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The United Nations, the Family and Sustainable Development Goals



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The role of families in the future we want

IFFD Briefing

The United Nations, the Family and Sustainable Development Goals

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Families & development

Well-functioning families

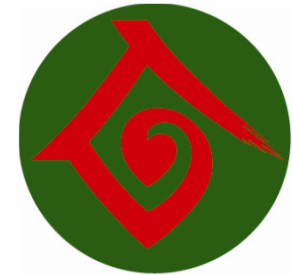
- are reproductive and productive units
- provide economic and emotional support to their members
- are care providers for the most vulnerable family members
- generate productive workers
- build competence and character
- contribute to social integration and social cohesion

Family-friendly public policies should

- support positive family functioning as an efficient way to achieve desired social policy goals
- support family functions
- focus on family units as dynamic entities
- promote child and youth well-being, healthy & reciprocal intergenerational relations
- aim at achieving long-term solutions to persistent development problems (inequality, intergenerational transfer of poverty, etc.)

United Nations & the family

- Human rights framework
- 1990s framework
United Nations conferences & summits
- 2000 framework
Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- International Year of the Family & its follow up framework
IYF + 20; GA & ECOSOC resolutions
- Post-2015 Development Agenda



2014 - TWENTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE
INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF THE FAMILY

2000 Framework: MDGs with special relevance to families

- Poverty reduction
- Education of children
- Gender equality & women empowerment
- Reduction in child and maternal mortality



The Millennium Development Goals, especially those relating to poverty, education and maternal mortality reduction are difficult to achieve unless the strategies to achieve them focus on the family.

Learning from MDGs:

ensuring work-family balance is closely related to gender equality

‘More family-friendly policies are needed to support greater women’s participation in the job market’

(United Nations, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2014* – under goal 3 ‘Promote gender equality and empower women’)

- The time-related underemployment rate for women is higher than for men, which calls for more family-friendly policies encouraging not only better work-family balance, ‘but also enhance the quality of part-time jobs and improve overall business productivity. The policies include legislation on flexible time, parental leave, codes of conduct and new working practices. As well as childcare and elderly-care facilities’ (Ibid)

Sustainable development goals (SDGs)

The Rio+20 outcome document, *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 68th session. It also provided the basis for their conceptualization. The Rio outcome gave the mandate that the SDGs should be coherent with and integrated into the UN development agenda beyond 2015.



SDGs must be:

Action-oriented; Concise; Easy to communicate; Limited in number; Aspirational; Global in nature; Universally applicable to all countries while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.

The outcome document further specifies that the development of SDGs should be useful for pursuing focused and coherent action on sustainable development; Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development; Serve as a driver for implementation and mainstreaming of sustainable development in the UN system as a whole; Address and be focused on priority areas for the achievement of sustainable development.



SDGs

- 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

* Depends on intergenerational relations

** Child marriage is often a family decision

*** Inequality is linked to family structure

SDGs

- 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 & 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

* Family law reforms

SDGs

Environmental sustainability, inequality & social integration.

Issues impacting development & relating to family:

- Gender equality issues (average marriage age of women, child marriage, rates of women literacy, girl child's school enrolment, harmful traditional practices)
- Public investment in health and education
- Employment

SDGs

- By 2020 all countries legislate for and provide all workers with a minimum living wage sufficient to support a family to live with dignity, particularly those in the informal sector, women, domestic and migrant workers

(FINAL COMPILATION OF AMENDMENTS TO GOALS AND TARGETS By Major Groups and other stakeholders including citizen's responses to MY World 6 priorities To inform the Thirteenth and last Session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, 14-18 July, 2014)

SDGs

- Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate (family farmers and family planning were also mentioned)

(Report of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals, A/68/970)

Family policy & post-2015 Development Agenda

- The two areas bound to gradually grow in importance are work-family balance and intergenerational issues. Recent trends, such as rapidly falling fertility rates in developed countries, family instability, growing divorce rates as well as mounting difficulties in family formation encountered by young people necessitate urgent action especially in the area of work-family balance and sustainable livelihoods. Similarly, changing family structures, urbanization and mobility as well as rapid ageing and challenges of ensuring human rights and dignity for older persons require a serious look at policies supporting healthy and reciprocal intergenerational interactions so that generations are not perceived as competing against one another.
- Both issues are not sufficiently addressed at the international forum despite their growing implications for issues such as the future of women's labour participation and ageing. Depending on the support of Member States, a systematic follow up on family policy development in these areas could be pursued and coordinated.

Family-oriented policies supporting family functions should contribute to:

- Self-sufficient, wealthy & resilient families
- Healthy & educated children
- Improved access to decent work
- Better work-family balance
- Gender equality
- Stronger intergenerational bonds....

all part of sustainable development goals
the future we want

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