



معهد الدوحة الدولي للدراسات الأسرية والتنمية  
**Doha International Institute for  
Family Studies & Development**  
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**IFFD**  
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION  
FOR FAMILY DEVELOPMENT



2014 - TWENTIETH  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL  
YEAR OF THE FAMILY

5 June 2012  
9:30-1:00

Room JDE 51

Raise Awareness Meeting

## Poverty, work-family balance and intergenerational solidarity

convened as part of preparations for the  
Twentieth Anniversary of the  
International Year of the Family, 2014

Hosted by

EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions

# Twentieth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2014

Raise awareness meeting  
“Poverty, work-family balance and  
intergenerational solidarity”

5 June, 2012, Committee of the Regions, Brussels  
Renata Kaczmarek, Focal Point on the Family, United  
Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

# International Year of the Family, 1994

- The International Year of the Family was observed under a theme: *Family Resources and Responsibilities in a Changing World* & a motto *Building the Smallest Democracy at the Heart of Society*
- The International Year of the Family, 1994 set off actions benefiting families at national, regional and international levels
- Starting in 1994, International Days of Families have been observed to raise awareness on family-related issues
- A resolution on the International Year noted “The General Assembly appeals to Member States as well as to other participants in the observance of the Year to highlight 1994 as a special occasion to benefit families of the world in their quest for a better life for all, based on the principle of subsidiarity, which seeks solutions to problems at the lowest level of the societal structure”. (GA/RES/47/237, 1993)

# International Year of the Family & its follow up process

- The observance of the Year gave impetus to consider family issues at an international forum
- Research on family-related topic has been conducted
- Based on the research, Reports of the Secretary-General on a variety of subjects of concern to families have been issued and considered by the General Assembly & the Commission for Social Development (a subsidiary body of ECOSOC)
- General Assembly and Economic and Social Council adopted resolutions on the family and offered recommendations to Member States, civil society and other stakeholders

# Objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up process

- Raise awareness on challenges faced by families
- Strengthen national institutions to develop, implement and monitor family-centered policies
- Improve the collaboration among national and international civil society organizations in support of family-oriented activities
- Build upon the results of major events of concern to the family and its individual members
- Review challenges and recommend solutions
- Support families in their functions
- Share good practices

# Guiding principles

- The family is the basic unit of society and as such should be strengthened. It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist...(Programme of Action of the WSSD, para. 80)
- Family has supporting, educating and nurturing roles & contributes to social integration and social cohesion.
- More principles are contained in Plans of Action of major UN conferences (e.g. Beijing Conference on Women, World Summit for Children)
- Specific recommendations are contained in GA and CSOCD resolutions.

# Actions to support family functions

- Encouraging social & economic policies that are designed to meet the needs of families and their individual members, especially the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members, with particular attention to the care of children
- Ensuring opportunities for family members to understand and meet their social responsibilities
- Promoting mutual respect, tolerance and cooperation within the family and within society
- Promoting equal partnership between women and men in the family

(Programme of Action of the WSSD, para. 81)

## Twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2014

- *Confronting family poverty and social exclusion*
- *Ensuring work-family balance*
- *Advancing social integration & intergenerational solidarity within families and communities*



## The themes...

- The themes reflect the mandate of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 1995 (eradication of poverty; expansion of productive employment – now decent work agenda; social integration)
- The three areas still require attention & urgent action to benefit the well-being of families and society
- There are major demographic and socio-economic trends impacting these issues
- They are relevant in all regions

# Confronting family poverty & social exclusion

- Poverty eradication is a primary concern of the United Nations on its Millennium Development Goals Agenda
- Poverty eradication should focus on families to succeed (we have examples of successful efforts of cash transfer programmes, child benefits, etc.)
- Fighting social exclusion, manifested by discrimination, prejudice, inequality, lack of access to resources and lack of voice is contributing to poverty eradication.

# Poverty & social exclusion

- Poverty and social exclusion are still prevalent
- In OECD countries child poverty has not diminished despite numerous efforts and is on the rise in some countries
- Despite positive legislation, social exclusion of groups & individuals continues (ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, older persons)
- Global progress has been uneven

# Ensuring Work-Family Balance

- Families, especially those with small children or caring for older persons have increasing difficulties in reconciling work and family responsibilities due to such trends as:
  - Higher number of women entering labour force
  - Less availability of the next of kin to care for vulnerable family members
  - Work responsibilities are more demanding
  - Competition for jobs is on the rise

# *Advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity within families and communities*

- Trends impacting intergenerational relations:
  - Extended families are shrinking & may not live in close proximity (in search for jobs, due to migration, as a personal choice)
  - Families are more diverse
  - Young people delay marriage & child-bearing & depend on their families longer
  - Populations are rapidly ageing
  - Burden of care is disproportionately placed on women

## Further action

- Considering trends affecting family poverty, work-family balance & intergenerational solidarity, it is imperative to:
  - Raise awareness of the issues
  - Design, implement and monitor policies in these areas
  - Promote research
  - Share good practices

# Conclusions

- International Year of the Family twentieth anniversary preparations give us an opportunity to refocus on families
- We need to demonstrate that families should be at the center of social and economic policies
- Development of policies for poverty eradication, work-family balance and intergenerational solidarity should be promoted at all levels since it contributes to the well-being of families and society at large

# Thank you!

For more information contact:

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Website:

[http://social.un.org/index/Family/InternationalObservances/  
TwentiethAnniversaryofIYF2014.aspx](http://social.un.org/index/Family/InternationalObservances/TwentiethAnniversaryofIYF2014.aspx)