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Quarterly Bulletin of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family

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Vienna NGO Committee on the Family

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Dear Readers of Families International,

This issue focuses on several texts from the United Nations, including the 53rd Session of the United Nations Commission for Social Development held in New York from February 4th to 13th 2015, and on an excerpt from the Report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, on the Celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2015.

The follow up goals of the United Nations to the Millennium Development Goals, which were set for 2015 are called Sustainable Development Goals. This issue also includes excerpts from the United Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals beyond 2015.

Further included is a brief newsletter from Families and Societies, a large scale European Research project, as well as texts submitted by member organisations of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family, which was founded thirty years ago this year in 1985.

The Committee is organising an International Forum entitled: Thirty Years Vienna NGO Committee on the Family – Outlook to the Future – on Monday June 1st 2015 at the United Nations Vienna International Centre. The draft programme for the International Forum, which is being held within a Full Committee Meeting of the Committee, is also included in this issue. Readers of Families International are welcome to participate in the International Forum.

The layout for this, and recent issues, of Families International has been carried out by Magdalena Schwarz, who is a student of Medical Informatics at the University of Vienna.

With kind regards,
Peter Crowley Ph.D.
Editor

<i>Table of Contents</i>

FROM THE VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY	3
FROM THE UNITED NATIONS	5
FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS OF THE VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY	16
FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION	28
RECENT AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS	30
IMPRESSUM	31

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 1st 2015

CONFERENCE ROOM 6 on the 7th Floor

INTERNATIONAL FORUM

THIRTY YEARS VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY

- OUTLOOK TO THE FUTURE -

Invited: United Nations Focal Point on the Family New York,
The Ministries of the Family in Austria,* Czech Republic and Germany.
Dr. Sabine Diabate, German Federal Institute for Population Research,*
Mag. Christine Leopold, Kolping International*
(*confirmed)

10:00 – 11:30 Keynote Speech, Panel Presentations & Discussion

11.30 – 12:00 Coffee Break

12.00 – 12.30: General Discussion

12.30 – 14.00: Lunch Break

INTERNATIONAL FORUM: Part II

The International Forum will also observe:
The International Day of Families 2015 &
The Global Day of Parents 2015

14.00 – 16:00: Panel Presentations by Member Organisations of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family and other Families-Oriented Civil Society Organisations on their own Outlook to the Future.

[Each organisation will have seven minutes to make their presentation. Organisations which would like to participate are requested to contact the Committee at the above Email address so that presentations can be coordinated and leave time for questions & discussion]

Those wishing to attend and who do not have current accreditation with the United Nations in Vienna, should contact the Committee at the above Email address, at the latest by Friday May 15th 2015.

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Board Officers:
Chairperson: Dr. Michael Schwarz, IFFD
Deputy-Chairperson: Dr. Gertrud Pichler, IFHE
Secretary: Dr. Peter Crowley, ICP
Deputy Secretary: Maria Helena Paes, PROSALIS
Treasurer: Mag. Wolfgang Engelmaier, Kolping

From the United Nations



United Nations 53rd Session Commission for Social Development

New York 13 February 2015

Press Release:

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/soc4830.doc.htm>

Concluding Fifty-third Session, Commission for Social Development Recommends Four Draft Resolutions for Adoption by Economic and Social Council

Concluding its fifty-third session today, the Commission for Social Development approved by consensus four draft resolutions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council that addressed issues of African development, ageing, youth and the rights of persons with disabilities.

In closing remarks, Commission Chair Simona Mirela Miculescu (Romania) emphasized that progress towards sustainable development could not be achieved under the prevailing growth model, which was not employment friendly. She recapped the session's highlights, including a commemorative event celebrating the 20 years since the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, in which speakers presented their positions under the theme of "Social Development: From Copenhagen to the Post-2015 Agenda".

Other highlights, she said, included a high-level panel on the priority theme, "Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world"; a panel on emerging issues; a civil society forum; and general discussions on issues related to social groups: youth, older persons, family and persons with disabilities among them. Thanking delegates for their active participation, she said "as a team, we will move the social development agenda forward".

Among the four texts approved today was one on the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (document E/CN.5/2015/L.6), which would have the Council urge African Governments to intensify attention on inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth that met the needs of young people. The Council would stress the importance of taking measures to promote the "dynamic diversification" of African economies by, among other things, developing new industries in order to create opportunities for more and better jobs. Expressing grave concern at the Ebola outbreak, the Council would invite further consideration of long-term aid with regard to Ebola-affected States to alleviate the impact of the crisis.

Introducing the text, South Africa's representative, on behalf of the "Group of 77" developing countries and China, called the resolution a testament to international support for the continent's future, adding that it aptly highlighted the persistent challenges. Speaking after action, the representative of the United States said national policies must adhere to international commitments to promote open and dynamic economies, as well as the free movement of goods and services.

The Commission then approved a draft on the modalities for the third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (document E/CN.5/2015/L.3), introduced by Commission Vice-Chair Janina Hasse-Mohsine (Germany). The text would have the Council invite States and the United Nations to take concrete measures to mainstream ageing issues into their programming and existing United Nations mandates. The Council would also encourage States to establish or strengthen a national coordinating body or mechanism to facilitate implementation of the Action Plan.

A draft resolution on policies and programmes involving youth (document E/CN.5/2015/L.4), introduced by the representative of Senegal, would have the Council encourage States to develop comprehensive policies and action plans focused on the best interests of youth, as well as promote gender equality and the empowerment of young women and girls. The Council would call on States to consider youth issues in all appropriate aspects of the post-2015 development agenda, urging them to promote young people's participation in all such decision-making processes.

The Commission next approved, as orally revised, a draft resolution on promoting the rights of persons with disabilities (document E/CN.5/2015/L.5), which was introduced by the representative of Romania. The text would have the Council decide to hold, at the Commission's fifty-fourth session, a multi-stakeholder panel on "Implementation of the post-2015 development agenda in light of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities". The Council would continue to consider the issue of disability and development, including within the framework of United Nations operational activities.

The Commission then took note of the following documents: the Secretary-General's report, the Celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2014 (document [A/70/61-E/2015/3](#)); the Secretary-General's report, Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world (document [E/CN.5/2015/3](#)); and the Secretariat note, Emerging issues: contributions of social development to the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals (document [E/CN.5/2015/6](#)).

Finally, as the Commission concluded the "review year" of its 2015-2016 cycle, it approved its draft provisional agenda and documentation for its fifty-fourth session (document E/CN.5/2015/L.1), as well as the report of its current session (document E/CN.5/2015/L.2), introduced by the Rapporteur.

Immediately following the conclusion of the fifty-third session, Ms. Miculescu declared open the fifty-fourth session, following which Luz Andujar (Dominican Republic) was elected as Vice-Chair for that session. It postponed the election of the remaining Vice-Chair to a later date.

Link to the Secretary-General's report, the Celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2014

<http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N14/636/06/PDF/N1463606.pdf?OpenElement>

United Nations

A/70/61-E/2015/3



**General Assembly
Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General
18 November 2014

Original: English

**General Assembly
Seventieth session
Social development: social development, including
questions relating to the world social situation
and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family**

**Economic and Social Council
2015 session
21 July 2014-22 July 2015
Agenda item 19 (b)
Social and human rights questions: social
development**

**Celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the
International Year of the Family in 2014**

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/136. The report focuses on the initiatives and activities by Member States and other relevant stakeholders in observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, at all levels, and on recent family policy developments.

Excerpt from Report of the United Nations Secretary General on the Celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family

D. Civil society

International initiatives

45. Worldwide, civil society has been actively engaged in the preparations for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year. The civil society declaration on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year, proposed and disseminated by the International Federation for Family Development, was sponsored by 27 international entities and signed by over 542 civil society representatives from 285 national organizations, as well as by elected officials, academics and individuals. The Federation actively promoted the objectives of the anniversary, mobilizing support for its declaration and organizing a number of awareness-raising events throughout the year. It also carried out several communications projects to promote a family perspective among governments and international organizations, including a website listing events organized worldwide in observance of the twentieth anniversary and issuing research papers focusing on topics relating to the themes of the anniversary.¹

46. The Doha International Family Institute organized an international conference in observance of the anniversary, on the theme “Empowering families: a pathway to development”, held in Doha on 16 and 17 April 2014. The conference served as a non-governmental gathering and a global platform for discussion and debate where policymakers, non-governmental organizations, experts, academics and Government officials shared their views regarding the centrality of the family and its role in society. Several panel discussions focused on family and poverty, work-family balance, intergenerational ties, families affected by HIV/AIDS, humanitarian disasters and conflicts, gender equality, men in families, family data and research, national institutions and family policy, family and civil society. A World Family Map Pro-

ject and family impact seminars were also features of the event.²

47. The Conference issued a “Doha Call to Action”, calling upon Governments to empower and enable families to contribute to development by, inter alia, developing comprehensive policies to support family stability; promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and reforming discriminatory family laws. The document captures civil society’s concern regarding the need for legislation to end child marriage and violence against women and for more efforts promoting active fatherhood. It also acknowledges that family breakdown could be both a cause and an outcome of poverty and recommends focusing on work-family balance, strengthening intergenerational solidarity and ensuring systematic collection of data and statistics on family well-being. The Conference supported the inclusion of a family focus in the post-2015 development agenda.²

48. The International Federation for Home Economics organized a meeting of its Council, in London, Ontario, Canada, from 20 to 24 July 2014, on the theme “Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the International Year of the Family 2014”. The meeting acknowledged that home economics education contributed to the achievement of several Millennium Development Goals, such as reducing family poverty, lowering maternal mortality and improving maternal health. The meeting called upon civil society to influence the development of family-oriented policies and to promote public debate on family policy design, implementation and monitoring. The organization launched a campaign promoting the anniversary, entitled: “Empowering Families, Individuals and Communities through Home Economics”, which added visibility to the commemorations of the anniversary among members of the organization and beyond. The International Federation also launched a commemorative publication, entitled “Family

¹ More information available from www.family2014.org.

² More information available from www.difi.org.qa/events/.

Socioeconomic and Cultural Issues: A Continuing Home Economics Concern”.

49. The Universal Peace Federation organized several events in observance of the anniversary, including a forum on “The Family as a Driver for Social Development”, held in New York on 20 February 2014, which addressed the need to promote the role of the family in achieving sustainable development goals and showcased policies and practices that include and strengthen the family.

50. The New York NGO Committee on the Family hosted a number of monthly meetings in observance of the anniversary. Good practices in family policymaking were discussed, including programmes which increase father child engagement or build up parents’ capacity to foster children’s literacy. The Committee also co-sponsored several side events during the fifty second session of the Commission for Social Development, including an event on the theme “Older people and families count: looking at empowerment, decent work and poverty eradication”.

51. The Vienna NGO Committee on the Family organized an international forum where it presented an update of its study, entitled “Documenting Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Well-Being of Families”. The study indicated that civil society organizations were mostly involved in the areas of economic, financial, education and subsistence services for families. The proceedings of the forum, including presentations from several civil society organizations, were published in the online quarterly bulletin of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family, “Families International”.³

Regional initiatives

52. In preparation for the twentieth anniversary of the International Year, regional expert group meetings and capacity development workshops were held in Europe, Africa, North and South America and in the Middle East and North Africa. In 2014, an expert group meeting for North America was organized by the International

Federation for Family Development and Family Watch, in cooperation with the National Council on Family Relations (United States of America), the Vanier Institute of the Family (Canada) and the focal point on the family within the Division for Social Policy and Development. Experts presented current research on social exclusion, spatial inequality and poverty, social capital and socioeconomic mobility, changing family structures, parental leaves, childcare arrangements and innovative flexible working arrangements. A number of intergenerational issues, including grandparental care, the transfer of resources between generations and caring for children and older persons were also discussed. Good practices from the region, such as family justice centres, parental education courses and intergenerational community networks were presented and discussed by practitioners.

53. The African Preparatory Conference, which covered such themes as confronting family poverty and social exclusion, ensuring work-family balance, and advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity in Africa, was held in Nairobi on 23 and 24 January 2014 and was organized by Voice of the Family in Africa International and the Law School of Strathmore University in Kenya. Issues discussed at the conference included social protection for families at risk, empowering young women, work family balance initiatives, family policies and family, informal work, fertility and parenthood. Persistent poverty, informal working arrangements, insecurity, crime and corruption were cited as the main obstacles to development in Africa. On the positive side, several African countries have made or envision changes in their constitution so as to adopt a rights-based approach to the provision of social services.

National initiatives

54. In Argentina, the anniversary was marked by a number of meetings and outreach activities involving civil society, the private sector, local government representatives and academics, during events held from 25 to 27 March 2014. Among them was a meeting on work-family balance hosted by the Centro Walmart Conciliación Familia y Empresa of IAE Business

³More information available from www.viennafamilycommittee.org and www.20yearsIYF.org.

School at Austral University. The work of an international network of companies committed to promoting flexible and family-friendly policies and an index measuring corporate family responsibility were presented. Several companies showcased their family-friendly policies, which won prizes in 2013 for corporate family responsibility.

55. Families Australia celebrated the anniversary by organizing a National Families Week, on the theme “Stronger families, stronger communities”, throughout Australia, from 15 to 21 May 2014. The annual event has been organized with financial support from the Government of Australia since 2003. Families Australia, with its 750 member organizations, reached a record number of 130,000 participants all across Australia through this event. The organization strives to improve the well-being of all Australian families and works to promote a national policy environment in which the needs and interests of families, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, are heard and addressed. In 2014, the important role of families as central building blocks of communities was highlighted.

56. A commemorative event and working meetings on family policies in Brazil were organized in São Paulo, on 24 and 25 March 2014, by the Instituto Brasileiro da Família with the participation of Centro Internacional Trabalho -Família of ISE Business School in São Paulo, as well as civil society organizations such as the Confederação Nacional das Entidades de Família. The effectiveness of family-centred national programmes for poverty eradication, such as *Bolsa Família*, as well as challenges in their implementation at the local level, were discussed.

57. A joint conference on “Development of Korean Families and Family Policies, 1994 - 2014” and “Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the International Year of the Family” was held in Seoul on 10 May 2014 by the Korean Family Association and the Center for Family Policy and Multicultural Society of Korean Women’s Development Institute and sponsored by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family and Seoul National University. The Framework Act on Healthy Families, passed in 2004, requi-

res local governments to provide comprehensive and preventive family services through healthy family support centres, while the Multi-Cultural Family Support Act, enacted in 2008, provides social integration services to legal aliens and immigrants married to Korean citizens. In addition, provision has been made for special services for families at risk, such as low-income families, single parents and those who struggle with domestic violence. The conference concluded that, to date, policies aiming to facilitate women’s entry into the labour market, combined with some work-family balance measures, had not resulted in increased fertility, which was their main goal. Another challenging area was engaging men in family life, including through the use of paternity leave. Moreover, rapid ageing of the population required better support for families with multiple caring responsibilities.

58. In Portugal, PROSALIS: Projecto de Saúde em Lisboa, a Portuguese family organization with a focus on health, organized several meetings and workshops in observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year. Its twenty-fourth workshop on family policies, on the theme “Recognition of the family as the first intergenerational nucleus”, held in Lisbon on 18 March 2014, addressed a variety of intergenerational issues from a family perspective and emphasized that the success of social integration and inclusion efforts depends on the effectiveness of public policies and the support from and involvement of local communities, civil society and families themselves.¹

59. As part of their corporate responsibility initiatives, Tudor Rose, a publishing company based in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, published “Family Futures” an illustrated commemorative publication on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year. The publication features articles on the three themes of the anniversary, with over 100 authors sharing their work on family policy development and actions at the international, regional, national and local levels. The publication offers a review of good practices in family policymaking by Government officials, civil society actors, academics and researchers.

Open Working Group proposal for **Sustainable Development Goals**

Full report of the
Open Working Group of the General Assembly
on Sustainable Development Goals
is issued as document A/68/970,
available at <http://undocs.org/A/68/970>



Excerpt from the United Working Group on sustainable Development Goals beyond 2015.

INTRODUCTION

1. The outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”, inter alia, set out a mandate to establish an open working group to develop a set of sustainable development goals for consideration and appropriate action by the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session. It also provided the basis for their conceptualization. The document gave the mandate that the sustainable development goals should be coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015.

2. Poverty eradication is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. In the outcome document, the commitment to freeing humanity from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency was reiterated.

3. Poverty eradication, changing unsustainable and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are the overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development.

4. People are at the centre of sustainable development and, in this regard, in the outcome document, the promise was made to strive for a world that is just, equitable and inclusive and the commitment was made to work together to promote sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection and thereby to benefit all, in particular the children of the world, youth and future generations of the world, without distinction of any kind such as age, sex, disability, culture, race, ethnicity, origin, migratory status, religion, economic or other status.

5. In the outcome document, all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including, inter alia, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as set out in principle 7 thereof, were also reaffirmed.

6. In the outcome document, the commitment to fully implement the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation) and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados Programme of Action) and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States was also reaffirmed. The commitment to the full implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action), the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, the political declaration on Africa’s development needs and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development was also reaffirmed. The commitments in the outcomes of all the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and environmental fields, including the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the key actions for the further im-

plementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences were reaffirmed. In the outcome document of the special event to follow up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, held in September 2013, inter alia, the determination to craft a strong post-2015 development agenda was reaffirmed. The commitment to migration and development was reaffirmed in the Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development.

7. In the outcome document, the need to be guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, with full respect for international law and its principles, was reaffirmed. The importance of freedom, peace and security, respect for all human rights, including the right to development and the right to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food and water, the rule of law, good governance, gender equality, women's empowerment and the overall commitment to just and democratic societies for development was reaffirmed. The importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as other international instruments relating to human rights and international law, was also reaffirmed.

8. The Open Working Group underscored that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, with a view to accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions. It recalled that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change provides that parties should protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. It noted with grave concern the significant gap

between the aggregate effect of mitigation pledges by parties in terms of global annual emissions of greenhouse gases by 2020 and aggregate emission pathways consistent with having a likely chance of holding the increase in global average temperature below 2°C, or 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. It reaffirmed that the ultimate objective under the Convention is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.

9. In the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, it was reaffirmed that planet Earth and its ecosystems are our home and that "Mother Earth" is a common expression in a number of countries and regions. It was noted that some countries recognize the rights of nature in the context of the promotion of sustainable development. The conviction was affirmed that, in order to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations, it is necessary to promote harmony with nature. The natural and cultural diversity of the world was acknowledged, and it was recognized that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development.

10. In the outcome document, it was recognized that each country faces specific challenges to achieve sustainable development. The special challenges facing the most vulnerable countries and, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as the specific challenges facing the middle-income countries, were underscored. It was recognized that countries in situations of conflict also need special attention.

11. In the outcome document, the commitment to strengthen international cooperation to address the persistent challenges related to sustainable development for all, in particular in developing countries, was reaffirmed.

In that regard, the need to achieve economic stability, sustained economic growth, the promotion of social equity and the protection of the environment, while enhancing gender equality, women's empowerment and equal employment for all, and the protection, survival and development of children to their full potential, including through education, was reaffirmed.

12. Each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and the role of national policies, domestic resources and development strategies cannot be overemphasized. Developing countries need additional resources for sustainable development. There is a need for significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources and the effective use of financing, in order to promote sustainable development. In the outcome document, the commitment to reinvigorating the global partnership for sustainable development and to mobilizing the resources necessary for its implementation was affirmed. The report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing will propose options for a sustainable development financing strategy. The substantive outcome of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, in July 2015, will assess the progress made in the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration. Good governance and the rule of law at the national and international levels are essential for sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger.

13. In the outcome document, it was reaffirmed that there are different approaches, visions, models and tools available to each country, in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities, to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions, which is our overarching goal.

14. The implementation of the sustainable development goals will depend on a global

partnership for sustainable development with the active engagement of Governments, as well as civil society, the private sector and the United Nations system. A robust mechanism to review implementation will be essential for the success of the goals. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum will play a key role in this regard.

15. In the outcome document, the commitment was reiterated to take further effective measures and actions, in conformity with international law, to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the right of self-determination of peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation, which continue to adversely affect their economic and social development as well as their environment, are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person and must be combated and eliminated.

16. In the outcome document, it was reaffirmed that, in accordance with the Charter, this shall not be construed as authorizing or encouraging any action against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. It was resolved to take further effective measures and actions, in conformity with international law, to remove obstacles and constraints, strengthen support and meet the special needs of people living in areas affected by complex humanitarian emergencies and in areas affected by terrorism.

17. To monitor the implementation of the sustainable development goals, it will be important to improve the availability of and access to data and statistics disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts. There is a need to take urgent steps to improve the quality, coverage and availability of disaggregated data to ensure that no one is left behind.

18. The sustainable development goals are accompanied by targets and will be further

elaborated through indicators focused on measurable outcomes. They are action oriented, global in nature and universally applicable. They take into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respect national policies and priorities. They build on the foundation laid by the Millennium Development Goals, seek to complete the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals and respond to new challenges. They constitute an integrated, indivisible set of global priorities for sustainable development. Targets are defined as aspirational global targets, with each Government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition, but taking into account national circumstances. The goals and targets integrate economic, social and environmental aspects and recognize their interlinkages in achieving sustainable development in all its dimensions.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

GOAL 1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere

GOAL 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

GOAL 3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

GOAL 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

GOAL 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

GOAL 6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

GOAL 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

GOAL 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

GOAL 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

GOAL 10 Reduce inequality within and among countries

GOAL 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

GOAL 12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

GOAL 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

GOAL 14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

GOAL 15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

GOAL 16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

GOAL 17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

From Member Organisations of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family



MMM NEWS – SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS

MMM submits statement to Commission for Social Development (CSocD53)

Make Mothers Matter submitted the following **written statement** to the **53rd session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD53)** held 4-13 February 2015 in New York.

On the priority theme "Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world" MMM called for the **rethinking of the issue of unpaid family care work** mostly performed by mothers, and the **need to address the related two interconnected challenges**:

- the recognition of unpaid family care work as a vital social link within society, and
- the establishment of policies that allow mothers to re-enter the labour market and be full actors of development within their communities, without being penalized for their unpaid family-care work.

Learn more about recent MMM activities around the world in the latest [Make Mothers Matter Newsletter 01/2015](#).

Compiled by Irina Pálffy-Daun-Seiler, MMM Representative to the United Nations in Vienna, on behalf of MMM.

United Nations

E/CN.5/2015/NGO/32



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
25 November 2014

Original: English

Commission for Social Development

Fifty-third session

4-13 February 2015

Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world

Statement submitted by Make Mothers Matter, 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.

E/CN.5/2015/NGO/32

Statement

Supporting the development of mothers in the contemporary world

Make Mothers Matter welcomes the possibility of rethinking and strengthening social development by raising awareness of the issue of unpaid family-care work.

Make Mothers Matter believes that unpaid care work contributes significantly to well-being, social development and economic growth. Because we approach the situation of women from the specific angle of mothers, we refer specifically to family-care work when addressing the issue of care work.

To transform the daily lives of millions of mothers, we have to rethink this issue, which comprises two main interconnected challenges, to improve social development: the recognition of unpaid family-care work as a vital social link within society and the establishment of policies that allow mothers to re-enter the labour market and be full actors of development within their communities, without being penalized for their unpaid family-care work.

The participation of women and men in the labour market, and therefore their access to economic resources, is unequal for structural and social reasons. One main reason for that inequality is motherhood.

Many studies show that mothers, more than fathers, put their family responsibilities before their career, taking career breaks or part-time jobs for family reasons.

That choice hinders their careers, financial income, future financial security and social recognition. These negative consequences have a name: the motherhood penalty.

Make Mothers Matter believes that measures encouraging fathers to take more responsibilities in family life are essential and strongly supports them. However, until responsibilities are shared equally, we have to be aware of the reality of mothers and of what they want.

The results of a survey conducted in Europe by Make Mothers Matter (in 10 languages and 16 countries and with close to 12,000 respondents), show that mothers have very similar aspirations all over Europe. They want recognition, more time with their children and real choices.

According to the survey, mothers seek recognition of the importance of their role in contributing to the well-being of their children and their family, but also to the future of society.

A majority of them want to spend more time with their children. They want to be active in the labour market, while being able to care for their family, giving priority to one or the other depending on the age and number of children.

However, mothers do not have a real choice between taking care of their children themselves and being active on the labour market. Either way, there is a well-documented motherhood penalty, and therefore a higher risk of poverty for mothers and their children.

The risk of poverty is aggravated in developing countries where the lack of public services, infrastructures and legislation, among other structural reasons, is a

further impediment to the empowerment of mothers. Mothers in this situation are often faced with the double challenge of having to care for their children while having to carry out income-generating activities to survive.

Specifically, addressing motherhood is a matter of gender equality. Motherhood should not be considered as an obstacle but as a reality to which the labour market and society must adapt.

The strategic objective contained in the Beijing Platform for Action on eliminating discriminatory practices by employers against women who are pregnant, on maternity leave or re-entering the labour market is far from having been achieved.

Recommendations

As time poverty is a central issue for most women around the world, conciliation measures and policies should address the issue of “time to work, time to care”.

Make Mothers Matter suggests a life-cycle approach that allows women and men to pursue discontinuous careers, leaving the labour market partially or completely for a definite period of time to care for and educate their children.

Such a new vision of professional life can be made possible by facilitating re-entry into the labour market. Today, the fact that it is difficult to re-enter the labour market is a major impediment to leaving it, because periods during which one does not work are very quickly penalized.

This problem could be alleviated by:

- Providing easier access to life-long learning opportunities that lead to qualifications after career breaks;
- Recognizing the skills acquired and developed while performing unpaid family-care work. Instruments have been developed to address this and it would be good to promote their use. If the European Union wants to achieve its target of 75 per cent of employment by 2020, it is worth finding ways to help mothers to get back into the labour market, as an untapped source of skilled and competent labour.
- Adapting the regulatory framework of part-time jobs to eliminate the discrimination of part-time workers. In the Netherlands, where there is a favourable framework, 48 per cent of the workforce works part-time, with a result of 71 per cent female employment.
- Adapting pension schemes and introducing care credits or similar systems to compensate for unpaid family-care work periods. These periods should be recognized as contributive.

Resources spent today on addressing stress and burnout situations could be usefully reallocated to the implementation of such measures.

E/CN.5/2015/NGO/32

Time-use surveys

Effective measures to better balance family life and professional life will be introduced when the value of unpaid family-care work and non-formal education at home is recognized and taken into account by policymakers and employers. In the Beijing Platform for Action, it is stated that women's share in the labour force continues to rise, although there has not been a parallel lightening of responsibility of unremunerated work in the household and community, and that women's income is becoming increasingly necessary to households of all types. The result is that women work double shifts, which results in time poverty and is a strain on their health, on their children and on their family, generating stress and burnout.

The burden of unpaid care work for mothers is higher in developing countries, where such work too often compensates for the lack of public infrastructures and services. In such situations, the resulting time poverty is particularly critical and, by depriving women of precious time to care, learn and engage in income-generating activities, perpetuates a lack of education and economic poverty for mothers and their children.

Make Mothers Matter asks for accurate time-use surveys measuring and differentiating unpaid activities. Some time-use surveys even show that mothers who stay at home spend less time with their children than those working outside. That is because respondents can report one primary activity only, ignoring the fact that care could be a simultaneous activity.

Make Mothers Matter asks for studies that will give a monetary value to unpaid family-care work, to show the importance of such work to the paid economy. In her report to the General Assembly, in 2013, the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Magdalena Sepúlveda Carmona, wrote that the monetary value of domestic work and caring for people was estimated at from 10 to over 50 per cent of the gross domestic product.

Accurate time-use data and studies will make unpaid family-care work, which is mostly done by mothers, accounted for and, hopefully, taken into account by policymakers and employers. It will also contribute to the recognition mothers are asking for, and with recognition will come measures.

Mothers' exhaustion and stress, single motherhood and increased poverty among mothers and children are part of today's family life. It is a worldwide societal challenge that needs to be addressed.

Make Mothers Matter fully supports the statement that the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) made in a media brief on the occasion of the publication of a report entitled *Doing Better for Families*, in 2011, which provides a direction for rethinking social development, namely that OECD countries need to find an optimal balance between preparing families for life in the labour market and preparing the labour market for the lives of families.

International Federation for Family Development:
Papers No.39

The 'being and doing' side of our behavior

Family well-being in a time of change

1 February 2015

Interest in well-being issues has tended to focus during the past years on the welfare of children rather than on the well-being of families. But growing policy interest in children's welfare has led to efforts to improve the ways that well-being is measured more holistically, within the family as a unit. As the UN General Assembly resolution 68/136 recalls, "the family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children and children, for the full and harmonious development of their personality, should grow up in a family environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding." There is also a growing recognition of intergenerational dialogue and solidarity. They mostly relate to reciprocal care, support and exchange of material and non-material resources between family members, typically younger and older generations.

Despite social changes and economic crisis, evidence shows that family bonds remain strong and family members assist one another through financial support and care. In both developed and developing countries, older people, especially the younger-old, are more likely to provide financial support to younger family members than they are to receive it, even though there may be a perception that younger generations are faced with the burden of taking care of the older ones. But what are the tools to measure the effectiveness of government policies in promoting the totality of family well-being?

Living in relative poverty has been considered to determine many aspects of family well-being. Yet, while family income is undoubtedly important, by itself it does not offer sufficient insight into how some families appear to cope well with their circumstances and others continue to struggle.

Besides, eliminating a single risk factor or promoting just one that is protective may not go far enough to improve the circumstances of families who struggle to cope with several separate and compounding difficulties.

In other words, although basic human functioning is so immediately dependent on key resources such as food and shelter, we cannot forget to focus on key indicators of the 'being and doing' side of human

functioning, and not only the 'having' side in our core concept of well-being.

That is why it would be interesting to reach a scientific consensus on how many or which aspects of people's lives should be considered as essential to well-being, nor is there a clear theoretical basis for interpreting composite measures or indices that are constructed utilizing methods such as factor analysis.

New routes to family

To move towards that consensus, it should be considered that the traditional route to family life – marriage, cohabitation and parenthood – is no longer the only possible or permissible sequence of events. In fact, a variety of family types have emerged which seem to have less to do with lifestyle choices and more to do with the economic circumstances in which men and women find themselves. "The key question is whether the well-being of parents and children varies systematically between the different family types."

However, the above chart shows that changes are not as drastic as it seems sometimes. It ranks countries by how likely children are to live with two parents in the European Union (excluding its last member, Croatia). In most countries, 7-9 out of 10 children live in two-parent families, in most of which the parents are married and have been together since at least the birth of the study child. In some cases, the parents are cohabiting, a family type with a less-advantaged social profile and greater risk of instability than married families, or they are step-families, over half of which are the outcome of never-married lone parents forming a second union. The remaining families (one to two) are headed by lone parents' (37.1%).

Family breakdown

Whenever it happens, family breakdown is not a simple event, but a process that involves a number of risk and protective factors that interact in complex ways both before and after parental separation or divorce to increase or limit the risk of the adverse outcomes associated with family breakdown. These

inter-related factors include parental conflict; the quality of parenting and of parent-child relationships; maternal mental health; financial hardship; and repeated changes in living arrangements, including family structure.

Parental conflict is a key variable associated with negative outcomes in children from both intact and non-intact families. Research in this area clearly shows that family functioning has a greater impact on outcomes than family structure. High levels of conflict, stress resulting from the separation and/or resulting poverty can all negatively affect maternal mental health. Poor mental health affects the ability of parents, whether married, separated or divorced, to parent effectively, which in turn impacts on children's well-being. Financial hardship and the stress it induces can both contribute to family breakdown and is often a consequence of it. When compared with their peers from more advantaged backgrounds, children from poorer backgrounds, whether from intact or non-intact families, generally do less well across a number of measures, such as health and educational attainment.

Compared with two parent families, lone parent families tend to be significantly worse off financially. Financial hardship increases the likelihood of other variables associated with negative outcomes, such as poor housing, health problems, poor nutrition and fewer material resources for nurturing children. Different studies show that although children are at increased risk of adverse outcomes following family breakdown and that negative outcomes can persist into adulthood, the difference between children from intact and non-intact families can be reduced if they are helped, and the majority of children would not be adversely affected in the long-term.

Reducing the risk of a negative impact on child outcomes means also understanding the mechanisms involved in the process of family breakdown and how they impact on child outcomes. The evidence shows that high levels of parental conflict, the quality of parenting and of parent-child relationships, poor maternal mental health and financial hardship interact in complex ways before, during and after parental separation, and impact on child outcomes. "The multiple transitions that children can experience following parental separation are also a significant explanatory factor. It is clear from the evidence that how the family functions, rather than family type, is more relevant to understanding the impacts associated with family breakdown."

Some risk factors

The presence of depressive symptoms and smoking among mothers is strongly linked to socio economic status: mothers with lower secondary education are five to six times more likely to smoke and more than three times more likely to show depressive symptoms than those with postgraduate education. Fathers report much lower levels of depressive symptoms than mothers. Risk of obesity among mothers varies by socio economic status only to a limited degree.

Married mothers have lower risk of depression than lone parents. However, closer analysis shows that conflict with the child's father is the crucial factor: lone mothers who reported low or no conflict are not significantly different from married mothers in risk of depression.

Mothers with larger families have a lower risk of depression, perhaps in part because non-depressed mothers are likely to have more children. However, the association between large family size and higher conflict among separated or divorced mothers, coupled with the link between higher conflict and depression, suggests that the associations between family size and parental well-being are complex and vary by family context.

Co-residence with a grandparent (usually, that is, the mother's own parent or parents) is associated with lower risk of depression and smoking among mothers.

Children are more likely to experience non-optimal parenting from non-resident than resident fathers, and mothers who are depressed or have conflict with the child's father are somewhat more likely to have conflict with the child, but neither of these linkages is very strong.

What is a functional family?

Changes and transitions of different sorts feature in all children's lives. Helping children to manage changes and transitions through, for example, improving their coping skills and resilience, is likely to benefit all children, some of whom may have experienced, or will in the future experience, parental separation. If families are able to successfully carry out their basic functions then they might be said to contribute to positive individual and social outcomes. Viewing family well-being as the ability of families to fulfill their basic functions then requires that those basic func-

tions are identified and agreed. “Unfortunately there is no definitive list of core functions, although there is some agreement on what a list might include. There is also debate over the extent to which some of the traditional functions of the family are now no longer the sole preserve of the family. The development of a conceptual framework will need to be guided by research evidence.”

“Viewing family well-being as the ability of families to fulfill their basic functions requires that those basic functions are identified and agreed.”

Having conceptualised family well-being, it will be necessary to identify relevant domains of interest and select indicators that measure key components and dimensions of the model. As with the development of the conceptual framework, this stage will be challenging. “The complex nature of family well-being will make the development and selection of appropriate and meaningful indicators that measure the concept in question difficult. Pragmatic decisions will be required.” Key considerations include the multifac-

eted nature of family well-being—reflecting the range of functions families have—; measurement of the factors that promote or detract from optimal family functioning; utility of using both a subjective and objective sense; the need to capture the collective well-being of individual family members and that part of family well-being that concerns the well-being of the entity itself over and above the well-being of individual family members; the need to monitor family well-being over time; and how to manage data limitations, such as the limited number of data sources that look at families rather than households or individuals.

Well-being is a vast and complex family outcome. As a result, programs need to carefully plan and implement their approach to address the many different strengths and needs of the families they serve. The first step would be to learn about the overall strengths and challenges of families in a program. Once a program has assessed family, community, and program assets and needs, individualized support targeted information can be offered and resources, and trainings develop community partnerships implemented.

International Federation for Family Development:
Papers No.40

Where values are first learnt

Impact of the family in the socialization process

1 March 2015

After devoting its two first editions to the preparations and celebrations of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, the IFFD Briefing held during the 53rd Session of the Commission for Social Development (11 February 2015) focused on four of the Goals included in the Open Working Group Proposal, to reaffirm or suggest the need for families to be mentioned in some of their Targets.

Under the title 'The role of families in the future we want - Promoting the empowerment of families in the Sustainable Development Goals', it kept in mind the priority theme proposed for the Commission – "Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world".

The event was attended by PRs and delegates of Permanent Missions of Member States, representatives of 36 civil society organizations and some academics from different American and European universities, over a hundred people in total. Speakers were carefully selected from persons working in Civil Society Organizations dealing very closely with those Targets.

The first presentation dealt with 'Family as a school of equality'(Target 4.1) and was given by Ferin Merve Yılmaz Göksan, Women's Platform Representative at the Journalists and Writers Foundation of Turkey, the only organization from that country holding General Consultative Status with the ECOSOC. We include the full text of her intervention in the following pages.

In the other presentations, Marina Robben, World President of IFFD, talked about 'Family and well-being for all at all ages'(Target 3.7); Kristin Bodiford, Delegate of Generations United to the

UN, talked about 'Productive employment and decent work for all'(Target 8.1); and Marie-Béatrice Levaux, President of the French Federation of Household Employers and the European Federation for Family Employment, talked about 'The value of unpaid care and domestic work'(Target 5.4) from the French experience.

The Briefing included the 2015 IFFD Family Awards Ceremony for persons and entities devoted to the promotion of family values took place. The first Award was granted to the High Representative of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, for his work in favor of families worldwide not only in his present position, but also during his years of service to United Nations and his country

The second Award was granted to the Department of Family, Children, Time Use and the Disabled of the City council of Barcelona, to their City of Barcelona Family Plan 2013-2016, and especially the programme 'Barcelona is Family', developed during the past months.

In her Concluding speech on 'The United Nations, the family and Sustainable Development Goals', Renata Kaczmarek, Focal Point on the Family at UN DSPD/DESA, referred to "well-functioning families" as those that "are reproductive and productive units, provide economic and emotional support to their members, act as care providers for the most vulnerable family members, generate productive workers, build competence and character and contribute to social integration and social cohesion."

The event ended by showing a short video to attendees about the activities organized by IFFD with UN representatives for the preparations and celebrations of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 12 countries. A copy of 'Family Futures', the landmark publication of that

Anniversary, and of the Documents of the North American Expert Group Meeting held in Mexico City last year were offered to them.

Family as a school of equality⁴

I would like to thank to all organizers and the International Federation for Family Development for giving me the opportunity to speak on 'Family as a School of Equality' while we are entering a new Era, which is very important at least for the following 15 years. Today, I will focus on this issue under the umbrella of the panel, which is promoting the empowerment of families in the Sustainable Development Goals.

As the only Non-Governmental Organization from Turkey holding the General Consultative Status at ECOSOC, the Journalists and Writers Foundation and its Women's Platform follow closely the United Nations' active role in enhancing international cooperation in family related issues and in Post-2015 Development Agenda. On the Proposal of the Open Working group for the Sustainable Development Goals, the role of lifelong learning and quality education, gender equality and empowering all women and girls are identified as crucial for the Agenda. In addition, the proposal is also emphasizing today's children, youth and future generations without distinction of any kind such as age, sex, disability, culture, race, ethnicity, origin, migratory status, religion, economic or other status.

As Stated in the ECOSOC Resolution adopted in June 2014, family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society [3]. It is well known that family unit has to be protected and empowered in the lights of universal values and basic human rights. For that aim, family policies have to be nourished by the good examples that could be seen all around the world. We should deeply understand the impact of family on children and the role of it in the society.

Socialization refers to preparing newcomers to become members of an existing group and to think, feel, and act in ways the group considers appropriate. "Viewed from the group's point of

view, it is a process of member replacement." Besides this, "as time went on, however, socialization came to be seen more and more as the end result—that is, as internalization. Internalization means taking social norms, roles, and values into one's own mind. Society

was seen as the primary factor responsible for how individuals learned to think and behave." It could be said that "socialization occurs within biological, psychological, and social contexts."

The emphasis of these contexts could be explained further but to summarize, it could be mentioned that the participants or the sources of socialization are the family, day care, schools, peers, community and country and also mass media. Obviously, according to Hodges, parents and the immediate family of infants are important to children's early care and development. It is seen that major changes in the family are increasing the importance of other caregivers as well. For example, teachers and schools transmit formal skills and knowledge, to social values and norms. As infants mature, they establish an interpersonal contact with other children at their age, called peers. Inevitably, children are affected by the community and nation in which they are reared. Also the children, in some countries, mostly spend a great deal of time with the mass media.

However, all these other factors that contribute to the socialization process of children do not diminish the power or the impact of the family on them. This way, we could conclude that gender equality and gender stereotypes are learned in the family like many other values or norms. To illustrate, if there is an inequality at the division of labour at home, the child could normalize the inequality. All these issues somehow are interlinked to each other as you all know.

That makes the family crucial and pivotal for the Post-2015 Era because we know family may be the most important

source of socialization. What it means for the "future generations"—this term is used in the Open Working Group Proposal — or "child" is that family has a great importance, together with other sources as schools.

At the Proposal for the SDGs, Goal 4 is "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." With its

⁴ by Ferin Merve Yılmaz Göksan, IFFD Briefing 2015. More information about the event at www.familyperspective.org/briefing.

targets, this Goal emphasizes quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education as well as quality primary and secondary education for both girls and boys and also it mentions the equal access all levels of education. It does not differ for the child whether you have a world-standard university or school if he/she has no chance to access. For example, although we have a legal system in Turkey that protects the right of education regardless of gender, in some cases we see that fathers do not allow their daughters to go to school in a different city due to cultural restrictions. And this is not specific to Turkey at all: despite all the positive work of States and the UN bodies to create opportunities for universal access to education, there still needs to be self-motivation starting within the families, which can be fostered by the active inclusion of local CSOs. In that way, a closer cooperation between local and international, public and private bodies can ensure access to education for all, towards the creation of a better world for “future generations.”

The Proposal continues with Goal 5, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. It talks about ending all forms of discrimination and other types of fighting with child, early and forced marriage; recognizing unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate. Also it emphasizes ensuring women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life and giving women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance. The promotion of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls at all levels has a great importance for that Goal. So we see a direct desire of the Agenda for the gender quality. Beside many other factors effecting the socialization of the child, family is the first hand where the notion of equality is formed by the child.

As the Journalists and Writers Foundation and its Women’s Platform, we organized series of side events on the girls’ education in Afghanistan first in during the 58th Commission on the Status of Women in New York and second during the 26th Hu-

man Rights Council in Geneva. We sponsored a field research on girl’s education in Afghanistan regarding the impact of Turkish private schools that has been operating in the country for the last fifteen years. The research was conducted by Semiha Topal from Fatih University, who concluded that in the case of education in Afghanistan, specifically, the opposition to women’s education is more about the structure of schooling in mixed-gendered settings, and the requirement of commuting to the school, which causes a security threat for the girls and their families. This reminds us that “the implementation of the sustainable development Goals will depend on a global partnership for sustainable development with the active engagement of Governments, as well as civil society, the private sector and the United Nations system.”

Lastly, I want to talk about our recommendations as a civil society organization. As the Journalists and Writers Foundation and its Women’s Platform, we are organizing International Family Conferences in every two- years. It is an academic gathering to stimulate interdisciplinary and cross-national collaboration and approach to various family issues. As our current recommendations on family issues and family-policies for the Post-2015 Agenda, I want to share the Final Declaration of the last Conference, in which some points are directly related to my topic.

To sum up, mainstreaming and promoting the empowerment of families for the new Agenda is very much related to understand the importance of family on the child and the impact of it to the whole society. Recognizing respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of all family members should be taking into consideration by families and should be the cornerstones of family-oriented policies. It could be said that equality between men and women, women’s equal participation in employment and shared parental responsibility are also the essentials of learning of equality in the family so governments should promote family policies within this line. Not only designing, but also implementing and monitoring these policies require a common intent at national, regional and international level including State participation and civil society for a more effective Sustainable Development Agenda.

Declaration of Istanbul Conference

On the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family designated by the United Nations, the Journalists and Writers Foundation Women's Platform organised the International Family Conference III -International Family Policies on 29-30 November 2014, with contributions of 17 speakers from 13 different countries, which dealt with family and law, family and work, family and poverty through regional practices, underlined by the presentations.

Recognizing the family as a natural and fundamental group unit of societies (E/RES/2014/8), we welcome all the preparations and celebrations happening around the world for this Anniversary. With the spirit of being part of it,

Stressing that equality between men and women, especially women's equal participation in employment, shared parental responsibility and respect to the rights of children should be the essentials of family policies, Acknowledging the evidence that family policies and laws are more effective when targeting the family unit rather than each one of its members; that balancing work and family life helps parents to be co-responsible in their tasks; and that empowering families is essential to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty, Convinced that civil society has a significant role in promoting human rights, assessing family policies and supporting families, we urge governments to consider these recommendations:

1. Family policies should always take into consideration the empowerment of women within the family, especially in their integration to the labour market.
2. Make sure that the law always respects the rights of every member of the family to be part of the decision process within the family.
3. Respect every nation's peculiarities as long as they don't violate the international conventions and treaties; and promote mutual understanding between different societies.
4. Make sure that reproductive technologies do not violate the basic rights of all parts involved.
5. Never force women to make a choice between work and family commitments; therefore consider the cost of maternal leave and in-kind services and tax benefits as investment for the society.
6. Build a legal framework in which the private sector doesn't get extra cost when their staff receives maternal leave, and the woman has the guarantee to keeping her job.
7. Ensure the universal accessibility and quality of early child education.
8. Ensure that young generations get the skills to find a way to integrate into society and start a family through a proper job.
9. Ensure that families are not replaced in their duties, but supported and made accountable for the help they get from society.
10. Mainstream the family in the sustainable development agenda, and take into account that the achievement of the new Development Goals depends on how well families are empowered to contribute to their achievement.

Service and Research Institute on Family and Children (SERFAC)

Introducing SERFAC's Newsletters for 2015:

The series of SERFAC'S News letter for 2015 will consist of six issues of Family focus and six issues of Child focus, on each alternating month. The core content of these issues will address the all important and urgent issues of marriage stability and family unity and will be titled: *"In Defence of Marriage and Family."*

It needs to be recognised that while stability and unity in marriage and family is being an increasingly yearned for state of life, its realization is becoming increasingly remote due to rapidly changing life styles, lack of understanding between generations, increasing number of divorces, the egoistic refusal to pass life on, conjugal infidelity, advocating alternate married life styles such as cohabitation etc. are becoming the norm with high investments of resources and expectations based primarily on sexual instincts/ gender demands and seldom on the creation of unity, gender equality, children, stability and a lifelong union/commitment and so on.

While our attention and concerns remain, we at SERFAC will not concentrate solely on these phenomenon. We will go beyond them and continue (as we have always done) to look for causes and explanations, for example: lack of preparation for marriage and family life, decreasing sense of responsibility and loss of

moral sense and values. This loss is the effect of inadequate education, environments which foster immorality, and a materialism which obscures the values and joys of spirituality.

In today's globalised world the need is to have a fundamentally different understanding of the nature of marriage, a realization of family and sanctity of life as the foundation of civilization. To do so we need to question stereotypes and gender issues. We need to have the courage to work towards the revitalization of the family because Marriage and Family are spiritual environments with its social and sociological expressions all of which are inter twined and the absence of which invites conflict, instability, abuse, violence, dysfunctional family life and breakdown.

We at SERFAC are convinced of: no matter how great the merits of the family of yesterday may have been, it is the one of today and tomorrow which must attract the attention of all persons and leaders who are really preoccupied with the welfare and well being of humanity. We welcome you to visit our web sites: www.familyserfac.org & www.familycentric.org which will help understand that our work and actions at and from SERFAC spring from our vision as a response to the pressing needs of all the world's people.

Dr.Catherine Bernard.

Founder and Director of SERFAC.

From the European Union



FamiliesAndSocieties

Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2015

This is the fourth newsletter of FamiliesAndSocieties, a large-scale European research project investigating the diversity of family forms, relationships and life courses in Europe in relation to policies.

Our Topics

1. Interview with the Work Package 8 co-leader Amparo González-Ferrer, senior research fellow at the Spanish National Research Council (Madrid).
2. Interview with the Work Package 7 co-leader Pearl Dykstra, Professor at the Department of Sociology, Erasmus University Rotterdam.
3. The FamiliesAndSocieties research news.
4. The collection of family-related policies co-financed by FamiliesAndSocieties is online at the data portal PERFAR.
5. Events.
6. Sign up for regular updates.

1. Avoiding segregation is crucial – interview with Amparo González-Ferrer, co-leader of the work package 8 in FamiliesAndSocieties.

Read the complete interview on our website! [More](#)

2. We need to think of four generation families - an interview with Pearl Dykstra from Erasmus University Rotterdam.

Read the complete interview on our website! [More](#)

3. The FamiliesAndSocieties research news

Working paper series: 26 research reports on family issues can be found on the FamiliesAndSocieties webpage. They constitute a key reference about what has been written so far in terms of family-related foresight methods, family forms and their relation to the well-being of children, family dynamics among immigrants and their descendants in Europe, childcare arrangements and much more. [More](#)

Peer-reviewed Publications: Check the FamiliesAndSocieties publications in prominent journals! [More](#)

Digests: Get updated with the latest research through the short and comprehensive summaries of FamiliesAndSocieties! [More](#)

4. The collection of family-related policies co-financed by FamiliesAndSocieties is online at the data portal PERFAR.

PERFAR (Population Europe Resource Finder & Archive) offers a broad collection of policies related to population developments throughout Europe, a catalogue with links to socio-economic and demographic data, and an online repository for related research results. Check out our collection of family-related laws for 16 European countries on childcare, divorce, marriage and registered partnerships, maternity leave, parental leave, and family allowances. [More](#)

5. Events

The FamiliesAndSocieties second annual consortium meeting was held in Madrid, Spain, on January 14-16, 2015. The primary aim of this mid-term meeting was to provide a progress overview on the first two years of the project and to strengthen contacts between researchers and stakeholders. [More](#)

FamiliesAndSocieties' Second Annual Stakeholder Seminar - Multiple pathways towards integration: The diversity of immigrant families in Europe: Experts from research, policy, and NGO's discussed in a confidential atmosphere about the most recent findings on transnational families, immigrants' childbearing, and well-being among children of immigrants in the EU context. [More](#)

6. Sign up for regular updates on the project

The website of FamiliesAndSocieties provides the opportunity to those interested to sign up for regular updates. Get informed on all publications and events of the project. Please register on the project website for the best way to stay updated about research in Europe on family issues! [More](#)

Imprint

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Recent and Forthcoming events

2015

- Seventieth Anniversary of the United Nations Organization
- World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995: Beijing +20 Campaign
<http://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/intergovernmental-support/world-conferences-on-women>
- World Summit on Social Development-Copenhagen+20
<http://undesadspd.org/CalendarofEvents.aspx>

March 2015

- 9-11 PSPC 2015 - 8th Annual Poverty and Social Protection Conference
<http://www.pspconference.org> (Bangkok, Thailand)
- 11-14 XXIII World Family Therapy Congress <http://www.ifta-congress.org/> (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)
- 11, 2.30 pm: CoNGO's Substantive Committee (New York) on Freedom of Religion or Belief: a side event at the session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, to focus on obstacles women face in pursuing equal enjoyment of the rights to freedom of religion or belief in the particular context of marriage and the family.
More information: <http://www.unfrb.org>
- 14-18 UN Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (Sendai, Japan)
- 15-19 International Conference on Childhood Education (Oxford, UK)

April 2015

- 27-29 Children's Welfare League of American Conference
<http://www.cwla.org/2015NationalConference> (Arlington, USA)

May 2015

- 4-7: International Conference on Sociology <http://www.atiner.gr/sociology.htm> (Athens, Greece)
- 18- 19 Child Aware Conference <http://www.childawareconference.org.au> (Melbourne, Vic)
- 19-22 World Education Forum 2015 (WEF) (Incheon, South Korea)
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/world-education-forum-2015/>

July 2015

- 4-7 ERPA International Congresses on Education 2015 <http://www.erpacongress.com> (Athens, Greece)
- 13-16 Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)
- High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, Third Session (Geneva, Switzerland)

September 2015

- 24-25: II International Conference on Family and Society, Barcelona
<http://www.fsconference.org/>
- 19-20: European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness, Sofia
<http://www.eufami.org/news/72-eufami-major-family-congress-2015>

October 2015

- 16-18: XIX International Family Congress, Mexico <http://iffdcongressmexico.com/>
- 27-30: World Congress of Families IX, Salt Lake City <http://wcf9.org/>

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