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Quarterly Bulletin of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family

May 2014, No. 89
Deadline for contributions: 15th July 2014

Vienna NGO Committee on the Family

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Dear Readers of Families International,

This issue features details about the observance of the United Nations International Day of Families 2014 as well as the observance of the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations International Year of the Family in 2014, with meetings on May 15th 2014, at the United Nations in New York, and on May 26th by the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family, at the United Nations Vienna International Centre, including the presentation of a study update 'Documenting Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Well-Being of Families.'

Further included is news from the United Nations and from member organisations of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family, as well as an outline of recent and upcoming events of interest.

With kind regards,

Peter Crowley Ph.D.

Editor

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From the United Nations

United Nations

Nation Unies



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

**MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES
15 MAY 2014**

As we commemorate this year's International Day of Families, we recognize the meaningful contributions that families make to advancing the mission of the United Nations.

By providing economic and emotional sustenance to their members, families can raise productive, caring citizens committed to the common good. Strong, wellfunctioning families, whatever form they may take, can help reduce poverty, improve the wellbeing of mothers, promote gender equality and uphold human rights.

Support for families is crucial to realizing their full potential. That means factoring their needs into

development policies, considering their circumstances in addressing conflicts, and advocating for the equal treatment of all families, regardless of their structure. As we strive to usher in a more sustainable future, achieve the Millennium

Development Goals, shape a new development agenda and combat climate change, let us mobilize the world's families.

On this International Day of Families, let us strive to strengthen these small but critical units found in every society so that we may advance as one human family toward greater progress.



☐ Live Webcast: webtv.un.org
@ outreach.un.org/ngorelations
[#dpingo](https://twitter.com/dpingo) @ [@undpingo](https://twitter.com/undpingo)
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DPI NGO

Working Together: Making A Difference

Organized in partnership with the Department
for Economic and Social Affairs

Families Matter for the Achievement of Development Goals International Year of the Family + 20

Moderator

Daniela Bas, Director, Division for Social Policy
and Development, Department of
Economic and Social Affairs

Speakers

Karen Bogenschneider, Rothermel Bascom
Professor of Human Ecology & Family Policy
Specialist, University of Wisconsin-
Madison/Extension

Noor Al-Malki Al-Jehani, Executive Director,
Doha International Family Institute

Peter Crowley, Secretary, Vienna NGO
Committee on the Family

Raymond Mutura, Area Vice-President
English-Speaking Africa, International Federation
for Family Development

Donna Butts, Executive Director, Generations
United, Introducing *Family Futures*
Tudor Rose Publication

**15 May 2014
11a.m. – 1p.m.
ECOSOC Chamber**

**UNITED NATIONS
HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK
(47TH STREET ENTRANCE)**

[RSVP](#)



INTERNATIONAL
DAY OF FAMILIES
15 MAY 2014

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES 2014
Families Matter for the Achievement of Development Goals
International Year of the Family + 20
DPI/NGO BRIEFING IN PARTNERHIP WITH DESA/DSPD
Thursday, 15 May 2014, 11 AM – 1 PM
ECOSOC CHAMBER (CRB)

Programme

Moderator

Daniela Bas

Director, Division for Social Policy and Development,
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Speakers

Karen Bogenschneider

Rothermel Bascom Professor of Human Ecology & Family Policy Specialist,
University of Wisconsin-Madison/Extension

***Building Better Public Policy for Families: Communicating Research and
Analysis to Policymakers***

Noor Al-Malki Al-Jehani

Executive Director, Doha International Family Institute

Beyond the 20th Anniversary: Make Families Matter

**Video presentation: *Highlights from the International Conference:
Empowering Families: A Pathway to Development****

Peter Crowley

Secretary, Vienna NGO Committee on the Family

***Documenting Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Wellbeing of Families: a Study Up-
date*****

Video presentation: *Civil Society Working for Families Worldwide*

Raymond Mutura

Area Vice-President for English-Speaking Africa, International Federation for
Family Development, IFFD

***Civil Society Declaration on the Occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Fami-
ly: Integrating a Family Perspective by Introducing a Family Impact Report******

Video presentation: *Civil Society in Support of the Declaration*

Donna Butts

Executive Director, Generations United

Presentation of Family Futures****

Family Futures is an illustrated landmark publication by Tudor Rose with over 100 authors relating their work on family policy development and actions at international, regional, national and local levels (all participants will receive a copy).

Discussion

The event will be followed by a light lunch sponsored by the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the United Nations.

***Doha International Conference “Empowering Families: A Pathway to Development”, 16-17 April 2014**

The conference was organized by the Doha International Family Institute (DIFI), a member of Qatar Foundation. This nongovernmental gathering, served as a platform for discussion and debate among policy makers, NGOs, experts, academics and other stakeholders regarding the central role of the family in society. It stressed the need to empower families in overall development efforts. The Doha Call to Action emphasized the importance of designing, implementing and monitoring of family-oriented policies, especially in the areas of poverty eradication, full employment and decent work, work family balance and social integration and intergenerational solidarity and called on Governments to empower and enable families to contribute to development.

<http://www.difi.org.qa/about/doha-declaration/doha-international-conference-on-thefamily/doha-international-conference-on-the-family>

****Documenting Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Well-Being of Families study update**

This study update incorporates various approaches to well-being and family well-being by several authors, and looks at restraining factors, as well as enabling factors, for wellbeing. Empirical analyses are carried out on textual data from families-oriented civil society organisations (CSOs) world-wide, to observe IYF+20 in 2014 and on textual data entered by CSOs ten years earlier, to observe IYF+10 in 2004. The results of the analyses are compared with criteria for well-being, to discern as to what extent the CSOs, included in this empirical research, contribute to the well-being of families. It is the aim and task of this study update to endeavour to make explicit what is implicit, by empirical evidence, in the activities and services of these CSO actors, as well as to further establish civil society as a resource entity, as well as a discourse entity, by creating a ‘cyber street’ of knowledge resources. The analysed textual data of the CSOs is further compared with the three focus themes, chosen by the United Nations to observe IYF+20 in 2014.

www.20yearsIYF.org

Contact: Peter Crowley at contact@viennafamilycommittee.org

*****Family Futures**

Family Futures has been published by Tudor Rose, a commercial publisher and information provider with considerable experience in UN publishing since 1999 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2014. It is a fully illustrated 200-page book with sixty authors relating their efforts in the three priority areas guiding the preparations for the 20th anniversary: confronting family poverty; ensuring work-family balance and advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity. The authors include Heads of State, National Government Ministers, academics and civil society representatives. Their commentaries draw upon experiences around the world reflecting the im-

portance of strengthening the role of the family in present and future societies. The book contains examples of family programmes in 74 separate countries.

By focusing on different levels of society, but particularly the experiences and livelihoods of local communities in vulnerable human habitats, it projects the benefits of experience in improving the lives of families worldwide, and advance shared commitment to the importance of families as both agents and beneficiaries of sustainable development and their particular role in advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity. In this latter respect, Family Futures amplifies and contributes to the international dialogue that is being created by the 20th Anniversary of the IYF. As an outreach publication it will be used to emphasize the role of families in sustainable human development and highlight the ongoing benefits that the Year has generated.

The digital edition is available at <http://digital.tudor-rose.co.uk/family-futures/>

Contact: Sean Nicklin sean.nicklin@tudor-rose.co.uk.

*****Civil Society Declaration on the Occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family**

The Declaration emphasizes that family-focused policies have proven both valuable and efficient in many areas of social development and urges Member States to promote and implement family-friendly policies aimed at providing sustainable, affordable and quality living conditions for families; and to empower families and recognize their role in social cohesion and economic development. It was sponsored by 23 international entities, 240 national organizations from 65 countries and 560 representatives of civil society organizations, academics and policy makers from 83 countries (as of 25/04/2014).

<http://www.family2014.org/declaration.php>

Contact: Ignacio Socias dircom@iffd.org

A video of the observance of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2014 and of the International Day of Families 2014 at the United Nations in New York is available at:

<http://undesadspd.org/Family/InternationalObservances/InternationalDayofFamilies/2014.aspx>

The full 80 page report of the study-update '**Documenting Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Well-Being of Families**' is also available to download on this same United Nations website under Presentation: Peter Crowley.

From the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family



VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY



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FULL COMMITTEE MEETING

UNITED NATIONS
VIENNA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

Monday May 26th 2014

CONFERENCE ROOM C0739

INTERNATIONAL FORUM

Study Update

**Documenting Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Well-Being of Families
To observe the Twentieth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family 2014**

10:00 – 11:15 Presentation of the Study Update: Dr. Peter Crowley

11.15 – 11:45: Coffee Break

11.45 – 12.30: Discussion of the Study Update

12.30 – 14.00: Lunch Break

14.00 – 15:45: Presentations by Member Organisations of the Vienna NGO
Committee on the Family who contributed to the Study Update

15.45 – 16:00: Coffee Break

16:00-17.00: ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION

- (i) Approval of the Agenda
- (ii) Approval of the Minutes of the Full Committee Meeting November 11th, 2013
- (iii) Report of the Chairperson
- (iv) Plan of Action 2014
- (v) Financial Report
- (vi) Report of the Auditors
- (vii) Budget 2014
- (viii) Reports from Member Organisations
- (ix) Any other Business
- (x) Date and Place of next Full Committee Meeting: November 10th, 2014, Room C0739

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

From Member Organisations of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family

**Statement to the 1st meeting on “Promotion of Family Friendly Policies”
Lisbon, 3rd December 2013
organized by Embrace the Family, Association for the Recognition of the Family in cooperation with
PROSALIS, Health Project in Lisbon**

By Renata Kaczmarek
Focal Point on the Family, DSPD/DESA



Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to address you today on the very important topic of family-friendly policies. First, let me congratulate you for choosing this topic for your deliberations today. It is important to raise awareness of the role family friendly policies play in ensuring the well-being of families, communities and society at large. It is encouraging to see that civil society contributes to this important task.

In my brief statement today I would like to highlight the types of explicit family policies and concentrate in more detail on work-family balance policies as this is the main topic of your Congress and one of the themes of the preparations for the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2014.

As you know, there are several types of explicit family policies which mainly focus on family formation, economic wellbeing, childrearing and family caregiving.

In the area of family formation, laws and policies mostly deal with marriage and divorce, adoption of children, as well as prevention of domestic violence. They have an important role in promoting young family formation, encourage childbearing, support family planning and protect children.

In the area of economic wellbeing, socio-economic policies and programmes can provide income security for family members through social protection and child allowances, tax benefits or employment related benefits for working parents.

Policies promoting childrearing may include child health protection, provision of affordable quality

childcare, the promotion of parental education programmes and a variety of other measures supporting parents and other caregivers. In the area of family caregiving itself, policies can be enacted to ensure adequate care for vulnerable family members, such as older persons or persons with disabilities. Such policies can also promote diverse family care arrangements, such as allowances for grandparents who care for their grandchildren.

Besides the explicit family policies like those just mentioned, there is a multitude of other policies that are not specifically related to any of the areas above but still have indirect consequences on families. Such implicit family policies include educational, employment, health or housing policies that have a potential to promote a variety of family functions.

As work-family balance policies will be the main focus of your discussion let me focus on this topic in more detail. In a nutshell, work-family policies aim to support working parents to be productive individuals who can contribute to the socio-economic development of their societies while ensuring the well-being of their children.

As you know, families are becoming smaller and generations tend to leave more apart with extended family members less available to offer care. In addition, parents are faced with growing demands at work and find it more and more difficult to meet the challenges at work and responsibilities at home. We can safely predict that the demand for family friendly policies in this area is bound to

continue with the increasing female labour participation and growing expectations of equal sharing of household responsibilities between mothers and fathers. Work-family policies mainly encompass the provision of parental leaves, flexible working arrangements and childcare services.

Parental leaves include maternity and paternity leaves as well as special leaves or a reduction of time worked in specific family circumstances. Parental leaves have been found to contribute to children well-being and positive child outcomes later in life. The provision of paternity leaves bolsters gender equality and strengthens father-child bonding. Flexible working arrangements, such as staggered working hours, compressed work schedules or telecommuting, are becoming more widely available. Research indicates that employers providing a variety of flexible working arrangements can rely on more productive and loyal employees.

Affordable and quality childcare arrangements are vital for families with young children. Talking to parents and being a parent myself I have come to realize that parents need a variety of childcare arrangements that suit their family's needs and the best interest of the child. Flexible working hours increase options in this area and may help with making the best choices. Let us also not forget the importance of out-of school hours care programmes especially important for low-income families and parents in non-standard and inflexible jobs.

Let me emphasize that family-friendly policies in general, and work family balance policies and programmes in particular, should aim at supporting family functions rather than replacing them and ought to be promoted as part of overall national socio-economic policy making.

In conclusion I would like to quote a few sentences from the annual message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the International Day of Families celebrated last year with a theme "Ensuring work-family balance":

"We need to respond to the ever-changing complexities of work and family life. I welcome the establishment of family-friendly workplaces through parental leave provisions, flexible working arrangements and better childcare. Such policies and programmes are critical to enhancing the work-family balance. These actions can also lead to better working conditions, greater employee health and productivity, and a more concerted focus on gender equality. Work-family balance policies demonstrate both a government's commitment to the well-being of families and the private sector's commitment to social responsibility."

It is my hope that your efforts to highlight the importance of family friendly policies will lead to many innovative policies and programmes in support of families in Portugal.

My best wishes for successful deliberations.

Thank you.

Organization



PROSALIS – Health Project in Lisbon

Holding the Special Consultative Status at:

- ECOSOC – Economic and Social Council, United Nations, New York

Member of:

- Vienna NGO Committee on the Family, United Nations, Austria;
- NGO Committee on Ageing, United Nations, New York;
- ICAA – International Council on Alcohol and Addictions;
- EOE – European Offenders Employment Forum.

President

Maria Helena Patrício Paes

Scientific Partner

Marta Gonçalves, Ph.D. (Researcher, CIS - IUL, Lisbon University Institute – ISCTE)

Organizing Committee

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XXIV Workshop about Family Policies – «Recognition of the Family as the first intergenerational nucleus»*



* Action Integrated in the celebrations of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (1994-2014)

18th March, 2014

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation
Lisbon



United for a cause, because
of those who need!

Presentation

PROSALIS – Health Project in Lisbon is a non profit organization with health and social aims, with public utility status, recognized as Family Association with generic representation.

The XXIV Workshop, integrated in the celebrations of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (2014), proclaimed by the United Nations, provides a useful opportunity to draw further attention to the objectives of the International Year for increasing cooperation at all levels on Family issues and for undertaking concerted actions to strengthen Family-centred policies and programmes as part of an integrated approach to development.

PROSALIS proposes to recognize the Family as the first intergenerational nucleus, constituted as the privileged area of realization of the person, transmission of values, interinfluences and the strengthening of solidarity between generations.

Aims of the XXIV Workshop

We can not see the family in a merely cultural, ideological or political perspective.

It is necessary an urgent inflection in political and social behavior related to the Family in order to be recognized by the functions that family performs, like the transmission of life, the responsibility in children education, the transmission of values, language, traditions, cultural heritage and the first nucleus of solidarity between generations, fulfilling the function of intergenerational cohesion, in particular, all the support and help.

We would like to emphasize the undeniable economic and social role of the family, that increasingly suffers with new and difficult social functions as support of the current crisis, without a fair recognition for their sufferings.

We wonder if the State is the real support of the Society of wellbeing?

We also wonder if the capacity to get out of the crisis would be the same without Families?

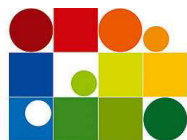
It is necessary to promote a substantial change through a global policy, integral and also integrating the Family, recognizing the Family as a social subject, developing policies that aim not only the individual but also the communities and, above all, the Families, planning and executing coordinated policies of integral and intersectorial character of support to the Families.

Provisional Program

- 09:00a.m. Registration
- 09:30a.m. Opening Session
- 10:00a.m. Round table: The Family as the first intergeneration nucleus
- 11:30a.m. Coffee break
- 11:45a.m. Round table: Family, Education and Society between Generations
- 1:00p.m. Lunch break
- 2:30p.m. Round table: The importance of the economic and social role of the Family
- 4:00p.m. Coffee break
- 4:15p.m. Round table: The role of the family in times of crisis: employment, housing, health and social policies
- 5:30p.m. Closure Session

Online registration:
<http://www.prosalis.pt>

IFFD PAPERS no. 28
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www.thefamilywatch.org

An example of intergenerational solidarity
Retirement and the current economic and social situation
1st February 2014

Europe, the birth rate, and our economic future: it is well known to everyone that these words have a complicated relationship and that the situation is getting worse as years go by. Major difficulties are the viability of the pension system, rising health costs and a low ratio of investing and saving, but not all considerations are financial. The real question may be 'who is going to take care of us?' That is a question we should worry about, as there are fewer young people to take care of the older ones, and also the economic crisis has changed their roles. Now there are elders who spend their time and money taking care of their families, after a life of working hard. This phenomenon has been widespread in countries such as Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark but it has not been in others like Spain or the Czech Republic where the current economic contraction has made it a growing reality.

Taking advantage of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, in this paper we will examine what kind of help (money and time) elders give and receive and how this aligns with the one of the themes that the United Nations has chosen to work on this year: 'Advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity.'¹ This paper is a review of several ways of living solidarity between grandparents and the younger generations, and it tries to emphasize how this solidarity can become a positive means of transmitting old-fashioned values while on the other hand taking

advantage of the new knowledge that young people can contribute, as an example of mutual aid.

Time and money

When people get old and stop working they experience a deep change in their day-to-day life. All of a sudden they have no job and they have fewer responsibilities. At least it should be like that but in so many cases today it is not. For many elderly people they actually leave their job and get a new one.

The current situation has induced a shift in families' rhythm in several ways: now some women who dedicated their lives to taking care of the children have to go outside the home and work or look for a job. Some young parents have to work more hours to meet the household expenses and some families have to dispense with nannies in order to reduce outgoing expenses. This provokes a request for help to the grandparents, who generally accept it.

We all know a good relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is beneficial for both. Elders tend to suffer less depression from loneliness and kids really have a good time learning from the mand playing with them.

But as mentioned previously, it is not just about time, as in so many cases the grandparents' retirement pensions become a part of the family's economy, even sometimes becoming the only means of income for that extended family.

¹ Cfr.

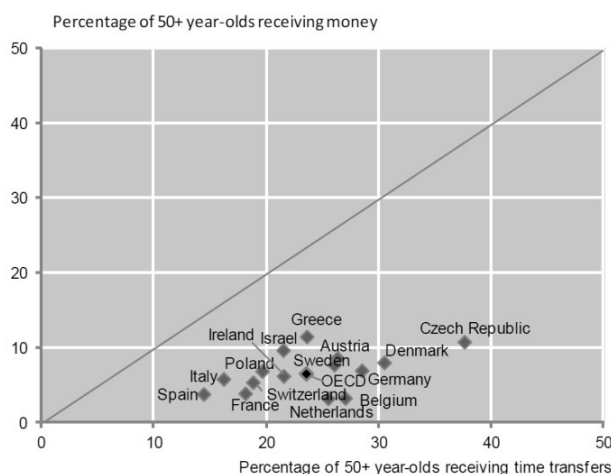
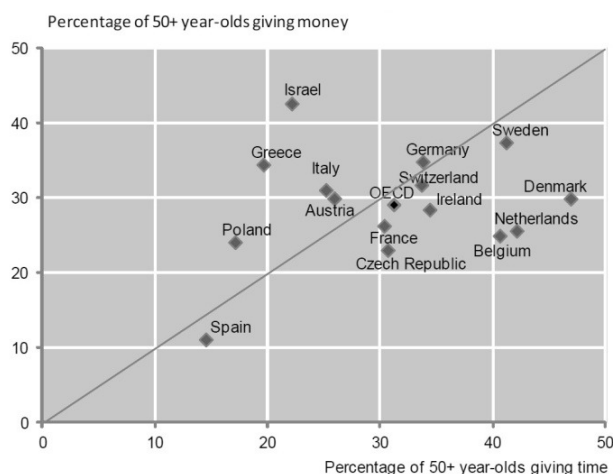
<http://undesadspd.org/Family/InternationalObservances/TwentiethAnniversaryofIYF2014.aspx>.

The Spanish problem is significantly striking. Fundación la Caixa has conducted a survey to find out how many families live on just the grandparents' allowance. Since the beginning of the economic crisis in 2007 the number of these families has increased threefold, to 300,000 families in Spain today. According to that study: "total-family

adoxically also fosters and strengthens the relationship between themselves and their grandchildren when it might have been weak or nonexistent before.

Transfers of money and time³

At the European level elders provide a larger



unemployment affects in Spain 7.6% of the homes (practically double that of the other surveyed countries) and it reveals the family limits when employment issues extend to all the active members. In such cases the search for other resources of income can be vital. And thus one in five households in a total unemployment situation coexists with some person over sixty-five years old. In this case the grandparent's pension can become an essential resource for the survival of all."²

The decision to have grandparents live with the rest of the family could be clearly positive to all of them. On one hand it will save nursing home expenses and care costs later, allowing the family to redistribute the money into the family budget. On the other hand they will have to take care of the grandparents by themselves. This situation can definitely benefit both: elders are more comfortable being at home and being cared for by their own family, and the members who take care of them, apart from taking advantage of the help of the pension, can experience a great inner reward.

In the case of elders who do not need to be cared for, they can combine time and money (giving their pensions and taking care of the youngest ones), making a maximum contribution effort which par-

quantity of time and money in comparison with young people. According to an OECD survey there is a remarkable difference between the gifts of money and time older people make and the transfers they receive.

The following chart shows the extent of involvement in such transfers over a one-year period of people aged 50 and over. The left-hand chart shows gifts from 50+ year-olds and, the right-hand chart, receipts by them. It is immediately clear that older people are much more likely to be 'givers' than 'takers'. On average, more than 30% of them give time – typically in the form of child care – and the same proportion give money. (Monetary transfers are defined in the survey as at least EUR 250 in cash or of that value in goods, excluding loans and sharing of living expenses.) Less than a quarter of older people benefit from time given by others, and less than 7% receive money.

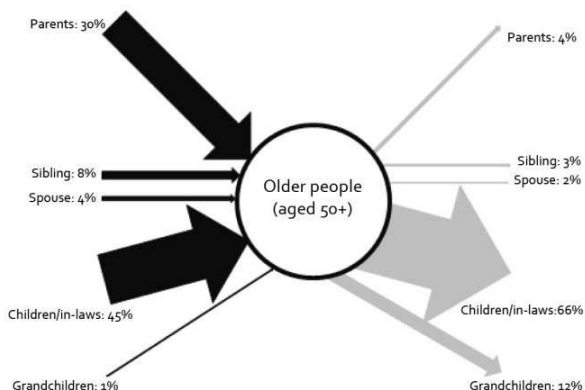
The next chart looks in more detail at the family relationships involved in transfers of money (A) and time (B). The left hand side of each chart shows transfers given to 50+ year-olds and the right-hand side shows transfers made by these older people.

At the top of each chart are relations with parents. In the middle are horizontal transfers, to spouses

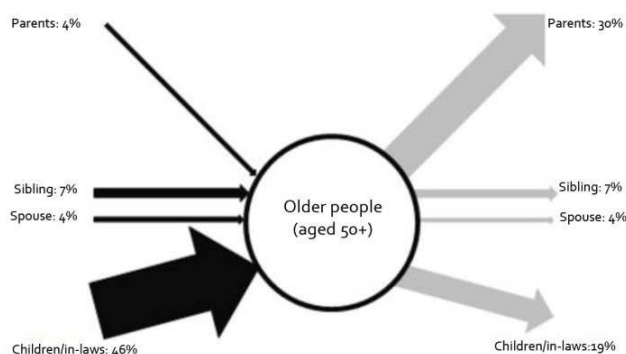
² Miguel Laparra et al., 'Crisis y fractura social en Europa; Causas y efectos en España' (Obra Social LaCaixa, 2012). Available at: https://obrasocial.lacaixa.es/deployedfiles/obrasocial/Estadisticos/pdf/Estudios_sociales/vol35_en.pdf

³ OECD, Background Document, Ministerial Meeting On Social Policy, Session 3. 'Paying for the past, providing for the future: intergenerational solidarity' (Paris, 2-3MAY 2011).

A. Transfers of money, percentage of total receiving or giving



B. Transfers of time, percentage of total receiving or giving



and siblings, who will generally be of similar age. At the bottom are vertical transfers to younger generations of the family: children and their partners and grandchildren.

The size of the arrows varies with the proportion of total transfers of each type and going in each direction. Older people receive money mainly from their children, although their parents are also a substantial source. Very few financial transfers are upwards – to parents – or horizontal, to siblings or spouses. Children account for two-thirds of cash transfers made by older people. The survey also provides evidence on the scale of transfers. The average amount given in the 15 OECD countries covered was EUR 6,000 in the 2006-07 wave of the survey and the average received was EUR 3,900. Transfers in both directions were typically of larger value towards the north of Europe (Belgium, Denmark, France and Sweden) and smaller in the south and east (the Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Poland and Spain).

Time transfers follow a different pattern than movements of money, coming mainly from children. Other relatives provide little of their time to this age group. A third of receipts of time are from non-relatives, a sharp contrast with monetary exchanges. Similarly, 50+ year-olds give the largest share of their time to non-relatives, closely followed by the proportion they give to their parents. The numbers of hours given averaged 0.8 a week (over a one-year period) while the number received was 0.6 a week.

Transfers of money and time⁴

Solidarity samples

Day by day various countries around the world work on intergenerational solidarity policies, but there are some private initiatives as well. These initiatives organize events, make platforms and

connect young and old people in different activities. We highlight some of them because of their originality, their forward thinking or their good results:

a) Cheap accommodations in exchange for company: a Belgian association called “1toit2ages” attempts to reconcile two needs: that of students in search of comfortable, inexpensive accommodations and that of the elderly living alone and looking for company. The association helps students find a room with an elderly person in return for a bit of company during the evening and a reassuring presence at night.

b) Intergenerational digital inclusion: the European funded project The Knowledge Volunteers is based on an intergenerational exchange approach applied to digital literacy courses for people over 60.

c) eScouts: Intergenerational Learning Circle for Community Service is a European project which aims to develop an innovative intergenerational learning exchange between elderly and youth volunteers. Youth volunteers aged 16 to 25 receive training and then teach interested senior citizens about word processors, Internet browsers, and more. At the same time, the intergenerational interaction allows older adults to give guidance for adult life challenges. Through the involvement of local stakeholders, this mentoring and communication will have an impact on the community as a whole.

d) Solidarity through cinema: ‘Les Deux Mémoires’ is an organization that is dedicated to preserving intergenerational action through film. The filmmakers strive to document the individual experience in changing rural communities in order to promote unity between generations. One of the topics on which the team focuses is the ageing of Europe. Three of the projects that took place in 2012 are as follows:

- Bac Pro - French youth studying to assist rural residents.
- Spring Emilie – aides in nursing homes and geriatric services.

⁴ Ibidem

- The humanity of AMP in hospice.

e) 'Lire et faire lire': this program seeks to foster reading among children at primary schools, in kindergarten, at libraries or leisure centers and promote dialogue between generations. Once or twice a week, volunteers aged 50+ are invited to take part in reading sessions where small groups of children can enjoy reading and discover literature.

f) 'Génération & talents': the intergenerational program of Alcatel-Lucent and APEC (a French recruitment agency).

Alcatel-Lucent launched this program that seeks to promote an intergenerational culture at work by mobilizing the potential of all workers and helping them to develop their skills and professional paths. This program applies to all 15 company branches in France and it revolves around skills development and knowledge sharing.⁵

Conclusions and family perspective

As we have seen there is a tilt of the balance of responsibility towards older people. The moment they start enjoying retirement they are asked to renounce their freedom and lend a hand. It should be a time to live and be grandparent, not to keep working and be educator but it happens, and we must make the best of it.

Living intergenerational solidarity is an ideal way for families to interact, and several studies have shown the advantages of it. From a family perspective we can find a long list of benefits for every member of the household. Among the main advantages for kids are to live and to spend time amidst a quiet and stable and at the same time rewarding model of living together, whether to play just to have fun; to talk about their restlessness and worries and to learn how to listen; to learn about values and to hear about the family links and history; to receive support and fellowship, and to develop positive attitudes toward elders.⁶

This model presumes dedication and much time but on the other hand we can find some advantages for grandparents as well, which sometimes can become a cognitive therapy to prevent the progression of mental illness such as Alzheimer's as experts such as Carolina Hoffman have tested. Some of these benefits are a decrease in depressive symptoms; to feel themselves useful and valued; to have physical and mental stimulation, a growth of self-esteem and rejuvenation from feeling themselves loved and accompanied.⁷

Governments must work on this example of solidarity as it is in all of our interests, giving it the importance it has. Social policies which improve the quality of life for old people should be developed. Luckily, there are a wide range of fields to work from: from the adaptation of psychological assistance for instance, to the fiscal benefits to families and society. Nevertheless, as we have seen, fos-

tering private behaviors of intergenerational solidarity is the most human way of facing this challenge.

Jaime Juárez Loaisa – Intern at The FamilyWatch.

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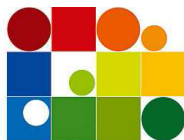
⁵ Available at: <http://www.age-platform.eu/age-policy-work/solidarity-between-generations/best-practices/1099-best-practice-intergenerational-solidarity>

⁶ More information at: http://huelva24.com/not/48266/relacion_entre_nietos_y_abuelos_beneficios_mutuos/

⁷ Ibidem.

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A clear Call to Action The significance of the Doha Conference outcome document 1st May 2014

As the year 2014 moves into the International Day of the Families (15 May), many initiatives have taken place along the world. There have been raise awareness meetings in more than a dozen countries and many other activities in different places, including radio and television programs, as well as some other academic activities, like conferences and Expert Group Meetings. Overall, it can be said by now that there has been a significant response of the civil society.⁸

Two of these initiatives deserve a special consideration, because of their global scope and their potential influence for the future. First, the Declaration of the Civil Society promoted by IFFD and co-sponsored by hundreds of organizations, policy-makers, academics and NGO representatives worldwide.⁹ Second, the Doha Conference to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family celebrated some weeks ago, a nongovernmental gathering to constitute a global platform for discussion and debate where policymakers, NGOs, experts, academics and other relevant stakeholders from all around the world have shared their views and experiences regarding the centrality of the family and its role in society.¹⁰

The outcome document of this Conference is a 'Call to Action' directly addressed to governments with very specific recommendations "to continue to make every possible effort to realize the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes and to integrate a family per-

spective into national policymaking,"¹¹ as the UN General Assembly has urged all Member States. It is the best way to summarize the contents of the Declaration and the outputs of the Conference, showing that a worldwide consensus has been reached on the occasion of this 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family and making totally explicit what civil society demands from governments as a consequence of it.

We reproduce the contents of this 'Call to Action' below, adding for every recommendation some ideas exposed by some of the speakers in the Conference.

We, the representatives of civil society, academia, policy makers and individuals participating in the International Conference organized in Doha, Qatar on the 16-17 of April, 2014 by the Doha International Family Institute (DIFI), member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family;

Having considered the conference theme "Empowering Families: A Pathway to Development,"

Reaffirming that the family is not only the fundamental group unit of society but is also the fundamental agent for sustainable, social, economic and cultural development,

Stressing the importance of designing, implementing and monitoring family-oriented policies, especially in the areas of poverty eradication, full employment and decent work, work family balance

⁸ Many of this initiatives are listed at www.family2014.org

⁹ More information available at:
<http://www.family2014.org/declaration.php>

¹⁰ More information available at:
<http://www.difi.org.qa/events/event-detail/event?item=57>

¹¹ Resolution of the UN General Assembly on 'Preparations for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family', 9 March 2012 (A/RES/66/126).

and social integration and intergenerational solidarity,

Emphasizing that the achievement of development goals especially those relating to the eradication of poverty, education of children, especially girls and reduction in maternal mortality depends, to a significant extent, on how families are empowered to fulfill their numerous functions,

Emphasizing further that strategic focus on families offers a comprehensive approach to solving some of the persistent development challenges such as inequality and social exclusion,

Call on governments to empower and enable families to contribute to development by taking the following actions:

1. Develop comprehensive and coherent policies, integrate cross sectorial approach to support family stability and establish/strengthen a national mechanism to develop family-oriented policies and programmes and allocate adequate human and financial resources to implement, monitor and evaluate them.

The family is the basic unit of society and as such it should be protected and nurtured. Yet family is not systematically placed at the center of policy and research. Stable and healthy families are the foundation of strong societies, when family breakdown, the costs are high, societies suffer and the role of government tends to expand. Although there is a universal recognition of the importance of the family there is no formal consensus on its definition which may impede the effective design and implementation of family policy. It is therefore more productive to focus on family functions and to assess the impact of policies from a family – focused perspective.¹²

2. Promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, reform discriminatory laws and policies, particularly family laws, and enact legislations to end child marriage and violence against women.

More equal societies do better socially and economically, because equality – oriented social policies, including family policies that promote gender equality and rights of the child, are drivers for ethically, socially and economically sustainable development – they support children’s rights to development, enable mothers and fathers to partici-

pate in society and working life and child care and are strongly supported by fathers and mothers.¹³

3. Recognize the contribution and responsibility of men to families, develop policies to address the impact of the absence of males/fathers on family wellbeing and promote active fatherhood.

The more time fathers spend with their children, the greater their impact. It’s called the ‘dose effect’, the more dads interact with their kids, the more of an influence they are. This ‘dose effect’ doesn’t have to involve doing anything special, or expensive things. It’s about hanging out, doing stuff together and chatting as the need arises. Just being there means you’re passing on all sorts of things to your children. So you have to be very conscious of everything you say and do.¹⁴

4. Focus poverty alleviation strategies on the family as a unit and acknowledge that family breakdown can be both a root cause and an effect of poverty and its prevention is a priority.

Overall as a functional unit, extended family plays major in poverty alleviation and economic empowerment of all members [...] To go forward, we need to focus on two assets of the family: family capital and family resilience, develop and effectively implement comprehensive social protection programmes that are family- focused, gender-sensitive, child-oriented, provide overall family-friendly policies for workers with child and other family-related care responsibilities and adopt the family lens in all policy development.¹⁵

5. Adopt policies to ensure work-family balance, so that the responsibilities of parenting and maintaining families do not fall primarily on women and collaborate with the private sector to protect and support workers with family responsibilities.

The two major objectives in this area are allowing more mothers to participate in the labour market and improve the work-life balance of mothers and fathers. Towards the first objective, policy measures are needed to address mothers who are temporarily outside the labour market because of child duties, as well as those who are unemployed or inactive because they have withdrawn from the labour market. Policies that fostered education

¹² Concept Note for the Doha International Conference on the Family, 16-17 April 2014. Available at: <http://www.difi.org.qa/app/wa/ca.fusiondev.fdevent.FDEventDirectAction/viewEventDocument?docId=54>

¹³ Ronald Wiman, ‘From Women’s Rights to Gender Equality Policies’. Available at: <http://www.difi.org.qa/app/wa/ca.fusiondev.fdevent.FDEventDirectAction/viewEventDocument?docId=53>

¹⁴ Adrienne Burgess, ‘Fatherhood Reclaimed: The Making of the Modern Father’ (Vermilion, 1997).

¹⁵ Zitha Mokomane, ‘Confronting Family Poverty’. Available at: <http://www.difi.org.qa/app/wa/ca.fusiondev.fdevent.FDEventDirectAction/viewEventDocument?docId=50>

opportunities for both sexes; work opportunities in family-friendly workplaces; maternity and balanced parental leave for both parents; quality, convenient, and affordable childcare combined with social support were identified as the most effective.¹⁶

6. Value important contributions of all generations within the family, design and implement policies to strengthen intergenerational solidarity and partnerships and promote healthy intra-family relations.

Three fundamental notions about intergenerational relations offer useful principles as each sector of civil society examines the role it can play in supporting families. Firstly, intergenerational solidarity and exchange continue to be the primary foundation for personal and social security as well as human bonding. Secondly, social networks of care develop when policies and programmes reinforce the interconnectivity of the generations. Thirdly, societies need to facilitate human contact and interactions in order to expand intergenerational solidarity.¹⁷

7. Ensure the systematic collection of data and statistics on family wellbeing and collaborate on good practice exchange at national, regional and international levels.

Policymakers almost always ask what the economic impact of this policy decision is, but they seldom ask what the family impact of this policy decision is. Public policy decisions could be more effective if they were based on hard evidence drawn from rigorous research and dispassionate analysis, and if they leveraged the contributions that families make to society.¹⁸

8. Develop and implement family focused policies and interventions to strengthen and support families in vulnerable situations (such as conflict, natural disasters and health epidemics including HIV / AIDS and malaria).

Providing care to a member who is suffering from HIV and AIDS places enormous pressure on a fam-

ily's human and financial resources. Research on the age distribution of HIV incidence indicates that infected family members are likely to be prime-age adults (aged 15-45), and ill health within this economically productive group is often associated with a decrease in income. Individuals in this age bracket also play a major role in domestic activities such as providing physical care for children and other dependents. Essentially, financial resources and the capacity to provide care may decline at a time when they are most needed within the family. The negative consequences of HIV and AIDS on the family may well be very different, depending on the circumstances of the family prior to the illness and what role the family member or members who became ill played prior to their illness.¹⁹

9. Create an enabling environment for a meaningful contribution of civil society organizations in the design, implementation and monitoring of family policies and programs and remove barriers to the establishment, work and funding of non-governmental organizations.

Family should be a meeting point and not a controversial issue. It is difficult to find a more universal topic (we all come from a family and most of us live in the context of a family) and a more necessary one (without families, the existence and personal development of individuals as well as social development becomes much harder). In front of this, all kind of differences and disagreements should give way to a common will of finding the common ground from which to build the basis for the protection families deserve. On the other side, international institutions and governments should have clear ways to promote that kind of consensus and to listen to it in an effective way.²⁰

10. Acknowledge that families are at the center of sustainable development and ensure that families are an integral part of the post 2015 development agenda.

The twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, on the eve of the target year of the Millennium Development Goals, gives us an opportunity to refocus on the role of families in development [...] The Millennium Development targets, especially those relating to the reduction of

¹⁶ Anne H. Gauthier, 'Improving the work-life balance', presentation at the Fourth Demography Forum organized by the European Commission (Brussels, 6-7 May 2013). Available at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=10198&langId=en>

¹⁷ Donna M. Butts, Leng Leng Thang and Alan Hatton Yeo, 'Policies and Programmes Supporting Intergenerational Relations', Background Paper for the Twentieth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2014. Available at:

<http://undesadspd.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=VGkxtn3WSyA%3D&tabid=1733>

¹⁸ Karen Bogenschneider, 'Using Research and Analysis to Build Better Public Policy for Families'. Available at:

<http://www.difi.org.qa/app/wa/ca.fusiondev.fdevent.FDEventDirectAction/viewEventDocument?docId=39>

¹⁹ Chris Desmond and Victoria Hosegood, 'Men in Families and Family Policy in a Changing World' (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs - Division for Social Policy and Development, 2011).

²⁰ Ignacio Socias, 'Civil Society and the Family'. Available at: <http://www.difi.org.qa/app/wa/ca.fusiondev.fdevent.FDEventDirectAction/viewEventDocument?docId=37>

poverty, education of children and reduction in maternal mortality, are difficult to attain unless the strategies to achieve them focus on the family [...] In effect, the very achievement of development goals depends on how well families are empowered to contribute to the achievement of those goals.²¹

The following words from the opening address by H. H. Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, explain why “the family is not only the fundamental group unit of society but is also the fundamental agent for sustainable, social, economic and cultural development,” as the Call states. “We behold that the issues of men, women, youth and the child is a single issue: which is the issue of family with its own array of challenges and problems. An issue that starts with the development of minds and requires empowering all family members of their roles. Family empowerment in this sense is to create the conditions for the advancement of the roles in a coherent family that preserves and inherits the values of cohesion. However, the larger role falls on the state, through fixing policies and programs that work to save education and health care, addressing the causes of poverty, supporting the balance between life and work, and upholding the values of solidarity and communication between generations.”²²

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²¹ ‘Follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond’, Report of the United Nations Secretary-General, 29 November 2010 (A/66/62)

²² H. H. Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Speech for the Opening of the Doha International Conference on the Family, 16-17 April 2014.

Recent and Forthcoming events

25TH – 27TH APRIL 2014

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

This conference will bring researchers, educators, policy-makers, and providers from across disciplines together with members of the judiciary and those with lived experience. The primary aim is to share knowledge and experience, to advance the rights and highlight the needs of families striving to live well with parental mental health challenges. Related objectives include provision of an interactive forum to discuss common experiences, effective and evidence informed support and advocacy strategies, and contemporary, cutting edge research.

Conference Objectives:

Participants will have opportunity to explore two general theme areas:

- The challenges of parenting for adults with psychiatric disability or mental health concerns
- The impact and challenges for children & young people living in families with parental psychiatric disability or mental health concerns, including those associated with being a young carer

Themes and topics will include:

- Evidence informed supports and services for young people, parents and families
- The legislative/legal barriers parents confront in maintaining custody of their children including interactions with the child welfare system and family law courts
- Strategies for building trust and reducing stigma while supporting parents and children
- Information on how psychiatric disabilities and mental health concerns are experienced by parents and both their young and adult children
- The use of technology-based platforms to provide information, training, education and support to parents and families
- Advocacy strategies for supporting families living with parental mental health challenges

Conference Format:

This 2.5 day conference will begin with an evening of networking. For the remainder of the conference, presentations and panels will be held both on specific theme and cross theme areas. We will be providing opportunities through the conference for people to gather formally and informally to discuss issues of common concern.

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