

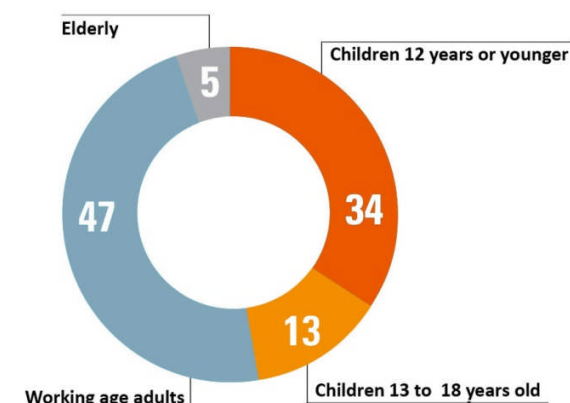
## Mentioning the Family in the Sustainable Development Goals

### 1. Child Poverty

#### Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

##### Children constitute nearly half of the world's extreme poor

People living on less than \$1.25 a day by age, % of total



SOURCE: Child Poverty in the Post-2015 Agenda, June 2014.

The United Nations has passed a resolution about the family's role in nurturing and protecting children. According to it, "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." (A/RES/68/136).

Between 2007 and 2012, child poverty has increased in 19 of the 28 countries involved in the European Union. In 2012, more than one-quarter of children in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Romania and Spain were living at risk of poverty (Eurostat, 2014). The pervasiveness of these numbers have raised concerns about how so many children growing up in poverty will affect the future productivity and economic competitiveness of European nations (European Commission, 2014; International Labour Organization, 2014/15).

The major cause of the rise in child poverty in the United States, according to recent estimates, is the decline in married-couple households. In 2000, about 11 million children lived in poverty. If the share of children born to two married parents was the same in 2000 as it had been in 1970, between 2.2 million and 3.2 million children would be raised above the poverty line (Amato & Maynard, 2007). These poverty-fighting benefits of marriage are pervasive, reaching across all socioeconomic groups, education levels, and races (with particularly strong effects among African American families).

**What Effect Does Poverty Have on Children?** Families are a powerful influence on children's development that begins before they are born and extends throughout their life (Future of Children, 2014). Children who grow up in poverty start kindergarten behind their more affluent peers. During the school years, they fall further behind. Children in low-income families hear fewer words, engage in fewer conversations with adults, and spend less time being read to. Evidence suggests that programs to support low-income children are not working as well as they could or should (Haskins, Garfinkel & McLanahan, 2014).

**What Can we Do to End Child Poverty?** We have some idea how to deal with a poverty of income (McLanahan, 2004). Around the world, we have policies on the books that help create a decent standard of living: policies that "make work possible," such as subsidized child care, and policies that "make work pay," such as supplementing income through policy levers such as the Earned Income Tax Credit and stronger child support enforcement (McLanahan, 2004). We know how to address low-income families' need for food or housing by issuing food stamps or housing vouchers (Tough, 2012).

We know less about how to counter the family impacts of economic changes like unemployment or employment in very low-wage jobs, which have made both men and women in the lowest income strata less "marriageable." Nor do we know how to offset how this decline in marriage has made family life less stable and more chaotic. We know less about how government can foster the stable, predictable, and orderly family life that allows parents to invest the time, resources, and supports that kids need to succeed.

A new promising approach to child poverty is two-generation approaches. Instead of focusing in children and parents individually, a family approach will be used that simultaneously provides high-quality programs for children and their parents. Typically two-generation programs enroll parents in education or job training, while at the same time enrolls their children in high-quality child care and early childhood education programs. What's more, strong connections are built between the parent and child programs, which are designed to be of equal duration and intensity (Future of Children, 2014).

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