important for all stakeholders to recognise the effective role played by Non-Governmental Organisations in dealing with research, training, capacity building, advocacy and information dissemination. They ensure there is a place for empirical groundwork which can be constructively used by governments and donor agencies for policy making exercise for “family centred” services and poverty eradication projects in different countries.

Furthermore, we recognise the critical role for family and nonfamily institutions such as educational, social services, health care, child care centres, displaced families and children to effectively supplement and compliment the role of caring environment so that inclusive, broad based, preventive and rights based approaches could be developed. In addition, support structures could be built to ensure their healthy development to adulthood.

It is equally important to facilitate families so that they have economic support, a stable and cohesive family life, and ensure higher growth enhanced productivity and overall sustainability.

The United Nations has a Family focal point at its Headquarters in New York, and works with various related institutions to promote the wellbeing of family and its institution, including labour related issues through its Global Compact principles. Actions proposed should be firmly anchored at the global level, as well as including, but not limited to, local and regional initiatives.

We, at SERFAC will endeavour to fill in the gaps in the ‘SDG’s through humane family centred approaches, which are indeed ‘basic and missing links’ in the sustainable development agenda, in national policies and the UN’s call to action in freeing people from countries of extreme poverty. We engage through dialogue and promote peaceful measures for all key groups and stakeholders to create a sustainable framework that contributes to the evolution of such policies in their respective locations.

The way forward and expectations: SERFAC makes a humble plea to the United Nations to develop a Charter of Rights of the family which will enable sustainable development on all fronts of human existence. In particular, peace, including economic wellbeing and prosperity, collaboration and collective action with key constituents as has been enshrined in various covenants and legal instruments to protect human dignity, provide equality of purpose and support unhindered growth of the most unreached segments of society particularly children, women and the vulnerable.

Conclusion: SERFAC believes that such collaborative efforts and partnerships are geared and intended to enable families to contribute to human prosperity, national stability and sustainable development for all, as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals.

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### Commission for Social Development

#### Fifty-fifth session

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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all**

### Statement submitted by Doha International Family Institute, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

*The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.*

#### Statement

#### **Eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development goals: It begins and ends with family**

“We need to create a shift in how the family is perceived – from an impediment to social progress and development to a driving force behind it. We need to invest in strengthening society through supporting and empowering its fundamental unit – the family.” – Her Highness Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development and the Founder of the Doha International Family Institute.

#### Introduction

The Social Summit Declaration correctly identifies the need to “recognise the family as the basic unit of society and acknowledge that it plays a key role in social development and as such should be strengthened, with attention to the rights, capabilities and responsibilities of its members” (26-h). This understanding should receive significantly more focus as international bodies move forward in the implementation of the post 2015 development agenda. In addition, the 2030 Agenda itself, in Paragraph 11, reaffirms the Social Summit Declaration.

A Family Perspective into Poverty Alleviation

A growing body of research shows that the family is indispensable to the welfare of society and to the individuals that comprise it. Even in situations of dire poverty, the most important factor influencing outcomes for individuals is whether they are members of strong, stable families (Strengthening the Family: Implications for International Development, UN University Press 1995, page 1.) Poverty is a human problem. It is a hydra-headed social plague that paralyzes families and keeps them from fulfilling their normal functions and roles in the care and nurturing of their members, especially women and children. Considerable evidence indicates that families are trapped by circumstances, often lack the willpower to resist, and easily become prey to social drift, which can lead to addiction, violence, mental illness, corruption, theft, and even suicide. Such a cause-and-effect phenomenon is cyclic, takes its toll on human life, wastes human resources, and impedes any form of development.

Evidence has shown that children enter poverty by virtue of their families’ socio-economic circumstances. Children of economically deprived parents are more likely to experience social and

health conditions that place them at risk for later academic, employment, and behavioural problems. Older persons, on the other hand, have an increased likelihood of becoming and remaining poor because old age brings with it a reduced capacity to work as well as difficulties in accessing health care and other essential services. Therefore, a family perspective is needed in formulating poverty alleviation policy at national, regional, and international levels to achieve sustainable development goals.

#### Family-Focused Social Protection

We believe that one of the best policy approaches for ending family and child poverty, ending insecurity and exclusion, and building up resilience is establishing or strengthening family-focused social protection systems. In both our advocacy efforts aimed at promoting family focused social protection and projects we carry out at the Arab regional level, Doha International Family Institute approaches family-focused social protection schemes as investments rather than as costs. We believe that universal family-focused social protection systems contribute to the eradication of poverty, enhance human capital, and help to reduce inequalities. We strive to increase the awareness of a family perspective in social protection systems and its roles in poverty alleviation to achieve sustainable development goals, engaging in dialogue at both the government and civil-society levels.

Family-focused social protection includes adequate cash transfers for all families who need them, especially families with children; benefits and support for people of working age in the case of maternity, family caregivers of people with disabilities, older persons, work injury, or those without jobs. Doha International Family Institute believes that access to social protection, including basic income security and essential health care, should be guaranteed to every family who needs such protection, taking into account specific national priorities and constraints. Achieving an integrated and sustainable social protection system that strengthens families and promotes children's welfare will be maximised through a strong partnership among civil society and the public and private sectors. Such a partnership has the potential to bring together sector-specific strengths in a structured manner to develop evidence-based programming that strengthens families and improves outcomes for children.

#### Conclusion

"As basic and essential building blocks of societies, families have a crucial role in social development. They bear the primary responsibility for the education and socialization of children as well as instilling values of citizenship and belonging in

the society" (The Report of the Secretary General on the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, A/66/62-E/2011/4). Strong families are key to effective poverty eradication to achieve sustainable development goals.

We need to be determined to end family poverty, in all of its forms and dimensions, and to ensure that families and all of their members can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.

Finally, the family, as the fundamental and basic unit of society, requires conscious recognition and inclusion by United Nations agencies and other governmental entities. Because the strength of the family is the strength of nations, our challenge is to integrate the family perspective into sustainable development goals to guide us now and in the future, to respond to the vital needs of all human beings.

As the delegates to the 2017 Commission for Social Development undertake their important work, we believe that the challenges presented can effectively be addressed by, in the words of the Secretary-General, focusing on the family. The family truly is the driving force behind development and is the very key to poverty eradication to achieve sustainable development goals.

To this end, we encourage a commitment:

(a) To focus poverty alleviation policy on the family as a unit; acknowledge that family breakdown can be both a root cause and an effect of poverty; consider its prevention as a priority; and promote the well-being of families and their individual members by addressing all of their functions, including family formation, economic support, women's empowerment, reconciling work and family responsibilities, and child-rearing and child development, to make sure that no one family will be left behind.

(b) To be determined to take the bold and transformative steps, which are urgently needed to alleviate family poverty by achieving integrated and sustainable social protection system that strengthens families to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path.

(c) To mobilize the means required to implement a revitalized global effective partnership for family poverty alleviation, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused particularly on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable families and their members with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders, and all people.

(d) To empower families by promoting the integration of a family perspective into poverty alleviation policy at the national, regional, and international levels; by removing social, political, legal,

and economic barriers to their active participation in society; by enabling them to assert greater control over their resources and life choices, especially including decisions on investments in health, housing, and education; and by providing instruments for recognizing the time, effort, and

money that committed families invest in their children.

(e) To ensure that family poverty alleviation policy recognizes generational interdependence and promotes intergenerational interaction and healthy intra-family relationships.

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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all**

### Statement submitted by Confédération des organisations familiales de l'Union européenne, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

*The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.*

#### Statement

Strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all: A European reality-check from COFACE Families Europe

#### I. Introduction

COFACE Families Europe is a network of 59 organizations in 23 European countries, representing about 25 million families. We work across Europe, advocating for families, including families in vulnerable situations and at risk of poverty. We promote a family-friendly society, where families and their members benefit from sufficient financial resources, available quality services and adequate time arrangements in order to live and enjoy their family life in dignity and harmony.

We would like to provide a European perspective to the debate, highlighting poverty trends in Europe, looking at the role of civil society organizations in developing policies and services to prevent poverty, and finally the way forward.

#### II. Poverty trends in Europe

Poverty is a reality in Europe. Poverty reduction is a key policy component of the Europe 2020 strategy, with the target of reducing the number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion by 20 million by 2020. The number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU has increased rather than decreased since 2010. Some key figures from Eurostat:

- Almost every fourth person in the EU was still at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2014.
- More than 30 % of young people aged 18 to 24 and 27.8% of children aged less than 18 were at risk in 2014. At 17.8%, this rate was considerably lower among the elderly aged 65 or over.
- Almost 50% of all single parents were at risk in 2014. This was double the average and higher than for any other household type analysed.
- Monetary poverty was the most widespread form of poverty with 17.2% of EU citizens affected in 2014. Next were severe material deprivation and very low work intensity, affecting 9% and 11.2% of EU citizens respectively.

#### III. The role of civil society organizations supporting families in vulnerable situations

Our experience in Europe is that family professionals have a role to play to develop policies and services to address and prevent poverty. COFACE Families Europe are currently engaged in the five general traditional stages of the policy cycle (both at national and European level):

- Problem definition: This entails assessment of the real needs of families, around which evidence-based policies can be built, and in order to create a baseline against which policy progress is measured. While researchers generally are called upon to scientifically define the policy challenge(s), civil society organizations can also fill

any research gaps (either through data collected on the users of their services or through qualitative surveys linked to the families they represent or work with). COFACE Families Europe and its members highlight trends and challenges in reconciling work and family life, the needs of single parent households, the challenges of family carers, and families in vulnerable situations.

- **Agenda-setting:** This phase is important in terms of defining the policy priorities and approaches. National social protection policies across Europe tend to prioritize areas such as financial support in the form of benefits and allowances, appropriate leave policies, and appropriate services to support family members (child-care, elder-care, disability care). We call for a life-course perspective in policy making allowing for a holistic approach to family needs which concern not only parents with young children, but also adults with ageing parents. We call also for a systematic two generational approach to preventing and tackling poverty and social exclusion of families, developing programmes which target explicitly both parents and children in order to maximize results.

- **Policy development:** The policy development process and the policy objectives will depend on the welfare structures in place in different countries, on the presence of a political vision or not for families, on the needs of families, on the exact target group of the policy (children, parents, youth, grandparents, carers). The policy objectives will depend on the approach taken to reach out to families (family or individual units, parent/child well-being, relationships to siblings), and the approach will determine the soft or hard outcome indicators used to measure policy progress. In many cases, civil society organizations are considered genuine partners in policy development.

- **Policy implementation:** Family organizations might wish to function outside of the policy arena, or they might wish to function within a clear policy framework. In some contexts, they are seen as part of family policy (as service providers to families e.g. parental support, babysitting), or as a way to complement existing family policies by helping to build family support networks, provide psychological support and training, respite to family carers, provide a voice for different groups of family members (e.g. grandparents associations, families of people with disabilities, one-parent families). Civil society organizations with a firm foot in local communities will be perceived as a resource to harness in order to contribute to successful policy implementation.

- **Policy evaluation:** Indicators are theoretically defined from the outset of a policy (see policy de-

velopment) and therefore serve as the basic evaluation framework of a given family policy, as well as scientific evaluations and cost-effectiveness evaluations. But there are also other ways of complementing such indicators, namely through qualitative surveys and focus groups sessions with families which civil society organizations can contribute to or indeed lead on. Key evaluation questions to be considered are: does the policy support the social and economic integration of families? Does the policy successfully manage family support needs? Civil society organizations can intervene ex-ante, mid-term or indeed at the end of a policy cycle in order to help define new problems to be addressed in a next policy phase.

#### IV. The way forward: a mix between national and European policies

COFACE Families Europe works on three main levels which represent the multi-level governance of the European Union. Firstly, the national members of COFACE (a diverse range of family organizations) provide a voice and services in their respective countries and push for quality family-friendly national and regional policies. Secondly, COFACE Families Europe represents the interests of its members in the EU political arena, aiming to build European family-friendly policies, working in partnership with the European Commission, European Parliament and other key institutions in Brussels. Thirdly, we reconcile both EU and national levels by promoting transnational exchanges and innovation across EU countries through various activities (seminars, training, common projects, awareness-raising campaigns and more).

We would like to reinforce the fourth dimension to our work: making the links between European dynamics and global dynamics to reduce or eradicate poverty. There are some upcoming initiatives worth mentioning in this respect which we are monitoring closely.

Currently the European Union provides funding to countries under its Cohesion Policy to support employment and inclusion pathways through its European Social Fund, the building of community-based social and health services through its European Regional Development Fund, and providing emergency assistance to families in vulnerable situations through its Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived.

In March 2016, the European Commission launched a consultation on European Pillar of Social Rights, and will publish a proposal next year. We are convinced this Pillar can provide a 2030 vision with long-term goals linked to the Sustainable Development Goals in order to guide policy

and law-making in ensuring all European citizens have access to their fundamental rights.

The European Commission is also preparing a package of non-legislative and legislative measures to be published early next year to promote reconciliation work and family for women and men. The package is likely to include proposals on leaves such as carers leave, paternity leave and on building quality services. The ultimate goal of this package is helping families to reconcile their private and professional lives, which we consider fundamental to preventing poverty and social exclusion.

COFACE Families Europe is working closely with EU institutions to shape and implement these policies with a view to supporting families in their daily needs (i.e. poverty prevention) and especially helping families in a vulnerable situation

transition out of poverty and social exclusion. To this end, we are doing our best to ensure these policies include our core values of non-discrimination (recognising all family forms), equal opportunities (equality between women and men being a cornerstone for the reconciliation of family and professional life), respect of human rights (advancing the rights of families and their members to a decent quality of life), empowerment (giving a voice to all family members as citizens, consumers and workers), social inclusion (advocating for the shaping of policies to tackle poverty and social exclusion of families and their members), and finally solidarity (promoting intergenerational solidarity between family members). We truly hope Europe can provide some inspiration to other world regions in the global fight against poverty to achieve sustainable development for all.

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### Commission for Social Development

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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all**

### Statement submitted by International Federation for Family Development, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

*The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.*

#### Statement

More than 25 years since the Convention on the Rights of the Child came to force and the world is still falling short in its promise to ensure the right to a safe childhood. Child poverty affects the lives of millions of children worldwide and conventional strategies are inadequate, as they do not recognize that children experience poverty differently from adults and have specific needs. As an international federation of Family Enrichment Centers present in 66 countries, IFFD is committed to contribute to the well-being of children worldwide, from a physical and psychological perspective.

The importance of psychological well-being in children and young people, for their healthy emotional, social, physical, cognitive and educational development, is generally recognized. There's an increasing evidence of the effectiveness of interventions to improve children's and young people's resilience, promote mental health and treat mental health problems and disorders, including children and young people with severe disorders. We need active measures to support the psychological well-being of children and youth with sensitivity to family situations (prevent violence, addictions and juvenile delinquency). Also, promote school to work transitions and young adults' economic security to facilitate family formation and stability, particularly among those with insecure socio-economic resources.

The following are key issues for identification and promotion of children's mental health and psychological well-being:

#### 1. Belonging

Successfully achieving a sense of belonging in institutions, such as schools, can have a positive impact on a range of important outcomes, including engagement with learning, emotional well-being and happiness. A sense of "not belonging" may lead to disaffection, disengagement from learning, depression and anxiety. When they feel excluded, they may be at greater risk of seeking a sense of belonging through anti-social groups, such as gangs or extremist organizations. And where problems of engagement and belonging are a feature of schools, these are likely to be manifested in increased risk of poor behaviour, poor attendance, underachievement and bullying.

#### 2. Distress

Common, transitory distress, even if severe, is a normal experience of childhood and usually does not require professional help. Although usually temporary in nature, distress can however also be more chronic and longstanding. Current estimates indicate that one in ten children and young people aged between 5 and 16 years in the UK experience symptoms, which cause them considerable psychological distress.

In some cases, long-term outcomes can be serious and without intervention, these difficulties can persist into adulthood with considerable implications for the individual, those close to them and wider society.

### 3. Enjoyment

Empowering children to enjoy their childhood and school life is an aim that should be up-held by all those who work with children. There are certain expectations in relation to “enjoyment” and the duty to promote the well-being of their pupils. Whilst objective indicators are available to assess attendance, standards of behaviour and rates of further education, they can do little to confirm subjective levels of enjoyment.

### 4. Healthy Living

Health promotion has become a hot topic, particularly for schools, and research has consistently demonstrated that healthy living is associated with positive outcomes. For children and young people, healthy living is important for healthy growth, cognitive development and psychological well-being, and habits learnt during childhood often continue into later life. There is also a positive relationship between diet and regular physical activity with social skills, positive self-esteem and good quality peer relationships.

### 5. Resilience

Resilience is not simply putting up with life’s adversities, or being able to cope with them –it’s the capacity to get up after being pushed over and to tolerate great challenges without breaking down under the strain they impose. School life can offer vulnerable pupils a wide range of opportunities to boost resilience, such as acting as a secure base, helping to developing self-esteem and self-efficacy, and providing constructive contact with peers and supportive adults.

### 6. Responsiveness

“Responsiveness” is a term used to describe the range of behaviours that children must show to successfully participate in activities with their peers and other individuals in a prosocial way. Empathy, altruism, self-awareness and relationship skills are all facets of responsiveness.

### 7. Social Behaviour

A child’s psychological well-being can be great enhanced by the breadth of quality of their social relationships. The behaviours that children display towards other children, their feelings about themselves and their sense of self-worth (particularly in school) can all reveal valuable indicators of their overall mental health and well-being. Social behaviour also plays a huge role in the classroom and can both aid and hinder learning and progress.

#### The role of the family

Often, low-income families have few possibilities

of improving their living conditions. Individuals do not choose to live in poverty and they struggle to make ends meet. Blaming them for being inadequate or lazy is insensitive and pointless. In many cases they come from a background and culture of poverty and many of their children are disadvantaged in their upbringing.

There is also a good deal of evidence on the links between a range of negative family outcomes and experiences of poverty. Evidence across developed countries generally agrees that children from poor households are more likely to grow up poor, experience unemployment, to have lower levels of education, and to experience a range of poor health outcomes and engage more often in many risk factors. Poverty has been linked to family breakdown, parental (particularly maternal) depression, social exclusion, and the take up of publicly provided family services.

#### The role of local authorities

What can local authorities achieve by promoting the social and emotional well-being of children and young people?

1. Improve the population’s health and well-being  
Social and emotional well-being is influenced by a range of factors, from individual make-up and family background to the community within which people live and society at large. Social and emotional well-being provides personal competencies (such as emotional resilience, self-esteem and interpersonal skills) that help to protect against risks relating to social disadvantage, family disruption and other adversity in life. Such competencies provide building blocks for personal development, which will enable children and young people to take advantage of life’s chances.

2. Reduce mental health problems in children and young people

Evidence shows that poor social and emotional well-being predicts a range of negative outcomes in adolescence and adulthood. For example, negative parenting and poor quality family or school relationships place children at risk of poor mental health. Early intervention in childhood can help reduce physical and mental health problems and prevent social dysfunction being passed from one generation to the next. Recent surveys identified that 10% of children and young people aged 5-16 had a clinically diagnosed mental disorder. Older children (11-16 years) were more likely than younger children (5-10 years) to be diagnosed as such (12% compared with 8%).

3. Improve social and economic outcomes

For children and young people with poor social, emotional and psychological health there is an increased likelihood of poor socio-economic outcomes, in both the short and long-term. For example, children with behavioural problems are more

likely to leave school with no qualifications, become teenage parents, experience relationship or marital problems and experience unemployment in adulthood.

#### 4. Reduce demand on services

For children and young people with poor social, emotional and psychological health there is an increased likelihood of criminal behaviour and higher risk behaviour's such as substance misuse, lower levels of social interaction and poor mental health, outcomes that may continue into adulthood.

#### 5. Promote educational attainment and reduce bullying and risk-taking behaviour among pupils

The emotional well-being of children and young people is enhanced through building self-esteem and self-efficacy, reducing bullying behaviour and risk-taking behaviours, and supporting the development of social and emotional skills. This may also improve all pupils' interest in their learning, lead to better school attendance and improve attainment.

#### Recommendations for governments

The complex and varied policy frameworks found in rich countries mean that many different pathways for reducing bottom-end inequality exist. But research suggests that children do better, families do better, and countries do better when nations invest in early childhood programs. The following principles and recommendations for governments should be considered in strengthening child well-being:

#### 1. Protect the incomes of households with the poorest children

Boosting employment opportunities for parents, implementing progressive taxation and effective service provision all have a role to play. However, it is evident that large income gaps tend to go hand in hand with less-extensive social transfer systems.

#### 2. Focus on improving the educational achievements of disadvantaged learners

The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires recognition not just of the right to education, but also "achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity". This means preventing children from failing far behind in their educational achievement. Evidence from the PISA surveys shows that there is no inevitable trade-off between reducing achievement gaps and overall outcomes.

#### 3. Promote and support healthy lifestyles for all children

Promoting healthy lifestyles at an early age is likely to pay short and long-term dividends, but the fact that such large relative child health gaps exist in many countries is a cause for concern. This is particularly so for inequalities in physical activity, given that these seem more tightly bound

to inequalities in income. This would suggest that there is particular scope for governments to do more to open up opportunities for less-affluent children to participate in physical activity in and out of school. Evidence from the "European Union statistics on income and living conditions" shows that low income is a barrier to participation in extracurricular activities in European schools.

#### 4. Take subjective well-being seriously

Data gathered over a period of more than 10 years for the "Health Behaviour in School-aged Children" survey shows stable patterns of inequality in children's life satisfaction. While this stability confirms that subjective well-being data reveal meaningful information about children's lives in rich countries, the fact that some countries have had persistently large gaps is a cause for concern. Moreover, the findings that children with low life satisfaction are more likely to be exposed to risky health behaviour's and outcomes underlines the fact that subjective well-being also matters for health and education.

#### 5. Place equity at the heart of child well-being agendas

The leave-no-one-behind principle should form the foundation of future social strategies. The evidence suggests that to improve overall child well-being the most disadvantaged must not be ignored. Better monitoring and measurement of child well-being. Producing better data for informed public debate and a more comprehensive picture of child well-being is essential.

#### 6. Improve the availability, timeliness and usefulness of information about the well-being of children in rich countries

As part of this process, governments and national statistical agencies should continue to work together more closely to harmonize surveys, wherever possible, in order to allow for fruitful cross-national comparison of child well-being outcomes and to foster cross-national policy learning.

#### 7. Data sets should track children through different stages of their life

Such analysis is particularly powerful for an exploration of the temporality of child well-being and the factors that shape child well-being. Governments should increase their support for these longitudinal data sources.

#### 8. Children's voices should be built into data-collection processes

While children's voices are heard more clearly than ever before, further efforts can still be made to capture child-derived measures of well-being more systematically and to understand better the particular contexts in which child well-being improves and worsens. Children need to be able to shape the questions asked in surveys of their own lives and well-being.

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#### Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all

#### Statement submitted by Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

*The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.*

#### Statement

The family is the natural social institution at the foundation of every society. It is the ecosystem where each individual member of the human family is conceived, develops, and grows to maturity. Sadly, the family is frequently overlooked by the international community even as the family faces new challenges to protection of the family, family formation and stability.

Policies and programs to achieve poverty eradication, in particular, suffer from a lack of attention to the family as a rights holder, a subject of policies and programming, as well as an agent of sustainable social and economic development.

Below are a several first order concerns the Commission for Social Development should entertain in elaborating strategies to eradicate poverty to achieve sustainable development for all.

Protecting the family is not only a matter of good policy, it is also an obligation under international law. The family is defined in international law and policy as “the natural and fundamental group unit of society.” As such, it is “entitled to protection by society and the State” and is a proper subject of human rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and binding international instruments reserve singular protections for the natural or nuclear family in recognition of the family’s irreplaceable role as “natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children.” International law further establishes that the family is formed when a man and a woman exercise their fundamental human right to freely “marry and found a family”, and that they are entitled to equal rights in the context of marriage and the family. This fundamental right is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and binding international instruments. The self-evident truth of the benefit of the family to its individual members and society at large enshrined in international law is validated by the best available social science and research. Indeed, the social science and the data could not be clearer. Unless the family is empowered, poverty eradication will never be achieved and development will never be sustainable.

Children thrive in intact families formed by the marriage of a man and a woman. It is the place where individuals learn both love and responsibil-

ity. No other structure or institution is able to deliver the same quality outcomes for children as the family composed of a man and a woman in a stable and enduring relationship.

Even schools that are home to strong and stable families also tend to enjoy more successful and gender-equitable schools.

A host of negative outcomes result from family breakdown and deprivation.

Divorce or partnership dissolution and re-partnering are associated with higher levels of diarrhea, stunting (i.e., poor growth), and child mortality in a number of lower-income regions around the globe.

When children are not brought up by their biological parents in a stable family environment, as for example in unmarried, cohabiting, and same-sex households, they are more likely to experience school failure, lower levels of education, behavioral problems, drug use, and loneliness, among other negative outcomes, as well as physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

Growing up with both parents (in an intact family) is strongly associated with more education, work, and income. Both men and women enjoy substantially higher family incomes, compared to peers with otherwise similar characteristics. These advantages are replicated across the population spectrum in the United States, regardless of race or religion.

Entering marriage and founding a family is associated with better physical and mental health, emotional wellbeing, less criminality and substance abuse, and longer life expectancies for both men and women. It is also positively correlated with lower infant mortality. Moreover, research shows that healthy families formed by the union of a man and a woman result in more healthy families. While individuals who do not experience the benefits of being raised by their mother and father can rise above their circumstances, children born in families that stay together are more likely to form their own families. It simply cannot be overstated. The family is essential in combating poverty and creating economic opportunity. Entering marriage and founding a family is correlated with higher earnings and social mobility. When the family breaks down new generations and entire social strata become trapped in the cycle of poverty.

A landmark Harvard study shows the best predictor of social mobility in the United States is the family. The most consistent factor in the ability of individuals to emerge from poverty and climb the social ladder is living in areas where families stay together.

Moreover, the economic synergies found naturally in families are impossible to recreate through government programs or institutions. Even aside from the direct social and economic costs of family breakdown because of its effect on children and parents outlined above, the breakup of the family results in exponentially higher expenses for governments through welfare programs to care for children and youth who do not benefit from an intact family, as well as adults and elderly persons whose only safety net is found in the public purse.

The benefits of the family for individuals and communities are repeated across borders and all segments of society regardless of social and economic status, including among minorities.

Recent pressure to grant international status and recognition to social and legal arrangements between individuals of the same sex in the context of the United Nations has led to unnecessary confusion and acrimony in international negotiations on the subject of the family. Unfortunately, this has led to the exclusion of the family altogether from recent debates in the General Assembly, as member states do not recognize relations between individuals of the same sex as capable of constituting a family.

This position statement and explanatory notes reflect the position of "The Family Articles," the platform of Civil Society for the Family, a coalition of over 180 pro-family organizations that wants the international community to protect the family in accordance with binding international human rights obligations.

The coalition is attempting to constructively move the debate beyond the current impasse to a more fruitful approach that will recognize the importance of the family for all individuals and society at large as a rights holder, an agent of sustainable social and economic development, and a proper subject of international programs and policies.

United Nations

E/CN.5/2017/NGO/75



## Economic and Social Council

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### Commission for Social Development

#### Fifty-fifth session

1-10 February 2017

**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all**

#### Statement submitted by Family Educational Services Foundation and American Pakistan Foundation, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

*The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.*

#### Statement

In accordance with the fifty-fifth session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD55), the priority theme "strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all" carries significant meaning for Pakistan civil society.

In the context of social development, Family Education Services Foundation (FESF), in collaboration with American Pakistan Foundation (APF) would like to emphasize the importance of a stable, secure and prosperous Pakistan which requires international collaboration to ensure Pakistan's emerging economy continues to grow through investment, trade, technology transfer, ICT, education and scientific exchange.

We would like to point out Pakistan's regional interconnectivity with the functionality of the Gwadar Port serves as a bridge to South Asia, Central Asia and China's economies. The newly functional China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) provides a multimodal transport network of quality infrastructure (power, highways, railways, pipelines), logistics and distribution networks to link production clusters, urban centers, and international gateways.

We believe that sustainable and substantive social development will be achieved in Pakistan as its democratic institutions are strengthened.

Given Pakistan's checkered constitutional history, the recent steadfast equilibrium in the balance of power between the military and the government is a positive step towards strengthening institutions.

The recent turbulence testing institutional relationships indicate equilibrium and continued progress in Pakistan's path to democracy and an economically and socially developed environment.

As highlighted by the provisional agenda for the fifty-fifth session of the Commission for Social Development (E/CN.5/2016/L.1), we emphasize the review of relevant UN plans and programmes of actions pertaining to the situations of social groups (i) World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and (ii) Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities; and (iii) World Programme of Action for Youth; and the importance of social protection floors.

In the context of disability inclusion, we support the launch of the first comprehensive international Charter on Disability in October 2015 which asserts the common commitment to create inclusive workplaces for all people with disabilities around the world.

In Pakistan, for over thirty years, Family Education

Services Foundation has dedicated its work to enhancing the quality of life for all members of the community, especially those who are disadvantaged. By investing in educational development, innovative training programs, development tools and services to enable recipients to gain competency and self-sufficiency, while empowering them to reach their full potential, Pakistan civil society supports ILO Global Business and Disability network principles and is dedicated to continue to make substantive gains in disability inclusion.

We strongly believe in the importance of formalistic global frameworks, such as the Business Charter on Disability, and the need for regional collaborations between civil society, respective member states, and the private sector in ensuring access and opportunity for inclusion in the workforce.

In the context of youth, Pakistan is witnessing a tremendous demographic divide. As one of the youngest populations in the world, Pakistani youth are in need of opportunities. And as research indicates, we firmly believe that integration and inclusion is best achieved through means of education and employment. We further affirm the need for inclusive based practices and policies.

We believe that in order to end poverty, insecurity and exclusion, and building up resilience, it is necessary to establish and strengthen the social protection systems as well. These systems contribute to the eradication of poverty, enhance human capital and productivity, and help reduce inequalities. Social protection as a human right has become an important part of the international development discourse.

The Commission on the recent Report on the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human

rights (A/HRC/29/31) states (see para 51): “It is difficult to accept that a State that has no basic social protection floor in place, whether so called or not, is meeting its most basic obligations in relation to the economic, social and cultural rights of its citizens and others”. We agree with this position that the Special Rapporteur’s vision and efforts.

We urge member states to establish social protection floors to include basic social security guarantees. These nationally defined set of essential goods and services should include (i) availability, accessibility and quality of essential health care; (ii) essential health care, including maternity care, that meets criteria of availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality; (iii) basic income security for youth (education and skill training —especially for the disabled); (iv) and basic income security.

We support the ILO’s Recommendation No. 202 concerning National Floors for Social Protection, and through our civil society network affiliates, strive to increase awareness of the positive impacts of social protection floors by engaging in dialogue at both the government and the civil society level.

In accordance with the follow up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, we emphasize the facilitation of national implementation and monitoring of programs.

And as poverty continues to be the greatest global challenge of our times, we urge Member States to continue an integrated economic and social policy approach by engaging a broad range of stakeholders.



INTERNATIONAL  
DAY OF FAMILIES  
15 MAY 2017

*DPI/NGO BRIEFING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH DSPD/DESA*  
*18 May, 11 AM - 12:30 PM*  
*United Nations Headquarters, New York*  
*Conference room (TBC)*

### *Families, education and well-being*

#### **Background Note**

Families and family-oriented policies and programmes are vital for the achievement of many goals and targets of the Sustainable Development Agenda. In particular, families have a unique role in supporting the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

In the 2030 Agenda, Member States commit to “strive to provide children and youth with a nurturing environment for the full realization of their rights and capabilities, helping our countries to reap the demographic dividend, including through safe schools and cohesive communities and families.” (A/RES/70/1, para. 25)

Indeed, cohesive, stable, supportive and well-functioning families are primary educators for young children and are truly indispensable to their emotional well-being impacting their educational achievement.

Primary caregivers educate and socialize children and youth and ensure their well-being. Parents, and often grandparents, have a vital role in safeguarding good quality education starting with early childhood and extending throughout their children’s and grandchildren’s lifespan.

Early childhood spans the period up to 8 years of age. It is essential for physical, social, cognitive and emotional development of children. Early childhood education (target 4.2) is essential to

prepare children for primary education. Beyond that, research indicates that early childhood learning lasts a lifetime and brings about many benefits.

In particular, early stimulation and interaction with parents and caregivers ‘jumpstart the journey of brain development and a lifetime of learning’. The first years of life are crucial for children, how they are parented and cared for affects their brain function for the years to come. Investments in early childhood care, education and development also help to reduce gaps putting children from lower socio-economic backgrounds at a disadvantage. In fact, the returns of such investments are highest among poorer children and serve as a stepping stone out of poverty and exclusion.

As the components of early childhood development include education, health and nutrition, protection and stimulation, safe, nurturing, responsive and stimulating family environments are crucial for children. In fact, girls and boys with involved and supportive parents tend to have high attendance records, positive attitudes towards school work, achieve better grades and have higher career aspirations.

It is then vital for parents to support their children on their lifelong educational journey. That is why programmes supporting parental education and

developing parental skills have an often untapped potential to contribute to the achievement of SDG4, especially for child and youth school success and lifelong learning.

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of SDG4, especially for child and youth school success and lifelong learning.



**TOGETHER**  
RESPECT, SAFETY AND DIGNITY FOR ALL  
UN4 REFUGEES MIGRANTS



**THE GLOBAL GOALS**  
For Sustainable Development

#### References:

"Building Better Brains: New Frontiers in Early Childhood Development", UNICEF, 2014

"Progress for Children: Beyond averages, learning from the MDGs", UNICEF, 2015 (number 11)

"Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", United Nations, 2015 (A/RES/70/1)

Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Family policies and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, New York, 12-13 May, 2016.

Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes, United Nations, 19 November 2015 (A/71/61-E/2016/7)

**FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS OF THE VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY**



International Federation for Family Development:  
Papers No. 61  
**Every efforts counts**  
**What families can do for eradicating poverty**  
1. February 2017

The Commission for Social Development contributes to the follow up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, within its existing mandate, by supporting the thematic reviews of the high-level political forum implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, including cross-cutting issues, which should reflect the integrated nature of the Goals as well as the interlinkages between on sustainable development on progress on the them, while engaging all relevant stakeholders and, where possible, feeding into and being aligned with the cycle of the high-level political forum, according to the modalities to be established by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in the context of the high-level political forum.

Eradication of poverty is clearly enunciated in the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Either developed, middle-income or developing countries are facing poverty challenges. Within the families, women, children, persons with disabilities, older persons and youth are the most affected. Many families across the globe suffer serious deprivations of basic human needs, with progress hampered by deep inequalities linked to income, access to nutritious food, quality education, job creation and healthcare. Such a broad and complex scenario might be better tackled by a holistic approach.

*The Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs organized an Expert Group Meeting (1-3 June, 2016) on the priority theme of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission for Social Development: 'Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all'.*

*Experts gathered to discuss about poverty, education, health, social protection, agriculture development and structural transformation to present, evaluate and made recommendations of the most effective strategies that countries have adopted to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty.*

*Extract of the report of the Expert Group Meeting on Strategies for Eradicating Poverty to Achieve Sustainable Development Goals [New York, 1-3 June 2016]. Available at: <http://bit.ly/2kMpJdX>.*

### **Health and social protection strategies**

Investments in health save millions of lives and improve the well-being and quality of life of individuals. The resources that family units procure to the health of their members have great impact on poverty reduction through short- and long-term economic gains from improved health at the family level. Family members raised in healthy homes live longer, are more likely to save more, invest in education, and enable an environment, which leads to improved prospect of economic growth. Another area, which significantly improves the health and the quality of life of the poor, is the availability of clean drinking water. Chlorine dispensers installed at community water sources disinfect drinking water against most bacteria while protecting water from recontamination. However charging even very small user fees substantially reduces adoption of preventive health products. A point-of-use chlorine dispenser, which can be directly installed at community water sources, is proven to be more effective in the area

where no clean water or piped connections to households are available.

At the same time, several countries and regions have experienced how social protection contributes to reducing poverty and social exclusion. By establishing universal social protection systems, including social protection floors, countries can ensure that no family is left behind and that prosperity is shared. While social protection systems are widely accepted as major tools for addressing multiple dimensions of poverty and deprivation, the fundamental human right to social security remains unfulfilled for the large majority of the world's population. Only 27 percent of the globe's population enjoys access to comprehensive social security systems, whereas 73 per cent are covered partially or not at all.

The 2030 Agenda identifies a strong role for social protection in combatting poverty and reducing inequalities, and calls for universal approaches to social protection provision while accelerating efforts for the poor and vulnerable. Moreover, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda recognizes social protection as one of the core cross-cutting areas where initiatives are needed in order to be able to achieve the SDGs. As far as ILO is concerned, universal social protection coverage is at the core of its mandate, guided by ILO social security standards including the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, No. 202, adopted by 185 states in 2012.

Some of these examples narrow down to practical applications such as conditional cash transfers (CCTs). Experts have measure their impact in high-income countries and on human capital accumulation. These mechanisms could be used when the reason for underinvestment is low demand for the given service (related to lack of information or low motivation), rather than just to lack of resources. The development of health care and educational services is the most appropriate policy solution, however, when the major cause of low human capital investment (for example, dropout from school) lies on the supply side (the unavailability and/or poorquality of services, etc.).

For instance, in EU Member States with mature welfare states, the introduction of CCT programmes should take the context of a comprehensive package of welfare services and provisions into account. Thus the interaction between the incentives of the CCT programmes and incentives inherent in existing welfare schemes should be understood before introducing such benefit schemes. An additional issue is whether the general public and experts in EU Member States will accept CCTs. Policies are implemented in a context 13 of societal values and beliefs about the

role of the state and the relationship between citizens and the state. For instance, countries differ in the extent to which poverty is seen as a consequence of societal injustice such as in Nordic countries, or as a consequence of low individual effort such as in Eastern European countries, which might make a difference for the acceptance of CCT programmes.

In Latin America cash transfer on poverty reduction, human capital accumulation and wellbeing have given some outcomes. Recent evidence from 13 countries shows that CCT programmes have contributed to reducing poverty rates at the national level. Relative to an internationally comparable poverty line of USD PPP 2.5/day, national poverty rates would be 1 to 2 percentage points higher - about 13 percent higher relative to average baseline rates - in the absence of CCTs. CCT programmes have also succeeded, however modestly, in bringing more children to school and keeping them in school longer. However, most countries that have introduced large-scale CCT programmes have not succeeded in making schooling universally accessible. In addition, subsequent growth in the scale of these programmes has over-stretched thin educational resources in many settings and has magnified the leakage of transfers to non-intended beneficiaries, substantially increasing administrative programme costs. As a result, the available evidence suggests that CCTs - despite raising average educational attainment - have not produced learning gains amongst target students.

While conditions matter, other aspects of programme design also seem to mediate programme effectiveness. In particular, easing educational resource-constraints and helping families negotiate savings restrictions that limit long-term educational investments show promise. Similarly, while the evidence on whether the return to transfer amounts is non-decreasing is mixed, recent evidence shows that small transfers that make education more salient without explicit formal incentives or conditions can be a cost-effective innovation.

In Vietnam's social protection programme major resources for social protection and poverty reduction have been invested from the State budget and other resources. In 2015, total expenditure on social protection reached about VND 307.03 trillion (an increase of VND 47.2 trillion compared to 2014), accounting for 6.61 per cent of GDP (an increase of 0.3 percentage-point compared to 2014). Every year, 320,000 new jobs are created by targeted labour policies. By the end of 2015, nearly 70 million people participated in health insurance, accounting for 77 per cent of the popu-

lation. By the end of 2015, more than 1,000 concentrated water supply facilities were built, increasing the proportion of rural families using clean water to 86 per cent. These investments were accompanied by a reduction in poverty rates: 14.2 per cent in 2010 to 4.5 percent in 2015. The rate of poor families at poorer districts declined from 32.6 per cent in 2014 to 28 per cent in 2015. The Vietnamese social protection policy system is still cumbersome and overlapped. Currently, there are about 233 policy documents issued and implemented by the Party, National Assembly, ministries and different agencies. In addition, the coverage of social protection programmes is still narrow - only 3 per cent out of 20 per cent in need; some social protection programmes (for instance, vocational training programme for rural labourers) are not effective.

Most importantly, poverty reduction results are not sustainable with one third of the families that escaped from poverty falling back into poverty. Social protection is not inclusive yet: the poverty rate in some disadvantaged areas and groups (poorer districts, communes with special difficult circumstances, and ethnic minorities) remains high - between 50 and 70 per cent.

### **Quality Education and decent work creation**

Nearly US\$10 trillion in total is needed to eradicate extreme and moderate poverty globally by 2030 if we attend the real magnitude of poverty challenges. Despite poverty has declined in many emerging and developing countries, it has tended to increase in the majority of advanced economies, including in terms of working poverty. The disparity among the gains is fragile and uneven. A decent work is paramount in the fight to reduce poverty. Hence, tackling persistent poor quality employment is critical in these efforts. Nearly one-third of those living in extreme and moderate poverty actually have a job, but these are often vulnerable in nature. In developed countries the lack of paid employment among poor households is even more striking. While in employment, 80 per cent of the working-poor are in wage and salaried employment but face more precarious employment conditions than the non-poor. Most of the working poor are employed in agriculture and rural areas. And the poor are particularly disadvantaged in terms of skilled occupations.

Evidence indicates that children in poor families have seen their learning outcomes improved in an efficient and cost-effective way after supporting education programmes focused on basic skills and direct instruction. There is little evidence that suggest that learning outcomes have improved due to high spending in education. But, "teaching at the right level", procured by the close

relations that a family unit can provide, has been found more effective. A simple assessment of the tools to identify student progress is therefore considered to be key to implement this model.

It is clear the good outcomes for families and their most vulnerable members when emphasizing on human development, especially quality education. Procuring quality education has proven to be so important in the modern world of rapidly shifting labour markets. Nevertheless, this has to be applied with caution and adjusted to each economic reality. Too much education could be risky if there were not jobs to match. In this regard, the impact of new technologies on employment and the labour market generates high levels of instability and uncertainty. No job seems to be spared from technical progress and the continual elimination of tasks and posts. Tools to sustain the movement of workers among different and new sectors of the economy are needed. Workers have to be technologically fit for making use of many of the jobs in the job market. In this regard social protection, capacity-building and reemployment mechanisms are needed. State capacity and families' engagement will have an even greater role to play in societal success in the coming century than it did in the last century. In particular, the developmental State will be required to provide universal quality education. Therefore inclusion and equality would be much more closely linked to the expansion of capacities and competitiveness.

### **Economy driven strategies**

Economic growth alone is insufficient to eradicate poverty. Countries whose exports depend on natural resources and primary goods have seen the smallest improvements. Further, the presence of a large informal and rural economy reinforces the weak link between the exploitation of natural resources and poverty reduction. Narrowly based economic growth also exacerbates income inequality. Particularly striking is that even though the world's poor makes up 30 per cent of total population, they receive only 2 per cent of its income. Therefore, economic growth alone is insufficient to end poverty. High-income inequality dampens the impact of growth on extreme poverty. To ensure that growth contributes to poverty eradication, a shift towards higher productivity sectors is required as well as raising productivity in the agricultural sector and enhancing linkages to markets. For poor rural families to move out of poverty, it is necessary to increase agricultural productivity, improve access to market opportunities, diversification into off-farm businesses and engagement in wage employment.

Another critical element in ensuring the creation of decent jobs is strengthening the rights of the poor. This will require that international labour standards reach the poor. Other critical elements include strengthening labour market institutions, including effective labour administrations and inspections, freedom of association and social dialogue. Countries should also focus on designing employment and income policies in order to help broaden the productive base. Labour market policies contribute to poverty reduction by raising skill levels, boosting participation in the labour market and facilitating transitions from informal to formal employment. Further, such policies enable employers to create jobs in new sectors required to alleviate poverty and at the same time equipping workers with the tools needed to take up these jobs. He further underscored the role of social protection in supporting the development of a productive workforce and in alleviating poverty among the most vulnerable. It is also critical to pay attention to new opportunities for poverty eradication such as rapid technological change and the emergence of new patterns of globalization, including the extension of global value chains.

Microcredits and alternatives to credit are also among strategies to eradicate poverty. Research suggests two conclusions:

- 1) there is a potential role for credit for certain types of micro-entrepreneurs; and
- 2) certain populations, notably poorer women, may need different interventions or additional support to move out of poverty. Evidence from randomized studies evaluating the impact of microcredit on borrowers found that the demand for many of the microcredit products was modest, expanded credit access did lead some entrepreneurs to invest more in their businesses, and expanded business activity.

Nevertheless, evidence base increasingly shows the limited potential for microcredit to move large numbers of poor families out of poverty. The rapid growth of the microcredit industry demonstrates both the ability of the world's institutions to mobilize the resources needed to serve the poor, and the opportunities lost when those resources are not directed to proven interventions. While microcredit fails to justify such a large public investment on the basis of poverty reduction, it still has a number of positive impacts on the poor, including giving parents and family members greater freedom in choosing how they want to earn money.

There is still much to learn about how to optimize credit products to produce the greatest impact while protecting the poor from risk, and how to use savings to encourage investment into in-

come-generating activities. The evidence base for the potential of other interventions to reduce poverty is much stronger, but there is more to learn about other interventions as well. So far the Graduation Approach and cash grants have the greatest track record in improving living standards for the poor. But these programmes are expensive and will require an investment far greater than the cost of delivering credit. Current research is investigating two broad sets of questions: whether cash grants can have the same long term impact as graduation programmes on the poor and most vulnerable families; and how to get the cost of graduation programmes down such that they can be scaled to large numbers of the extreme poor.

### **Family perspective among poverty eradication strategies**

A family perspective, in which no member of the families is left behind from the efforts done to integrated policies and strategies to end extreme poverty, collaborate to the various innovative solutions implemented. In order to provide concise, evidence-based reviews of poverty eradication strategies, we need to highlight those that had worked and been effective. A family perspective is useful while monitoring development in poverty eradication given the multidimensional nature of the problem and the projected solutions. The families offer better conditions in which, people living in poverty are able to participate fully in the projected growth because they are the primary and earliest providers and fosters of schooling, health care, decent employment opportunities and financial resources. They also act as shields while avoiding the damages of major crises such as financial, political and climate related crises.

For the SDGs to be achieved, it is critical to recognize the political and social impact of the gains done so far. The results perceived by the people will play a crucial role in the future, when more actions are to be taken. What better than family members to foster, communicate and deliver good results early in the agenda. The households play an important role while planning for political transitions, building coalitions of support, getting the poor themselves and their representative organizations engaged, engaging local NGOs in public policy processes, strengthening national data collection and analysis, greater engagement of private actors, helping the poor become private agents of wealth creation to reduce inequality and making growth inclusive. Worldwide families have an important role for getting people out of poverty traps, especially by investing in education, health, skills and job creation.



## MMM ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE MOTHERS' RIGHTS

**On the occasion of the 55th session of the UN Commission on Social Development in New York MMM convened a side-event on “Early Parenting and Early Childhood Care and Education to address the intergenerational dimension of Poverty: The CEPPs Global Initiative”.**

A focus on **children’s “critical years”, that is between pregnancy and age 3**, is key to progress on health and the human rights of women, children and adolescents, and thus to achieve the UN 2030 agenda and its 17 SDGs. These critical years are the foundation that shapes a child’s future physical and mental health, growth, development, self-confidence, happiness, and learning achievements at school, with a life-long impact not only on themselves, but also on communities and societies.

Beyond nutrition and basic health (i.e. survival), **early parenting and nurturing care** must also be promoted and supported, so that young children receive all the attention, love, encouragement, and intellectual stimulation that will allow them to develop their full potential and thrive. **A focus on early childhood development brings high rates of return across the course of life. It also has the transformative potential to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty, and bring about fairer and more peaceful societies.**

There is now a powerful and solid scientific, social and economic case for Early Childhood Education and Care, and for supporting mothers, as well as fathers and other caregivers, in their caring and nurturing role during pregnancy and the early years of their child. The rationale is supported by many studies conducted by organizations like WHO and UNICEF, or by highly respected universities in the USA, the UK and Europe, and published by such journals as The Lancet.

The evidence is conclusive and the focus now needs to shift to implementation.

Top-down implementation is already under way in a number of countries but could be accelerated

through partnerships and improved bottom-up collaboration between professionals and civil society organizations involved in health and social care. These disciplines and organisations have traditionally worked independently, often to the detriment of mothers and children. This needs to change to a more collaborative way of working and a multisectoral approach capable of delivering a continuum-of-care to mother and child throughout pregnancy and the early parenting period.

This is why *the 1001 Critical Days Manifesto*, the *Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health* (APPPAH), the *International Society for Pre- and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine* (ISPPM), and *Make Mothers Matter* (MMM) have partnered to propose the **Childhood and Early Parenting Principles (CEPPs)**.

The CEPPs initiative aims to do for mothers and young children what WEPs has done for women in the workplace. It is about a simple set of seven principles that form the basis for a unified engagement of all stakeholders with governments, with the single goal of ensuring that every child develops to its full potential.

### Objectives of the Side-Event

The objectives of this panel side-event were to:

1. position Early Parenting and Early Childhood Care and Education as a children’s rights issue, but also as a **key strategy for the eradication of poverty, the promotion of peace, and more generally the realisation of the 2030 Agenda**;
2. introduce/launch the **Childhood and Early Parenting Principles (CEPPS)** as a **global initiative to educate and support parents and other caregivers in skilled early parenting and nurturing care during pregnancy and early childhood through a multi-stakeholder and multisectoral mobilisation and engagement with governments at all levels.**

**Speakers:**

Introduction by Laurence Stip, MMM Main Representative to the United Nations in New York

**Panellists:**

- Rima Salah, Assistant Professor, Yale School of Medicine, & co-editor of “Pathways to Peace – The transformative power of children and families”: The intergenerational dimension of poverty and what neuroscience tell us
- Sara Watson, Global Director, ReadyNation International: Global Business as Partners on Early Care and Education – why, what and how
- Sandra Bardsley, President, Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology And Health (APPPAH): Proven practices in prenatal and perinatal care to help disadvantaged mothers and families
- Valerie Unite, CEPPs Executive Director: The CEPPs Initiative: Proposing a unifying framework and roadmap to accelerate and scale-up the 2030 Global Agenda

Moderation: Renata Kaczmarek, UN Focal Point on the Family, DESA/DSPD

The panel report is available on [www.makemothersmatter.org](http://www.makemothersmatter.org).



**SPEAKERS OF THE PANEL – FROM THE LEFT: RIMA SALAH, VALERIE UNITE, SANDRA BARDSLEY & SARA WATSON**

**MMM also highlighted the importance of Early Parenting and Early Childhood Education and Care in a joint written statement submitted for the 55th session of the UN Commission on Social Development.**

In their joint statement, MMM and OMAEP drew the attention on the strategic importance of Early Child Care and Education (ECCE) and the key role of early parenting to break the cycle of intergenerational transmission of poverty.

*“Investment in Early Parenting and Childhood Care and Education is the best investment a country can do. Not only is it a matter of children’s rights, but it will be key to the realisation of the 2030 Development Agenda, Starting with Goal 1: Eradicating Poverty”*

Read the full submission (ref. E/CN.5/2017/NGO/35) on the MMM website.

**A joint written statement was submitted by MMM in preparation of the 61st session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York.**

*“Raising children requires time and dedication, and the current reality is that working mothers end up working double shifts. The resulting time poverty puts a strain on their health, as well as on their children’s health and development, generating stress and burnout situations – and these are unlikely to decline in the new world of work brought about by the “4th revolution”.*

The MMM statement, which was co-signed by 10 other organisations, highlights the particular difficulties that mothers face in the labour market due to their unpaid care work responsibilities and to deep-rooted stereotypes. And these are likely to be exacerbated in the fast-paced, technology-centred emerging new world of work. The Statement also makes recommendations for a better recognition of the unpaid care work and essential role of mothers, and for the imperative to better support their participation in the labour market.

Read the full statement (Ref. E/CN.6/2017/NGO/49) on the MMM website.

### About Make Mother Matter – MMM

*Make Mothers Matter (MMM) is an international NGO created in 1947 to raise the awareness of policy makers and public opinion on the contribution of mothers to social, cultural and economic development. MMM has no political or religious affiliations, and thus transparently voices the concerns of mothers at international level with permanent MMM representatives at the United Nations (General Consultative Status), UNESCO and the European Union.*

*MMM federates a network of about 40 grass-root organisations working across the world to advance the rights of women and children.*

Compiled by Irina Pálffy-Daun-Seiler, MMM Representative to the United Nations in Vienna, with input from Valérie Bichelmeier, MMM Representative to the United Nations in Geneva.

**Recent and Forthcoming events**

**2017**

June 2017

- 5-7: 7<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Family Law and Children's Rights (Dublin, Ireland) <http://www.world-congress.co/dublin-2017/>

July 2017

- 25-29: 16th ISFL World Conference: Family Law and Family Realities (Amsterdam, Netherlands) [http://www.isflhome.org/conference?conference\\_id=16](http://www.isflhome.org/conference?conference_id=16)

September 2017

- 12-16: AAFP Family Medicine Experience (FMX) Meeting (San Antonio, USA) <http://www.aafp.org/events/fmx/about/past-future.html>

## **Impressum**

### **Projects of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family are supported by:**

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- ❖ Government of Spain, Catalonia and the Balearic Islands
- ❖ INGOs
- ❖ Niederösterreichische Landesregierung
- ❖ Niederösterreichische Versicherungs AG
- ❖ OMV
- ❖ Rotary International
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