



FAMILY MATTERS

Circular No. 28

Follow up of the International Year of the Family

October 2000

FAMILY UNIT

The Follow up to the International Year of the Family is the responsibility of the Family Unit, Division for Social Policy and Development within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The follow-up activities to the International Year of the Family are in accordance with intergovernmental mandates e.g. General Assembly resolutions 50/142 of 21 December 1995, 52/81 of 12 December 1997, and 54/124 of 17 December 1999 respectively. [The Family Unit welcomes ongoing information and data on family-related policies and programmes from concerned actors and focal points].

Within the context of the preparations for, and observance of the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004, the general objectives of the Family Unit is to assist Governments and civil society, including research and academic institutions in strengthening family-centered components of policies and programmes as part of an integrated approach to develop and stimulate, coordinate and catalyse activities for the preparation and observance of the Tenth Anniversary.

The specific objectives of the subprogramme *inter alia* are:

- (1) Increase awareness of family issues among Governments, policy-makers and the public;
- (2) Strengthen national institutions to formulate, implement and monitor policies in respect of families;
- (3) Stimulate efforts to respond to problems affecting, and affected by, the situation of families; and
- (4) Coordinating the preparation for and observance of the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

The Family Unit's Work Programme identifies five main areas of focus within the framework of the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family:

5. Technology and its impact on the family;
6. Approaches to the development of family policies;
7. Indicators and statistics for family well-being;
8. Parental roles and intra-familial support systems;
9. HIV/AIDS and its impact on families.

The legislative authority for this subprogramme is derived most recently from General Assembly resolutions 50/142, 52/81 and 54/124.

The Family Unit will service intergovernmental and expert bodies. Substantive servicing of General Assembly meetings will occur as they relate to the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family including meetings of the Third Committee. Substantive support, in the form of reports and results of expert group meetings, will assist the General Assembly in monitoring the preparation for the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (2004).

The purposes are: to inform Governments on the progress achieved in the implementation of the International Year of the Family objectives as well as on the preparations for the Tenth

Anniversary; to address its mandates pursuant to current General Assembly resolutions 50/142, 52/81 and 54/124 as well as subsequent ones; and to provide relevant documents and information to guide the debate on relevant family policy issues.

Substantive servicing of Economic and Social Council meetings will take place as they relate to the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family. Substantive support, in the form of reports and results of expert group meetings will inform Economic and Social Council of activities related to preparations for the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (2004).

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The objectives are to inform Governments on the progress achieved in the implementation of IYF activities pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 50/142, 52/81 and 54/124 as well as on the preparations for the Tenth Anniversary, and to provide relevant documents and information to guide the debate on relevant family policy issues.

The Family Unit will prepare reports of the Secretary General on the preparation for the Tenth Anniversary. The objective is to facilitate actions of national mechanisms concerning sustained policies and strategies within the context of the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

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activities pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 50/142, 52/81 and 54/124 as well as on the preparations for the Tenth Anniversary, and to provide relevant documents and information to guide the debate on relevant family policy issues.

Substantive servicing of Commission for Social Development meetings will also occur as they relate to the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family. Substantive support in the forms of reports and results of Expert Group Meetings will assist the Commission for Social Development in monitoring the preparation for the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

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A series of Expert Group Meetings will be planned for 2002-2003. The aim is to exchange regional "How-to" approaches to developing productive and sustainable frameworks on family policy development and to identify major regional trends affecting families. This will be undertaken in cooperation with partners.

Research studies will be prepared. The Family Unit will disseminate the results to policy makers on major regional trends to strengthen family centred components of relevant national policies and programmes.

Special events will be celebrated such as the Observance and promotion of the International Day of Families on 15 May annually. This should encourage the active celebration of the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family at the national and local levels.

A backgrounder on the annual themes of the International Day of Families will be prepared and disseminated to over 50 UNIC offices in all regions and family focal points at all levels. There is a need to provide

high visibility to the family issue as a priority in social development planning. Also, a message will be made available on the International Day of Families, 15th of May.

To facilitate the dissemination and exchange of ideas and experiences on family issues, a home page (Family Matters) will be continued to facilitate access to up-to-date information about the work of the United Nations in the area of families.

International Coordination and Inter-Agency Coordination and Liaison will continue to facilitate the exchange of experience and information among Focal Points; support and promote networks among non-governmental organizational committees related to families; promote and develop the Inter-University Network on Families; participate in activities of funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system on meetings, joint missions and other undertakings; and consult with Governments, UN Agencies and bodies, including the regional commissions, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

Assistance to Governments and national institutions will be provided to promote the role of families in development within the context of the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family. The aim is to assist governments in addressing national priorities and emphasizing the family perspective in development planning.

Mobilization of resources will continue by utilizing the UN Trust Fund on Family Activities to support salient national and regional initiatives. The aim is to strengthen and support families in performing their societal and developmental functions and to build upon their strengths, in particular at the national and local levels. It is geared to promote family specific pilot research activities, programmes and policy development in least developed and developing countries, and countries with economies in transition.

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