United Nations Department
of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Social Policy and Development

Since 1978 IFFD
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

55TH COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

"Strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all"

The United Nations Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD),
in partnership with the International Federation for Family Development (IFFD),
cordially invites you to attend a high-level panel discussion:

INCLUSIVE CITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE FAMILIES

Monday, 6 February 2017
1.15 pm - Conference Room 12
United Nations Headquarters
New York, NY

www.familyperspective.org/cities

Dr. Siti Norlasiah Binti Ismail
D. G. of the National Population
and Family Development Board
of Malaysia

Daniela Bas
Director of the Division for
Social Policy and Development
UN DESA

H. E. Roberto Ciambetti
President of the
Consiglio Regionale
del Veneto (Italy)

H. E. Michael Farrugia
Minister of Family
and Social Solidarity
of Malta

Moderator **Mario Armella** World president of the International Federation for Family Development

For more information, please visit http://bit.ly/csocd55

TOPIC: INCLUSIVE CITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE FAMILIES

FORMAT: PRESENTATIONS FOLLOWED BY A MODERATED DISCUSSION

CONCEPT

According to the World Bank, today's urban population of about 3.5 billion people is projected to reach 5 billion by 2030, with two-thirds of the global population living in cities. City leaders must move quickly to plan for growth. The speed and scale of urbanization brings challenges for all family members such as children, parents, youth, persons with disabilities and older persons. The capacity to tackle challenges is essential to assure a safe growth of all family members that live in the city. Along the natural process of ageing, the World Health Organization has published a guide which defines the relevant areas to work on to become age-friendly. It looks at 8 domains of citizens' live which have an impact on how people age. These domains are: affordable housing; well-connected transport systems; meeting accelerated demand for infrastructure and built environment; respect and social inclusion; access to community support and health services; communication and information; as well as civil participation; jobs and opportunities, particularly for the nearly 1 billion urban poor who live in informal settlements.

While most of the global population and capital goods are concentrated in cities, urban areas remain crucial to social development, economic prosperity and poverty eradication. They drive most of the economic growth and are a source of innovation, facing sanitation and security challenges while acting as cultural centres. Achievements in eradicating poverty among developing countries are partly recognized to the significant progress in economic growth performance in the past two decades as well as gains in education and health, and the provision of social protection. To ensure that no one is left behind in the New Urban Agenda, strategies that have proven to be effective and measurable need to be taken. Modern cities need to be resilient and constantly diagnosed of their urban strength. Only a holistic approach of the numerous variables within the cities can manage to give a complete picture of the city's vigour. A dialogue among stakeholders is equally important; any effort aimed at facilitating it among government, civil society, residents, and the private sector about risks and the performance of urban systems is a worthwhile cause. With an accurate diagnosis, priority actions and investments can be identified, as well as strengthening resilience for planned or aspirational projects.

What better holistic approach than a family perspective? The family unit has proven to be the main agent for development within societies and thus cornerstone for sustainable cities. Therefore, its area of action must be of great concern in order to facilitate its role in generations to come. If families are these crucial development agents, an adequate environment is needed to facilitate their role. An adequate integrated approach that encourages cross-sectorial collaboration is more efficient when tackling existing issues and unlocking opportunities within the city. A holistic approach to the family will definitely contribute in the three different aspects of sustainable development, and will make possible an accurate assessment of the needs for inclusive cities, especially in terms of investment in infrastructure. In order to achieve this objective, families may need to be provided with adequate tools for strengthening their ability to reach their potential as productive, engaged, and capable agents of sustainable development, contributing fully to their members and communities. Sustainable cities start and end with cohesive and inclusive families. Building cities that "work" –inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable– requires intensive policy coordination and investment choices. National and local governments have an important role to play to take action now, to shape the future of their development and to create opportunities for all, so that no one will be left behind.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How can the dialogue among government, civil society, residents, and the private sector about the New Urban Agenda be improved?
- What is the role of families in the achievement of SDG 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable?
- How can families be provided with adequate tools for strengthening their ability to reach their potential?