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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 109th issue focuses on the 57th Commission for Social Development (CSD) of the United Nations, which convened in New York from February 11th to 21th 2019. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), accredited with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations, have the opportunity to submit written statements, which become part of the official documentation of the CSD. CSOs also have the opportunity to make oral statements to the deliberations of the CSD. Included in this issue is a selection of written statements, relating to families, submitted to the CSD 2019, by six CSOs, including the International Federation for Family Development, which is a member organisation of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family.

The Committee on the Family is organising an International Forum on May 6th 2019, at the United Nations Vienna International Centre, to observe the International Day of Families 2019. The Forum will include a presentation by Dr Ehab Salah (Advisor, HIV/AIDS Section, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) covering: "The fight against HIV/AIDS-What we have achieved and what still needs to be done." The Programme of the Forum is included in this issue. Further included are texts from Member Organisations of the Vienna NGO Committee, as well as a list of recent and upcoming events.

Sincerely,

Peter Crowley Ph.D.

Editor

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From the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family

VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY



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Digital Networks

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ANNUAL REPORT 2018

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

- ❖ Austrian Federal Government
- ❖ Bank Austria
- ❖ Berndorf Gruppe
- ❖ Country Womens Association in Lower Austria
- ❖ E.F.T. Transportagency GmbH
- ❖ European Commission
- ❖ Government of Germany
- ❖ Government of Liechtenstein
- ❖ Government of Luxembourg
- ❖ Government of Spain, Catalonia and the Balearic Islands
- ❖ International Non-Governmental Organisations
- ❖ Lower Austrian State Government
- ❖ Lower Austrian Insurance AG
- ❖ OMV Energy Group
- ❖ Rotary International
- ❖ Schoeller-Bleckmann Oilfield Equipment AG
- ❖ Shell Austria AG
- ❖ Siemens
- ❖ United Nations Trust Fund on Family Activities



Vienna NGO Committee on the Family



The following quotation from the Report of the United Nations Secretary-General to the General Assembly on November 21st 2018 (A/74/61-E/2019/4) documents the appreciation of the highest office of the United Nations for the endeavours of our Committee, the Member Organisations and their representatives, for the well-being of families worldwide. “The Vienna NGO Committee on the Family organized two international forums. One, organized in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime, focused on family based prevention of risky behaviours, including substance use disorders and violence. The other, organized in cooperation with the University of Salzburg, raised awareness of socially disadvantaged families and digital media usage. The Committee also published its online quarterly bulletin “Families international” incorporating forum proceedings, and disseminating resources from United Nations agencies relevant to families.” <http://undocs.org/A/74/61>

PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES 2018

In two Full Committee Meetings, representatives of the 42 International Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), who are members of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family, and 22 associate member organisations, discussed various institution-building projects and activities and approved the Plan of Action for 2018. The Board of the Committee worked out a schedule for its implementation, which was realised in co-operation with the support of the member organisations of the Committee and their representatives. The worldwide network of civil society organisations, research and university institutes, government agencies and individuals, continues to be, not only a beneficiary of interactive exchange, but is in many cases, directly involved in the work of the Committee. The Committee understands itself as a bridge between families-oriented Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), The United Nations, Governments of Member States of the United Nations and Academia, as well as between CSOs themselves, through the various digital networks set up and maintained by the Committee.

The following projects were realised in 2018

1. Families International (FI)

Three new Assistant Editors, Christin Kohler, M.A., Karin Kuzmanov & Isabella Nening, B.A., B.A., joined the Editor, Peter Crowley, Ph.D. on the Editorial Committee of FI in 2018 augmenting, inter alia, the research capacities of the Bulletin. Issues, Nos. 105 - 108 of the Quarterly Bulletin of the Committee were published online at www.viennafamilycommittee.org

Special features in FI included: ‘Issues relating to families at the 56th United Nations Commission for Social Development 2018’; The proceedings of an International Forum organized by the Committee, held on May 7th 2018 at the United Nations Vienna International Centre entitled: ‘Family-Based Prevention in the Work of UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime); ‘Families and Inclusive Societies in Africa’ a text by Prof. Monde Makiwane of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in Pretoria, South Africa, emanating from an Expert Group Meeting at the United Nations in New York on ‘Family Policy for Inclusive Societies’ in May 2018; The proceedings of a further International Forum, organized by the Committee held on November 5th 2018 at the United Nations Vienna International Centre entitled: ‘Socially Disadvantaged Families in a Rich Country, With a Special Focus on Mediation Practices’.

Each issue of Families International also included texts submitted by member organizations of the Committee as well as relevant texts from United Nations agencies. Over three hundred

and thirty readers of 'Families International' are informed by the Secretariat of the Committee by e-mail, when the latest issue is available to download.

2. International Forum: 'Family-Based Prevention in the Work of UNODC'

The Committee organised an International Forum, which was held during a Full Committee Meeting, at the United Nations Vienna International Centre on Monday May 7th 2018, to observe the United International Day of Families 2018, entitled 'Family-Based Prevention in the Work of UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime) with a presentation by Dr. Wadih Maalouf from UNDOC, who holds a Doctoral Degree in Epidemiology, specializing in Mental Health and Drug Addiction from Johns Hopkins School of Public Health in the U.S.A. The presentation discussed the science behind family-based prevention, showing its effectiveness in preventing a range of risky behaviours, including substance use disorders and violence. Dr. Maalouf, kindly provided various relevant documents, with regard to the presentation, which were included in Issue No. 106 of 'Families International' the quarterly bulletin published online by the Committee.

3. International Forum: 'Socially Disadvantaged Families in a Rich Country – Digital Media Usage and Mediation Practices' Philip Sinner, M.A. University of Salzburg

The Committee organised a second International Forum, which was held during a Full Committee Meeting at the United Nations Vienna International Centre, on Monday November 5th 2018, with Philip Sinner, M.A., who is a research associate and lecturer at the Department of Communications, University of Salzburg and a fellow, since 2011, of Prof. Dr. Ingrid Paus-Hasebrink's longitudinal project on media-socialisation of socially disadvantaged children and adolescents, which was originally launched in 2005. This project was also the basis of his presentation. The proceedings of the International Forum, with a text provided by Prof. Paus-Hasebrink and Philip Sinner, were published in issue No. 108 of 'Families International'. www.viennafamilycommittee.org

4. Cooperation with the United Nations Focal Point on the Family in New York

Further to the opening quotation above, the Board of the Committee keeps its various networks informed with documents of United Nations Resolutions and Reports of the United Nations Secretary General pertaining to family issues.

A background note, entitled; 'Families and Inclusive Societies' was prepared by the Focal Point on the Family, of the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD), at the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), of the United Nations Secretariat. This theme was chosen for the United Nations, International Day of Families 2018. A panel discussion on this theme, was held at the United Nations in New York. The background note was also included in Families International Issue No. 106.

United Nations International Day of Families May 15th 2018: 'Families for Inclusive Societies' <https://www.un.org/development/desa/family/international-day-of-families/2018idf.html>

United Nations Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on 'Families for Inclusive Societies'. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/family/2018/04/23/egm-on-family-policies-for-inclusive-societies-15-16-may-2018/>

For further information on the EGM: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/family/meetingsevents/family-policies-for-inclusive-societies.html>

An eighty page report, of a study update entitled: ‘Documenting Contributions of Civil Society Organisation to the Well-Being of Families’ by Dr. Peter Crowley, then Secretary of the Committee, in cooperation with the United Nations Focal Point on the Family, which was presented by the author, at the United Nations in New York, to observe the 20th Anniversary of the United Nations International Year of the Family, is available to download, on the United Nations website: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/family/international-day-of-families/2014-3.html>

5. Website of the Committee

www.viennafamilycommittee.org

This website, which was set up in 2000 is, amongst others, the main vehicle to publish our quarterly bulletin ‘Families International’. Issues Nos.105 to 108, which were published in 2018, may be downloaded from our website without cost to the reader.

6. The Three Digital Networks of the Committee [203 CSOs Networked - 92 in Sub-Saharan Africa]

A so-called ‘**Digital Divide**’ exists between those connected and not connected to the Internet. Statistics from the United Nations International Telecommunications Union based in Geneva, for 2016, show that only 43.% of the World’s present population of 7.67 billion are connected to the world wide web, leaving over 56.6%, or more than half the world’s population, not connected. In the continent of Africa alone, 74.9% were offline. 92 CSOs, or 45.3% of the total, of 203 CSOs in the three Digital Networks, set up and maintained by the Committee, are based in Sub-Saharan Africa, which is particularly affected by the ‘Digital Divide’. These 92 CSOs offer important knowledge resources for the well-being of families, especially in the first 1000 days of a child’s life, which are so important for its future development, as UNESCO pointed out in 2014. These digital knowledge networks expand the concept of Civil Society being more an advocacy and discourse entity, to also being a resource entity, especially of knowledge.

www.10yearsIYF.org

This website continues to experience interest, as a digital network, and also as a resource archive for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF) in 2004, with many relevant links to other sources. It resulted out of the participation of the then Chairperson of the Committee in a consultative meeting of international and regional Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) set up by the United Nations Secretariat in New York, in 2002, to implement a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly to observe the 10th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF) in 2004. There it was agreed to prepare a study, under the chairmanship of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family on: ‘Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Well-Being of Families’ since 1994. The original study, in which thirty two CSOs, from eighteen countries in five continents participated, was also published in book form with the financial support of the United Nations Trust Fund on Family Activities in 1994, under the title: ‘Documenting Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Well-Being of Families’ and edited by P. Crowley. The book was submitted to the members of the special session of the 59th General Assembly of the United Nations on Dec. 6th 2004, in order to officially observe the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

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

www.20yearsIYF.org

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

www.civilsocietynetworks.org

An Interactive-Internet-Forum for civil society organisations world-wide, including local, national and international CSOs, as well as academic and research institutions, was set up at the request of many organisations from around the globe, and went online in August 2004 at www.civilsocietynetworks.org. This Network had 143 member organisations from 25 countries in 2018 having incorporated the Interactive-Forums the Committee had originally set up with civil society organisations in Eastern African and in Central and Eastern European Countries, between 2000 and 2004, and then extended and opened up, as a further digital network, to worldwide membership in 2004. Civil Society Organisations worldwide can join, and participate in this Forum, free of cost, by contacting the Committee at: contact@viennafamilycommittee.org. Each organisation receives an individual User-Identity and Password and is able to enter and change data as necessary. The Forum also includes a discussion board, internal e-mail and online conference facilities, as well as a newsletter function, for each individual member organisation of the network.

The above outlined facts and figures, reflect perhaps, the ever-increasing interest generated by issues relating to families and also speak for themselves, with regard to the continued and increasing endeavours worldwide of the Committee, which observed in 2018 the 33rd Anniversary of its inception in 1985.

7. The Members of the Board of the Committee for 2016 - 2019

Board Officers:

Chairperson: Mag. Wolfgang Engelmaier, Kolping International,

Deputy Secretary: Dr. Peter Crowley, International Council of Psychologists,

Treasurer: Mag. Alexandra Lugert, European Union of Women

Board Members: Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Mazal, University of Vienna,

Dr. Maria Riehl, Women's Federation for World Peace,

Dr. Eleonora Teixeira Da Costa Rossoll, Federation of Catholic Family Associations.

Gerald Williams, Latter Day Saints Charities.

VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY



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Digital Networks

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Email: contact@viennafamilycommittee.org

UNITED NATIONS
VIENNA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

Monday May 6th 2019

CONFERENCE ROOM CO237

UNITED NATIONS
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES 2019
INTERNATIONAL FORUM
13.00 – 15.00
[Including Discussion with Presenter & Participants]

“The fight against HIV/AIDS –

What we have achieved and what still needs to be done (aligned to the SDGs in particular target 3.3 to end AIDS by 2030 and the [UNAIDS Fast-Track Strategy 2016-2021](#) that calls for a 75 per cent reduction of new HIV infections)”.

Dr Ehab Salah

[Advisor, HIV/AIDS Section, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)]

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Board Officers:
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Treasurer: Alexandra Lugert, European Union of Women
Board Members:
Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Mazal, University of Vienna, Gerald Williams LDS Charities,
Dr. Maria Riehl, Women's Federation for World Peace, Dr. Eleonora Teixeira
Da Costa Rossoll, Federation of Catholic Family Associations

From the United Nations



**Innocenti
Research
Brief**

2017-16

Growing Inequality and Unequal Opportunities in Rich Countries

Emilia Toczydlowska and Zlata Bruckauf
Social and Economic Policy Unit, UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti

INTRODUCTION

Inequality can have wide-ranging effects on communities, families and children. Income inequality (measured through the Gini index) was found to have an association with higher levels of peer violence in 35 countries (Elgar et al. 2009) and to influence the use of alcohol and drunkenness among 11- and 13-year olds (Elgar et al. 2005). On a macro level, countries with greater income inequality among children have lower levels of child well-being and higher levels of child poverty (Toczydlowska et al. 2016). More worrying still is that growing inequality reinforces the impact of socio-economic status (SES) on children's outcomes, limiting social mobility. Concern about growing inequality features prominently on the current international development agenda. Goal 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) calls specifically to reduce inequality within and among countries, while the concept of 'leaving no one behind' reflects the spirit of greater fairness in society. But with a myriad of measures and definitions of inequality used in literature, the focus on children is often diluted. This brief contributes to this debate by presenting child-relevant distributional measures that reflect inequality of outcomes as well as opportunity for children in society, over time.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

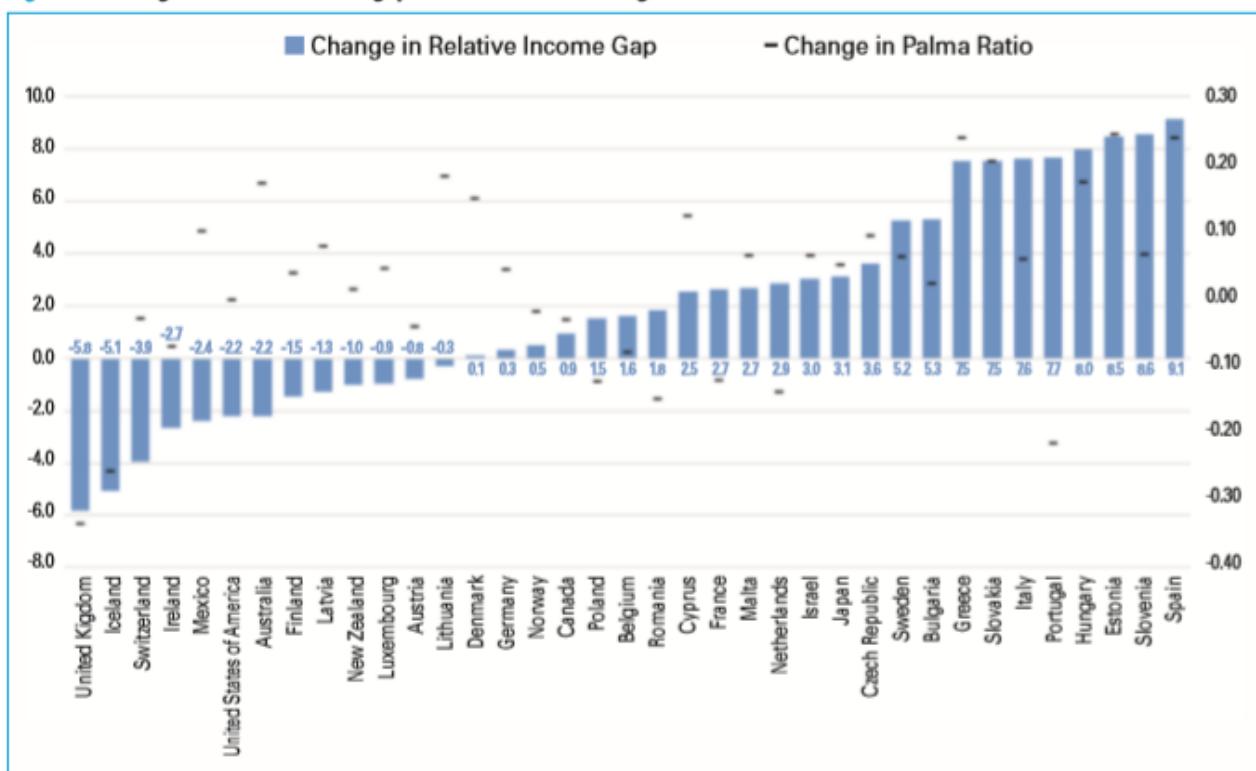
Three indicators are selected to examine the child-centred income inequality and the impact of family background on child outcomes: The first indicator, the Palma ratio – a standard indicator of income inequality – was adapted to reflect a focus on children. It measures the income share of the richest 10 per cent and the bottom 40 per cent of the population in an income distribution. To make it child-specific, the

shares are based on the equivalized disposable household income of children. The second indicator measures the bottom-end relative income gap among children. The measure represents a gap between household income of a child at the median and that of a child at the 10th percentile – reported as a percentage of the median. It represents an overview of how well the world's developed nations are living up to the ideal of 'no child being left behind'. The data for these two indicators comes from various waves of European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) for European Union countries and Iceland, Norway and Switzerland, and various household surveys for the remaining countries¹. The third indicator represents the impact of family background or SES on students' achievement in maths, reading and science literacy. It is measured through the composite index of economic, cultural and social status (ESCS) developed by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). It includes a number of PISA-constructed indices such as family wealth or parents' educational and occupational status². The ESCS index is built on a continuous scale which is standardized across the OECD countries to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one (OECD, 2014). The results presented in this brief across 39 countries are based on the average score-point difference across students' achievement in all three subjects, associated with a one-unit increase in the ESCS index. A higher value indicates a higher level of impact of socioeconomic background on students' performance.

RESULTS

Children in the rich countries live in a world of growing inequality. The trend on both income inequality indicators (relative income gap and Palma ratio), shows a widening economic divide between children across the whole income distribution. Since 2008, the most disadvantaged children in the bottom 10 per cent of income distribution have fallen further behind the median, in 23 countries³. The starkest increase in relative income gap between the poorest and the ‘average’ child (at the median) was registered in Estonia, Slovenia and Spain, as well as in Hungary and Portugal. Moreover, the share of income held by the richest 10 per cent increased in two thirds of rich world.(see Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Change in relative income gap and Palma ratio among children between 2008 and 2014



Note: The changes illustrate percentage point difference between 2008 and 2014 in relative income gap and Palma ratio among children between 2008 and 2014. Missing countries: Chile, Croatia, Korea and Turkey.
 Source: EU-SILC various waves, and various household surveys.

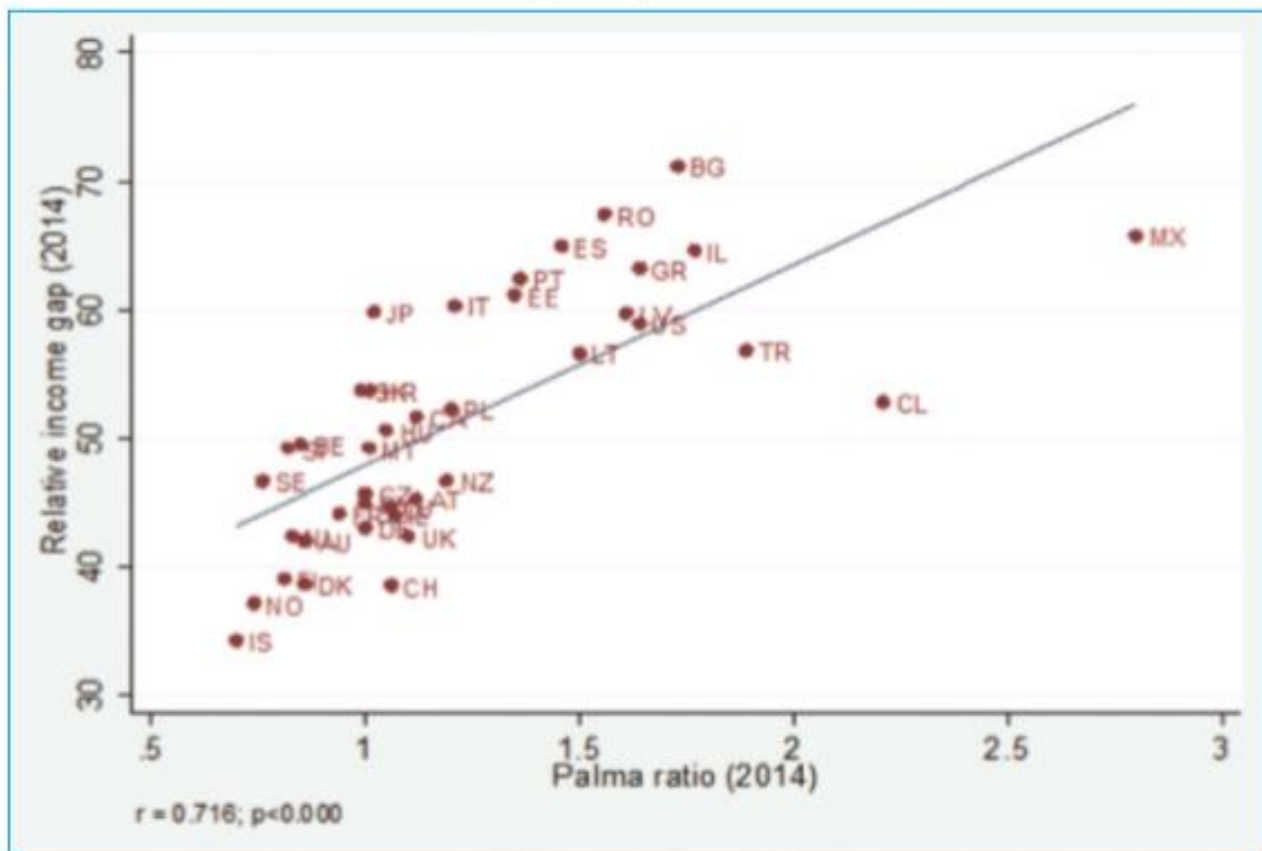
The poorest children fall further behind if the richest accumulate more income

The countries where the richest top 10 per cent accumulate more income than bottom 40 per cent are also those that allow the poorest children to fall further behind the ‘average’ child (see Figure 2). We find that the countries with high relative income gap such as Bulgaria, Israel and Mexico are also the ones with a high Palma ratio

i.e. share of income distributed unequally within society. In Bulgaria, the poorest children at the 10th percentile have around 30 per cent of the income of the ‘average’ child, while the richest group holds a bigger share than that of nearly half of all children combined. In Chile and Mexico, the share of income accumulated at the ‘top’ is more than twice the size of the share of the poorest 40 per cent of children. In Nordic countries, income distribution is more equitable with

income differences being much smaller among children.

Figure 2 - Palma ratio and relative income gap among children in 2014



Note: The Palma ratio is the ratio of the income share of the top 10 per cent and the bottom 40 per cent of the population in an income distribution. A value of 1.0 indicates that the income of the top 10 per cent is the same as that of the bottom 40 per cent. Values above 1.0 show that the share of the top 10 per cent is bigger, and values below 1.0 indicate that it is smaller. Values below 1.0 therefore suggest lower levels of inequality.

Source: EU-SILC 2014 and various household surveys.

The school system can mitigate the impact of socio-economic background, but can equally exacerbate it

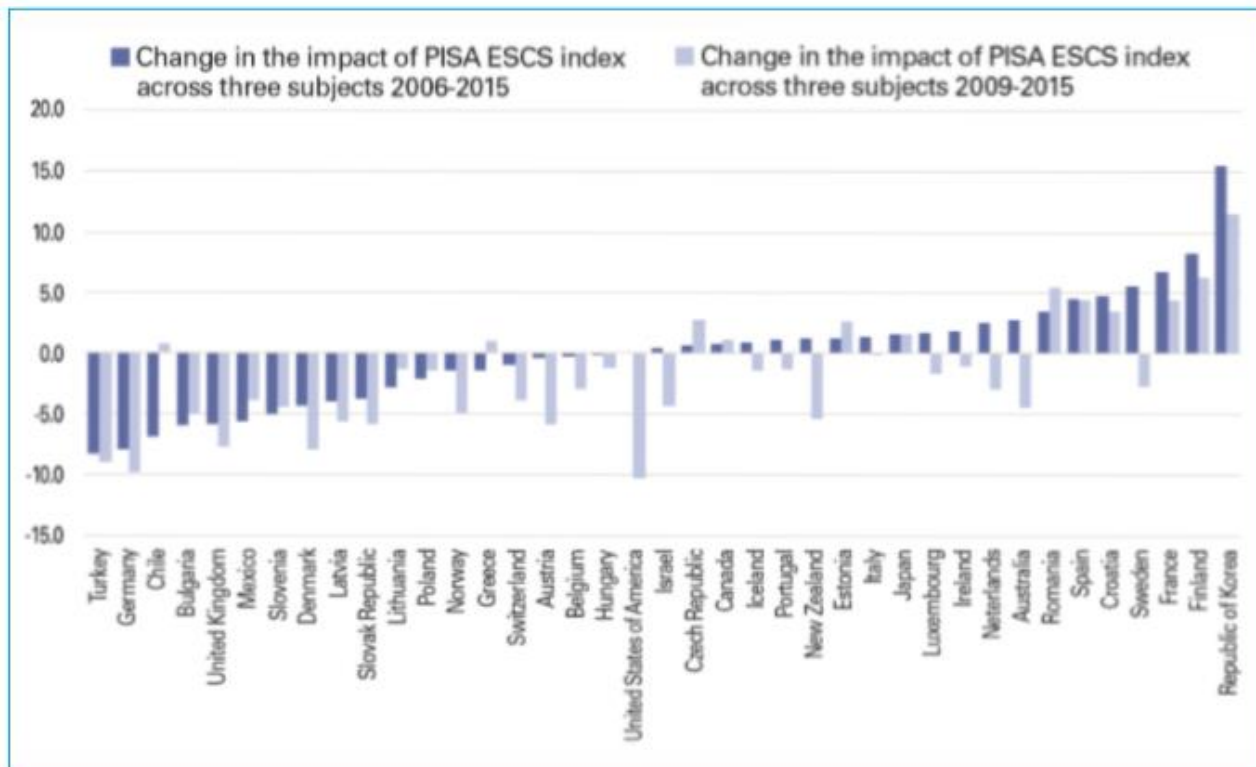
Unequal accumulation and distribution of income can translate into a greater degree of inequality of opportunities. This can happen either through the education system or through differentiated ability of parents to invest in their children’s skills, knowledge, health and social support network. The family’s socio-economic background is a significant predictor of 15-year-old students’ achievement across three subjects (reading, mathematics, and science) in all 39 industrialized countries studied (Richardson et al. 2017). On average across OECD countries, the difference

in academic performance explained by students’ socio-economic background is around 38 score points, which is equivalent to about one-year’s schooling.

Progress over time has been mixed (see Figure 3). In nine education systems, the average change in the effect of socio-economic background measured using the PISA ESCS index weakened by more than two score points between 2006 and 2015. The educational system of the United States of America has made significant improvements in mitigating the impact of SES across the three subjects between 2009 and 2015. Conversely, in twelve education systems, the effect of SES on school achievement across core subjects increased between 2006 and 2016. The highest increases in average differences in performance between students with different socio-economic statuses (above 5

score points) were observed in Finland, France, the Republic of Korea and Sweden – the countries with traditionally strong academic performance, as reported through PISA.

Figure 3 - The score-point difference in reading, mathematics and science associated with a one-unit increase in the ESCS index



Note: All values are statistically significant. US 2006 data are not available, as there are no data on reading. Data for Mexico are excluded due to low rates of enrolment. At the time of the PISA 2015 survey more than one in four Mexican students between the ages of 15-17 were out of school (26.7 per cent); children from the lowest income quintile make up almost half (45 per cent) of non-attendees in this age group, see UNICEF (2016). ‘Niños y niñas fuera de la Escuela en México’. Socio-economic advantage led to a 19.8 score-point difference in Mexico in 2015. Data on the ESCS index are missing for Austria in the 2012 round. Missing countries: Cyprus and Mexico.

Source: OECD PISA survey, 2015.

CONCLUSION

The results show a consistent picture: Income inequality among children is growing in rich countries. The more the income share is accumulated at the top, the more likely the poorest children are to fall behind, compared to ‘average’ child.

The education systems of OECD member countries show mixed results in mitigating the impact of family socio-economic background on students’ achievement. Tackling socio-economic inequalities may require a long-term political vision and coherent policy effort across distribution policies or education sector modalities. But it is high time that rich countries make it their policy priority. The SDG agenda on reducing inequality provides countries with an aspiration but at the same time makes them accountable for achieving a common vision of a more equal society.

¹ See Appendix 1 for data sources for non EU-SILC countries

² For more information see OECD, 2015

³The increase of more than 0.2 percentage points took place in 23 countries with available data. In Denmark the increase is equal to 0.1 percentage points, which is not seen as statistically significant.

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APPENDIX 1

Data Sources for non-EU-SILC countries:

- Australia:** Household, Income and Labour Dynamics (HILDA).
- Canada:** Canadian Income Survey (CIS).
- Chile:** La Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (CASEN).
- Israel:** Household Expenditure Survey (from Luxembourg Income Study).
- Japan:** Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions.
- Mexico:** El Módulo de Condiciones Socioeconómicas de la Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares (MCS-ENIGH).
- New Zealand:** Household Economic Survey for New Zealand (estimates taken from Perry, B (2016). 'Household Incomes in New Zealand: Trends in indicators of inequality and hardship, 1982 to 2015'. Ministry of Social Development, Wellington).
- Turkey:** Income and Living Conditions Survey.
- USA:** Current Population Survey 2013, Annual Social and Economic Supplement (from Luxembourg Income Study).

Reported 2014 data for Australia, Chile and Republic of Korea refer to 2015; for USA and New Zealand refer to 2013; and for Israel and Japan refers to 2012. Reported 2008 data for Canada, Israel and USA refer to 2007 . Income estimates for Chile are based on equalized total household income and are not directly comparable.

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Research
for Children
at Innocenti



United Nations

E/CN.5/2019/NGO/30



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
1 November 2018

Original: English

Commission for Social Development

Fifty-seventh session

11–21 February 2019

Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly

**Priority Theme: Addressing inequalities and challenges to
social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social
protection policies**

Statement submitted by SOS Kinderdorf International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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

Statement

To holistically address the various inequalities in societies and the challenges to social inclusion, it is imperative that policies are designed and implemented with the aim of prioritizing the improvement of the lives of the most marginalized populations, thereby reaching the furthest behind first, in accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Children are more vulnerable to the effects of poverty and exclusion in general, and children without parental care even more so. This is because children who have become separated from their families and are in some form of alternative care, do not have the support of family members or access to safety nets to alleviate the burden of inequality and social exclusion. Also, children without parental care are automatically excluded from the reach of social protection policies that for children are usually delivered through the parental structure. Therefore, targeted resources and policies are needed to ensure basic security for this vulnerable group of children.

Child-sensitive social protection is essential to make sure that children without parental care, are not left behind but rather receive the attention and

social support they need.

The creation of well-functioning social protection systems is also key to prevent family separation, as they provide a cushion to strengthen families in vulnerable situations and reduce vulnerabilities to economic, social or environmental challenges. Cash transfers, provision of adequate nutrition, increasing caregivers access to employment or income generation are examples of child-sensitive child protection services that are needed in order to prevent further harm for children.

Social protection for young people in alternative care and care-leavers, who are transitioning from life in alternative care to independent adulthood, is also important. In accordance with the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, which will mark its 10th anniversary in 2019, it is important to ensure that policies and services are instituted to improve their life chances and outcomes through appropriate preparation for leaving care as well as after-care support. Access to social, legal and health services together with appropriate financial support should be provided to young people leaving care and during after-care.

It is also crucial to ensure meaningful participation of children and young people in designing policies

and programmes to ensure their opinions and ideas are reflected, and that this participation is continuous even in the assessment of social protection systems.

In order to accurately target these vulnerable child and young people, there is a need to know how many they are and where they are located. Unfortunately, sufficient data is lacking for some of the most marginalized populations who are currently not being counted, such as children without parental care - who are not in a household and therefore not included in most national household surveys. We urge Member States to endeavor to invest in mechanisms to properly identify children at risk so as to better support them and their families.

SOS Children's Villages would like to remark and bring up a key, though often neglected issue in the

functioning of social protection systems: the social workforce. Investing in, and adequately training social workers and care professionals is a key piece to ensure social protection reaches and protects the most marginalized children. Therefore, there should be adequate budgetary allocations to build the capacity of social workers, and efforts towards inter-sectoral training of professionals working in the provision of basic services to prevent vulnerable children and youth from falling between the cracks.

We call on Member States to pay special attention to these most vulnerable children and implement transformative policies to improve their lives and emphasize that we as civil society remain available to collaborate with you to fulfill this goal.

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Priority theme: Addressing inequalities and challenges to
social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social
protection policies

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

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

Statement

Implications of the gender gap: a double “taxation” for women

The unequal distribution of unpaid care work between women and men represents an infringement of women’s rights, their enjoyment of social protection systems and a brake on their economic empowerment. We argue that gender inequality in unpaid care work is the missing link that influences gender gaps in labor outcomes. The gender gap in unpaid care work has significant implications for women’s ability to actively take part in the labor market and the type/quality of employment opportunities available to them [MIRANDA, 2011].

Time is a limited resource, which is divided between labor and leisure, productive and reproductive activities, paid and unpaid work. Every minute more that a woman spends on unpaid care work represents one minute less that she could be potentially spending on market-related activities or investing in her educational and vocational skills [FERRANT, 2014].

Unpaid care activities constitute a time and energy-consuming occupation that limits women’s access to the labor market, relegating them to low-income and insecure employment. In countries where

women spend a large amount of time on unpaid care and there is a large gender gap in time spent, the gender gap in hourly wages is also higher. Unpaid care work entails a systemic transfer of hidden subsidies to the rest of the economy that go unrecognized, imposing a systematic time-tax on women throughout their life cycle [ANTONOPOULOS, 2009]. Caregiving is a complex activity, which requires among other physical and emotional skills, empathy, patience, dedication and effort. The result for those who do it is frequently exhaustion and, at times even illness [SILVERA, 2010].

Globally, an increase in girls’ education and women’s paid work means a decrease in the supply of unpaid work. Dependency is the fourth pillar of the Welfare State [SILVERA, 2010]. Women bear greater responsibility for unpaid care than men. Prevailing gender norms mean that women and girls undertake the bulk of unpaid care work such as looking after and educating children, looking after older family members, caring for the sick, preparing food, cleaning, and collecting water and fuel. The socially prescribed and entrenched gender roles that denote women and girls as care providers can undermine their rights, limit their opportunities, capabilities and choices, and so impede their empowerment. Prevailing gender norms

mean that, across all societies, women and girls undertake the bulk of unpaid care work such as looking after and educating children, looking after older family members, caring for the sick, preparing food, cleaning, and collecting water and fuel. This unequal burden of unpaid care undermines women and girls' rights (to decent work, to education, to health, to rest and leisure), limits their opportunities and, therefore, impedes their economic empowerment. It hinders women from seeking employment and income, which in turn holds them back economically.

The role of fathers

While there is a growing body of evidence about the role of fathers in children's lives, there are also knowledge gaps, and the quality of evidence varies. The labor force status is an important determinant of the time parents devote to childcare. Both fathers and mothers who are not working spend, on average, more time in childcare as a primary activity than do their working counterparts. Although a concerted effort has been made to capture evidence about the positive influences of fathers on child development and well-being, it is pertinent to note that studies to date have more often focused on the negative impacts of poor or absent fathering on children [WOOD & LAMBIN, 2013].

Most fathers aspire to share care-giving equally with their spouse/partner, but often are unable to bring this desire to reality. Fathers need time to develop parenting skills, but they don't have it. The fact that men don't bear children is obviously an unchangeable biological fact. The fact that men don't rear children is not. People are not born with the gene that teaches them all they need to know to be effective parents – neither women nor men. From the first days and weeks after childbirth, many (we hope most) women have the opportunity to spend time with their children, which facilitates both bonding with their newborn and the development of competencies as new parents. In contrast, few men are provided with an opportunity to spend significant time with their young children [HARRINGTON, 2011].

Unpaid work is also interlinked with the position individuals occupy in paid work because:

- It shapes the ability, duration and types of paid work that can be undertaken;
- It reduces the exercise of “voice” over decision-making and ability to accumulate savings and assets;
- In many societies, it is viewed as outside its socioeconomic dimensions and contributions;

– It is presumed for workers who are unskilled, with low pay, slender options for promotion and scant social protection.

Age is also a determinant of unpaid work, albeit with a smaller quantitative impact. The frequency of involvement first increases, then reaches a maximum before decreasing [MCCLOUGHAN, 2011]. The turning points pertaining mostly to women are:

- The mid-40s in the case of caring for and educating children;
- The late 40s in respect of cooking and housework;
- The early 50s for caring for elderly/disabled relatives.

Not only are women more involved in unpaid work, also the kind of activities in which they engage differs from their male counterparts. The most typical male tasks in the household are construction and repair work where women's involvement is limited, both in terms of participation and the amount of time they devote to the task. Men also devote slightly more time to gardening and pet care, but their participation rates in these activities are more or less equal to those of women. Tasks that have traditionally been thought of ‘women's work’ (e.g. cooking and cleaning) continue to be primarily performed by women. In the countries surveyed, 82% of women prepare meals on an average day, while only 44% of men do. Also, the average time spent by women on cooking is four times the time spent by men [MIRANDA, 2011].

As the reasons for unpaid work inequalities are multi-layered, there need to be distinct policy interventions to effectively remedy their negative impacts for different groups of women. Work-family reconciliation policies must be tailored accordingly.

From “shadow” to formal

Activities that contribute to well-being of families and individuals at home such as care services and housework services have an important job-creation potential. Home care services form part of “white jobs” together with healthcare services and residential care activities, while housework services are at the border of this category. Demand for care and household services is expected to increase due to an important trend on ageing in all Member States, combined with the expected decline of the number of potential carers within the family circle.

Rather than asking which type of State is best for women performing unpaid work, “we will attempt to make some observations that help contextualize their potential effects within diverse frameworks and policy spaces. If a country is facing underemployment and unemployment, and is willing

to engage in public work programs, we need to identify (from a gender point of view) the interventions that can ameliorate burdens on women; if social cash transfers are used to improve human development indicators, it is useful to investigate how and when they are also helpful in addressing unpaid care work. When universal provisioning is a viable option, we need to ensure that policies are mindful of existing inequalities in paid and unpaid work” [ANTONOPOULOS, 2009].

In policy debates in many Member States, personal and household services are often mentioned as a possible answer to the following issues:

- Better work-life balance, achieved through increased externalization of daily tasks carried out at home as well as of child and elderly care. Accessible and affordable care services are also an important precondition for increasing female participation in the labor market.

- Creation of job opportunities for the relatively low-skilled, in particular as far as housework services are concerned, at a low cost for public finance by encouraging the provision of housework services in the formal economy rather than in the shadow economy. Job creation is also a factor in considering the cost of different options for long-term care.

- Improvement in the quality of care, thanks to a work-force having the right skills and benefiting from good working conditions, subject to quality controls on the service providers.

Given the foreseeable impact of demographic evolution on our societies, European labor markets need to become more inclusive and employment rate needs to rise. Personal and household services offer significant opportunities in this respect, allowing work-life balance to be improved, productivity to be increased and undeclared work to be brought into the official labor market [EU Commission Staff Working Document on exploiting the employment potential of the personal and household services, 2012]. When related to a country’s development level, country cross-sectional data suggest that demographic factors and public policies tend to exercise a much larger impact.

One of the “solutions” for better reconciliation of work with family responsibilities involves more paid employment in caring, but the conditions of work and employment in these jobs often leave much to be desired. Undervaluation of paid care work goes hand in hand with lack of recognition of unpaid care work, which is seen as natural and not requiring skills.

Female migration in this context has significant impacts both in the South and the North. In the receiving countries, the employment of female immigrants represents an individual household’s solution to the needs of balancing family and labor market work. [ANTONOPOULOS, 2009]

Family members have always been the mainstay for providing care to aging and other relatives or friends who need assistance with everyday living. Yet family caregiving today is more complex, costly, stressful, and demanding than at any time in human history. [REINHARD, 2015]

Policy recommendations

1. Recognize and communicate the value of work-family balance in the economy and in society.

2. Develop, provide and communicate comprehensive well-resourced and flexible parental leave entitlements throughout the life course of the family and in periods of transition.

3. Support, promote and communicate part-time working arrangements according to parental choice by ensuring non-discriminatory practices towards parents in the labor market. Promote skill development and learning systems throughout the life course of the family and in periods of transition to facilitate parents re-entering the labor market.

4. Promote, develop and communicate key media messages focusing on the value of children, maternity, paternity and families in our communities and societies.

5. Develop, promote and communicate the economic and social value of familyfriendly workplaces in accordance with comprehensive systems of accreditation.

6. Enhance dialogue and partnerships between social policy makers and relevant stakeholders, including families, family associations, business sector, trade unions and employers to develop and improve family-friendly policies and practices in the workplace.

7. Support and promote a stronger, integrated, accessible and supported framework to enhance lone parents’ opportunities to balance work and family life and therefore fully engage in education, skill development and job advancement.

8. Recognize and communicate the social, economic and cultural value of family care work.

9. Offer and promote a variety of care practices and opportunities to enable families to make choices (e.g. regarding childcare arrangements), according to their parental responsibilities, needs and values.

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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development
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Assembly: Priority Theme: Addressing inequalities and
challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and
social protection policies**

Statement submitted by FEMM Foundation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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

Statement

The FEMM Foundation is a knowledge-based health program for women inspired by women's right to be informed participants in their own healthcare and to make voluntary decisions based on options, information, and understanding. The Foundation is dedicated to health education, medical research, and improving reproductive health care to advance women's health. FEMM's work includes health education for women, medical training for doctors, and reproductive health research, which undergirds all of our work.

International law recognizes a right to the "highest attainable standard of health." The Sustainable Development Goals reflect this in their commitment to health in Goal 3. Good health empowers achievement in education and work; in contrast, poor health can lead to missing school, lost days at work, and lower income. By ensuring quality healthcare for all, we enable everyone's participation in the social and economic life of their communities. This participation closes gaps in equality and animates social inclusion, and makes good fiscal and wage policies more likely to reach as many as

possible. For women and girls, who often face inequality and are not fully included, reproductive health (target 3.7) is a key part in this equation.

Women and girls comprise approximately half the population of the world but remain more vulnerable to health problems due to both biological and social reasons. Women and girls in rural areas often have access to fewer doctors and clinics, and may not have the financial ability to get the care they need. Health can help or hinder women and girls' education and participation in the social and economic life of their communities. By implementing good healthcare in rural communities for women and girls, we ensure that we do not leave half of humanity behind in poverty eradication and sustainable development policies.

Understanding one's own body is essential for good health and empowers women and girls to be informed participants in their care. Women also often accept as normal symptoms such as irregular bleeding, pain, depression, mood swings, and weight gain, nor realizing that these are often signs of underlying hormonal imbalances and abnormalities. Even when women do seek medical care, most health care providers and programs struggle to diagnose them and often can only treat the

symptoms.

These underlying conditions can affect women and girls' long-term overall health, sometimes irreversibly. They can also affect women and girls' ability to complete their education, engage in work, and plan their families, and other aspects of their lives. Poor health hurts equality by undermining women and girls' ability to realize their potential and drive development in their communities. Women and girls who have untreated medical conditions can be empowered through both knowledge and good medical treatment.

A woman who understands how her body works can monitor her health and seek help when needed. Even women who have not completed schooling can learn to monitor their signs of health. Understanding women's bodies will also combat stigma and myths associated with normal biological processes such as menstruation that can keep women and girls from educational and career opportunities.

FEMM has developed an app to help women take control of their health. The FEMM App is available free of charge and is now available in English and Spanish on both iPhone and Android systems. Women who use the FEMM App can track their observations and symptoms to better understand their bodies and health. Just as each woman is different, so are her observations and experiences, which is why the App is completely customizable. Women can track as much or as little as they like and add symptoms and observations. It also provides insights into what a woman is experiencing in her cycle, and can flag potential health concerns and connect women with medical professionals for treatment.

FEMM also enables women to make informed choices about family planning. There is a right to adequate family planning and information about reproductive and sexual health that is accurate and respects cultural, religious, and ethical beliefs. Programs focused on providing commodities often fail to ensure that women have the education needed to understand their bodies and what they are using, and may not always respect values.

Information-based health education and medical care is uniquely well suited to meet these needs while respecting individual choices and values. FEMM offers reproductive and hormonal education and helps women to understand the way various family planning methods work and their potential side effects. It educates women about the science of their bodies, how to identify when they are fertile, and how to achieve or avoid pregnancy. It also can

demystify how women and girls' bodies work, combating stigma and promoting understanding and respect.

FEMM's researchers have rethought women's health. They have found that a woman's hormonal health is intrinsically linked with her overall health. They have developed better diagnostic criteria to identify conditions that are currently treated mainly at the symptomatic level and treat them at the roots. They are even discovering links with conditions not typically considered related to reproductive health. FEMM is rethinking the health of contemporary women in ways that will help them to take charge of their health and thrive in their communities.

Women and girls also need good healthcare to meet their needs when they do identify health concerns. FEMM's Medical Management program trains doctors to diagnose and treat reproductive health problems, with a holistic view of a woman's body that incorporates recent research on the complex hormonal interactions between different body systems. This interaction, and the delicacy of the hormonal activity in a woman's body, is essential to the experience of health in the entire female body. FEMM has developed innovative protocols that allow doctors to identify underlying problems with precision and treat them effectively. This medical support provides treatments that help women to live healthy lives.

FEMM is low-cost and meets the underlying needs of women. Comprehensive health care for women can now be provided through basic health delivery systems, making this approach to women's health more effective, cheaper to deliver, and providing stronger health outcomes for women. Even women who have not completed schooling can learn to monitor their signs of health. Understanding women's bodies will also combat stigma and myths associated with normal biological processes such as menstruation.

Women's full participation in society requires the investment in women's health and health education. Women's healthcare has often failed to meet women's needs. We know that informed decisions lead to healthier decisions, and that women play a key role in family and community health outcomes. Through FEMM's innovative programs, women will be empowered to take charge of their healthcare, and health systems will be able to meet their needs.

FEMM's programs are ready to be incorporated into the health aspects of social protection programs and FEMM is ready to assist in implementing them. The knowledge gained through FEMM can allow

women to identify underlying health concerns and to achieve or avoid pregnancy. When people attain the highest level of health they can, they are able

to thrive and partake in their communities, ensuring social inclusion and equality for women and girls. FEMM is prepared to assist the Commission and Member States to meet this goal.

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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and
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**Priority Theme: Addressing inequalities and challenges to
social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social
protection policies**

Statement submitted by Society to Support Children Suffering from Cancer (MAHAK), a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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

Statement

27 years ago, MAHAK- the Society to Support Children Suffering from Cancer, was established with the aim of supporting the families of cancer-stricken children who need special care throughout the hard days of treatment. In this regard, different measures were taken, such as establishing a residential center for the families who came to the capital city for the treatment of their child.

By the passage of the time and the expansion of MAHAK's vision and, as a result of multiplication of the needs of the families, it was decided, in 2007, to establish a specialized hospital to provide comprehensive treatment and supportive services to cancer-stricken children regardless of gender, color and ethnicity.

From then onward, the best and updated measures have been taken for providing all-purpose diagnostic, treatment and supportive services to children with cancer and their families. Some of these activities include launching joint projects with experts and specialists in the field of cancer treatment with the aim of sharing and benefiting from knowledge and experiences.

MAHAK has had precise plannings to accomplish its mission and has utilized all its capacities in line with the realization of its vision. However, providing treatment is a long and difficult process in low and middle-income countries, where health care systems are facing great challenges to improve cancer care, control costs, and increase systems efficiency. The disparity in access to care and outcomes between high-income countries and low- and middle-income countries is staggering. The reasons for this disparity include cost, access to care, manpower and training deficiencies, and a lack of awareness in the lay and medical communities. Diagnosis and treatment play an important role in this complex environment.

MAHAK as a charity organization operating in a middle-income country with all the expenses being covered by public donations; is also facing different challenges. Considering the need to scale up cancer care in the low- and middle-income countries, these challenges can be managed via proper planning while some others, which are caused by external factors, are not manageable by any one organization alone.

One of the external factors is the imposed embargos which have hindered some of the vital processes for accomplishing the mission of MAHAK, a charity organization which is striving to support innocent cancer-stricken children and their families in a comprehensive manner.

Currently, debilitating sanctions have been unilaterally imposed on Iran as a result of which fund transfer from other countries has become effectively impossible and therefore have led to the scarcity and related price hikes of crucial drugs in the country and have put the lives of all patients with severe sicknesses especially cancerstricken children in hazard. As an NGO which has received the top score by Soci t  Generale de Surveillance (SGS) global NGO Benchmark practice with the score of 97.5% in September 2018 from among all the organizations which have valid certificates and as an organization which is responsible for health and serenity of more than 17000 under treatment cases, we would like to share our deep concern that the sanctions imposed on Iran have made it extremely difficult to procure required medications, for children with cancer, as the expenses have doubled.

To address the above-mentioned issue, we have communicated this dire predicament to international organizations working in human services and closely related fields which can resolve this issue. We believe that solving such issues will not be possible unless humanity strives for them and policy-making organizations plan for their eradication, disregarding the borders with the aim of promoting the idea of giving borderless love to all the people in universe.

As many countries are working hard to establish a payment mechanism that would curtail the impact of these sanctions, international organizations can undertake a similar emergency measure to address the resulting public health problems that will ensue.

In the same regard the famous Iranian13-th century poet has said:

Human beings are members of a whole
In creation of one essence and soul
If one member is afflicted with pain
Other members uneasy will remain
If you have no sympathy for human pain
The name of human you cannot retain

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**Priority Theme: Addressing inequalities and challenges
to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social
protection policies**

Statement submitted by Soroptimist International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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

Statement

Social protection and human rights issues have enjoyed a powerful, sustainable and collaborative relationship and been regarded as priorities since 1948, when the right to social security was included in Article 25(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. At that time, it was acknowledged that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for their health and well-being, including human rights such as food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. In addition, under social protection programs, women are the beneficiaries of social security including social insurance and public and private pension schemes.

Despite significant progress in the extension of social protection in many parts of the world, the right to social security is not yet a reality for a majority of the world's population. Only 45 per cent of the global population are effectively covered by at least one social protection benefit, while the remaining 55 per cent — as many as 4 billion people — are left unprotected. ILO estimates also show that only 29

per cent of the global population are covered by comprehensive social security systems that include the full range of benefits, from child and family benefits to old-age pensions. Yet the large majority — 71 per cent, or 5.2 billion people — are not, or are only partially, protected.

Soroptimist International sees social protection as a key strategy for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all. Nationally appropriate Social Protection policies and programs including social protection floors have been recognized as playing an important part in addressing the poverty and vulnerability of women, children, older persons, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities. Social protection policies have great potential in facilitating the rights to education, social security, health, food, shelter, and water, in accordance with the obligations of States under international human rights law. When used as a floor and not a ceiling, social protection floors can contribute significantly to gender equality and the realization of minimum essential levels of those rights especially for marginalized groups.

We believe that quality education accessible beyond primary stages, can be regarded as one of the major pillars of social protection, offering women

and girls the opportunity to fulfil their potential, engage in social entrepreneurship or find meaningful employment. Along with the provision of supportive health systems, adequate housing to meet family needs and the safety net of social security financial provisions across the life span, mean that women and girls especially, can be lifted above the poverty level and provided with a self-sustaining future.

Soroptimist International advocates the following to lift women and girls from poverty:

- accessible free quality education at all levels for all women and girls as a platform of support to enable them to move out of poverty whilst contributing to economic development locally and nationally;
- the empowerment of women and girls through recognized employment that provides a minimum living wage with the provision of accessible financial support and training enabling those who wish to develop skills of entrepreneurship;
- provision of full, quality health care, especially maternal health and child care, supported by appropriate education and information on sexual and reproductive health rights;
- provision of social protection systems and floors for the most vulnerable, especially those with disabilities and long-term illnesses and older persons;
- ensure through social protection policies safe shelter and food security for women and girls in vulnerable situations;
- Safe access to water and sanitation for homes, schools and workplaces with the involvement of women in community management of these facilities, ensuring that the time resource recovered for women and girls is available for positive action enabling development;
- Improved levels of disaggregated data collection which provide information that enables positive measures to be targeted for those most in need.

We Urge:

Governments to create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional, and international levels to provide universal, human rights based social protection for all. Goal 1 of the 2030 Agenda for Social Development to end poverty in all its forms everywhere, calls for the implementation of nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, as well as the achievement of substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable by 2030.

Governments to recognize and implement existing agreements. To be protected is not a privilege, but a right as stated in Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This right was reaffirmed by the Social Protection Floors Recommendation unanimously adopted by 184 members of the International Labour Conference in 2012.

Social protection is an investment in people and thus in long-term social and economic development. Nationally appropriate social protection systems and floors make a critical contribution to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals aimed at poverty eradication and exerting a positive impact on economic growth, social cohesion and social development.

Member States for decades have been entering into agreements and adopting resolutions which provide for many forms of social protection for women and girls. However, for many women and girls personal and family safety, access to education, economic security, food security, safe shelter and a healthy life are a long way from being achieved. It is no longer acceptable that action has not been taken or is implemented slowly. In order to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda, Governments must immediately act on the promises given so that no one is left behind.

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Statement submitted by VIVAT International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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

Statement

Statement submitted by VIVAT International, a Non-Governmental Organization in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations working in 127 countries in the world.

Introduction

Since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals by 193 countries of the United Nations General Assembly on September 25th, 2015, efforts have been made by all stakeholders to implement and make this development agenda come true for all people and the planet. The motto “Leave no one behind” seems to be powerful enough to push everyone forward. A lot of progress has been made during these past three years, as reported and shared through voluntary national reviews (VNRs) at High Level Political Forum sessions since 2016. The UN Report of 2018 also gives us the hope that, by 2030, this Agenda will work in every country and region (See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2018>).

However, gaps remain and many are still being left behind. People in rural and suburban slum areas, people with HIV/AIDS, persons with disabilities and persons with mental health problems are the most

vulnerable ones to be uncouncted in the development process.

Inequalities and Challenges

People in rural and suburban slum areas tend to be ignored and neglected in government programs and have less access to public services such as health care, free basic education, electricity and public transportation, safe drinking water and sanitation. Many people in rural areas are also excluded from government statistics which results in being excluded from access to social benefits. In some countries, multinational corporations and governments have grabbed the lands and territories of the people in rural areas for mining, plantations, or electric dams, without any compensation; this situation has resulted in the increase in poverty, unemployment and food insecurity. Finally, children of poor families in rural and suburban slums areas are often vulnerable by being victims of cheap labor, human trafficking and sexual exploitation, and violence.

Persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and persons with mental health disabilities are among those most maltreated in society. They are face obstacles to education, health care, access to

public services, and social protection. These people's voices also tend to be ignored; their participation and contribution in political, economic and socio-cultural affairs and development process are not recognized in many societies. In some societies, such persons are labeled and stigmatized as a burden for their families and society as a whole. It is often found that persons with disabilities are underpaid and discriminated against from access to certain jobs and prestigious positions in their work places which then results in extreme poverty and vulnerability among these people and a potential violation of their basic human rights (<https://workspirited.com/discrimination-against-disabled-people-in-workplace>).

VIVAT International's Efforts and Commitment

In response to the situation previously described and in relation to people in rural and suburban slum areas, VIVAT International has taken some initiatives to ensure food security by providing and distributing food for the poor in suburban and rural areas. In Kayole, suburban Nairobi, for example, a "food for the poor" program has been developed to feed the poor from 6 to 98 years old living in slums – Soweto, Matopeni, Spring Valley and Gatwikira – most of whom are street children and elderly. They also receive medical services (See Anthony Amissah, "The Power of Food", VIVAT Newsletter, 75th, April–June, 2018: 4-5).

Similarly, the Divine Word Missionaries which is a founding Congregation of VIVAT International has developed the "Arnold Project" for vulnerable people in rural and suburban areas of Ecuador. This project operates in three parishes outside Guayaquil City: St. Arnold Janssen in Mount Sinai, Our Lady of the Rocks, and St. Brother Michael in Guasmo. The aim of this project is to assist families and children in risky and violent situations. More than 270,000 inhabitants live in this vast area. Seventy-five percent of this population lives in abject poverty. They migrated from Chimborazo, Azuay and Manabi provinces and live in small houses made of wood and reeds and built on the extensions of land acquired from land traffickers. It is common to find more than one family living in one house or many single mothers with their children. Unemployment is rampant. The project also provides food and free counseling for these people (John Cudjoe, SVD, "The Arnold Project: Hope for the Vulnerable in Guayaquil, Ecuador", in Divine Word Missionaries Magazine, Winter 2017:10-12).

In Nong Bhua Lampu, Northeast Thailand, VIVAT International members run a Rehabilitation Center called "Mother of Perpetual Help Center" for

HIV/AIDS patients. Established 16 years ago, this center tries to give hope to patients who are mostly neglected and rejected by their families. At the Mother of Perpetual Help Center patients receive intensive medical care as well as HIV/AIDS education program ("HIV/AIDS Challenge 2018 Thailand" in Divine Word Missionaries, Summer 2018: 6 - 11). Similarly, in Vitoria City, Brazil, VIVAT International (Divine Word Missionaries) founded a center called Villa de Nazare (House of Nazareth) in 1993 for HIV/AIDS patients, especially for children and teenagers. These children receive medical treatment as well as education program (Markus Fraedrich, "Villa de Nazare: HIV/AIDS Challenge 2018 Brazil," in Divine Word Missionaries, Summer 2018:12–16).

In both countries, poverty and lack of education are two of the root causes of HIV/AIDS. Therefore, education and eradication of poverty have been part of VIVAT International's effort and commitment to free these people from being marginalized, excluded and discriminated against.

Sustainable Development Goals and Social Protection

The Sustainable Development Goals, adopted by the United Nations in 2015, are a 15 year development agenda by all and for all. In relation to eradication of poverty, Goal 1, target 1.3, calls for governments to implement nationally and locally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors. It also calls for the achievement of a substantial coverage of the poor both in rural, suburban, and rural areas and the vulnerable, including the persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, migrant workers and persons with mental health problems.

Meanwhile, Goal number 1, target 1.4, calls for the governments to ensure that all people, especially the poor and the vulnerable, have access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, natural resources and inheritance.

All of these are based on the 6 essential elements: dignity, people, prosperity, our planet, justice, and partnership.

Recommendations:

Based on those realities, challenges and expectations, VIVAT International calls upon Member States to:

1. Provide fiscal policies that include the fulfillment and the protection of the rights of the suburban and

rural people to food, education, health care, electricity, water and sanitation, and public transportation/infrastructure.

2. Provide fiscal policies for the medical care and health education of persons with HIV/AIDS;

3. Provide fiscal policies that guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities and persons with mental health problems to have access to facilities and public services.

4. Establish national minimum wage policies that ensure the fulfillment of the basic needs (housing, food, clothing, education, health and recreation) of rural and suburban people.

5. Ensure and enact laws and policies that protect and respect persons with disabilities from discrimination, abuse and exploitation.

6. Create more job opportunities for the persons with disabilities.

7. Provide insurance policies that include the suburban, rural, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, and persons with mental health problems.

Conclusion

The dignity of all, including the poor in suburban and rural areas, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, persons with mental health disabilities, can be achieved and fulfilled if all stakeholders commit themselves to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals for the benefit of all. With its motto, "Together for Life, Dignity and Human Rights," VIVAT International, along with the United Nations and in collaboration and partnership with multi-stake holders, continues to put the last first, to bring the marginalized at the center of its work and to become the voice of the voiceless both at national and global levels.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

Inclusive and responsive protection

The new United Nations resolution on family issues

1 December 2018



The draft resolution was introduced by the Group of 77 and China [1], joined by Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Uzbekistan and Turkey.

The representative of Egypt, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, reaffirmed the importance of the International Year of the Family and stressed that the draft can promote well-being for all, empower women and girls, and end violence against them, as it encourages Governments to make every effort to fulfil the International Year.

The representative of Mexico said that while the family, as a fundamental core, has a variable composition depending on the country, in Mexico

there are a multiplicity of families that make up society, and the Government fully respects gender diversity, where all families have state protection. After it was approved, the representative of Austria, on behalf of the European Union, attached importance to the family, noting the crucial role of caregivers and the value of intergenerational relationships, and adding that families strengthen society, as they are living, evolving entities. As a consequence, various types of families exist and it is critical that nobody is left behind. [2]

We reproduce in this paper the approved text [3], with some notes on the previous Report of the Secretary General supporting it [4].

The Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly approved the draft resolution titled 'Follow-up to the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond'.

The proposal was approved without a vote on November 16th, 2018.

By its terms, the Assembly encourages Governments to enact family-oriented policies for poverty reduction, promote work-family balance as conducive to the well-being of children, invest in family policies that promote strong intergenerational interaction, provide universal and gender-sensitive social protection systems, support the United Nations trust fund on family activities, and strengthen cooperation with civil society in the implementation of family policies.

Information compiled by the International Organizations Department of the International Federation for Family Development.

UN General Assembly Resolution on the 'Follow-up to the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond'

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [...] concerning the proclamation of, preparations for and observance of the International Year of the Family and its tenth and twentieth anniversaries,

Recognizing that the preparations for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year in 2014 provided a useful opportunity to continue to raise awareness of the objectives of the International Year for increasing cooperation on family issues at all levels and for undertaking concerted action to strengthen family-centred policies and programmes as part of an integrated comprehensive approach to development,

Recognizing also that the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes, especially those relating to family policies in the areas of poverty, work-family balance and intergenerational issues, with attention given to the rights and responsibilities of all family members, can contribute to ending poverty, ending hunger, ensuring a healthy life and promoting well-being for all at all ages, promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, ensuring better education outcomes for children, including early childhood development and education, enabling access to employment opportunities and decent work for parents and caregivers, achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all

women and girls and eliminating all forms of violence, in particular against women and girls, and supporting the overall quality of life of families, including families in vulnerable situations, so that family members can realize their full potential, as part of an integrated comprehensive approach to development,

Acknowledging that the family-related provisions of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits and their follow-up processes continue to provide policy guidance on ways to strengthen family-centred components of policies and programmes as part of an integrated comprehensive approach to development,

Recognizing the continuing efforts of Governments, the United Nations system, regional organizations and civil society, including academic institutions, to fulfil the objectives of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year at the national, regional and international levels,

Acknowledging that the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes have served as catalysts for a number of initiatives at the national and international levels, including many family policies and programmes to reduce poverty and hunger and promote the well-being of all at all ages, and can boost development efforts, contribute to better

outcomes for children and help to break the inter-generational transfer of poverty in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Acknowledging also that strengthening intergenerational relations, through such measures as promoting intergenerational living arrangements and encouraging extended family members to live in close proximity to each other, has been found to promote the autonomy, security and well-being of children and older persons, and that initiatives to promote involved and positive parenting and to support the role of grandparents have been found to be beneficial in advancing social integration and solidarity between generations, as well as in promoting and protecting the human rights of all family members,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;

After the introduction (1-4) and the new frameworks to strengthen national institutions (5-10), the Report focuses on the objectives of the International Year of the Family: poverty reduction (11-25), work-family balance (26-44) and intergenerational solidarity (45-58), the need to promote research and awareness-raising on them (59-67), processes at the United Nations system (68-97) and civil society initiatives (98-105).

The conclusions (106-114) confirm the improvement made by many Member States on all these issues and give way to new recommendations on implementing family-oriented policies and programmes, reinforcing the cooperation with civil society, academic institutions and the private sector, promoting research and impact assessment studies and sharing good practices (115).

2. Encourages Governments to continue their efforts to implement the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes and to develop strategies and programmes aimed at strengthening national capacities to address national priorities relating to family issues and to step up their efforts, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to implement those objectives, in particular in the areas of fighting poverty and hunger and ensuring the well-being of all at all ages;

3. Invites Member States to invest in a variety of inclusive family-oriented policies and programmes, which take into account the different needs and expectations of families, as important tools for, inter alia, fighting poverty, social exclusion and inequality, promoting work-family balance and gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity, to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

In El Salvador, 'Programa Nuestros Mayores Derechos' seeks to create a culture in which older persons are autonomous and respected. The 'Comunidades Solidarias Rurales' programme provides a basic universal pension for older persons and promotes intergenerational exchanges (48).

A panel discussion, organized by The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, through its Division for Social Policy and Development, in partnership with the International Federation for Family Development, focused on the topic 'Inclusive Cities and Sustainable Families' (96).

4. Encourages Member States to continue to enact inclusive and responsive family-oriented policies for poverty reduction in line with the main objectives of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year, to confront family poverty and social exclusion, recognizing the multidimensional aspects of poverty, focusing on inclusive and quality education and lifelong learning for all, health and well-being for all at all ages, full and productive employment, decent work, social security, livelihoods and social cohesion, including through gender- and age-sensitive social protection systems and measures, such as child allowances for parents and pension benefits for older persons, and to ensure that the rights, capabilities and responsibilities of all family members are respected;

The mention to the 'multidimensional aspects of poverty' should be understood in the context of the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index, developed by the Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative and the UN Development Programme. More information available at: <https://ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-poverty-index/>.

The briefing 'Leaving no child behind: promoting youth inclusion through quality education for all', organized

by the International Federation for Family Development in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of Qatar at the UN Headquarters, advocated for the importance of quality child education for responsible citizenship (84).

As mentioned in the Report, Colombia has implemented a national public policy to strengthen families ('Política Pública Nacional de Apoyo y Fortalecimiento a las Familias'), and 'Más Familias en Acción' (More families in action) offers monetary incentives in education and health for vulnerable families with children, while its 'Ingreso para la Prosperidad Social' (Income for Social Prosperity Programme) seeks to increase levels of education for heads of households in poverty (15).

In Chile, the child protection programme entitled 'Chile Crece Contigo' (Chile grows with you) recognizes the dimensions of child development (35) and in Rwanda a month-long family campaign has been organized on an annual basis since 2011. (66).

The recently updated family grant programme 'Bolsa Família' in Brazil complements the income of more than 50 million families in the country (76).

Other examples include (77):

- Paraguay: conditional cash transfers are provided to households living in poverty, 70 per cent of which are headed by women;

- Sweden invests in family policies that focus on supporting early childhood care and education, which it considers the most efficient way to fight poverty;

- Thailand has established a child support scheme for vulnerable families which recently benefited 190,000 children;

- In 2016, Poland introduced a programme entitled 'Rodzina 500 Plus', which offers monetary transfers for families with two or more children to increase the economic stability of households and respond to demographic challenges;

- In the Islamic Republic of Iran, assistance to households headed by women is offered;

- In Malawi, conditional cash transfers for vulnerable households aim to reduce poverty, improve nutrition and encourage the enrolment of children in school;

- Productive safety nets in Zimbabwe provide employment in community infrastructure projects for vulnerable households, complementing cash transfers.

5. Also encourages Member States to promote work-family balance as conducive to the well-being of children, the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, inter alia, through improved working conditions for workers with family responsibilities, flexible working arrangements, such as telecommuting, and leave arrangements, such as maternity leave and paternity leave, affordable, accessible and good-quality childcare and initiatives to promote the equal sharing of household responsibilities, including unpaid care work, between men and women;

According to the report, longer maternity, paternity and parental leave provisions, the option to work reduced hours and telecommuting have been introduced in several Member States, and the public sector has often been a pioneer in offering work-life balance measures for its employees (27).

Hungary has also prioritized support to mothers re-entering the labour market, and the employment rate of women has grown from 50 to 60.2 per cent in the past 6 years (32). In Jordan, the National Council for Family Affairs has been implementing a project to establish and support nurseries and childcare centres in the private sector to encourage women to participate in the labour market (38).

Flexible working arrangements and telecommuting are expanding in the Russian Federation: special training courses are also offered to help women returning from long-term parental leave improve their job qualifications in the competitive labour market (40). In Peru, the Fatherhood Platform Peru ('Plataforma de Paternidades Perú') seeks to encourage men to participate in caring for their children, and is composed of organizations and institutions of government, civil society and companies (54).

6. Further encourages Member States to invest in family policies and programmes that enhance strong intergenerational interactions, such as intergenerational living arrangements, parenting education and support for grandparents, including grandparents who are primary caregivers, in an effort to promote inclusive urbanization, intergenerational solidarity and social cohesion;

'Parenting education' is mentioned in this resolution for the second time in a row, and it refers to programmes targeted to improve fathers' and mothers'

parenting skills, while 'parental education' relates to their educational attainment.

The Hungarian pension system fosters intergenerational solidarity and reduces inequality, reallocating resources

between the young and old generations: both formal employment and childcare activities count towards pension entitlements (50).

Several Member States have invested in intergenerational facilities and supporting interactions among generations, such as parenting education to improve the wellbeing of children, though more evaluations are needed to ascertain the long-term impact and effectiveness of such programmes (112).

7. Encourages Member States to consider providing universal and gender-sensitive social protection systems, which are key to ensuring poverty reduction, including, as appropriate, targeted cash transfers for families in vulnerable situations, as can be the case of families headed by a single parent, in particular those headed by women, and which are most effective in reducing poverty when accompanied by other measures, such as providing access to basic services, high-quality education and health-care services;

8. Encourages Governments to support the United Nations trust fund on family activities;

More information about this fund is available at: <https://bit.ly/2RlVnzK>.

9. Encourages Member States to strengthen cooperation with civil society, academic institutions and the private sector in the development and implementation of relevant family policies and programmes;

Cooperation with civil society is reinforced with this paragraph, following the initiatives undertaken by many civil society organizations to contribute to the implementation of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year.

Some examples of this advocacy effort include CO-FACE Families Europe and its vision for the reconciliation of economy and society (98); the events organized by the Walmart Centre for Family and Corporate Conciliation at the IAE Business School in Argentina (99); the Global Home Index, an initiative of the Home Renaissance Foundation designed to evaluate how home-based work is valued and how it contributes to

human development (100); the Exchange Programme on the Wofoo Asian Award organized by the Consortium of Institutes on Family in the Asian Region and the Family Council in Hong Kong (102); and the International Conference on the Family and Sustainable Development, organized in Lagos by the Institute for Work and Family Integration, in partnership with the International Federation for Family Development and the Nigerian Association for Family Development.

10. Encourages further collaboration between the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the United Nations entities, agencies, funds and programmes, as well as other relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations active in the family field, as well as the enhancement of research efforts and awareness-raising activities relating to the objectives of the International Year and its follow-up processes;

11. Requests the focal point on the family of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to enhance collaboration with the regional commissions, funds and programmes, recommends that the roles of focal points within the United Nations system be reaffirmed, and invites Member States to increase technical cooperation efforts, consider enhancing the role of the regional commissions on family issues and continue to provide resources for those efforts, facilitate the coordination of national and international nongovernmental organizations on family issues and enhance cooperation with all relevant stakeholders to promote family issues and develop partnerships in this regard;

This mention of the focal point on the family strengthens this position and shows new possibilities to consolidate it.

12. Calls upon Member States and agencies and bodies of the United Nations system, in consultation with civil society and other relevant stakeholders, to continue to provide information on their activities, including on good practices at the national, regional and international levels, in support of the objectives of the International Year and its follow-up processes, to be included in the report of the Secretary-General;

13. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, through the Commission for Social Development and the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the objectives of the International Year and its follow-up processes by Member States and by agencies and bodies of the United Nations system;

14. Decides to consider the topic 'Implementation of the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes' at its seventy-fourth session under the sub-item entitled 'Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family' of the item entitled 'Social development'.

[1] *The Group of 77 is the largest intergovernmental organization of developing countries in the United Nations, and the original number of members has increased to 134 countries since it was established in 1964. More information available at: <http://www.g77.org/>.*

[2] *Cf. UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases (3rd Committee, 16 Nov. 2018), available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/gashc4254.doc.htm>*

[3] *A/C.3/73/L.19/Rev.1, available at: <https://undocs.org/A/C.3/73/L.19/Rev.1>. [4] A/73/61-E/2018/4, available at: <https://undocs.org/A/73/61>.*



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The secure attachment of children

The importance of positive parenting practices and behaviors

1 February 2019



Positive parenting is focused on the understanding that children come into the world primed with the tools and capacities to follow a path of optimal growth and development.

This outlook is drawn from positive psychology, which is the study of how people flourish. This movement in the field of psychology arose to counteract the heavily present disease/illness model of human functioning and to focus on what goes right.

It is based on the view that all individuals want to have lives that are meaningful and fulfilling by exploring, enhancing, and using our individual strengths and to be able to enjoy love,

play, and work. Keyes and Haidt [4] identify four hallmark behaviors that express what is needed for people to flourish:

- Being resilient — the ability to meet the challenges of life and use setbacks and adversity as learning and growing experiences by relying on oneself and having a positive attitude.
- Able to engage and relate to others.
- Finding fulfillment through being productive and creative.
- Looking past ourselves to help others flourish, as well.

The Civil Society Statement on Parenting recently promoted by nine international organizations mentions in its preamble “the scientific evidence that confirms the importance of positive parenting practices and behaviors to health, education, child wellbeing and overall wellbeing outcomes for children, including adolescents” [1].

These follows the mention of the two last UN General Assembly resolutions on the ‘Follow-up to the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond’ [2] and the annual Report of the UN Secretary General on the ‘Implementation of the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes’ [3].

All this background calls for an explanation of what makes parenting a positive action, according to the most recent doctrines.

Based on the recompilation made by Universal Class. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2CTs3uq>

Parenting Styles

Parenting styles are made up of parents’ attitudes about childrearing and parenting and they represent how parents interact with their child. Diana Baumrind is credited with the work of establishing parenting styles from her research in the 1960s. The research has continued on vigorously and is now one of the most extensive and robust in psychology. One of the reasons is that children’s outcomes in so many areas — from emotional, to social, to cognitive — have been found so often to be related to the style of parenting they experience.

The first thing to understand about parenting styles is that there are dimensions that make up the various styles. Falling into categories related to being high or low on the dimensions results in four parenting styles.

- One dimension is parental responsiveness. This has to do with the degree parents pay attention to their child in a way that is warm, sensitive, supportive, and deserving of respect. It is also about how much parents acknowledge the child is unique.

- A second dimension of parenting styles is parental demandingness. This is about the demands or

claims parents make for their child to become a functional and vital part of the family. It revolves around the extent to which parents have appropriate expectations for a child’s maturity of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. It is closely tied to how parents supervise and discipline. A feature of this dimension is psychological control. This refers to how much parents use guilt, taking away love, and shaming the child.

Most parents have a main or dominant style. However, they can be anywhere on a continuum, and they might also move across styles. Parents tend to use the style they experienced when they were growing up. If the style is not a healthy one, they will need to work harder to change their thoughts and behavior.

The style positive parenting is most aligned with is the authoritative. There are three other styles that are less supportive of positive parenting. These are authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved.

Authoritative parenting style is high on responsiveness and demandingness, while low on psychological control. Parents who practice this style are very warm when their child approaches. They treat their

children with respect when children ask questions and when they talk together. They are able to read children's signals well, both non-verbal and verbal. They also are accepting of individual differences in children, such as their particular interests or their temperament, which is how a child approaches and interacts with the world.

Authoritative parents encourage and support their children to show autonomy or independence in how they think and act. However, they have fair and clear expectations and limits about how children should behave and they base these on the level of their child's maturity. They believe in the child taking responsibility for managing their thoughts and behaviors, but they guide and teach their children how to do so by using reasoning and consequence-based discipline, rather than punishment. They are willing to still nurture and forgive when children do make mistakes, or engage in disappointing behavior. This makes for close, healthy relationships.

Authoritarian parenting style, on the other hand, is essentially the opposite. These parents are low on responsiveness and high on demandingness, with high psychological control. They do not respond warmly and discourage dialogue. They believe children should follow parents' strict orders and not think for themselves.

When children do not behave or try to be autonomous, authoritarian parents tend to punish harshly, both verbally and physically. This typically happens frequently, because such parents expect children to be able to do things earlier and better than any child can. These relationships are not close and not healthy.

Many people confuse positive parenting with permissive parenting, but as the following description highlights, this is not the case. Permissive parenting style is high on responsiveness and low on demandingness. These parents do respond warmly and much communication is present. These parents, however, are overly devoted to reading and responding to their child's signals in a way that makes it more about indulging the child's whims, which get met, no matter what.

Children are expected to regulate themselves without parental guidance or any standards of conduct being provided for them. These parents don't ask for

personal responsibility and rarely discipline effectively; usually they just give in or bribe. These relationships are close, but not healthy.

The fourth style is the uninvolved parenting style which is low on responsiveness and low on demandingness. Such parents are disconnected and very hands-off, although they take care of their children's basic needs (food, clothing, shelter, health).

They don't respond much one way or the other to their children when they reach out, they rarely talk much with them, and they don't set limits or attend to whether the child is learning to self-regulate. Some parents use this style because they are overwhelmed and so shut down, while others think children, in general, are capable of raising themselves. These relationships are not close, and not healthy.

Attachment Theory

Establishing a close parent-child relationship with secure attachment is a hallmark of positive parenting. Attachment theory has a very long and well researched basis. It is most notably from the work of John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth, who established the theory beginning in the 1950s. Attachment is particularly important in the area of social and emotional outcomes for children. Fundamentally, the purpose of attachment is so a child feels safe, secure, and protected.

Three main types of attachment relationships have been identified. One of the most important determinants of the quality of the attachment relationship is how the parent responds when the child has a need, such as feeling insecure, or upset, or afraid.

It's useful to know the need for attachment is so strong in infants and young children that it's not whether they are attached, but how healthy that attachment is. Also, children can have any of the types of attachments discussed below with any number of main caregivers. So they could have one for mother, a different with father, and another with a nanny or grandparent.

Secure attachment is most likely to result when parents respond to the child's needs in a way that is sensitive and loving; for instance, they pick the child up when they're crying — especially in infancy — speak

soothingly, listen to the child. Children then know they can express such feelings and will get comfort.

Their strategy for using their parent to manage their distress is to find and stay close. When a young child has a secure attachment, they can use their parent (or primary caregiver) as a base from which to explore, but yet feel they can get reassurance and comfort if needed.

When there is avoidant attachment, children do just that — they avoid. This is a type of insecure attachment. They will avoid both the parent and avoid showing they are in distress. This happens when the parent regularly ignores or is insensitive by expressing annoyance or belittling the child when they send signals or approach for comfort.

Another type of insecure attachment is called ambivalent/resistant attachment. This develops when the response the child gets is inconsistent or unpredictable. It can also happen when the parent acts as if his/her needs are greater than the child's or they make a big deal of the child's distress and behave as though they're overwhelmed. The child typically exaggerates their needs in the hope that the parent will pay attention. Insecurely attached children have a difficult time exploring appropriately without a secure base.

What about 'Attachment Parenting?'

There has been a recent rise in a childrearing approach called attachment parenting. This revolves around physical touch, responsiveness to crying and other distress-related emotions, cosleeping, extended breastfeeding, and authoritative parenting style. Some of these practices are part of attachment theory and mainstream positive parenting, and others are not.

The two that are most unique to attachment parenting are co-sleeping and extended breastfeeding. While these are personal choices, it is important to know that close sleeping, such as in the same room, is safer than co-sleeping in the same bed, as there is a large risk an adult will roll onto a child and smother them, particularly for infants. Breastfeeding is recommended for as much of the first year as possible, but extended breastfeeding is seen in cultures and in times when food is extremely scarce, which is not the case in the U.S. for most families.

Tips on practicing positive parenting *

Positive discipline emphasizes mutual respect and utilizes positive instructions. It focuses on learning (for the future) instead of punishing (of the past). Here are 8 tips on practicing it.

1. Focus on the reasons behind the action There is always a reason why children misbehave even though the reason may seem silly to the parents. It is reasonable to the child and that's why they behave that way.
2. Kind and firm discipline Be kind to model how to be kind and respectful to others. When a parent is kind and respectful despite being upset, the child learns to deal with difficulties with composure and respect.
3. Time out yourself It is inevitable that sometimes parents are just exhausted. If something doesn't go your child's way, do you want him to blow up, or do you want him to have the ability to control his own emotion and remain respectful?
4. Be non-punitive, be creative Punitive punishment produces Four Rs that do not help a child learn – Resentment, Rebellion, Revenge and Retreat. A positive, non-punitive response is much better at settling an overstimulated child and engaging them in learning.
5. Be clear, be consistent and follow through Decide and explain the consequences of violating limits clearly before being enforced. In addition, parents need to be consistent and follow through on them.
6. Understand brain development and ageappropriate behavior Children under the age of three cannot reason because the part of their brain responsible for understanding consequences and making sound judgment has not yet developed. So for children in this age group, redirection instead of reasoning or giving consequences should be used.
7. Make it a learning opportunity When children are old enough to reason (older than three), every misbehaving episode can be turned into an invaluable life lesson.
8. Be patient and don't despair It is not about getting fast results. It is about teaching behavior that parents want their children to emulate over time.

* Based on ParentingForBrain.com, 'What Is Positive Parenting?', available at <https://bit.ly/2s8OM1W>

Child Guidance

The work of Rudolf Dreikurs is frequently cited as a major influence on positive parenting. His work is an

extension of Alfred Adler's Individual Psychology approach, which takes into account the environment of the person in understanding them. Dreikurs' advice on parents guiding the child has a number of components. Among these are:

- There should be mutual respect between a parent and child based on the basic human right of equality. Parents should show encouragement for their child's efforts, as this indicates they believe in the child and accept them as they are. At the same time, parents should not set standards the child cannot reach, as this will discourage them.
- Rather than rewards and punishment, parents should use natural consequences that stem from the child's actions, as opposed to the parent using their authority to get the child to do or not do something. When disciplining, more acting and less talking, which can lead to arguments, is recommended. Related is for the parent to withdraw by ignoring or leaving the room to remove an audience for the child's attempts at a power struggle. However, this is not the same as withdrawing from the child, just from the conflict. Please note these ideas are not for when a child is in immediate danger, or too young to be left alone.

- Children need to be taught important skills and habits, but this should be done when the child is calm, and also not when there are others around who aren't in the immediate family so the child is not too self-conscious. Parents must let children do for themselves when and what they can, and to accept a child's perhaps still-inadequate efforts, if it still gets the job done. They must resist the urge to make it just a bit better, or to validate their importance as parents.

Behaviorism

Many people shudder when they hear behaviorism connected to child rearing. They conjure up images of a controlled, scared, or emotionless child. Even those who write in the popular positive parenting world rarely use this term directly.

None-the-less, the truth is all of us, as humans, pretty much from the beginning of life, make decisions about what we think and how we act, based on the feedback we get from our environment, both physically as well in relationships. It is perfectly normal! B.F. Skinner developed the behavioral theory of operant conditioning, based on the idea that to understand behavior, one must look at both what happened before and the consequences following the behavior.

[1] Cf. <http://www.familyperspective.org/ffpo/ffpo-cssp-en.php>.

[2] "Initiatives to promote involved and positive parenting [...] have been found to be beneficial in advancing social integration and solidarity between generations, as well as in promoting and protecting the human rights of all family members." [A/RES/72/145 and A/C.3/73/L.19/Rev.1].

[3] It significantly referred to positive parenting and discipline as relevant for UNICEF programmes and some national strategies, as those developed in Malta and Portugal, as well as its study in the Conference held in Doha after the presentation of the Statement [A/74/61-E/2019/4].

[4] Corey L. M. Keyes and Jonathan Haidt, 'Flourishing: Positive Psychology and the Life Well-Lived', 2003.



MMM ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE MOTHERS' ROLE AND RIGHTS

Making social protection work for and with mothers: MMM written statement for the 63rd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW63)

Social protection, supported by well-designed and functioning public infrastructure and services, is essential to empower women, especially when they are in vulnerable situations (notably single mothers, disabled women, mothers of disabled children, older women, widows, teenage mothers, etc.).

In its most basic form, social protection includes the provision of essential health care, as well as income security along the life course – two pillars which are especially relevant to women in their role as mothers:

- Universal health coverage and maternity protection is the cornerstone of a social protection system that works for women;
- Beyond cash transfers: addressing the unequal distribution of unpaid family care work is key to empowering women and lifting them out of poverty.

But women, especially mothers, are not only recipients of social protection: they produce and process food for the family; they are the primary educators of children and the first caregivers of dependent family members, including older persons; they actually provide basic health and care services, thus largely contributing to social protection.

By raising the next generation of citizens and workers, mothers also support human development and contribute to building the future society and economy.

They must be recognized as powerful economic and social actors – who deserve to be better equipped and supported. Social protection is a human right that must be supported by universal public infrastructure and services. Social protection must also be seen as an investment with high returns, especially when targeting the most vulnerable women and their children.

Access the full statement on the MMM website [here](#).

MMM at International Forum on Women's Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Leave no mother behind: empowered mothers are change-makers who can make the SDGs succeed

This was the key message of the MMM intervention at the 10th International NGO Forum on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of Women, which was jointly organized by the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco and OCAPROCE International and took place on 5 November 2018 at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Its main theme was “The Eradication of the Extreme Poverty of Women: Their role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030”.

Summary of MMM intervention:

For women around the world, the 2030 agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals bring high hopes for a better future, for them, as well as for their children.

At the same time, MMM is convinced that women, in their role as mothers, can have wide-ranging positive impacts on the realization of this agenda, cutting across most if not all SDGs:

- Because mothers are – together with fathers and other family members – the first educators of their children, the future citizens.
- Because of their multiple roles in the family and in society – whether in the economic, social or political spheres.
- Because they all share the same long-term concern of leaving a better world to their children.

Goal 1 and 5: Women's poverty and the unequal distribution of unpaid family care work are intrinsically linked.

→ Addressing the unequal distribution of unpaid care work responsibilities and empowering mothers is key to breaking the circle of poverty – and to the realization of goals 1 and 5.

Goal 2: Rural women make major contributions to the agricultural and rural economies – they are also often engaged in unpaid subsistence farming and thus provide a huge amount of time and energy by ensuring food security and nutrition to their family. Yet in their role as farmers, rural women remain discriminated in terms of access to land, credit, and other productive resources such as access to seeds, fertilizers, information, training, etc.

→ Public policies, notably public infrastructure and services policies, should aim at supporting their multiple roles as household managers and caregivers, food producers and marketers, not to mention their role in nature conservation and climate adaptation.

Goal 3: Healthy mothers can ensure healthy lives for their children.

→ Prioritizing and investing in maternal and child health will allow educated and supported mothers to be change-makers for their children's long term health, and even for their own and other mothers' health.

Goal 4: Education is key for development. Educated girls especially will become empowered mothers who in turn will have positive impacts on their families, their communities and societies. They are the changemakers of our future.

→ “Change the world for girls, so that girls can change the world.”

Goal 16: Peace begins in the home! Enabling children to grow up in healthy, violence-free families, and thus enabling them to reach their full potential and to find their role in society, is the foundation of lasting peace.

→ The intergenerational perpetuation of violence against women must be stopped and mothers empowered as agents of peace

Mothers are change-makers – if only they are adequately recognized, supported, empowered and involved as such.

Visit the MMM website for [more information](#).

CIVIL SOCIETY JOINT STATEMENT on the International Day on the Elimination of Violence against Women: Time to stop obstetric violence

On 25 November 2018, MMM joined forces with 16 other women's grassroots organizations in Europe and the US to issue a statement on the issue of obstetric violence.

The statement aimed to spotlight the need to promote respectful maternity care and the involvement of women and women's groups in decisions concerning childbirth policies and practices, in full compliance with the World Health Organization (WHO) statement, WHO recommendations on positive pregnancy and birth, and the OHCHR Report of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice.

MMM and its partner organizations jointly urge governments to eliminate all forms of obstetric and gynaecological violence, whether institutional or against women, according to article 12 of the CEDAW Convention and in compliance with the Istanbul Convention that defines violence against women as “a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and [...] all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”.

Many women across the globe experience disrespectful, abusive or neglectful treatment during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum care, in high, medium and low-income countries. Such mistreatments include physical abuse, profound humiliation and verbal abuse, coercive or unconsented medical procedures (including sterilization), lack of confidentiality, failure to get fully informed consent, refusal to give adequate pain relief, violations of privacy, refusal of admission to health facilities, neglect during childbirth resulting in life-threatening

avoidable complications, and detention of women and their newborns in facilities after childbirth.

Although some countries have laws in place to eliminate obstetric violence which recognize it as a specific form of gender-based violence, in Europe the phenomenon has just been tackled, raising heavy controversies. It is almost impossible for women to report it, as it is considered “normal”, both in medical as well as in legal contexts. The extent of this issue has been measured in several European countries where civil society groups and mothers’ organizations have been raising public awareness collecting thousands of traumatic stories of mistreatment during childbirth within hospitals. The voices of mothers have been vastly ignored by governments, and advocates have been threatened and intimidated.

Therefore, MMM and the other organizations call on governments to:

1. Support research and data collection in order to measure the prevalence of obstetric and gynaecological violence during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum care, and investigate its impact on the health and autonomy of women.
2. Adopt national strategies on the involvement of maternity healthcare users in the decision-making process, at individual and policy levels.

3. Implement accountability and transparency policies in healthcare facilities allowing users to make informed decisions.

4. Support women’s choices on birth settings (including homebirth and midwifery-led birth centres), as part of a regular offer within maternity care.

5. Set up mechanisms for women to report about their childbirth experience without stigma or fear.

6. Regulate a system of remedies and monetary compensation for violations during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum care.

7. Design educational programs on the respect of human rights in childbirth for both healthcare providers and users, starting from schools to universities.

8. Include women and mothers in educational programs aiming at teaching healthcare providers how to treat a childbearing woman and babies with dignity and respect.

9. Support midwives by increasing their number and guaranteeing the one-to-one ratio, and setting up studies allowing for direct access to this profession in all countries.

10. Guarantee in any case that human rights defenders will be able to work and provide their support without fear of reprisals, harassment or undue hindrance.

Access the full statement [here](#).

About Make Mothers Matter – MMM

Make Mothers Matter (MMM) advocates and supports mothers as change-makers for a better world. Created in 1947, MMM is an international, apolitical and non denominational NGO, with UN General Consultative Status with ECOSOC.

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Recent and Upcoming Events

2019

April

- 11.-14.: NTSAD 41st Annual Family Conference (Raleigh, NC, USA)
<https://www.ntsad.org/index.php/event-listings/family-conference/2019-annual-family-conference>
- 29.-02.: Big Sandy April Family Conference (Texas, USA)
<https://familyconferences.org/events/family-conference/bigandy19/>

June

- 03.-08.: Northwoods June Family Conference (Watersmeet, MI, USA)
<https://familyconferences.org/events/family-conference/northwoods19/>

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