



2016 FAMILY EXPERT GROUP MEETING

RECOMMENDATIONS

SDGs 1&2: Poverty & hunger

- Ensure a family perspective in poverty and hunger reduction policies and programmes.
- Delink social security benefits from labour market status, extend coverage to vulnerable families and introduce the principle of progressive universalism in social protection provision.
- Promote an integrated, multi-generation approach to social protection that recognizes care responsibilities throughout the life-cycle.
- Adopt care-related labour market policies to enable working family members – including those in the informal sector -- to effectively combine work and care responsibilities.
- Scale up social support and care service provision by increasing access and improving the quality of social services such as healthcare, education, and care for children, persons with disabilities and older persons.
- Develop better reconciliation policies for women and men, such as flexible forms of employment, paid paternity and parental leaves, and promotion of shared responsibility within the family.

SDG3: Health & well-being

Reproductive health

- Remove existing barriers (including legal and policy frameworks) in access to core health services; ensure community engagement involving all stakeholders, as a core component of programmes and policies and tailor health-related policies and programmes to the social context.

Children and youth wellbeing

- Incorporate a family perspective (including on parent-youth relationships) in the design of youth targeted policies. Focus some family and youth policies (explicit or implicit) on changing harmful and risky behaviours in order to strengthen family relationships and promote the well-being of all family members.
- Promote the psychological well-being of children and youth, taking into account unique family situations, including through efforts to prevent violence, prevent and treat addiction, discourage juvenile delinquency, and help youth transition from study to employment so that they are capable to form their own families.
- Promote child and youth participation in the decisions that concern them in the family and the community in line with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Promote public campaigns aiming at eradicating of female genital mutilation and other harmful practices.

HIV/AIDS

- As appropriate, include a family (rather than individual) perspective in HIV prevention interventions
- Provide accurate information, testing, counselling, support, and training for families to help them protect their children from HIV infection.
- Ensure that HIV programs contribute to empowering, protecting, and strengthening families infected and affected by HIV/AIDS
- Promote family-focused ART (adherence to antiretroviral therapy) programmes that train family members to be caring and supportive for HIV-infected members.

Mental health

- Involve families in the promotion of mental health, and in the prevention and treatment of mental illness, e.g. through family life education programmes, community support groups, family therapy and counselling.

- Develop mental health action plans and policies to assure comprehensive and coherent systems of care, and follow through implementation and evaluation.
- Develop national suicide prevention strategies based on contextual and cultural beliefs to decrease the number of suicide attempts.
- Increase governmental expenditure for mental health services, including increasing the number of professionals in the mental health field.
- Promote social inclusion and access to health care, specifically mental health care services, for all ages.
- Promote formal employment with benefits and health insurance to increase the probability of using health care services.
- Improve access to health insurance for people working in the informal sector

SDG4 - Inclusive and equitable quality education

- Maintain existing commitments to the State funded provision of free primary and secondary education (including keeping low or abolishing indirect costs such as school materials, books and school uniforms) to increase the provision of education and attendance, especially in deprived areas.
- Plan and implement through cooperation with civil society organisations (including trade unions, women's groups, NGOs) the gender equality programmes in education.
- Provide and improve education programmes for parents in order to enhance their role in the education of their children.
- Acknowledge the unpaid, yet substantial, contribution of parents to the education of children through policies targeting parents in national education programmes
- Integrate education, health and nutrition policies within inter-ministerial institutions and agencies
- Develop tax incentives to businesses, organisations and activities involved in education; these include for example abolishing value added tax on school materials and children's clothing.
- Develop and revise school curriculum to bring it closer to working needs of children and their parents.
- Facilitate the portability and transferability of educational

qualifications of displaced and immigrant families fleeing conflict situations and economic hardship.

- Foster care and support among generations within families and societies and equitable access to family strengthening resources, such as parenting classes, mentoring programmes, and family enrichment courses, and encourage volunteering by older persons in schools and by youth with older persons.

SDG 5 – Gender equality

- Identify and eliminate discriminatory laws and practices, attitudes and norms which impede girls and women’s life trajectories and affect their well-being, health, education, and employment in areas such as early marriage, female genital mutilation, and other harmful practices.
- Prioritize gender analysis in global development programs, and especially those focused on health and education, in order to expose and address the inequalities that girls and women are subjected to.
- Recognise caregiving and unpaid work and promote reconciliation policies at the workplace and equal share of care and family responsibilities in the family, to avoid an unbalanced burden on women and enable adult family members to enter and maintain formal employment.
- Emphasize gender mainstreaming in order to embed gender equality in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes
- Recognize caregiving and unpaid work in families (e.g. through the compensation of care work in families).
- Carry out programmes, such as targeted scholarships and stipends for girls to increase gender equality and empowerment.
- Gather basic and complex social data with a focus on gender in households and communities.
- Encourage paternal responsibility and acknowledge men’s role and contribution to family life, promote active fatherhood, and address the impact of male absence on family well-being.

Cross-cutting issues:

Family & parental support for violence prevention

- Provide widely available supports for families to parent effectively and reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect
- Ensure that violence prevention and family support systems are underpinned by a family well-being framework that recognises the cross-disciplinary nature of effective interventions, and is supported by an integrated ‘whole-of-government’ approach that overcomes the silos that occur when responsibility is divided up between different departments, and different levels of government (local, state/province, and federal/national), and the community/NGOs.

Support for fathers

- In public policy and business practice: work towards greater parity between the amount of parental leave provided to women and men and increase the provision of parental leave geared specifically to men (including partial wage replacement).
- Institute mandatory paternity leave for fathers when a child is born.
- Promote efforts to enhance the role of fathers throughout pregnancy and early parenthood by including them in pre-natal medical visits, classes and education.
- Expand family-friendly workplace flexibility, alternate scheduling and other family-supportive practices for both female and male employees.
- Offer educational programmes in the workplace to change work cultures and supervisory attitudes in order to reduce stigma associated with men who prioritize family.

Research and data collection

- Ensure data are collected on the nature of family connections and relations in order to advance the design and effectiveness of policies and programmes to improve health for all at all ages as well as to understand the specific mechanisms of how a policy or programme is working (or not). These data must go beyond family structure (who lives with whom) and reflect the situations of families and the capacity of families and family relationships in order to improve access to basic health services and preventive information and education, reduce stigma around health outcomes and behaviours and support adherence to treatment.
- Proactively plan for investments and involvement of families in programmes that are integrated with multiple SDG’s to make

progress on one SDG that can have positive "spill-over" effects in other SDGs (e.g., study support and livelihoods training for adolescent girls not only reduces child marriage but also leads to increased retention of girls in school) .

- Involve families and communities in the design and approaches used in policies and programmes in order to build general consensus and receptivity in the community and to tailor methods to the social and cultural context.
- To reduce the cost of new data collection incorporate family related questions and issues in the existing data collection programmes such as household surveys and census.

New areas of research

- Improve data collection and research on the following emerging issues:
 - a) The integration of youth into society, especially as it relates to youth unemployment, and young people becoming discouraged workers or accepting jobs that are dangerous, exploitative, or otherwise unsuitable, and the connections between poor youth integration and intergenerational poverty, social exclusion, crime, and poor health.
 - (b) The increasing prevalence of 'full-nest syndrome', in which young people depend on their parents and grandparents for a longer time, due to challenging economic conditions and lack of employment.
 - (c) Labour market conditions that either promote or decrease female participation when linked to fertility issues (for instance, an increase in age at childbearing and/or the decrease in the number of children couples have when compared to previous generations.
 - c) Ways to promote 'active ageing', including policies, practices and programs which can help senior family members attain new vital roles in order to avoid social exclusion and continue to feel needed and valued by their families, prolonging their lives and mitigating the lack of family carers.
 - d) Research on fathers should increase our understanding of the factors that impact paternal attitudes, their role in families, changing attitudes towards gender roles. It is also important to promote case studies of societies and global companies that offer paternal leave and their effect on gender equality and parental roles.

Stakeholder cooperation and the role of civil society

- Increase awareness and interaction among stakeholders: policy makers, transnational NGO's, academics that address the linkages among the SDG's specifically around poverty, hunger, education and gender equality and empowerment.
- Support local, national and transnational NGOs working with children and families, ensuring their participation in policy design, making and implementation.
- Involve professional associations and trade unions in advocacy for family policies and programmes.
- Recognise and encourage financial contribution to civil society organisations working with/for families and children (especially those in vulnerable situations).