

National Guidelines

National programmes are being implemented to support families in the discharge of their functions and promote the strengths of families, including their inherent capacity for self-reliance, and to stimulate self-sustaining activities on their behalf. National programmes should give expression to an integrated perspective of families, their members, communities and society.

A wide spectrum of promotional and informational activities are proposed as an integral part of local and national-level activities. It is anticipated that the commencement of the tenth anniversary will be seen as an opportunity for advocacy and promotional efforts to achieve maximum visibility. Specific measures may include statements and speeches on the observance of the tenth anniversary by the head of State or Government, an announcement of policy and programme intentions on specific family issues, observance of a national family day or week, and festivals promoting the family. Governments are being invited to establish a national coordinating committee for the tenth anniversary to plan, stimulate and coordinate activities by appropriate governmental and non-governmental agencies. Such a committee would also help to assure the integration of family issues into overall national development planning. Close and effective coordination among the numerous actors involved is desirable throughout the process of policy formulation and implementation. Such coordination can be achieved through special institutional arrangements and procedures, which may take several forms, according to national political and administrative traditions and circumstances. The national coordinating committees or other coordinating bodies can serve as national focal points to liaise with the United Nations regarding the tenth anniversary. It is proposed that Governments establish national coordination committees or similar mechanisms on the tenth anniversary by early 2002 or soon thereafter, or entrust responsibility for preparations for the tenth anniversary to already existing bodies by that date. Governmental action is necessary to involve all sectors of society and elaborate specific programmes for the preparation of the tenth anniversary, in particular at the local level (see annex).

Governments may similarly consider preparing an agenda for national action for the tenth anniversary in which specific family needs would be identified and action programmes proposed for implementation by end of 2002. National initiatives will be adopted by each Government within the broader framework of the strategy for the tenth anniversary. The role of civil society is useful to recognize and in this context, and its active participation can be a valuable aid to successful observation of the tenth anniversary.

Guidelines for the establishment of a national coordinating committee

A. Nature and composition

In order to accomplish its objectives, a national coordinating committee for the tenth anniversary would need to possess adequate political influence and high public visibility, possibly at the highest policy- and decision-making levels. It is encouraged to reflect the multidisciplinary nature of family issues and provide for intersectoral consultation, coordination and implementation, with adequate structural support. The committee may include representatives, as appropriate, of governmental and non-governmental organizations, associations, the private sector and individuals. Governments may wish to ensure that they are widely represented and enjoy appropriate status in the national coordinating committee for the tenth anniversary.

B. Objectives and functions

The overall aim and objective of a national coordinating committee is to promote and encourage family concerns and activities as an integral part of national development within the framework of the tenth anniversary. One of its main objectives is to achieve a coordinated and integrated approach to family-related issues.

The functions of a national coordinating committee can include the following:

- (a) Identifying, monitoring and evaluating various governmental and non-governmental programmes of both direct and indirect concern to the family, in connection with the tenth anniversary;
- (b) Providing an effective channel for the promotion of the tenth anniversary at the local and national levels
- (c) Elaborating and implementing a national programme of preparations for the observance of the tenth anniversary in the form of an “agenda for national action”;
- (d) Reviewing and assessing the situation of the family, and identifying specific issues and problems;
- (e) Sensitizing public opinion on family-related issues and problems and providing a leadership role in articulating family concerns;
- (f) Monitoring and evaluating family policies and programmes;

(g) Promoting and undertaking research on the family and serving as a repository for national information and data relating to the family;

(h) Facilitating the involvement of non-governmental organizations in the preparations for and observance of the anniversary;

(i) Encouraging incorporation of family programmes into national development strategies.