FAMILY FUTURES

2014 - TWENTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE
INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF THE FAMILY

Tudor Rose

FAMILY FUTURES

Tudor Rose

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Tudor Rose concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors; they are not necessarily those of the publisher.

MIX
Paper from
responsible sources
FSC® C114687
FSC
www.fsc.org

2014 - TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY

Tudor Rose

Acknowledgements

Australian Government Department of Social Services

Australian Institute of Family Studies

Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO)

Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union (COFACE)

Doha International Family Institute (DIFI)

Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Generations United

Hong Kong Family Council Secretariat

Hong Kong Family Welfare Society

Inclusion International

Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (ICBF)

International Center for Work and Family (ICWF)

International Federation for Family Development (IFFD)

Kenya Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Services

Kenya Program for Family Development (PFD)

Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs (KIHASA)

Make Mothers Matter lnternational

Malaysia National Population and Family Development Board (NPFDB)

National University of Ireland

New Zealand Families Commission

Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Pusat Kajian Perlindungan Anak: Center on Child Protection

Roy McKenzie Centre for the Study of Families

SEDESOL, Mexico

Service and Research Institute on Family and Children (SERFAC)

Singapore Ministry of Social and Family Development

State Committee for Family, Women and Children of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Thai Ministry of Social Development and Human Security

UN Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA)

UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA)

United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Uruguay Ministry of Social Development

Vanier Institute of the Family

Voice of the Family in Africa International

World Assembly of Youth (WAY)

Foreword

**AMINA J. MOHAMMED, SPECIAL ADVISER TO THE UNITED NATIONS
SECRETARY-GENERAL ON POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT PLANNING**

Families are at the core of human development. Among the natural and fundamental bases of society, families are central to the world's quest for dignity, peace and justice. Moreover, as the basic economic unit in every society, families are key to global efforts to eliminate poverty and bring about prosperity.

There is ample evidence of the important role of the family and its contribution to economic and social development. Chronic poverty within families is generally transferred to the next generation. Intergenerational solidarity is a matter of justice and is essential for social inclusion. Violence amongst youth in many parts of the world, for example, is often related to the weakening of family bonds. Some of the most successful development policies and programmes that have led to social inclusion and poverty reduction have been family-oriented.

As a result, families have made an important contribution to achieving international development objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Healthy and stable family relations contribute to each of the eight MDGs: generating wealth and reducing hunger; prolonging education; empowering women and girls; reducing infant mortality; improving maternal health; preventing diseases; reducing pressure on the environment; and promoting social cohesion and global partnerships.

Much remains to be done. With less than 700 days to the 2015 MDGs deadline, far too many people and families continue to face serious deprivations. But the world has changed radically since the turn of the millennium when the MDGs were first devised. Inequality has risen in rich and poor countries alike. New technologies are reshaping our societies and new patterns of human settlement, as well as consumption and production, are intensifying the pressures on our planet. Meanwhile, new opportunities have also arisen from considerable socioeconomic changes; the expansion of education, health care, employment and migration continues to positively alter traditional societal structures and roles.

In the midst of all this change, however, what remains constant is the role of the family, both as a fundamental unit of society deserving the widest possible protection and assistance, and as a key enabler and nurturer of social and economic progress.

While deliberations on the post-2015 development agenda are ongoing, there is a general consensus on the need to build on the experience of the past decade; to expand from social development to include economic and environmental objectives; and to fully embrace the notion of sustainable development. Families will remain firmly at the core of this agenda across all these areas. The twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2014 is an opportunity to reflect upon and reiterate this important message.

Amina J. Mohammed
Special Adviser to the United Nations
Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning

Contents

I

ADVANCING SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Contents

II
CONFRONTING FAMILY POVERTY

Contents

III
ENSURING WORK-FAMILY BALANCE

MICHAEL D. HIGGINS, PRESIDENT OF IRELAND

It is indeed a high honour and a pleasure to support this excellent publication.

The foundational themes that animate UN DESA's work resonate very strongly with my presidency here in Ireland. I came to office at a time when faith in public institutions had been seriously eroded. I am certain that recovery in Ireland and elsewhere is based not merely on sound economic discipline, but on a renewed sense of hope as well as a deep appreciation of the value of our social existence. We used to talk about the social dimension to the market. Now much more is needed. We need to truly understand and appreciate the value of the social sphere in its own right, and we need to understand and appreciate the family as a bedrock institution that enables a democratic ethos.

Despite the rhetoric of excessive individualism, the truth is that our personhood is shared. It is this intersubjectivity that makes us human. Support we give and receive in intimate family relationships makes us who we are. The ethic of civic virtue – seeing something beyond ourselves and a willingness to contribute – stems from the foundation we receive in the nurturing environment of the family. The ethic of civic engagement – a willingness to engage with and help others as well as contribute to our democratic society – depends on the ethics embedded in family life. Indeed, the reflex for tolerance, respect for the other and human rights depends in no small part on the quality of family life.

It is clear that we all have a stake in ensuring that the family receives the support it needs to continue to flourish as an island of repose and nurturing, and as a bedrock in our democratic societies. As we move forward into the twenty-first century it seems plain that we need to adopt life-course perspectives on the family to ensure that today's children continue to be valued throughout their lives.

Coinciding with the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, *Family Futures* brings together the experience, good practice, observations and endeavours of policymakers, agencies and academics working with families across the world. This publication provides an invaluable resource for those looking to address today's challenges and support the families and societies of tomorrow.

Michael D. Higgins
President of Ireland

FREDRIK REINFELDT, PRIME MINISTER OF SWEDEN

Balancing work and family responsibilities is a key challenge for many parents in today's society. In Sweden, both women and men are extensively employed after becoming parents. Several studies have shown that high labour force participation among women increases a country's gross domestic product substantially. It ensures that a country's human resources are better taken care of and enables all individuals – women and men – to make full use of their professional potential. In short, gender equality is good economics, but also good from an individual development perspective. Our experience confirms this conclusion.

Sweden's general welfare system aims to even out the differences in life opportunities and living standards, while retaining scope and conditions for freedom for individuals and families. Family policy is based on the opportunity for children to develop together with their parents. The key elements that summarize my government's view of modern family policy are: a focus on the child, freedom of choice, and an equal responsibility of both parents for the child.

Since family circumstances vary greatly, it is important that family policy is based on the family's individual situation. This means family policy is constantly in need of revision, to meet the changing needs and preferences of families. There are several policy strategies at hand to encourage and support both women's and men's potential to combine family life with working life. Among them are universally available, good quality and affordable preschools, and a family policy that contributes to the adequacy of resources of families with young children, including a generous and flexible parental benefit.

The *Family Futures* initiative is an excellent example of a means to exchange good practice and promote family friendliness across the globe. Countries can learn and be inspired by others, adjusting models and solutions to country-specific needs. I believe there is a need for continuous policy development in order to improve living conditions for all types of families.

Fredrik Reinfeldt
Prime Minister of Sweden

JOSÉ GRAZIANO DA SILVA, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, FAO

The 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2014 offers the opportunity to bring to the fore the central role families play in development. But it goes beyond simple recognition by also allowing us to give a strong response to the challenges faced by families. As basic units of societies, families are vehicles for mitigating and overcoming social and economic challenges. They are very important actors in addressing a number of key global challenges, including the achievement of food security and sustainable food systems. However, they need support and an adequate policy environment to be able to fulfil their contribution to development.

The vital role of families is particularly evident in rural areas, where agriculture accounts for the majority of livelihood opportunities. With estimates pointing to more than 500 million family farms in the world, family farming is the predominant form of agriculture in developed and developing countries and family farmers are key actors for food security. Despite the demonstrated importance of families in agriculture, they face significant challenges, including an exodus of youth from the sector, a gender gap in terms of access to productive resources and work opportunities throughout the food chain, and difficulty in accessing services and markets. The issues addressed by the 20th Anniversary of the International Family — to confront family poverty, ensure work-family balance, and advance social integration and intergenerational solidarity — are essential for helping family farmers meet the challenges they face. With the necessary support, they can quickly achieve their productive potential and increase food availability, and thus contribute towards decreasing poverty and strengthening family units and communities.

The 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family coincides with the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF). The United Nations chose 2014 as the IYFF in order to recognize and bolster the central role family farmers play in improving food security and promoting sustainability. Family farmers used to be considered part of the problem. Instead, they have an important role to play in ensuring a more sustainable future in which the right to food is a reality for every person. They are part of the solution to the world's problems of food insecurity. As the agency tasked with leading the implementation of the IYFF on behalf of the United Nations, FAO is in charge moving this shared vision forward.

The joint celebration of the International Year of Family Farming and the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family offers a unique opportunity to capitalize on our shared ambitions: to foster an effective and supportive policy environment that can fully engage the potential of family farmers. This publication, *Family Futures*, explores the important role of families in development in greater depth, with the aim of highlighting the best practices in policy making and programmes to achieve our common goals.

José Graziano da Silva
Director-General, FAO
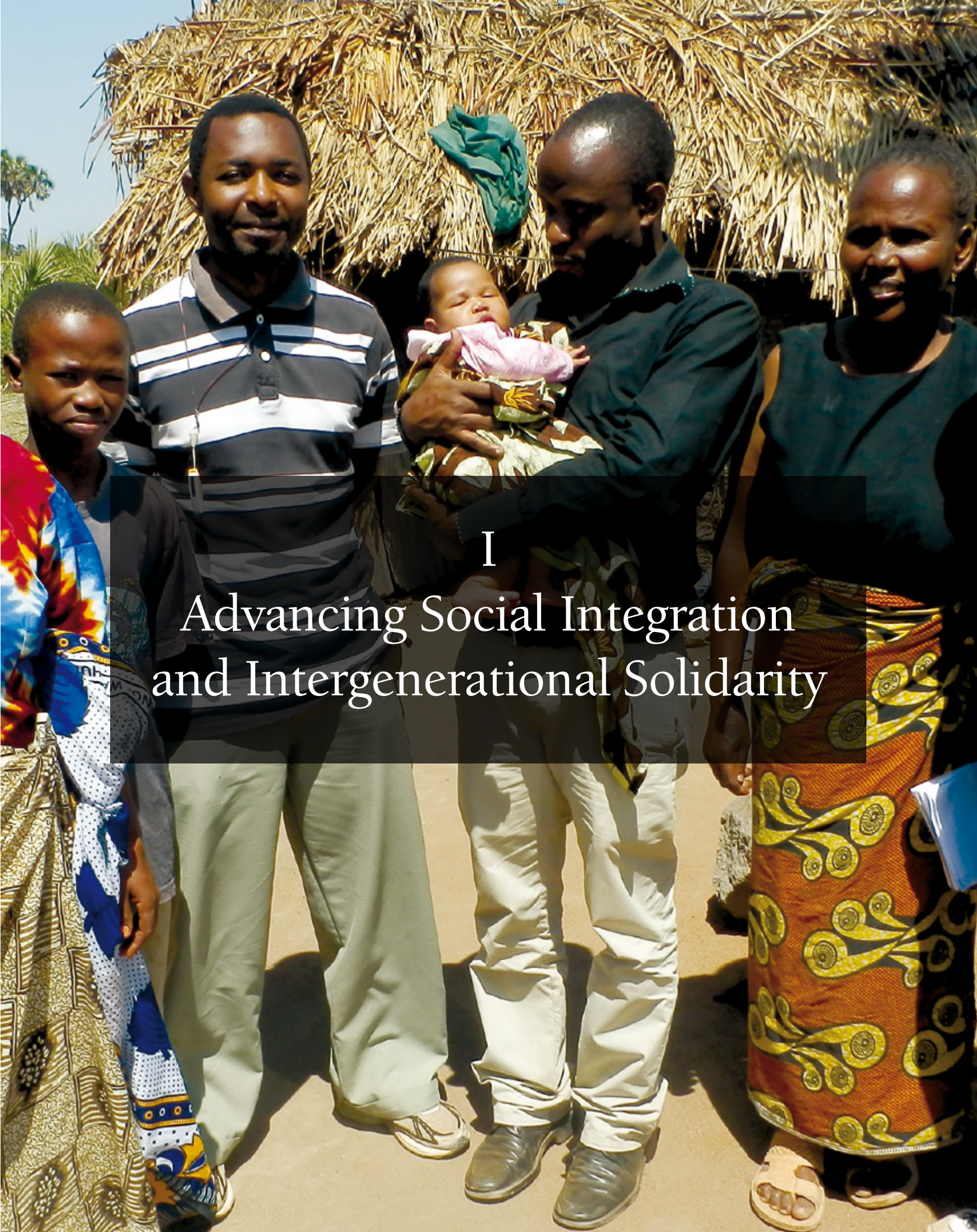
I
Advancing Social Integration and Intergenerational Solidarity

Stronger together: intergenerational solidarity in families and communities

Donna M. Butts, Executive Director, Generations United

Families are the foundation of our communities and global society. The bookend generations of young and old within societies continue to be the primary basis for personal and social security as well as bonding between human beings. Generations have always been, and will continue to be, interdependent in order to survive and thrive.

Throughout our lives, we receive and give care while collecting, managing and passing on resources and stories. Such a social compact between generations not only ensures a higher level of basic survival but also contributes to the ability of human beings to flourish and make rich contributions at every age. Families and communities invest in the next generation, convinced that this is how society progresses. The next generation in turn will reciprocate and be better prepared to care for those who are younger and older, while advancing the well-being of societies. The circle of life completes and continues carrying us forward.

Throughout their lives, the majority of people in all cultures maintain close relationships with members of their families. This remains true even as the definition of 'family' rapidly expands around the globe. Many factors influence this change, including growing numbers of blended and cohabiting families, unmarried couples, single heads of households and childless couples, as well as changing views on same-sex marriage. Today it's not unusual for families to include great grandparents and great aunts and uncles, because people are living longer.

Older adults have always played a significant, but often overlooked, role in supporting families. This so-called 'grandparent advantage' — the ability to recycle human knowledge, understanding, culture and experience — benefits future generations and is essential to supporting strong, healthy families.

The grandparent advantage manifests itself in many ways. It can be thought of as a continuum measured by the degree to which grandparents are involved in family life. The range runs from older adults who may have occasional contact with children and youth to those that provide some childcare and/or financial assistance or those that provide a roof and full-time care, acting as parents in a skipped-generation household.

Reliance on grandparents and other relatives to raise children has increased dramatically around the world. This happens, for example, in Africa because of HIV/AIDS, in the United States due to substance abuse, and in parts of Asia where distant but better job prospects cause parents to leave their children behind. Many factors can prevent parents from being able to parent. In the US alone, 7.4 million children

"Joey is my cruise" — Adrian's story

When my husband Ron and I bought our house 17 years ago we were looking for neighbourhoods with senior centres. We never thought about grade schools! Then my father passed away, which left my mom living alone. After her house was broken into, Ron said she had to come live with us. The next year my grandson Joey moved in with us.

Joey is our gift. Neither of his parents could really care for him. We didn't want to see him go into foster care so we pulled up our suspenders and went to court. I made every court appearance — more than 100 of them — to make sure he'd be able to stay with us. I had a pension, but I spent it all on court costs. He's worth it!

Joey calls me 'Babi' — that's Czech for 'grandma' — and he calls my mom 'Double Babi'. The other day he got up early and he came in and told me, "Babi, I made the coffee, fed the dog, fed the cat and brought in the paper. You've got an easy day today!"

Sometimes at home everyone's talking at the same time. I told my doctor, "I can't wait to get hearing aids — so I can shut them off!" But really you just have to keep an open mind and an open heart.

I talk to people my age and they talk about the trips they take and cruises they go on. I tell them I cruise too. I cruise to school, to doctor's appointments, to meetings after school. Joey is my cruise and I wouldn't have it any other way.

Supporting the relationships between generations is increasingly important as global populations and economies shift

live in households headed by a grandparent or other relative. Known as 'grandfamilies', these older caregivers provide an incredible service to their families and their government by reducing the burden on both. It's estimated that grandfamilies save US taxpayers more than US$6.5 billion a year by keeping children and youth out of the government-funded foster care system. Children in grandfamilies can benefit because relative caregivers are less likely to separate sisters and brothers and provide a stronger connection to roots, culture and heritage. Children in relative care report feeling loved far more often than those in the care of a government system. And while a young person may age out of a system when they reach adulthood, they never age out of a family that continues to care for them even as they transition.

Unfortunately, older relatives are rarely acknowledged in family policies. It's becoming impossible, though, to ignore the pivotal role grandparents, grand aunts and uncles and extended family members play in supporting healthy children and protecting social cohesion. Fortunately, in recent years we've witnessed some progress in family policymaking. In the US, policymakers have begun to recognize that some older adults are the receivers of care while others are the givers of care. The National Family Caregiver Support Program, for example, was originally proposed to fund services such as respite, support groups and legal services for family members supporting older relatives. Advocates intervened and successfully lobbied for the inclusion of older relatives caring for children. Still, good family policymaking lags behind and needs to change so that caregivers can do what they do best: raise a healthy, productive next generation.

Thriving communities around the world mirror the family compact of strong exchange and solidarity between generations. Just like families, communities that support intergenerational programmes (those that engage two or more generations) play an important role in promoting intergenerational cohesion. Dr Leng Leng Thang of Singapore

> The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the state.
> **— United Nations, 1948**

found that intergenerational programmes provide a platform for developing positive relationships across generations and also strengthen the quality of ties between family members. Similarly, a study in Europe found that younger people engaged in intergenerational programmes showed more interest in the older members of their own families.

Intergenerational programmes vary around the world, but they typically fall into four categories — young serving old, old serving young, young and old serving together, and intergenerational shared sites. Recording oral histories, teaching mobile phone use and delivering meals to home-bound seniors are all examples of the young serving the old. Older adults serve younger generations when they tutor, mentor or pass on history and culture. Younger and older teams can serve together when they assess needs in their neighbourhoods and recommend solutions, work to cultivate intergenerational community gardens or produce music or theatre together. Intergenerational shared sites can be adult and child day care offered under one roof, a school and a senior centre built together, or providing summer meals for low-income children in the dining room of a nursing home.

Practices and approaches that bridge the gap between different age groups save dollars while making sense. They are a tribute to reciprocity. Studies conducted by Johns Hopkins University and Washington University in St Louis, US found that that older adults who participated in intergenerational programmes took better care of themselves, were healthier and less depressed, scored better on memory tests and had larger social networks. Young people in the

Older relatives play a pivotal role in supporting healthy children and protecting social cohesion

Reliance on grandparents and other relatives to raise children has increased dramatically around the world

same programmes scored better on reading tests, had more advanced social skills and were more accepting of people who were different from themselves.

In economic terms, intergenerational engagement maximizes the use of the world's growing human capital asset — older adults. Every country needs its elders to continue to contribute and advance the well-being of society. Using an intergenerational lens or frame strengthens social cohesion and ensures that this important asset isn't left dormant.

Hubert Humphrey, a former Senator and Vice President of the United States, once said that the moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped. The social compact he was describing strengthens the commitment between and among generations. This compact, along with social insurance and retirement schemes, is coming under pressure as our global population ages. As countries grapple with changes, some are turning from a compact to a contract, often supported by punitive policies. For example, in 2007 India passed the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, which punishes people found guilty of not providing care for older family members. The punishment calls for imprisonment lasting up to three months or a fine of up to Rs5,000, or both. Many parents, however, are hesitant to bring charges against their own family members. This situation is similar to what Singapore experienced following a law passed there in 1995. It was modified in 2010 to focus more on a conciliation-first approach which does more to strengthen the bonds between generations of family members.

Countries can consider an all-generations approach to developing family policies designed to reinforce social integration and intergenerational solidarity. Simple questions such as whether all generations are being viewed as assets can provide standards to evaluate whether a proposed policy is family-friendly. Generations United, a US-based advocacy organization, suggests four principles to judge policies by:
• make lifetime well-being for all the highest priority
• consider the impact of every action on each generation
• unite rather than divide the generations for the greatest social and financial impact
• recognize and support every generation's ability to contribute to the well-being of their families and communities.

As global populations and economies shift, supporting the relationships between and among generations in families and societies becomes even more important. Policymakers and other leaders can support and strengthen families by using a lens that values and engages all ages. We are, after all is said and done, stronger together.

Image: Generations United/Richard Adler

Every country needs its elders to continue to contribute and advance the well-being of society

Intergenerational approaches in Wales

In 2002 the Welsh Government undertook consultation with older people across Wales to inform its national strategy for older people. The most surprising outcome was the concern that older people expressed for younger people and the belief that it was much harder for young people now than when they themselves were young.

As a consequence, when the strategy was published in 2003 it contained a funded commitment to develop a national intergenerational programme to be led by the Beth Johnson Foundation. Since that time the Welsh Government has continued to support the development of this work and intergenerational approaches are embedded across the country.

Highlights have included a national working group on grandparenting in 2006, the development of a national intergenerational strategy in 2008 and the training of front-line staff and volunteers across Wales. The importance of a coherent and integrated approach now influences the way that policy is approached and considered. The national action plan to address poverty and young people takes an intergenerational approach, recognizing that poverty is transmitted across the generations and needs a whole community approach. The arts, community schools and the environment have all become vehicles to develop the exchange of skills and support to build better connected communities.

Building on its work of the last 10 years, Wales has now expressed the ambition to become the first truly all-age friendly nation in Europe. Linking to the work of the World Health Organization, most authorities have already signed the Dublin Declaration and a national action plan is being developed to challenge inequality and disadvantage and ensure everyone gets the best opportunity to age well as part of strong families and communities.

"Our experience demonstrates that bringing our youth and older people together is an essential foundation for a strong, vibrant and cohesive nation that values all its members and creates a fairer and more just society."

— Alan Hatton-Yeo, Generations Together Cymru

The role of youth in strengthening intergenerational solidarity within the family

Ediola Pashollari, Secretary General, World Assembly of Youth

Many studies have shown the strength of families as functioning social support units with frequent and regular intergenerational contact and assistance.[1] It is important to note that every generation plays a fundamental role in supporting intergenerational solidarity. For instance, children often unite families in cases where those families have been separated by divorce, distance or death. It is common for grandparents, aunts and uncles to take over parenting duties in cases where the children's parents are not available. In most cases, extended families contribute towards the raising of children, either on a seasonal basis or full-time.

Contrary to popular belief, there is a positive relation between generations today according to attitudinal surveys. Research from a 2009 survey on 21 European countries shows that a large number of people do not believe that the elderly generation is an encumbrance to society. This positive response proves that there is little intergenerational conflict, especially between youth and the older generation. Nevertheless, a measure of intergenerational solidarity presents a challenge although it appears to be positive.

Intergenerational solidarity in family life and society is an important value as it enables a situation where generations view each other in a progressive way, or where the said generations have unanimity on moving ahead despite their differences. To a certain extent, intergenerational solidarity can be viewed as a mechanism for supporting mutually beneficial exchanges, both monetary and non-monetary, between generations.

People often see these exchanges as being unidirectional whereby the youth are the taxpayers for elders' pension benefits and health-care costs. Contrary to this belief, the exchanges benefit both generations. The youth of today are enjoying the fruits of what the older generation invested in, in terms of infrastructure and investments in environmental protection.

In his study, Erik Erikson[2] describes how the final stage of emotional development is experienced at approximately the age of 60 and older. At this stage, people are looking to find the significance of their lives and making sense of the way they have lived. Connecting with younger generations can help older adults feel a greater sense of fulfilment. The bond between the generations can:

- help children to understand and later accept their own ageing
- give both the child and the older adult a sense of purpose
- invigorate and energize older adults
- reduce the isolation of older adults
- fill a void for children who do not have grandparents
- provide an opportunity for both to learn new skills
- help to alleviate fears children may have of the elderly
- help reduce the likelihood of depression in the elderly
- help keep family stories and history alive.

Values and perceptions of how the world operates among people born and raised in different eras can be somewhat diverse. In turn, this could lead to complicated relationships between the two generations — hence there is a need to find a connection between them. There are many ways to accomplish this, but the most important one is assisting youth to learn how to relate to older adults and vice versa. Research shows that what matters most is the quality of the interaction between youth and older adults.

Among the many challenges of intergenerational solidarity is the geographic mobility among people nowadays, which threatens the intergenerational social compact.[3] This had led to younger and older generations becoming habitually separated from one another. This segregation often results in undesirable, improbable stereotypes between the two generations. The conflict clouds the fact that these two generations in fact share areas of concern and that they are both subjected to negative stereotyping.

Former WAY President Ole Lovig Simonsen chats with a young delegate

Another challenge is that the industrialized regions (developed countries) of the world notably face a large proportion of the older populations.[4] This is a result of lower birth rates and the age at which mothers give birth nowadays, which is relatively older than in the past. The positive transformation in today's society that comes with safer work environments, higher quality diets and better health care contributes to a large elderly population as well. In normal circumstances this positive change should be celebrated, but instead it is often dominated by worries about how the countries will engross and sustain larger elderly populations.

The expansion of families is driving governments to reassess their future plans and the promises they made during the time when life expectancy was shorter. They now have to come up with beneficial plans that cater for society as it is today. They have to create a comforting environment for the elderly generation who, due to debates about pensions, health care and social security, live in fear of the unknown. The pressure from these debates also affects the families, as they will have to look for ways to take care of their elders and their children at the same time. Given the status of the world economy at the moment this could be distressing.

Developing countries, on the other hand, generally have large younger populations, although this is beginning to change. Regions such as Latin America are following the trend of developed countries, witnessing a reduction in family size.[5] It is estimated that the number of people per household in Latin America will fall by 18 per cent by the year 2020.

Youth migration remains one of the causes and challenges of intergenerational relationships and solidarity. Young people are in need of change, independence and jobs. This has caused many families to lose their children to world, leaving behind older adults and smaller children.

It is undeniable that technology has also impacted families and the way they relate and communicate. While some youth find it easier to stay in touch with family members while they fulfil work, school and other responsibilities, other young people do not share the same sentiments. They would rather spend more of their time watching television, playing electronic games and communicating with others through social media, and this has increased the isolation of family members and diminished relationships around the home base.

The above-mentioned demographic changes and challenges have an effect on families and are bound to put pressure on the solidarity among family members, as new roles materialize to meet emerging challenges. However, it is important that despite all these changes that are capable of adversely affecting intergenerational solidarity within families and society at large, the majority of people in all cultures maintain close relationships with members of their family throughout their lives.

The World Assembly Of Youth

The World Assembly of Youth (WAY) is an international-scale organization that contributes actively towards resolving youth-related matters and coordinating national youth councils. In addition to these areas of focus, WAY has been known for its concern towards the welfare of the younger generation. Due to its close involvement with youth, the organization has been conducting research on different youth issues from around the world. Youth and intergenerational relationships is one of the selected issues that WAY picked to do research on.

The research focuses on the facts and figures of youth and intergenerational relations; the role of WAY in addressing the issue; and what stakeholders need to do to promote solidarity in youth and other generations.[6] In addition to the research, WAY holds international events every year that tend to bring together youth with older generations, to address key youth-related issues. The focus of these events is on providing a forum where youth can take centre stage in the design and development of policies and strategies that address issues that affect them, with help and guidance from the older generation. The event yields a declaration that strategically positions

Delegates at the 12th Melaka International Youth Dialogue in 2012, which focused on the theme 'Health: it's my right'

WAY to promote solidarity among youth and other generations at a family and societal level.

One such event, the 21st International Youth Forum, was held in collaboration with the National Council of Youth Organizations of Korea. During this event, the role of youth towards protecting family dignity and their role with regard to the issue of an ageing population were discussed. In their

A long-term commitment to youth issues: a WAY Caribbean Regional Seminar in 1966 and a workshop seminar on population and family life in 1974

declaration, delegates came to a conclusion that they should organize more recreational activities to promote family bonding and strengthen family relationships. They also declared that they recognize that issues related to an ageing population cannot be solved by monetary means alone. They came to an understanding that many more challenges lie in sustaining the unity of society and preventing intergenerational conflicts and age-based discrimination. The declaration stated that programmes that promote knowledge and experience exchange would allow for greater interaction and dialogue between youth and the elderly.

The youth forum saw young people agreeing that they should facilitate collaboration between youth and the elderly towards creating job opportunities that match the needs and the skills of an ageing society. These jobs should focus less on financial and career issues and instead aim at social inclusion. By doing so, the issue of discrimination due to job opportunities will be minimized.[7]

The way forward

There is increasing understanding of the significance of social integration and intergenerational solidarity. It is deep-rooted in interdependence among generations during the different lifecycles.

Collaborative efforts are being made by some countries to protect and support intergenerational solidarity. The countries in question are creating mechanisms that act to protect family solidity amid changing demographics and economic instabilities. Their objective is to strengthen intergenerational relations within the family and larger community by investing in the development and implementation of policies and programmes. The countries that have already implemented these programmes and policies are experiencing positive results.

Studies in Singapore and Europe have found that younger people engaged in intergenerational programmes show more interest in the older members of their own families. Polls in Europe and the United States found that respondents believed governments could and should do more to encourage intergenerational interactions.[8]

WAY, with the support of all the stakeholders and member organizations, will continue to interchange ideas among the youth of all countries and address the intergenerational relations issues that directly and indirectly affect them.

WAY brings together youth with older generations to address key youth-related issues

Strong families building strong communities

Vivian Fernández de Torrijos, former First Lady of Panama and Special Adviser on Family Issues, Inclusion International; and Diane Richler, Past President, Inclusion International

There are at least 1 billion people in the world who have a disability. Of those, about one-third, or more than 3 million people have an intellectual disability. And all of those people are members of families — they have mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles and cousins. If we assume that each person who has an intellectual disability has at least eight relatives, that means that 2.5 billion people in the world are touched by intellectual disability.

The nature of intellectual disabilities — difficulty learning, remembering, problem-solving and often communicating — means that people who have intellectual disabilities usually require some degree of lifelong support. And most of that support comes from their families.

Unfortunately, in most parts of the world, people with intellectual disabilities are invisible. There is a lot of stigma and misunderstanding about intellectual disability. People may think that the person with a disability is a punishment for the parents' sins, or controlled by the devil. Families may worry that having a brother or sister with an intellectual disability will make it difficult for other children in the family to marry. A father may blame the mother for having a child with a disability and abandon the family.

A mother tells her story: "In Nepali society, disabled and (intellectually disabled) individuals are often shunned. Few people are aware of what (intellectual disability) is and see the disorder as a handicap and something to stare at and be ashamed of. I myself have a five-year-old son with (an intellectual disability). The biggest lesson I have learned is that the more you hide, the bigger the situation grows. I believe that the parents should not isolate such children from the fear of stigmatization; rather they should be treated as normal members of society."

Children with intellectual disabilities rarely go to school in most of the world. Those that do are often in schools or classes separate from the other children of their communities, so that they remain strangers. People with intellectual disabilities in all parts of the world are more subject to violence and abuse, less likely to be employed, and generally poor.

People with intellectual disabilities usually require lifelong support, most of which comes from their families

When communities are inclusive, everyone benefits: a weekly parents' support group meeting of the Kenyan Association of the Intellectually Handicapped

Whether in rich countries or in poor ones, families bear almost all the responsibility for supporting their disabled members. The vast majority of people with intellectual disabilities live at home with their families, with little or no services or support from their communities or governments.

A mother from Bahrain said: "Of course, being a mom is not just being a mom. You have to be the CEO, the treasurer, the lawmaker, the good cop and bad cop, a friend, an adviser, a sympathetic listener and much more. All this has to be done on a 24/7, on-call service."

But there are hopeful signs that the situation is changing. In 2006 the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) which, as of February 2014, had been ratified by 141 countries. The CRPD promotes the rights and full inclusion of people with disabilities by rejecting outmoded and negative stereotypes and recognizing them as contributing citizens. The CRPD recognizes the rights of persons with intellectual disabilities to receive the support they need to exercise their rights. It also requires communities to remove barriers to their participation and to promote their full inclusion. The CRPD also recognizes that families have a role to play in ensuring that persons with disabilities can exercise their rights, and that they require assistance to support their family members.

Some countries have introduced policies to support families. Panama has given grants to families of persons with intellectual disabilities to help them start small businesses to reduce family poverty. The United Kingdom has given support to families to take short-term breaks. The Canadian tax system compensates families for some of the additional costs of caring for a child with a disability. Costa Rica includes a disability targeted transfer as part of its family allowances. South Africa has a means-tested programme that provides support to families who have a child under the age of 18 with a disability.

Research has shown that families of children with intellectual disabilities often experience a lot of stress. However, further research has found that this stress is not caused by the disability, but by a lack of support to the family, and by the persistent exclusion of the person with a disability from ordinary community activities. Families from the Middle East to Europe, from Asia to Africa and throughout the Americas describe this hurtful exclusion from school, from recreation, from religious institutions and from extended family gatherings.

Unfortunately a large proportion of the resources currently devoted to assisting people with intellectual disabilities actually reinforces their exclusion, rather than inclusion. Governments, donors and international agencies too often fund residential institutions, segregated schools, special recreation programmes and separate vocational programmes instead of investing in the regular systems to make them inclusive of everyone.

A young woman from the Netherlands talked about being excluded: "Please go on with your efforts to send all children to school. Not to special schools where they will be treated as special monsters, not capable of learning, but to regular schools. I was treated as a monster — not human — because I cannot speak or show easily what I think. I want to tell the world everybody should be treated as human beings even when they can't speak."

A mother from South Africa reported: "We heard that a group was starting a campaign for Education for All, but when we tried to join the coalition we were told they didn't mean our children."

But there are also stories of how communities are strengthened when people who have intellectual disabilities are included. Inclusive education is a prime example. When children with intellectual disabilities can go to the same school as their brothers and sisters and other children from their neighbourhood, everyone benefits. Mothers have a better chance of contributing to household income if their disabled child goes to school and doesn't require full-time care. The changes required for an education system to be able to educate children with intellectual disabilities — qualified teachers who know how to teach children with different learning styles, cooperative learning where students help each other, adapting the curriculum for the needs of students, having

The CRPD requires communities to remove barriers and promote the full inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities

Gabriel Gardeazábal celebrating his first communion with his friends and family: in an inclusive community everyone is valued, supported and feels they belong

resources to help teachers who face challenges in their classrooms — also improve the education for all learners.

A parent from Lebanon said: "My child attended a regular school but wasn't given the right material. He was playing all the time. Moving him to a [private school that believes in inclusion] has changed my life. I know now that I have wasted three years of my child's life. The teachers at my son's school now are very understanding, progressive and take the time to plan Individual Education Plans according to his needs. Teachers are cooperative with other teachers, parents and children."

When disabled and non-disabled students learn together they learn how to live together. Those who don't have disabilities are better prepared to be caring and supportive adults in the future — as parents, as teachers, as bus drivers, as shopkeepers, as co-workers or as neighbours.

Besides inclusive education, there are other programmes that promote inclusion and the sense of belonging to their community for people with an intellectual disability and their families. Norwegian Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (NFU), an organization for families of persons with an intellectual disability, supports groups of parents in Africa to learn about the rights and potential of their sons and daughters. Best Buddies encourages friendships between people who have an intellectual disability and non-disabled peers in 50 countries. Special Olympics runs sports, health and education programmes in 170 countries to raise awareness about the abilities of persons with intellectual disabilities and to provide services and support to families.

Over 60 years ago families came together to form Inclusion International because they needed an organization to represent their perspectives; to advocate for inclusion in the community; to share ideas about how to support families; and to raise awareness of the need for family-friendly policies. Today, Inclusion International and its members around the world work to build supports and policies to promote inclusion. With over 200 national members in over 115 countries, Inclusion International raises the profile of families with the United Nations and its agencies and helps its members to work with government to develop progressive policies for inclusion.

Progressive policies for inclusion require three essential elements: support to the individual to meet disability-related needs (such as therapies, assistive devices); support to the family, which recognizes them as the constant presence in the life of the individual who has an intellectual disability; and support to communities to eliminate barriers faced by people with intellectual disabilities. Essential to all these policies is the element of choice. People who have an intellectual disability and their families have usually been given no options when they have been offered support. For example, it is often easier to have the government pay for 24-hour, 365-day services in a large residential institution than to receive support a few hours a week so that parents can catch up on sleep or attend to other family matters. One of the key principles of the CRPD is self-determination. Individuals who have an intellectual disability need support so that they can make choices in their lives, and their families need support to help them exercise their rights.

Families of people who have an intellectual disability advocate for their family members for support and services. But even more, they advocate for inclusive communities, where everyone is valued, supported and feels they belong. As Fadia Farah, Vice President of Inclusion International put it: "The 'Arab Spring' has been in the news, but today I want to talk to you about another 'Spring' that is taking place in the region I live. I want to talk about Lebanon, Iraq, Bahrain and Algeria, where a different change is sweeping over the region. Families and people who have an intellectual disability are using their voices to push for the recognition of their rights, inclusion in their communities and acknowledgement of the supports they need. Families have shown me that progress is happening and is all about parents' will and their work. And when people with intellectual disabilities are included, others get included too."

Families of people with intellectual disabilities are demonstrating that when communities are inclusive, everyone benefits.

Parenting around the world: same task, same effort, different solutions

Marina Robben, President, International Federation for Family Development

The picture on this page was taken during a meeting of Family Enrichment leaders some years ago. Michele had just arrived from Sweden with his wife Joanna and his young son. Evelyn, from Kenya, was surprised to see how blond the little boy was. She approached the family and started smiling as the child smiled too. It is a great image of how families from such different backgrounds come together through Family Enrichment courses, and demonstrates how much parents have to share and learn from each other.

Back in the 1960s, a group of parents from Spain foresaw that parents in coming decades would benefit from sharing experiences. They felt that the best way to do this would not be by organizing the usual sort of talks and speeches full of preconceived ideas and ideal solutions. Instead, based on the experience that some of them had working as professors in business schools, they designed the first Family Enrichment programmes using the 'case method': a way to promote open discussion about real situations without imposing our own ideas or dismissing other people's.

The famous Harvard Business School professor Chris Christensen has described the case method as "the art of managing uncertainty" — a process in which an expert serves as "planner, host, moderator, devil's advocate, fellow-student and judge," all in search of solutions to real-world problems and challenges. These experts are not teachers, but leaders, and in this way, their role perfectly matches the meaning of the Latin verb 'educare': to lead forth. A good discussion leader does not seek just to cover material in the classroom, but instead to guide students towards the discovery of critical insights and the uncovering of broader lessons through thoughtful questioning, listening and responding. That is why the leader must be well-prepared, both to cover the content associated with each class session, and to guide the participant-centred learning experience. The role of this

Michele from Sweden and Evelyn from Kenya show how families from different backgrounds can share experiences through Family Enrichment courses

individual is to achieve the highest possible level of participation from the parents attending the session, helping them to define the problems presented in the case in order to maximize the learning experience.

The moderators are not only leaders, but also parents who are experts at facilitating and guiding these debates in small groups. They are professionals from different sectors, trained in moderation and communication techniques. Each professional moderator has a broad knowledge of the contents of all programmes. The courses are developed with a strong commitment to cooperation: parents educating parents, families educating families.

Another key element of the case method is that the other participants act as co-creators of the learning process. They are responsible for preparing the case in advance, first individually, and then often in small study groups. Ideally, learning should continue after class as students reflect on the discussion and apply insights and lessons in the broader context of their academic, professional and personal lives.

The case method in the context of family training is known as the 'family system', in recognition of its specific characteristics. In addition to the traditional three stages of the case method — individual analysis, discussion of the case in small groups and general discussion — an intermediary stage is added: the discussion of the case by the couple. This means that the family system is made up of a total of four stages: individual analysis, discussion of the case by the couple, discussion of the case in small groups, and general discussion led by an expert. The family system is more focused on the couple than on the subject, and is based on the following principles.

A small group discussion, one of the four stages of the family system

Parents as primary educators of their children: The specialization that so often occurs in contemporary life can lead parents to relinquish control of their children's education to others (teachers, educators, nannies etc). However, it is the parents themselves who are in the best position to educate their children, as they are the ones who receive all the information about them from different sources. Family Enrichment courses highlight this reality and provide parents with the tools they need to develop their own philosophies and goals, both in terms of education and character. The methodology — discussion of case studies by the couple, in small groups, and in larger general sessions led by an expert moderator — dissuades parents from the temptation to develop a child's education system according to a single external perspective.

Professionalization and anticipation: Through individual study of the technical notes and discussion of the case studies in three phases, couples develop their ability to analyse the reality of a situation, to distinguish facts from prejudices and judgements, and to get to the root of a problem. The cases provide an opportunity to anticipate and learn how to deal with situations that will, sooner or later, arise in family life.

Commitment: The case method, by virtue of analysing an external situation, ensures the involvement of both partners and allows them to rediscover the richness they each bring to their shared role as spouses and parents. This balance is critical in the family. On the one hand, for the children, whose temperaments are generally more aligned with one or other parent, and for whom it is important to recognize both parents' contributions and roles. However, it is also essential for the couple, who learn to externalize their own ideas, put them together and manage any differences of opinion effectively. To educate is to teach love, and strengthening the bond between spouses helps ensure a solid foundation on which children can grow.

Friendship and definition of common standards: The contrasting views of different couples during small group discussions and general sessions help couples to maintain objectivity and constantly review their own values. The cooperative climate surrounding the courses encourages couples to explore their desires, goals and concerns, thus providing the basis for long-lasting friendships between couples. The mainstream climate is not always family-friendly, and the relationships formed naturally during Family Enrichment programmes provide a welcome — and nourishing — change of pace.

Fun and simplicity: Courses are developed according to the age of the children and/or the length of the marriage. The specific problems of a particular period of personality development of the children or the evolution of a marriage are discussed among those experiencing them first-hand, favouring a simple and informal exchange of stories and lessons learned. The atmosphere, rather than being strictly academic, is more like a gathering of friends interested in improving and helping each other with care and affection, while maintaining a strong level of professionalism.

The courses focused on children cover the main academic frameworks and the basic habits that children acquire at each stage of their development. The Marital Love course concentrates on the most important aspects of a marriage,

Family Enrichment courses provide parents with the tools they need to develop their own philosophies and goals

The IFFD International Congress in Valencia, Spain, 2010: these events have resulted in a remarkable increase in family-related activities across the world

and the Grandparents course deals with issues relevant to that role in the family.

The fact that these programmes deal precisely with the main issues facing parents in their everyday lives is what has made the initiative so successful and has meant that, 50 years on, Family Enrichment programmes have spread to 65 countries and benefit thousands of parents on the five continents every year. Since 1978, these activities have been coordinated by the International Federation for Family Development (IFFD), the reference point for all Family Enrichment Centres around the world.

The main activities of these centres are educational courses and programmes. However, most of them also carry out other activities, such as forums, congresses and conferences, focusing on topics relevant to families. These, and other leisure and cultural activities, are intended to promote collaboration with the media and other institutions. All the work carried out by the centres is aimed at supporting families and promoting intergenerational solidarity.

IFFD holds general consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), a position only granted to 4 per cent of civil society organizations working in the United Nations. By awarding this status, ECOSOC accredits organizations which it considers to be technically capable of dealing with matters within their area of competence, advising the council and participating actively in the actions it carries out. As part of the preparations and celebrations for the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, IFFD has taken part in

different expert group meetings. In this preparatory process, IFFD has also organized awareness raising meetings in different cities on three continents.

IFFD has also regularly organized International Congresses since 1976, which has resulted in a remarkable increase in activities related to the family in a large number of cities and countries across the five continents. The congresses are also designed to allow new skills to be learned in order to promote and carry out educational and family development programmes. They also take part in innovative European Union projects regarding the future of families in Europe, such as the large-scale FamiliesAndSocieties integration project, involving 25 research partners.

For these academic and research tasks, IFFD created, back in 2007, The Family Watch: a think tank committed to carrying out research on family issues and finding solutions to the problems they face. The institute uses interdisciplinary research to analyse the social context families find themselves in today. Its main activities include publishing research papers, exchanging information and services, integrating initiatives, promoting teaching activities and research projects, content production, and organizing events aimed at the promotion, creation and presentation of awards.

Fifty years after they were first conceived, Family Enrichment programmes and the activities surrounding them are continuing to grow and spread across the world, demonstrating that parenting is, and always will be, one of the most important tasks we face in our society.

Empowering families to achieve lifelong education for all

Abbie Raikes, Programme Specialist, Section for Basic Education, UNESCO

The core mandate of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is to bring education to all the world's people, based on the principle that education is a universal human right and is central to building peaceful societies. For the coming years, UNESCO's education goal is focused on lifelong learning: the right for all people to have access to education throughout their lives, from early childhood through adulthood.

While school systems and governments are the primary route through which people receive schooling, families also play a critical role in education. Focusing on families as central partners in education is important for both children and their parents, especially those who have been excluded from schools systems or who are at risk of being excluded due to family economic circumstances, cultural background, gender or the presence of special needs. Education systems that build upon and empower families as teachers and learners will help to propel the world forward in pursuit of lifelong learning for all.

For all children, engaging families early in each child's life is central to achieving global education goals. Families form the basis for children's learning and development, beginning at birth and continuing throughout life. A child's first teachers are parents — parents provide the interaction, emotional support and exposure to language that forms the basis for lifelong health, well-being and literacy. Despite parents' deep love and commitment to their children, families in many countries struggle to see that their children's right to an education is fulfilled. Family poverty poses a grave challenge to education. Children who come from families that do not have adequate resources face considerable challenges to school success, beginning in infancy with poor health, nutrition and a lack of access to stimulating learning environments. As children grow older, the many barriers that families face in educating their children include a lack of access to affordable schools; schools of low quality; and schools that do not foster inclusion — meaning that children from families of different ethnic or cultural backgrounds are not accommodated in educational systems. Many children do not have access to instruction in their mother tongue, a very challenging situation for children that further isolates families from their children's education. Working families may face additional challenges, such as finding adequate after-school care and ensuring that parents have the time off

and support needed to attend school functions and engage in the school community, all of which are integral to a child's success at school.

It is also important to note that in many families, some members have been able to obtain an education while others have not. Promoting families as teachers and learners requires that access to education is available for all, including youth and adults who may not have had the opportunity to attend school when they were children, or did not gain the skills and competencies desired. All told, families are at the heart of education — by empowering and supporting families, global education goals of ensuring access and completion for all can be obtained.

While UNESCO's primary mandate is in relation to educational systems, the organization also recognizes the important role of families as partners in achieving global education goals, especially through approaches designed to support family literacy and community learning. Reading is perhaps the most basic skill required for lifelong learning, and therefore promoting literacy is a central goal for UNESCO. Yet despite increases in primary school enrolment and completion, millions of children and adults still do not know how to read

Focusing on families as central partners in education is important for both children and their parents

well in their native languages. In order for families to thrive as children's first teachers, support for literacy — including access to culturally-relevant books in the mother tongue, literacy instruction for parents who may not have had the opportunity to develop strong literacy skills, and parent education on the importance of literacy and reading — is needed. Intergenerational approaches to learning, where parents and children learn together, can be a viable path towards building the family as a setting for teaching and learning.

Family literacy refers to education programmes that involve all members of the family, and can include parent education in supporting children's education, adult literacy and adult education. Community learning focuses on creating opportunities for education that are community-based and responsive to the needs of families, by offering non-formal education for children and adults who are not part of the formal school system. There are several effective ways to empower families as a force that is integral to achieving global education goals. These pages include just a few examples — the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning maintains a database with profiles of many other effective programmes that address family literacy.

The role of families in achieving education goals cannot be understated. Effective programmes to help build families as supporters of education can engage and empower families as teachers and learners, through an emphasis on their mother tongue and creating culturally appropriate and accessible avenues for instruction. UNESCO applauds the International Year of the Family as recognizing the importance of families in achieving education for all.

Family literacy programmes

Image: UNESCO

Family literacy involves interaction between parents and their children, in a set of diverse learning and literacy activities

Family literacy programmes[1] focus on promoting literacy by placing an emphasis on all members of the family, not just children who are enrolled in school. Family literacy programmes have been implemented in many countries. The term 'family literacy' usually refers to a set of diverse learning and literacy activities that involve interaction between parents and their children. Family literacy programmes can be adapted to meet the needs of families in various settings and communities, and have been implemented through home visits, community centres or other means. The activities of family literacy programmes serve not only as training for parents to learn how to participate in the education of their children, but also as a way to improve their economic autonomy through literacy training, so parents become learners themselves.

De Cero a Siempre

'De Cero a Siempre' (From Zero to Forever) is the National Strategy for Integral Attention in Early Childhood created by the Government of President Juan Manuel Santos in Colombia.[4] The programme is based on a belief that investment in early childhood is the most cost effective long-term contribution to a country, and that a good start in life will lead to a better future. It emphasizes the obligation of family, society and the state in ensuring children's protection, health, nutrition and early education from birth to five years old.

The programme aims to combine the efforts of the private and public sectors, civil society and international cooperation to address early childhood care on a national level. In doing so, it seeks to transform the way early childhood care services are provided to enable comprehensive care and effective rights for children between birth and five years old. It devises a wide variety of activities around an education strategy for both the family and the child. Activities include training and support for families during the children early years, prenatal classes on child health for families, and community awareness activities.

The Bouba and Zaza series
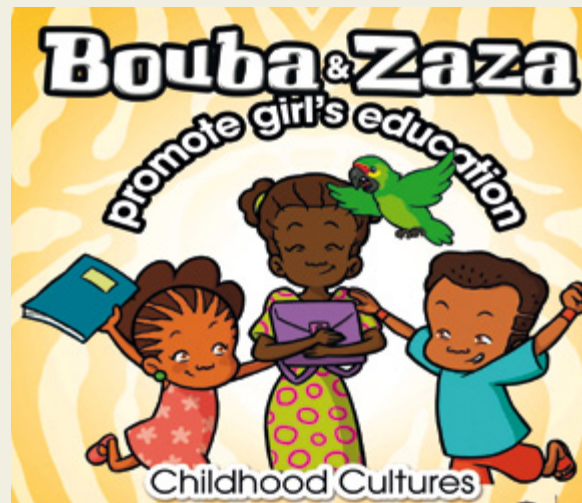
To address the need for culturally-appropriate texts for parents and children to read together, the Bouba and Zaza series was published in 2012 as a UNESCO-Dakar project with the collaboration of the African Development Education Association and the publishing house, Editions Michel Lafon. The publication of the series was part of a framework established in Dakar 2000 to include the private sector in education development. The series was created as part of the 'Childhood Culture' collection to develop essential life and socialization skills that reach out of the family context; it also encourages interaction between school, family and community. The project was intended to address areas and topics that parents may find difficult to address such as HIV, the environment and conflicts. The Bouba and Zaza series was published in English, French, Portuguese and Kiswahili editions and targeted at children aged between three and eight years.

Community learning centres

CLCs provide learning services and activities in a non-formal context

Community learning centres (CLCs)[2] are a form of community-based education institutions that provide learning services and activities delivered in a non-formal context to out-of-school children and other community members with limited or no literacy skills. The main beneficiaries of these centres are people with fewer opportunities for education, such as preschool children, out-of-school children, women, youth and the elderly.

CLCs are usually managed by local people with the support of the Government, non-governmental organizations and private sector organizations. Their main objective is to empower locals to develop their own communities by providing education opportunities to the least favoured members including adults, youth and children of all ages.

CLCs provide various learning opportunities including literacy, post-literacy, income generation, life skills programmes and basic education. The learning programmes vary according to local needs and contexts in the country. In cases such as the Community-based Parenting Education programme, CLCs offer general parenting education to parents and families.

Currently, 24 countries have established CLCs or similar non-formal education centres, with an estimated 170,000 centres in the Asia-Pacific region.

Community-based parenting education

In addition to literacy, in some cases such as the Community-based Parenting Education Programme[3] launched in 2010 by UNESCO Bangkok, CLCs offer parenting education to parents and families in general. This education is aimed at expanding and improving the quality of non-formal early childhood care and education (ECCE).

Early childhood is the critical stage of human development. Significant brain development happens during the first years of life, and interactions with the family and with a wider environment literally shape the child's development. Parents and families are the first educators of their children, and given knowledge and skills, families and communities can be even more effective ECCE practitioners.

The Community-based Parenting Education Programme is aimed at raising awareness about the added value of parenting education. It was initially introduced in seven countries: Bangladesh, Myanmar, Pakistan, Samoa, Mongolia, Kazakhstan and Viet Nam, but it has also been adapted to India and Indonesia. The materials for this programme (a guidebook and a handbook) were developed to be adaptable in the social and cultural context of Asia-Pacific countries.

The Community-based Parenting Education Programme aims to help families become more effective ECCE providers

Intergenerational solidarity:
the springboard for societal well-being

Lynn Walsh, Co-chair, Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Committee on the Family and Director, Marriage, Family and Human Development, Universal Peace Federation; and Florence Denmark, Co-chair, NGO Committee on the Family and Main UN Representative for the International Council of Psychologists

Intergenerational solidarity deserves our focus as it impacts the very fabric of society, in that it relates to the fundamental question of how human beings care for one another. This includes many care-giving roles and issues related to work-family balance, women joining the workforce, unemployed people needing their parents' support, grandparents caring for grandchildren, and adult children caring for elderly parents. These issues carry with them a host of economic ramifications; however the family is more than this. The family provides the base for a flourishing world — that is, well-adjusted, contributing citizens and strong interpersonal ties that afford human belonging and attachment.

Intergenerational solidarity is an important resource for social and economic development and stability. But there is another dimension to this often-discussed idea. Intergenerational relations — parent to child, child to parent, extended through the generations — are only valuable in as much as they are strong and genuine, and each member of the family is given the love, care and values that they need to develop into a responsible, caring human being.

As we look at the world today, we see frequent outbreaks of violence between tribes, communities and families, long-standing conflict between nations, unresolved poverty, corruption, and gross violations of human rights such as human trafficking. Despite great international efforts, these problems are not disappearing. These dilemmas are complicated and solutions must come from a multitude of approaches, but we have to wonder if the challenges related to development and social justice are but symptoms of deeper human realities. Repeatedly at play in these problems there is a breakdown in essential human relationships — a fundamental void in moral principle and absence of human empathy.

Before we address intergenerational solidarity, we need to consider an element of the human being that is perhaps so close to us that we do not see it. As the saying goes, "the heart of the human problem is the human heart." If people are perpetuating conflict, don't we need to ask if we can become 'more whole' as human beings and, if so, what facilitates this? In light of some disappointing results in addressing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and now during the twentieth anniversary of the Year of the Family, perhaps it is time to look at improving human potential as a core concern, and at the family as a critical piece of the solution.

The MDGs address the essential needs of all human beings, but there is another fundamental human need required for human development and fulfilment: that of stable human attachment and belonging, from birth through every stage of one's life. Developmental psychologists have clearly established that the first primary relationship in which an infant bonds with his or her mother is the foundation for the development of an emotionally healthy human being. A mother is primed with floods of maternal hormones in order to have the greatest ability to provide for her infant's needs. The bond is established not only in acts such as breast-feeding, but also, according to research at the University of Montreal, in the unique response that newborns have to their mother's voice.[1] Fathers, too, bond and reciprocate in essential ways with their baby. According to Dr Brizendine's research,[2] fathers are also primed during the pregnancy by the pheromones of the pregnant mother, which reduce testosterone and increase oxytocin. Thus a father's desire to protect and provide is enhanced through a harmonious relationship with the mother. In this ideal situation, the child is given the best beginning to life.

But clearly, this does not reflect the situation in many relationships throughout the world. Actual parenting situations may differ from the ideal. Many parents find themselves in circumstances that they did not choose, and certainly did not wish for, and yet provide heroically for their children. Parenting may be carried out by grandparents, aunts, uncles, adoptive parents and many others. Single parents must also be acknowledged. The inherent beauty in these family relationships cannot be ignored and these families deserve much support. However, the reality is that every child stands to benefit from being raised in a harmonious home with both father and mother, and as such a two-parent household is the ideal for which we strive in accordance with the best interests of the child.

The family provides a base of attachment and belonging not only for children, but also for adults. Research on happiness and overall health and success indicates that individuals who can maintain secure and stable long-term relationships have the advantage on all levels of human well-being. Poverty, ill-health and lack of employment all

put stress on a committed relationship and these difficulties need to be addressed. Alongside these issues is the equally serious problem that stems from a lack of understanding of how to handle the very natural occurrence of conflict in relationships. Not having the skills to manage one's negative emotions can lead to abusive behaviour or distancing, both of which destroy the hope of secure, stable belonging and attachment. Understanding and accepting how different another's perception is from yours can make negotiating conflicts possible. Where do we learn how to deal with the conflicts in relationships? It is ideally from watching our parents' relationship, later asserting our perspective in negotiations with our parents and siblings, and then in our own committed relationships as adults — hopefully we learn.

Although many families deviate from the ideal, this is not evidence of the family's lack of importance. On the contrary, it is within the family that the solutions may be found. If we give up on the family, we ignore the basic human need for stability, belonging and attachment that every person possesses. If we remain too busy doing our jobs and building our careers to pay much attention to the family, society will pay the price.

We become 'most human' in our relationships with other people, and it is in relationships that we reach the highest human capacity to love and thus learn to refrain from treating others inhumanely. At the core of the injustices that we commit against others is a basic lack of love and security. Could it be that the human heart will always be aching for the haven of the family? It is only when we take the family seriously as the unique resource of love, guidance, principles, compassion and genuine human connection that we may start to address a root cause of human weakness. Fortunately, we live in an era where women's value and unique qualities are being recognized more than ever before. Thus we are uniquely positioned to benefit from a society in which men and women in intimate relationships respect each other as equal human beings while honouring different capacities, gifts, traits and

needs. The best time to look to the family as the unique resource it is, is now.

Parents shape the human capital of each community and nation, negatively or positively. No government programme or social policy has this ability. Instead the role of government is to support parents and afford the family every protection it needs to raise conscientious citizens. This is in the best interest of governments, as they will bear the burden of poor parenting.

Good parenting is subject to a myriad of differing opinions, but in general, parents who have established a relationship of mutual respect, compassion, honest communication and shared virtues with their children are far more likely to maintain a positive relationship through all phases of life. Solidly connected grandparents can contribute their experience, wisdom and support for their adult children's parenting of the next generation. Confronted with economic challenges, many parents rely on their own parents to provide childcare so that they may go to work. For the most part, grandparents who share a healthy bond with their children become a natural source of love, stability, values and care for the third generation if living in close proximity. Although there is quality childcare available, often it is least available to the poor and the care can lack the same sense of responsibility that a loving grandparent can provide. Also, when the three generations are well connected, they may combine resources in living together, or the grandparents may try to give financial support for the young or struggling family, decreasing the stress of raising a family.

In the same way, in a mutually respectful, caring parent-child relationship, the adult children become willing and loving caregivers for their ageing parents. With the population decline in developed nations, many economies are faced with fewer young workers providing the tax base for the large number of ageing adults leaving the workforce. In addition, many ask whether there will be enough people to provide care for the elderly as this trend increases.

Strong intergenerational relations help each member of the family to develop into a responsible, caring human being

Grandparents who share a healthy bond with their children can become a natural source of love, stability, values and care for the third generation

Image: BigBrotherMouse

The family is a unique resource of love, guidance, and compassion that must be supported and protected

Certainly the second generation, having a genuine empathy for their parents and compassion for the elderly, will be better positioned to provide the direct care of their own parents or at least support social policies that best provide for the ageing.

However, in terms of potential quality care exchanged between generations as mentioned above, the opposite is true for families plagued by unresolved conflict. Such families become fragile and splintered; there is less natural inclination to care for other generations and the very substance of what makes us better human beings dries up. The individual and society bear the consequences of this painful fragmentation.

The family has a key purpose and therefore deserves protection and support. The family benefits from a social recognition of the unique and essential human need and purpose it is meant to fulfil. Families thrive in cultures that uphold the value of parents and affirm the virtues that enhance family relationships such as commitment, personal responsibility, respect, fidelity, filial piety and empathy. Just as literacy, health and technology education are necessary for socioeconomic development, society can support social development through education about healthy relationships and decision-making, starting with young people and respecting the parents' role as the primary educators of children. Further, for building mutual respect between the genders, most of us can improve ourselves and our own relationships by learning skills to constructively assert ourselves and handle conflict, so as to avoid abuse and increase genuine understanding and connection.

As we now look to establish the Sustainable Development Goals, we have to work to empower the family at all levels. Affirming the family as fundamental in the formation of every human being and in the intergenerational ties that bind us to one another is a crucial starting point that was omitted by the MDGs. Societies that protect and support the unique and primal purpose of parents and the family will garner more social stability between generations. This, of course, is an enormous challenge, but much of this challenge is rooted in the need for personal improvement in our own lives and families. But there again if, upon personal reflection, most of us detect a need for greater genuine human connection and family solidarity, then it is in this very realization that we understand the significance of the universal human need for strong family ties.

Informal support in family life: a hidden gem for young people, community and society

Professor Pat Dolan, UNESCO Chair, and Director, UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, National University of Ireland, Galway

Participation in family life is a central part of the normative growing up process for young people and applies universally, regardless of cultural or geographical contexts. For centuries, the informal support provided within family membership across the life course process has been vital to human sustenance. Even in contexts of severe adversity, whether man-made crises such as abject poverty or environmental disasters such as floods and earthquakes, family support to young people has been central to their survival, resilience and development.

It is important to highlight and revisit the importance of informal support and family functioning for young people in the overlooked context of their everyday living environment of home, school and community. Additionally, young people must be recognized as positive civic actors, who benefit society in the present as well as the future in connection with their past experiences of giving and receiving social support.

Regardless of the formation of family, kin relationships including nuclear and extended family are the most typical and likely source of help. Whether in times of sudden crisis or in the context of daily living, informal support from nuclear and extended family is key for many people. This applies across cultures and continents and over the life course from womb to tomb. From new parents coping with their newborn child to adult children caring for their ageing parents, the vital role of social support from other family members, friends, community allies and professionals is well established.

This is not to say that all families support their members. As has been well established, particularly in recent years in relation to children and older people, family members can be the source of stress and harm. This cannot be denied or overlooked, but thankfully in the vast majority of communities across the globe family relationships are key to our survival. It is also noteworthy that even where children, youth or vulnerable adults experience maltreatment from a family member, in many cases other, more loving and caring family members as well as others, seek to help and are able to compensate.[1]

The social support provided to young people, particularly from their family, includes instrumental and emotional help. This is essential, and has been described as the bread and butter of relationships. Informal support from responsive family members to young people occurs not only in times of crisis, when it is likely to be noticed, but also in the processes of daily living through mundane supportive acts that can perhaps be taken for granted. Young people also provide support to their family as well as receiving help. In fact, regular reciprocal support exchanges between young people and parents is often provided automatically, to the extent that it may only really be recognized when it ceases to exist.

For young people, the social support they receive from within their nuclear and extended family, school and community has been summarized (for the purpose of convenience) as 'tea and cards'.[2] 'Tea' relates to the types of help required by young people: tangible (practical help), emotional (empathy when upset) and advisory (assistance in making a decision). 'Cards' relates to the quality of support or the ways help is provided, such as closeness (warmth), admonishment (constructive challenging), reciprocity (exchange of supportive acts), durability (dependability) and subtlety (sensitivity).

Young people's participation through civic action is associated with a range of specific personal benefits, many developed as part of their internal processing

Apart from the importance of source, amount, type and quality of support, help that is provided through informal sources (unpaid) is often preferred to interventions through formal (paid) services. This is not to say that there are not essential situations where professionals need to intervene, but rather to highlight the value of informal help. Informal, positive and natural support, particularly from family, is essential in that it is generally on call at any time, provided outside of nine-to-five, Monday-to-Friday contexts and available throughout the year. It should also be remembered that this is a natural function within positive familial relationships — it is what families do anyway — and is therefore non-stigmatizing. In practical terms, from the point of view of civic society, informal support is very cost effective. Consider the mere quantity of needs of the elderly, willingly and lovingly provided by their adult children day-in, day-out in countries around the world. If it were incumbent on each member state to provide a similar service, the costs would be astronomical and probably unsustainable to most if not all economies.

While the role of parents in the rearing of their children and adolescents is rightfully noted as vital and the importance of teachers as educators is well known, the part played by other family members and community volunteers also deserves some recognition. Brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles and collegial cousins are important sources of help to young people. Similarly, voluntary youth workers, church groups, sporting organizations and musical allies all have a role to play in the provision of family support for children and youth.

The association between positive life experiences gathered during young people's formative years and their willingness to contribute and participate in civic society has been well established. However, the rhetoric of young people being an investment for the future and over-simplification of their right to be heard and participate, cited in article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, needs challenging and elaborating.

Firstly, in part based on the value systems they receive at home, in school and from their community, many children and youth contribute strongly in the present in consistent ways. Think of young carers who are supporting family members with a disability, or consider how often youth volunteers contribute positively to society through community actions ranging from local environmental clean-ups to intergenerational initiatives to support older people. Very often, civic engagement by young people is labelled narrowly as political rather social (altruistic), moral (demonstrable empathy) or economic (working to support other family members).

Secondly, while there is now more awareness of the need to value such participation by young people, this is usually accompanied by advocacy and a co-request to listen and hear their voices. Equally important, however, is the need not just to listen and hear but also to act on what young people are saying. For example, the World Assembly of Youth works to ensure positive action with and for young people as well as making sure they receive adequate recognition. Despite what are often negative images of young people in the media, portrayed as disruptive and destructive, the vast majority of young people have insight, contribute very positively and, to some extent, are unsung heroes in communities. Even at a more basic level it is important to remember that most young people do well and of those who have difficulty, many demonstrate resilience, either growing out of their problems or overcoming their issues — typically with strong and consistent support from family and friends. Global organi-

Image: Foróige, Ireland/Alan Kerins Projects

Many young people contribute strongly and consistently by supporting family members or volunteering to take part in community actions

zations, like the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) through its strategy for/with young people, based on principles of social justice, seek to enable not just a greater appreciation and positive recognition of young people, but also to counterbalance unfair negative representations.

Apart from any benefits to their families, community and society, participation through civic action by young people has been associated with a range of specific personal benefits, many developed as part of their internal processing. Young people who contribute through civic action develop mastery (skills), generosity (including a sense of empathy), independence (through new relationships) and belonging (a sense of connectedness to others). It could be argued that whereas the seeds of these four personal qualities are sown for a young person within their early-life familial and school contexts, it is during adolescence in particular that they are developed and enhanced. Take, for example, a young person who not only feels empathy but acts on it, by working with others to stop the bullying of one of his or her peers at school. One could argue that such positive action by the young person comes partly from a range of values and skills attained as part of his or her upbringing experiences and an accompanying innate sense of social justice.

Young people benefit from the opportunity to exchange learning with others from different cultures and countries, most typically accessed through individualized leadership and group citizenship projects. Through experiential learning young people not only gain insight from interaction with peers living in other countries, but also have an opportunity to revisit their own value system.

For young people, the experience of participating in an international citizenship programme by simply spending time with other young people and sharing views of family and school life, hobbies and interests, ambitions and concerns can create mutual understanding and enhance self-esteem. The experience can act as a reminder of the importance of giving and receiving support within family relationships, and can have a positive 'quasi renaissance' effect on a young person. More simply, when young people travel abroad and participate in a social leadership commu-

nity exchange project, they can road-test what is important for them in their lives through interaction with their peers. Importantly, the evidence is that many young people who volunteer inevitably find that in doing so they get back much more than they give.

The 20th anniversary year of the International Year of the Family is a good time to remind ourselves of the positive aspects of family life for young people, but not to deny or minimize its risks and challenges. In the main, many young people benefit immensely from the support of their familial ties, but additionally contribute hugely to their family and community. We raise our children not just for their benefit or that of our families, but for the betterment of civic society in general. Despite hardships or adversity, young people have value in their own right during their childhood and adolescence, and are more than a future asset in adult life.

Participating in an international citizenship programme can create mutual understanding and enhance self-esteem for young people

Image: Foróige, Ireland/Alan Kerins Projects

The Ireland Zambia Youth Leadership Exchange Programme

In 2011/12 young people from the west of Ireland and western Zambia participated in a youth civic engagement exchange programme. Fundraising for the project took place in Ireland and the programme occurred in Kaoma, Zambia.[3] The project was under the guidance of the Alan Kerins Projects, which works with local orphanages run by the Zambia-based Presentation Sisters Order. They partnered with Foróige, Ireland's leading youth work organization, which developed an international youth leadership programme in collaboration with (and accredited by) the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre at the National University of Ireland, Galway.

The project evaluation found that, over a short but intense period of activity, young people engaged in dialogue with one another, exchanged aspects of each other's culture, played, formed bonds of friendship and provided a caring and supportive role. All this left a marked insight into their own lives as well as into the resilience of people in situations of adversity.

Strikingly, the project evaluation found a very real and deep sense of empathy and care instilled in the young people towards the children and young people in Kaoma. Deeply felt bonds of attachment and friendship were forged in the period spent there, which created a strongly expressed emotional impact on all youth and adults involved.

Another notable value attributable to the initiative is the new awareness and appreciation generated among the youth. Only this type of experiential hands-on learning and exchange can create profound new insights, and in this regard the initiative was successful in challenging and changing young people's perspectives about their own lives in relation to others who are less privileged. There was a clear sense of a stronger awareness about the importance of aspects of young people's lives that they previously had taken for granted.

Youth developed a clearer capacity to view their lives in the broader context of a reawakened knowledge of family support, the functionality of school life and their engagement in local community.

Family law and Islam

Mounira M. Charrad, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Texas in Austin

In discussing family law in countries with Muslim majority populations, a fundamental point to underscore is that Islamic ideals and practices took different forms in different places in the course of history despite a common theology. I find it useful to think of Islam as an 'umbrella identity', an idiom of cultural unity that goes together with considerable variations according to time and place. Islam has intermingled with many other factors such as local customs, politics, socioeconomic structures and historical conjuncture to shape the interpretation of family law in various ways, depending on time and circumstances.[1]

Islamic family law has been at the core of the Islamic tradition. Defining the rights and obligations of men and women in the family and, by extension, in the community and society at large, Islamic law regulates marriage, divorce, custody of children and inheritance rights. These issues matter a great deal for the stability of families and the well-being of individuals. They have led to a wide range of legal interpretations and practices.[2]

Origins and debates

The Shari'a, meaning 'Islamic law', specifies principles to be followed in regard to the family, but it is not a legal manual lending itself to a single interpretation or application. It is better thought of as a set of ethical imperatives that can translate into various rules and behaviours. It stems from the Qur'an and the Sunna or model behaviour of the Prophet as recorded in compendia called the Hadith. As such, it is open to different readings, as is evinced by the range of existing interpretations throughout the Muslim world. The Shari'a has interacted with 'urf, or common law, tribal law and secular law imported from European systems, as well as community norms and behavioural codes, and thus bears the mark of particular environments.[3]

Historically, the Shari'a was not codified and was left to the interpretation of judges or religious leaders in communities. This sometimes resulted in a discrepancy between normative law as presented in religious texts and lived experiences, as people found ways to negotiate reality around the law and to escape stringent regulations. For example, studying legal practice, Peirce remarks that "law as a process was considerably less sharply gendered than normative law."[4] This was especially the case when local communities had jurisdiction over family law based on religious texts before the emergence of sovereign nation-states from colonial rule. When national, postcolonial states emerged following the wave of decolonization in the region in the twentieth century, most enacted national bodies of legislation to apply to the citizens of the country and promulgated codes of family law and personal status. In several countries, this was the first time that texts written in the form of legal codes defined family law.

As the most contested issues in family law, marriage, divorce, custody of children and inheritance have received most attention in the postcolonial codes. They have been treated differently depending on the country, just as they were in earlier history. In regard to marriage, one major issue that has given rise to debate in recent times is polygamy. The Qur'an states: "Marry other women who seem good to you: two, three or four of them. But if you fear that you cannot maintain equality among them, marry one only."[5] On the basis of that statement, some people have claimed that polygamy should be allowed. Others argue that no man can be fair and just to four women and that therefore polygamy should be banned altogether or restricted. There have been numerous opinions as to what kinds of restrictions should apply, such as the requirement that the first wife give her consent to a second marriage or be given a divorce if that is her choice.

With regard to divorce, the debates focus on whether unilateral repudiation (or the husband's ability to terminate the marriage at will) should be allowed, whether the wife should receive compensation, and the conditions under which a wife can file for divorce. The most conservative interpretations of Islamic family law make unilateral repudiation not only possible but also easy for husbands. They tend to deprive

Image: Azim Azimzade, 1935

The painting, 'The old wife and the new one' depicts polygamy, a key subject of debate in family law

repudiated wives of compensation or make it quite limited. By contrast, these interpretations restrict the woman's right to a divorce to limited conditions. They require that a wife appeal to a religious judge and prove that she has been harmed in the marriage in order to obtain a divorce. Controversies in recent history have centred on whether the husband's unilateral repudiation should be allowed to continue even with compensation to the wife or, on the contrary, whether divorce can only be decided in court by a judge, and whether men and women should have equal rights to file for divorce.

Regarding custody, the issue is whether the husband has a privilege or whether custody is decided primarily on the basis of the best interest of the child, thus giving husbands and wives an equal chance. Finally, concerning inheritance, in most Muslim majority countries of the Middle East and North Africa, a woman inherits half as much as a man in the same kinship relation to the deceased. For example, a daughter will inherit half as much as a son. Only minor modifications to this rule have occurred. In contrast to the issues of marriage, divorce and custody, which have given rise to a wide range of regulations in the family codes of different countries, inheritance has proven resistant to change. One reason is that although the original scriptures of Islam contain a sometimes ambiguous language open to interpretation on several points relevant to family matters, rules on inheritance are unambiguously stated in the very text of the Qur'an. As a result, proposals to equalize inheritance between men and women are often read as a rejection of Islam and a move towards secularism, a risk that few reformers have been willing to take.

In the Islamic tradition, women have the right to own property and to continue to do so after marriage. Their individual property did not become part of the couple's common assets, which gave women of means a measure of security. These are important rights. However, given the gender inequality in several other dimensions of the law as outlined above, it is not surprising that Asma Khadar, a lawyer and human rights activist, once declared: "Family law is the key to the gate of freedom and human rights for women."[6] Without basic rights in regard to family matters, women are vulnerable to the whims of their husbands and sometimes their male relatives.

Diversity

A survey conducted by Freedom House and published in 2010 illustrates the extent to which countries in the region vary on dimensions relevant to family law and gender. It ranked Tunisia number one regarding gender equity in family law, and Morocco number two. It ranked Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Iran as the lowest. Out of a maximum five points, Tunisia scores 3.6 in the categories of non-discrimination and access to justice and 3.4 in autonomy, security and freedom of the person. The first category, 'non-discrimination and access to justice', assesses women's equality under the constitution, protection from gender-based discrimination and citizenship rights. The second category, 'autonomy, security and freedom of the person', refers to equality within marriage, freedom of movement and freedom from gender-based violence.[7] Taken together, the two categories capture the issues relevant to family law. In a similar study conducted in 2005, Freedom House also ranked Tunisia and Morocco highest with respec-

tive scores of 3.6 and 3.2 for Tunisia and 3.2 in both categories for Morocco.

Given the diversity that pervades Islamic law, especially after codification in the era of modern nation states, the topic of family law in Muslim majority countries in the contemporary period should be considered in regard to specific countries rather than in generic terms.

Reforms: Tunisia and Morocco

Tunisia and Morocco rank highest in the Freedom House study because they made significant reforms of family law that expand women's rights in the family, the community and society. It is important to note that in these countries, reforms were made under the umbrella of Islam, as a new interpretation of Islamic law and an adaptation of the law to the conditions of modern times. In both cases, policymakers presented the reforms as an expression of modernity within Islam, as a form of legal innovation, and definitely not as a rejection of the Islamic tradition.

Tunisia was a pioneer in the Arab Islamic world in making major reforms in the 1950s.[8] As soon as the country became independent from French colonial rule in 1956, the first independent government of Tunisia promulgated the Code of Personal Status, which transformed family law. To this day, the Tunisian Code of Personal Status remains the most progressive and boldest family law throughout the Arab Islamic world in terms of expansion of women's rights.

In a nutshell and looking only at major issues, the Tunisian Code of Personal Status abolished polygamy altogether, making it illegal and punishable by a fine and imprisonment. Tunisia remains the only Arab Islamic country to have abolished polygamy. Even though only a tiny minority in effect practiced polygamy — about 3 per cent of marriages were polygamous in the 1950s — its abolition has considerable symbolic significance for women who used to see it as a sword of Damocles ready to fall upon them.

Shakeela Hasan of the Islamic Shari'a Council in Leyton, East London counsels a young woman with marital problems. Shari'a courts have been operating in the British civil jurisdiction since the early 1980s

The variance in country ratings for family law and gender equity in the Arab Islamic world (scored out of 5)

	Non-discrimination and access to justice	Autonomy, security, and freedom of the person	Economic rights and equal opportunity	Political rights and civic voice	Social and cultural rights
Algeria	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Bahrain	2.2	2.6	3.1	2.3	2.9
Egypt	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.6
Iran	1.9	2.1	2.7	2.1	2.5
Iraq	2.7	1.9	2.6	2.6	2.3
Jordan	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.8
Kuwait	2.2	2.4	3.1	2.4	2.9
Lebanon	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.1
Libya	2.4	2.6	2.8	1.8	2.5
Morocco	3.1	3.2	2.8	3.1	2.9
Oman	2.1	2.1	2.9	1.8	2.5
Palestine	2.6	2.4	2.9	2.7	2.6
Qatar	2.1	2.3	2.9	1.8	2.5
Saudi Arabia	1.4	1.3	1.7	1.2	1.6
Syria	2.7	2.3	2.9	2.2	2.5
Tunisia	3.6	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.3
UAE	2.0	2.3	3.1	2.0	2.5
Yemen	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.0

Source: Kelly and Breslin, 2010

The Code of Personal Status equalized divorce in that both men and women could now file for divorce, thus abolishing all forms of unilateral repudiation. The code increased women's custody rights. Inheritance was only minimally touched for reasons indicated above. Since the 1950s, the Code of Personal Status has been regularly amended, with another major wave of reforms expanding women's citizenship rights in the early 1990s and further amendments in the 2000s.

Turning now to Morocco, the 2004 reforms received international attention when they occurred. This is in part because they were the first reforms of the twenty-first century at a time when highly conservative interpretations of family law and gender practices in other Islamic countries occupied the forefront of public discourse. The 2004 reforms of Morocco increased women's rights considerably, although they did not go as far as the Tunisian reforms. They placed severe restrictions on polygamy, and greatly expanded women's access to divorce and custody. Like the Tunisian reforms, they left inheritance essentially untouched.

A major issue repeatedly mentioned in Morocco concerns the enforcement of the 2004 reforms. Observers complain that the new laws are not adequately applied. Many judges, trained in the previous legislation, are sometimes not quite equipped to legislate according to the new laws. As to the women themselves, it will take time before they come to a greater appreciation of their rights and challenge patriarchal norms.

In Tunisia, even though women have made immense gains through reforms of family law, important dimensions of gender inequality remain in the law. Issues of domestic violence are insufficiently addressed in legislation and inheritance continues to be unequal between men and women. Nevertheless, women's rights advocates are proud of the rights enjoyed by Tunisian women and often refer to the 'exceptionalism' of Tunisia in regard to family law in the Arab world. Following the 2011 Tunisian Revolution during the Arab Spring, a degree of uncertainty is likely to prevail in the foreseeable future. Three sets of voices will be vying to define family law in Tunisia: secularists who want further reforms, moderate Islamists who are prepared to keep in place the Code of Personal Status as a hallmark of Tunisian identity, and hardcore Islamists who are more inclined to abandon or modify it. Only the future will tell which voices shape family law.

The Arab family: increasing vulnerability in times of transition

Raidan Al-Saqqaf, Social Affairs Officer, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Beirut

The patriarchal nature of the Arab family is changing at a rapid pace, driven by a number of factors such as economic pressures, access to education and convergence in social relations. Today's Arab family has new roles for a more educated youth, more empowered women and more opportunities for all family members to achieve social development objectives. These changes are correlated with the swift urbanization taking place across the region.

The average annual urban growth rate in the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA) region was higher than the average world rate during the 2000-2005 period, and is estimated to remain higher during the next few decades. The share of the urban population in the region as a whole will rise from 54 per cent in 2010 to 72 per cent in 2050.[1] This urbanization partly arises from rural-to-urban migration related to diminishing economic opportunities and limited availability of social services in rural areas. It is also the result of improved access to education, basic social services, work prospects and greater socioeconomic opportunities in urban areas.

However, this rapid urbanization has led to severe pressures in urban areas, increasing demands for employment and social services while stretching the infrastructure and housing facilities. These pressures have created a new set of problems for urbanized families, and established inequalities and social strata based on the capacity of these families — and their members — to take advantage of better urban socioeconomic opportunities while minimizing the drawbacks. There is evidence[2] suggesting that the cost of housing is the largest share of household expenses for recently urbanized families in several parts of the Arab world, an expense which could otherwise be directed to productive social investments for the family.

As a coping mechanism, many families resort to living in substandard urban housing or slums. For example, according to UN-Habitat, in 2007 slums housed 17.1 per cent of the urban population in Egypt and 15.8 per cent in Jordan.[3]

Annual urban population growth rates in the ESCWA region, 1990-2030
(total figure shows average of the 14 ESCWA countries contained in the graph)

Growth rate (%)

■ 1990-1995 ■ 2000-2005 ■ 2010-2015 ■ 2020-2025 ■ 2025-2030
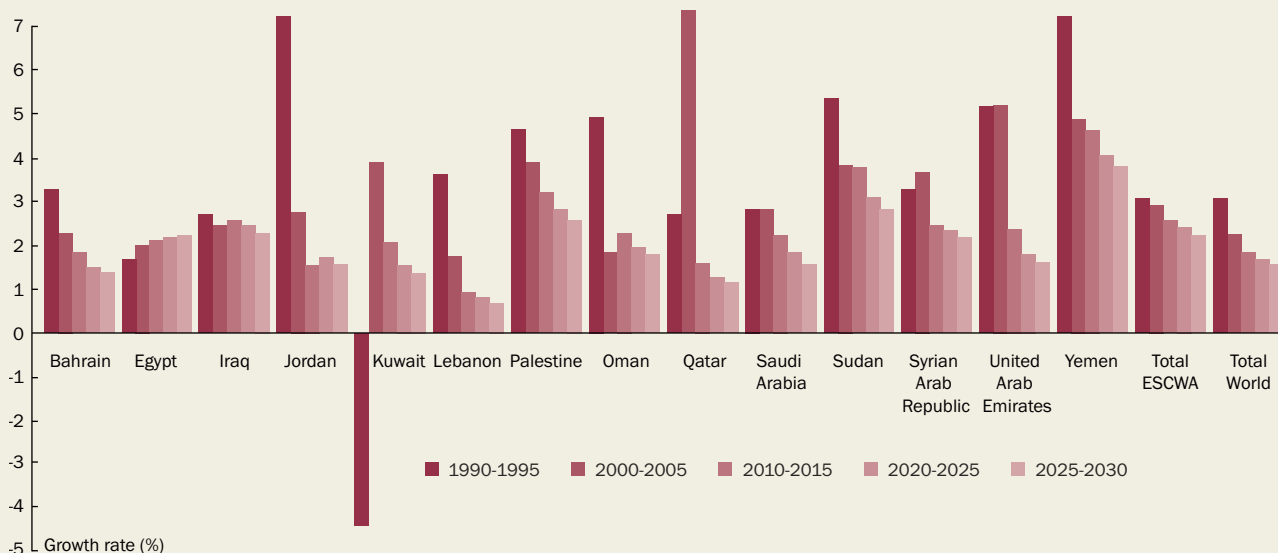
Source: E/ESCWA/SDD/2011/Technical Paper 3

Conflict is also a key reason behind the increase in the percentage of the population living in slum areas in some countries, such as Iraq and Yemen where slums house over 50 per cent of urban populations. Thus, slums include internally displaced populations as well as other disadvantaged social groups. The Iraq Housing Market Study[4] estimates that the housing needs in six Iraqi cities could reach 1.27 million housing units over the period of 2006-2016, notwithstanding the unique shelter needs of the displaced populations within urban centres.

In particular, urbanization is expected to increase significantly in Arab least developed countries (LDCs), where both population growth and urbanization are comparatively higher. The rates of urbanization will continue to be particularly high in three Arab LDCs — Yemen, Sudan and Mauritania — which raises a number of critical concerns around the well-being of urban families in two of those countries suffering from conflict and displacement.

With reference to the internal dynamics affecting the Arab family, most Arab countries have experienced a number of trends, including a decline in family size and the increasing dominance of the nuclear family. Traditionally, the Arab family is an extension of its parent clan, in which several generations cohabitate and serve complementing functions within the extended household. However, there have been recent changes to this situation. For instance, the proportion of nuclear families in Morocco increased from 51.5 per cent in 1982 to 63.5 per cent in 2004, while the average size of the Palestinian household decreased from 6.4 members per household in 1997 to 5.9 in 2010.[5] These findings were corroborated by another study which examined family formation in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen, and concluded that extended families are no longer the norm in these countries.[6]

A review of the literature on the family in the Arab region carried out by UN-ESCWA[7] shows that many Arab governments have adopted government family planning policies which advocate for smaller and nuclear families. These policies were coupled with several initiatives designed to modernize Arab societies and improve the public's access to social services, including care. Several Arab countries have indeed made progress on social development indicators, such as life expectancy, girls' education and reducing maternal mortality.

An internally displaced family housed in a public school in Aden, Yemen, which fled armed conflict taking place in Abyan, 80 km east of Aden

However, it must be noted that in LDCs, this progress has not been as unequivocal: the United Nations Population Fund reports that 77 per cent of maternal deaths in the Arab region occur in Sudan, Somalia and Yemen.[8]

Therefore, government policy on family planning in the region cannot be isolated from social development policies and programmes, where improvements in access to education, health and welfare have supported a paradigm shift from dependency on the family for care and support to a shared dependency with the state. The success of many Arab countries in improving social well-being indicators is praiseworthy, however it must be noted that these improvements vary by country, geographic location, and social group within a geographic location.

Equitable access to government-sponsored care services is not the norm in Arab countries, where institutionalized care provision remains limited. A key example is in the area of childcare, where traditionally the extended Arab family has

Annual growth rate (per cent) of the urban population in select Arab countries

Year	Egypt		Jordan		Morocco		Saudi Arabia		Mauritania		Sudan*		Yemen	
	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG
1950	4.29	2.51	10.49	7.27	3.64	3.12	6.45	2.59	10.25	2.46	7.33	2.64	6.18	0.54
1980	2.43	2.28	5.98	3.98	4.27	2.36	7.95	5.98	7.78	2.83	6.04	3.41	6.22	3.99
2010	2.04	1.63	2.17	3.50	1.62	1.41	2.38	1.85	2.95	2.45	2.60	2.11	4.78	2.30
2040	1.59	0.81	0.85	0.98	0.43	0.40	0.85	0.62	2.43	1.63	2.47	1.60	3.15	1.01

*pre-2011 numbers include South Sudan territory, UG = Urban growth, PG = Population growth

Source: Calculations from the World Population Prospects 2012 revision and the World Urbanization Prospects 2011 revision, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Many families in Egypt resort to living in substandard urban housing on the outskirts of cities. Commuting considerable distances to markets, livelihoods and services becomes a necessity and in some cases a hazard for families and children

played a major role in providing childcare services, particularly in households where multiple generations cohabitate. However, a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization survey[9] in 2010 indicated that the majority of childcare services for the 0-3 age band are only available for select urban populations and are provided for by for-profit commercial enterprises and in limited capacities.

There is evidence to suggest that transferring services traditionally rendered by the family to external parties is becoming increasingly accepted. In Lebanon, for example, the decline in fertility with the gains in schooling and employment for women have given rise to formal and long-term care facilities, particularly noting that 11.8 per cent of older people were living alone in 2004.[10] Consequently, it can be observed that social relations are changing within the Arab family, where the patriarchal authority is increasingly challenged by the growing and more educated youth cohort, and by Arab women who are carving for themselves new roles given the increasing opportunities for engagement and work within urban settings. These changes reveal a paradigm shift on the social roles of members of the Arab family, intrafamily relations and societal changes within Arab communities towards empowerment of the individual at the expense of the collective.

Such a move away from dependence on the extended family in the provision of care will lead to an increased need for care provided by the state, social welfare organizations or the private sector. The complexity of this challenge is of particular concern for slum populations and displaced people. These marginalized groups face the dual challenge of lacking the traditional wide-ranging extended family support and facing the new realities of expensive housing and cost-of-living issues, as well as emerging biases against slums and associated security risks.

One key realization that emerges from this paradigm shift is the popular recognition of the deficit in social protection.

Impact of displacement on the family

It is estimated that there are over 7 million displaced persons in the Arab world, from conflicts in Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen and, most recently, Syria. Population displacement forces families to seek critical and life-saving support from their extended families, as well as from the state and from social welfare organizations. In Yemen, around half a million people were displaced in 2011 as a result of previous and ongoing conflicts in the country. Only a small fraction of that population was housed in camps; the majority had to seek refuge in slum areas of urban centres with close proximity to livelihood opportunities. This adds an increased burden on host communities and results in considerable tensions within the extended family and increasing resentment over resources within the vulnerable slum community. The Humanitarian Response Plan for Yemen appealed for US$702 million in 2013, out of which US$39.5 million were required for the immediate shelter needs of vulnerable displaced families.

Arab populations continue to highlight the shortages in government-sponsored social service delivery and social protection platforms, particularly towards poorer segments of society. These shortages mean that individuals continue to depend to a degree on their families to fill the gap in care and social support. This comes in the light of governments' limited resources and capacity to address the individuals' needs and supplement care provided by the family or the private sector for Arab families.

In a region which has witnessed a surge in conflict during the past few years, resulting in significant population displacement and an increased demand for care and social support, the need for traditional family support as well as government and community support is very high. Conflicts deprive affected populations of many of their human rights, impact adversely on development and the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, and create conditions that reverse the impact of development.

Advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity

Doha International Family Institute

The Doha International Family Institute (DIFI) is a member of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. It was established in 2006 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of the Qatar Foundation, following a conference celebrating the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

DIFI's mission is to:
• contribute to the global knowledge base on issues facing the Arab family through the development and dissemination of high-quality research
• encourage knowledge exchange on issues related to the family across an international and interdisciplinary network of researchers, policymakers and service providers
• make family issues a priority for policymakers through advocacy and outreach at the national, regional and international levels
• build an international coalition of regional experts.

From its establishment, DIFI has been committed to the aims of the International Year of the Family with the objectives of strengthening families and furthering family policies. It has helped to advance social integration and intergenerational solidarity by working with organizations throughout the world.

DIFI has partnered with many United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), UNAIDS and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to hold expert group meetings (EGMs) on issues relevant to the Middle East North Africa (MENA) region. Some of these meetings spearheaded topics that are sensitive in the region, including AIDS, violence against women and the empowerment of women in Arab countries. The AIDS meeting was titled 'Symposium on Family, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and AIDS' and was organized in collaboration with UNICEF and UNAIDS. It brought together for the first time senior experts from governments in the MENA region, senior experts from the United Nations system, the Intergovernmental Authority

Launch of *The Family and the MDGs: Using Family Capital to Achieve the 8 Millennium Development Goals* at UN Headquarters in New York

Children participating in an animation workshop, a side event of the Family and the Arab Media conference

for Development, the League of Arab States, civil society and academicians. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the regional AIDS response in the Arab world within the broader development agenda, particularly MDGs, and to understand how family is the key to reaching the goals.

The 'Impact of Violence Against Women on the Family' colloquium was organized in collaboration with Qatar's Supreme Council for Family Affairs and the United Nations. It was attended by prestigious personalities including the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General on Gender Violence, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Under Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, the Chairperson of the Human Rights Committee, and the past Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. The colloquium also hosted experts in the field from around the world. It was organized as a contribution to the campaign of the United Nations Secretary-General to end violence against women. Recommendations from the colloquium were included in the Secretary-General's special report on gender-based violence, which was presented to the General Assembly in October 2009.

The 'Empowerment of Women in Arab Countries' colloquium, organized in collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women at the United Nations, aimed to provide United Nations member states with expert opinions and recommendations regarding policies to empower women in the political, economic and social fields. Twenty experts from different parts of the world explored the empowerment of women in multiple contexts, addressed challenges and achievements,

and provided recommendations to all stakeholders in order to make policy responses more effective.

DIFI has also worked with United Nations agencies to learn more about issues of population, decent work and poverty, and held several conferences related to the International Year of the Family. Working with the primary United Nations agencies involved with population and ageing issues (the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Parliamentary Assembly and UNDESA) and Northwestern University, DIFI held the 'Family Support Networks and Population Ageing' colloquium. The colloquium report was disseminated during the Commission on Social Development and the Commission on Population.

DIFI worked with the International Labour Organization and the International Training Centre to hold the 'Forum on Decent Work and Poverty Reduction'. This provided a platform for the exchange of experiences and policy lessons from different countries, including the Arab region, and helped to consolidate the Decent Work approach in the region's national development strategies and plans. The event's proceedings were disseminated during the fiftieth session of the Commission on Social Development at the United Nations.

Several conferences have been held by DIFI for the International Year of the Family, both as a follow-up to the tenth anniversary and in preparation for the twentieth anniversary. DIFI worked with UNDESA and the United Nations Focal Point on the Family to hold the 'Family Policy in a Changing World: Promoting Social Protection and Intergenerational Solidarity' EGM. Recommendations of the meeting were included in the United Nations Secretary-General's report on the follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, which was presented to member states.

Also with UNDESA, DIFI held the 'Expert Group Meeting on Dialogue and Mutual Understanding across Generations'. This EGM provided member states with expert opinion and concrete policy recommendations on issues related to youth. It was convened in observance of the celebration of the International Year of Youth and as part of the preparatory activities for the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

The EGM, 'Confronting Family Poverty and Social Exclusion: Ensuring work-family balance, advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity in Europe', was organized by DIFI in collaboration with the International Federation for Family and Development, the European Union Committee of Regions and the United Nations Focal Point on the Family/UNDESA. The event was part of the preparations for the twentieth anniversary celebrations.

The EGM 'Protecting the Arab Family from Poverty: Employment, social integration and intergenerational solidarity' was held in response to several United Nations General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions as a follow-up to the International Year of the Family. The main issues discussed were social and economic trends affecting families and the need for adequate policy response; anti-poverty family-focused policies; employment; family and work balance, policies and practices; recent trends in family poverty and social exclusion; demographic and social trends impacting social integration; and intergenerational solidarity. The meeting explored good practices and lessons learned and culminated with the production of a comprehensive set of expert recommendations for poverty eradication through decent employment and access to basic social services, reconciliation of family-work balance and the promotion of social integration and intergenerational solidarity.

DIFI has sponsored conferences and research to help strengthen families and further family policies internationally. Since 2009, it has provided 20 research grants, including co-funding three of Britain's Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) reports. 'Breakthrough Britain: Every Family Matters' explores the financial and emotional cost of family breakdown to individual family members and children as well as the costs to the nation. It estimates that the country's direct financial cost of family breakdown is in excess of £20 billion per year. 'Completing the Revolution: Transforming mental health and tackling poverty' provides research implicating the breakdown of the family as a cause of mental health issues, and gives information on the family's role in helping its members recover from mental illness.

The final report from CSJ, 'It Happens Here: Equipping the United Kingdom to fight modern slavery', shows how modern slavery — including those in domestic servitude, forced labour and sexual slavery — targets the most vulnerable people and disadvantaged communities across the world. It illustrates that the UK is neither impervious nor unscathed by this phenomenon. The report explains that the little-known issue of human trafficking, both globally and within the UK, is a growing problem that shows signs of increase every year. The impact of this report has been felt globally. Britain's Home Secretary has asked CSJ to host national and international hearings in partnership with Labour Member of Parliament Frank Field, who will lead the evidence process. Information from the hearings will provide input for a modern slavery bill.

The International Research on Working Children Foundation, based in Amsterdam, received a grant to provide research on violence against children in Kenya. The first phase of the research provides relevant ethnographic data on the open and hidden lives of children in order to get a better understanding of the parameters of childhood in selected areas. It studies the specific incidence of violence in the various domains and, subsequently, the changes brought about by intervention. The second phase focuses on the support-seeking mechanisms of children experiencing violence and offers new insights into child-friendly policy measures within the context of poverty, violence and malfunctioning institutions.

Other organizations DIFI has awarded grants to include the Supreme Council of Information and Communication Technology in Qatar, which is studying whether there is a desire to adopt a 'work from home' (WFH) model of employment and whether it would help WFH participants to better balance their work and domestic life pursuits. Seoul National University in Korea is investigating how changing traditional family values along with demographic change, shifting women's status and changing family structure affects intergenerational relations. The International Institute for Family Enterprises at Witten/Herdecke University in Germany received a grant to discover the main topics of interest and concern to Arab family businesses and to better understand the family dynamic from an economic point of view. And the Lebanese American University-Institute for Migration Studies in Lebanon was awarded a grant to learn about the influence of migration on the family — the focal point for traditions, value patterns and cultural identity — and how migration impacts and/or transforms family values and traditions.

DIFI has also sponsored international research conferences on family-related issues. An outcome of two of the conferences was to form a network of scholars. The 'Symposium on Jurisprudence of the Family', which explores marriage and marriage laws, led to the International Academy for Jurisprudence of the Family and a peer reviewed publication, the *International Journal of the Jurisprudence of the Family*.[1] The Doha Colloquium in Nairobi, Kenya, organized in collaboration with Strathmore Business School, led to the Network for African Family Scholars, which includes scholars from different regions and countries in Africa and partnerships between the corporate and academic sectors.

DIFI recognizes that social science research indicates that stable families, founded on marriage, provide significant benefits for men, women and children, and that marital breakdown imposes substantial costs on individuals and society at large. It understands the important contributions families make to society. Because of this understanding, DIFI sponsored the book, *The Family and the MDGs: Using Family Capital to Achieve the 8 Millennium Development Goals*. The book provides information on how families can help achieve the MDGs, as encouraged by the United Nations Secretary-General.

As DIFI transitions to a research centre it will continue to hold research conferences and will also provide its own research to help advance social integration and intergenerational solidarity.

Social connectedness and youth development

Jaimee Stuart, Paul E. Jose and Magdalena Kielpikowski,
Roy McKenzie Centre for the Study of Families, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Social relationships are arguably the most important influences on a youth's social and psychological adjustment; they enable normative interactions to be learned and practised, they provide sources of social support, and they create the basis for subsequent adult attachment. For young people, functional and supportive relationships across multiple contexts — such as family, school, peers and community — can serve as a foundation for successful engagement in the social world.

In contrast, the absence of such relationships or the experience of dysfunctional relationships may leave young people unprepared to meet challenges that present themselves later in life. Without a supportive social foundation, young people are less able to cope with the transition into adulthood and may experience difficulties adapting to new roles and environments. Since functional social relationships play such an integral role in youth development, it is imperative to understand which types of relationships play a particularly important role in promoting positive adjustment.

Contemporary researchers of adolescent development have recently focused attention on social connectedness as a predictor of, and protective factor for, psychosocial adjustment in young people. Social connectedness can be broadly defined as the quality and maintenance of the bonds between the self and others, the degree to which these bonds are sustained over time and the extent of mutual reciprocity, trust and dependency within these relationships. A sense of connectedness includes cognitive components such as cohesion, stability and mutuality; affective components such as closeness, affection and satisfaction; and behavioural components such as support, care and involvement. Previously, we have proposed the following definition of social connectedness for adolescents: "Connectedness is a psychological state regarding other persons (groups or institutions) that reflects a sense of belonging, a lack of aloneness, a perceived bond. This sense of belonging is characterized by the adolescents' perceptions that they are valued and accepted; that they value and believe the other persons (groups or individuals) to be important; that their needs for companionship and support are met; and that they like and enjoy being with the other person (group or institution). To this extent, connectedness is conceptualized as something not merely received, but reciprocated as well."[1]

Social connectedness is a construct receiving attention across a number of disciplines as researchers are attempting to describe what it means to be socially connected and to determine how these connections affect well-being. Broadly, this research finds

Social connectedness provides stability, a sense of belonging and meaning for adolescents

Adolescents tend to seek autonomy outside of the family system, for example through work, social groups or sport

that adolescents' social connectedness serves a protective function against the stressors experienced during development by providing stability, a sense of belonging and meaning. A number of cross-sectional studies have specifically found that greater family and school connectedness are associated with lower levels of maladjustment, higher levels of well-being and fewer negative mental health symptoms. Consequently, there is a growing consensus that social connectedness acts as a protective factor for adolescent health and development. Thus far, only a small number of studies have investigated whether social connectedness is associated with positive adjustment for youth over time. Therefore, one of the aims of our research has been to close this obvious gap.

The Youth Connectedness Project[2] has studied the longitudinal relationships between social connectedness (measured across the four domains of family, peers, school and community) and indices of well-being for New Zealand youth. This study sampled approximately 2,000 community-based young people in three age cohorts (10-11, 12-13 and 15-16 years at time one) over the three time points between 2006 and 2008. The overall aim of the Youth Connectedness Project is to examine the links between the multiple domains of connectedness and positive outcomes for young people in New Zealand, and to identify modifiable factors that foster and enhance connectedness.

We first examined the average levels of connectedness across the four domains throughout the developmental period assessed.[3] The data clearly indicate trends in connectedness throughout adolescence. At the earliest ages measured, youth report high levels of connectedness with peers, family and school, but low levels of connectedness with community. Over time, connections to peers tend to remain high and stable, connections to family and school diminish and connections to community increase. Trend lines indicate that the decline for family connectedness and the increase for community connectedness both level off, and that school connectedness begins to increase after the age of 15 years. These results illustrate normative developmental changes in the social relationships of young people, such that during adolescence youth tend to engage in the process of individuation, seeking autonomy outside of the family system and participating more in the broader social realm (for example work, social groups, sport). The trends evident in our results reflect well-established research findings which show that the process of autonomy-seeking peaks during mid-adolescence as young people begin to develop a more defined sense of self and then begins to level off as these young people mature.

Following on from the examination of connectedness across the developmental period, we next sought to investigate the relationships between the domains of connectedness and adolescent well-being at each of the three time points. Correlation coefficients of cross-sectional data revealed positive correlations of between 0.22 and 0.62 between domains of connectedness with well-being. This pattern of findings indicates that the domains of connectedness are significantly positively related to one another and to well-being at each of the time points.

In order to assess the relationship between social connectedness and well-being over time, we next tested a hierarchical residualized regression model[4] predicting well-being from Year 1 to Year 3. Step one included age, gender, ethnic group and well-being at time one. Findings show that after controlling for levels of well-being at time 1, individuals who were younger tended to be happier two years later, and there is no difference between girls and boys or between ethnic groups. The second step of the regression showed that the domains of family, school and peer connectedness were all predictive of increased well-being over time, but community connectedness was not. Furthermore, family and school connectedness manifested stronger relationships with well-being than did peer connectedness. Notably, upon the inclusion of the social connectedness domains in the second step, the predictive effect of well-being at time 1 diminished, indicating that the construct of social connectedness significantly overlapped with initial levels of well-being.

Social connectedness trends during adolescence across family, school, peer and community domains
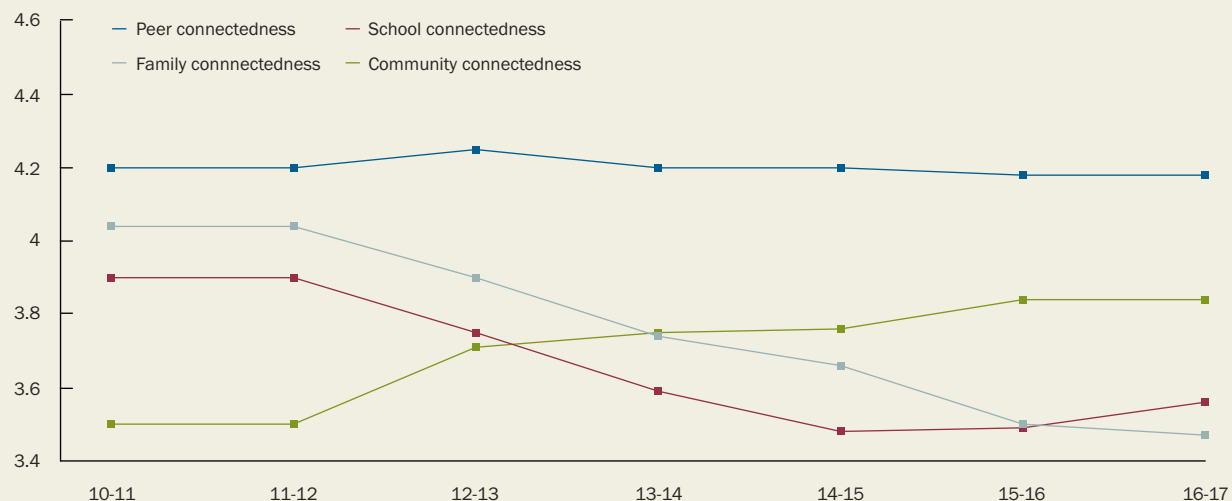
Source: Youth Connectedness Project

Overall, the findings from the Youth Connectedness Project illustrate that adolescents who reported experiencing a sense of belonging, feeling valued and being included in the important social contexts of family, school and peer groups also reported increases to their well-being two years later. On the basis of these findings we can argue that social connectedness, particularly to one's family and school, leads to and predicts greater reported well-being in adolescents over time. Feeling connected to other people and being part of something greater than one's self effectively fulfilled a fundamental psychological need in these adolescents, which then served as a base for a growing sense of confidence, successful interpersonal relations and an optimistic view of the future.

It is important to note that we found families and school to have the greatest predictive effects on well-being two years later. These areas of connectedness seem to be particularly important for youth psychologically, having a more powerful influence on feelings of well-being than either peer or community connectedness. This result is congruent with theory and observations that families are fundamental to child and adolescent development and that schools are also a very important context for development to occur.

Given that adolescents increasingly spend more time with peers and less with family members as they mature, it is often thought that peer connectedness becomes more important than family connectedness. Our results, however, support the view that families continue to have a strong influence over adolescent development even if teenagers spend less time and feel less connected to the family over time.

The weak pattern for community involvement suggests that young people's investment in the community does not lead to significant increases in well-being. This result does not negate the important role of belonging to a community, but rather indicates that proximal rather than distal connections are more central to well-being.

There are strong theoretical and empirical indications that youth need to feel that they belong, that they have people to rely on and places where they feel included. Moreover, both theory and research suggest greater benefits for youth from feeling connected across multiple domains. Our findings suggest that feeling connected in only one area of one's life is not enough to maintain healthy levels of psychological well-being. Furthermore, it has been found that the protective influences from one context can be diminished by lack of connection in another context.

The crucial task facing researchers and practitioners is to determine what leads young people to become connected and what helps to sustain the feelings of belonging to multiple contexts throughout adolescence. Furthermore, research should be conducted that investigates what can be done to increase the supportiveness of interpersonal relationships for youth and how to encourage connectedness within and across the multiple domains of social functioning. We suggest that in order to facilitate this process, examining the protective influence of families and schools is a good place to start.

Family policy often focuses on mitigating the negative effects of family breakdown and conflict, rather than on emphasizing the family's strengths and promoting quality relationships. Encouraging parents to listen to and support their children, to include them in matters relating to the family and to actively champion the positive influence of connectedness, may promote well-being for all family members. Since educational policy is very outcome-oriented, it can miss the importance of connectedness for youth well-being, although there is much empirical evidence showing that young people perform better academically when they feel good about themselves and are confident in their own abilities. For schools, training teachers to engage constructively with their students, clearly communicating and promoting values of inclusion and offering students opportunities to participate in decision-making at the school level, can promote connectedness and shared goals. A challenge for policymakers is to promote and support the efforts of families and schools to build social connectedness and to help integrate them into a larger, reciprocally supportive system.

Feeling connected to other people helps adolescents to develop confidence, successful interpersonal relations and an optimistic view of the future

Image: Youth Connectedness Project

Social connectedness predicting well-being at time 3 of the study

	Step 1	Step 2
Well-being at time 1	0.44**	0.26**
Gender	-0.04	-0.06
Age	-0.09*	-0.04*
Ethnic group	-0.04	-0.02
Family connectedness		0.14**
School connectedness		0.19*
Peer connectedness		0.07*
Community connectedness		-0.02

** p <0.01 * p <0.05 Note: Standardized regression coefficients are reported

Youth Connectedness Project

Whānau development and resilience

Kahukore Baker, Principal Māori Policy and Knowledge Analyst, Families Commission, New Zealand

The Families Commission recently conducted research on an indigenous Māori approach to building and maintaining whānau (extended family) resilience in times of adversity and hardship. The research aimed to improve our understanding of the ways in which whānau respond to challenging circumstances and the strategies they draw on to deal with them.

The term Māori is a collective term for the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand. Typically, Māori people will identify themselves as belonging to a particular iwi (tribe) or a number of different iwi. The place of Māori in Aotearoa is underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi), the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand. It outlines the terms under which iwi Māori and the people of the British Crown live side by side in Aotearoa. Currently, the treaty helps to shape the country's democratic system, including political representation, social structures and education, health, welfare and justice services. The Crown and Māori have a partnership relationship[1] which creates opportunities for government social and economic policy to strengthen the lives of whānau.

There are a number of partnership initiatives in place that recognize the importance of whānau being central to Māori economic growth and development. Understanding whānau as partners and enablers of the future creates more opportunities for government social and economic policy to strengthen the lives of whānau.

There are two key differences between resilience for whānau and that for family. The first is that whānau are larger and usually more complex than family as understood by Western culture. The second is that the 'glue' that holds whānau processes and relationships together is distinctive, emerging from the Māori world view and its related cultural constructs.

According to leading Māori academic Professor Sir Mason Durie: "A wealthy whānau is one whose members obtain full benefit from their resources; they will be able to enjoy the heritage of language and custom; reap profits from land, fisheries and investments in the wider economy; and enjoy the gains from their own work, the efforts of the collective whānau, and the work of their forbears."[2]

Te Puni Kōkiri (the Ministry of Māori Affairs) further notes that, while some risk and protective factors for Māori may be similar to those in Western culture, additional factors arise from unique aspects of history, culture and social structure.

The resources Māori themselves draw on are many and varied. They are often steeped in traditional cultural values and customary practices that enable whānau to access cultural, economic, social and environmental resourcs. For example, the

hunters in the photo would demonstrate manaakitanga (caring for others) by taking food from the hunt to vulnerable family members and others in the community, distributing the choicest cuts of meat to older whānau members. The custom of koha (gift giving) is often used to demonstrate reciprocity. In this example the hunters might give some of the meat to reciprocate for advice and/or support provided by kaumatua (tribal elders) or other whānau members. Their tribal land serves as an environmental resource that enables hunting for food.

As part of the research to better understand these cultural resources and how they are employed by whānau on an everyday basis, the Families Commission undertook a series of interviews with eight whānau living in South Auckland (an urban setting) and eight whānau who were living rurally within the traditional tribal homelands of Tūhoe. These two groups provided a comparison between rural and urban-based whānau and the resilience and strategies employed.

Most of the whānau in the urban-based case study originated from a number of different tribes other than Tūhoe. Most of these whānau members were the third generation of their whānau to live in the city. Various support organizations were also interviewed.

The rural-based whānau collectively represented approximately 150 people affiliated to the Tūhoe iwi an approximately 100 for the urban whānau. As part of the research, the commission also interviewed organizations working with Tūhoe communities. The study resulted in the report, *Te Pūmautanga o te whānau: Tūhoe and South Auckland whānau.*[3]

The origins of the Ngāi Tūhoe people lie deep within the mists of Te Urewera National Park in the central North Island. The Ngāi Tūhoe people originate from the union of Hinepukohurangi, the Mist Maid, and Maungapohatu, the Maunga (mountain). The descendants of Hinepukohurangi and Maungapohatu were the earliest Peoples of the Mists. The first inhabitants of Te Urewera intermarried with those who came later. Together they formed the people who became known as Ngāi Tūhoe. One-third of the 35,000-strong iwi still reside in or near their traditional tribal homelands. The area has poor infrastructure, roads, housing, energy options, and limited health services, and is divided and bounded by nine territorial local authorities.[4]

The Tuhoe whānau, and their organizations involved in the study, jointly identified real hardship for themselves as being the loss of connections to whānau, hapū, iwi, whenua (land) and tikanga (culture), loss of te reo Māori (Māori language), and loss of knowledge of whānau life and Māori society. The Tūhoe whānau identified financial pressures including: running out of money; transport costs; food prices; cost of tangihana (funerals that usually involve costs associated with hosting and catering for large numbers of people for two to three days); job loss; electric-

Feeding the whānau: from left, Ponti Te Moana, Boz Te Moana and Charlie Wiremu

ity and housing costs; medical costs; cost of household items; changes to benefit levels (government income support) owing to changing whānau circumstances; stress and the affordability of school sports trips. Nevertheless, the protective factors of Tūhoe traditions provided buffers against adversity for these whānau — for example, a hapū raising money for a whānau to bring the deceased back home from another country for burial.

The cultural resources the Tūhoe whānau identified as factors that strengthen resilience included the transmission of *Tūhoetanga* — the world view or essence of being Tūhoe; *Whakapapa* — genealogical connections to each other and the land through the past, present and into the future; *Whanaungatanga* — kinship relationships; *Kanohi kitea* — the 'seen face', or being physically present with one another; and *Marae* — a central, ancestral meeting place governed by tribal protocol and one of the few places where Māori can be essentially Māori; and *Ahurei* — coming together for the biennial Tūhoe Festival where up to 25,000 descend on their tribal homelands to celebrate their Tūhoetanga.

Social resources included whānau hapū, iwi, Māori and non-Māori organizations and committees. Access to education that provides immersion in Tūhoetanga and Māori language along with information technology and online learning are significant educational resources. Tūhoe have their own tertiary institution and the local schools support Tūhoetanga. Between 2008 and 2010 there were increases in tertiary enrolments among Tūhoe living in the Whakatane Territorial Authority. Enrolments here increased by 51 per cent compared with an increase of 7 per cent among Tūhoe nationally.

The whānau stressed the leadership of kaumātua (elders) as essential to their well-being. In the Tūhoe case study, the preference is for Tūhoe to work with their own whānau directly, as they are trusted to do so. Advocacy from within the whānau is the first step, then the wider whānau, followed by the hapū and/or iwi. This means the focus is on the entire whānau, not isolated individual members.

Economic resources included *Koha,* a reciprocal giving of time, food, and other resources. Māori communities are adept at fundraising and quickly come together to fundraise regularly for whānau in need. There is also income derived from whānau and land trusts, housing on tribal land, and significant farming and forestry trusts.

Environmental resources included access to resources from the land, lakes and rivers which provide *rongoa* (traditional medicines) as well as a food supply. As the *Kaitiaki* (guardians), whānau work with the resources to ensure sustainability. There is also the opportunity for communities to develop their own natural resources. For example, the community of Ruatāhuna put in its own water supply and is exploring the use of its own energy sources. These resources strengthen whānau resilience and create choices for whānau. Consequently, the Tūhoe whānau have many protective factors to support them in times of economic hardship and adversity.

In this study, whānau wanted the whānau service providers trusted by the community to be better resourced to work with them. This is an 'inside-out' approach, recognizing key roles in the community that are known and respected by local people. The approach is preferred to formal 'outside-in' interventions that are implemented in isolation of kaumatua, marae and the hapū, and which tend not to engage whānau because trust is not easily developed.

The study found that the South Auckland whānau experienced financial pressures around job loss, food insecurity and having to use food banks, costs of tangi (funerals), the clothing and food trucks that operate on credit arrangements leading to debt and loan repayments, changing benefit levels, power costs, rent, adult health issues, children's health issues, medication costs, the expense of whānau members coming to stay, and school fees.

In the face of such pressures, many of these whānau have shown significant resilience on a daily basis. They do this with the support of effective organizations that are trusted by whānau and are supported and resourced to work with and walk alongside whānau. Like Ngāi Tūhoe, these urban-based whānau also drew upon their cultural resources. However, this was largely in isolation from the traditional support structures of hapū and iwi. Consequently, they built strong networks with friends and neighbours. Furthermore, Māori organizations and churches were also called upon to fill this significant gap in traditional support structures.

The cultural resources these whānau drew on included Tikanga Māori (Māori values and customary practices). Although isolated from hapū and iwi networks, their lives are framed by these values and practices. They drew heavily on Whanaungatanga (the practices that strengthen kinship relationships). One mother said: "I refer to my neighbours as whānau even though we have no blood ties." Whānau also provide aroha (love), and manaakitanga which includes providing food, money, fundraising, clothes, furniture, transport, and sharing of household appliances and lawn mowers.

Whānau seek out activities and organizations that support their Mana (self-esteem and personal dignity). In times of stress, whānau used karakia (prayer) to support and sustain them. Their social resources also included Kaumātua who build and maintain networks along with churches, sports clubs and urban marae. As with the Tūhoe whānau, people also sought out opportunities for further education. The study found that four out of eight mothers were engaged in tertiary education such as nursing, a

Tangaroa and Rongomatane, Ngā Whare Waatea

Master's degree in Māori Development, business administration and management. These are Māori or community organizations rather than government services. The urban whānau also drew on the support available through urban marae, such as the marae associated with the Manukau Urban Māori Authority.

Economic resources to these whānau included koha, fundraising, budgeting services and the Aotearoa Credit Union.

Environmental resources in the urban setting were very scarce. At best, a few of the whānau had access to a garden. When one whānau tried to practise customary food gathering, its choices were restricted to the waterways around industrial Auckland city, some of which are polluted.

In both the rural and urban studies, factors and practices supporting whānau resilience include: the transmission of tribal cultural knowledge; access to resources; education, skills and capability; whānau development and high-trust relationships; mana and self-esteem; advocacy and brokering; kanohi kitea (face-to-face, community knowledge); presence of skilled whānau workers; kaumātua and whānau support; ability to identify and refer whānau members with problems; sports club and church membership; and whānau access to computers and the Internet.

Urban Māori and community organizations play critical roles in supporting families and whānau in their communities, in the same way hapū and iwi act to create enabling environments that provide a range of social, cultural, economic and environmental opportunities for the future development of those involved. These organizations need not be formal 'social services', but a mix of formal and informal organizations such as a tribal authority, a sports club or a church.

Such organizations are often the first port of call for whānau because of the relationship of trust that has been built between the two. Therefore they have a critical role to play in connecting whānau with other support networks. Services working to make a positive difference with Māori are likely to have more success by working within and through whānau, hapū, iwi and communities that are known, trusted and respected by whānau and work within appropriate cultural frameworks. For example, the concept of 'kanohi kitea' is one that supports face-to-face interaction, rather than remote engagement by phone or e-mail. Seeing people working within the community, actively engaged in relationship-

building, and attending events and occasions of importance to whānau, reinforces the value that is placed on the relationship.

In a world where many are pressing for an approach to policy and practice that is 'evidence-informed' and based on 'what works', the whānau in these studies demonstrate the need to think carefully not only about what works, but also about what relationships are working, and who determines what counts as success. This is a significant challenge for everyone working in the development, implementation and evaluation of social services in Aotearoa and it is a challenge these whānau encourage us all to accept.

Understanding how best to work with and engage Māori, especially whānau, is important since critical support functions exist within the whānau as well as between whānau and the hapū (sub-tribe) and iwi. These functions cannot be replaced or replicated by government agencies and programmes, but the study shows that they can be supported to enhance the resilience of whānau.

The following passage from Sir Apirana Ngata (one of Māoridom's foremost leaders and scholars in the last century) speaks of partnership and the resilience that Māori people can draw from their own cultural traditions and values. It reinforces the importance of whānau taking the lead in decisions that affect their lives and in delivering services with the support of their community.

E tipu, e rea
Mō ngā rā o tou ao
Ko tō ringa ki ngā rākau a to Pākehā
Hei ora mō tō tinana
Ko tō ngākau ki ngā taonga a ō tipuna
Hei tikitiki mō tō māhunga
A,koo tō wairua ke te Atua
Nāna nei ngā mea katoa.

Grow tender shoot for the days of your world
Your hand to the tools of the Pākehā (non-Māori people)
For the welfare of your body
Your heart to the treasures of your ancestors
As a crown for your head
Your spirit unto God the author of all things.

Whānau Ora: strengthening Māori families in Aotearoa, New Zealand

Emeritus Professor Sir Mason Durie, Massey University; and Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, Indigenous Centre of Research Excellence, New Zealand

Māori are the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand. Like indigenous populations who have been colonized in other parts of the world, the Māori suffered serious depopulation in the latter half of the nineteenth century as a consequence of infectious diseases, musket wars, land losses and malnutrition. By 1910, however, and largely due to inspirational indigenous leadership at political, medical and community levels, a recovery process was evident.

More than a century later, the 2013 New Zealand Census of Individuals and Dwellings showed that the population had increased from around 47,000 in 1910 to 598,605, now accounting for 14 per cent of the total New Zealand population. Although slowly ageing, Māori are relatively youthful, the median age being 24 years compared to 38 years for the total population. In that respect the population is larger than it ever has been in the past, with greater rates of participation in a range of professions and industries. There are also positive signs of greater participation in tertiary education. According to the New Zealand Government Statistician, over 36,000 Māori stated a bachelor's degree or higher as their highest qualification at the 2013 Census — a more than 50 per cent increase since 2006.

Meanwhile, in the face of alarming disparities between Māori and non-Māori first detailed in 1960, significant changes to Māori policy were introduced in 1984. The changes partially reflected the New Zealand Government's recognition of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi, under which the British Crown made certain guarantees to Māori including recognition of Māori property rights and expectations of similar citizenship rights and social well-being. The 1984 approach also recognized the right of Māori to retain their language and culture and to enjoy state-supported Māori television and radio networks. Importantly, the new mood saw the emergence of Māori health and social service providers, Māori language-medium schools, and the introduction of Māori perspectives into the core business of hospitals, schools, prisons, universities and government departments.

However, notwithstanding major gains over the previous three decades, most socioeconomic indicators show that Māori still fare worse than non-Māori. Life expectancy is some eight years less; acute and chronic illnesses are two to three times more frequent; educational achievement is significantly lower as are incomes, home ownership and stable employment. Māori rates of imprisonment are higher than for non-Māori, truancy rates are similarly greater and poverty among Māori families is substantially higher than among other sections of society. According to the 2013 Child Poverty Monitor, one in three Māori children is deemed to live in poverty compared to one in seven European children.

In some areas the disparities have increased despite the increasing number of Māori non-governmental organizations (NGOs) delivering a wide range of services, mainly in health and social services. But the services have generally been small, in competition with each other, and geared to the resolution of individual crises. Contractual obligations required by government funders have been narrowly defined, favouring specific interventions such as truancy, diabetes management or smoking cessation, and measurements of compliance have focused on accounting for volumes rather than results. What had been missing was an approach that could incorporate individually-oriented
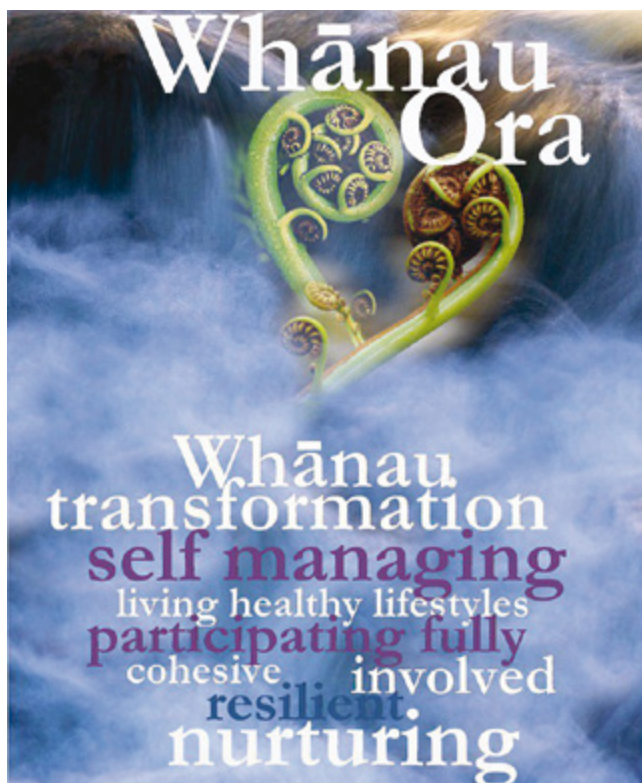
Whānau Ora combines social, cultural and economic values to provide integrated services that contribute to whānau empowerment

interventions with family circumstances, combine crisis management with capability building, measure results as well as volumes, balance NGO autonomy with community-wide cooperation, and match sector-led initiatives with cross-sector collaboration.

In 2009, concerned that current policies and practices were not reducing disparities, the Hon. Tariana Turia, Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment and co-leader of the Māori (political) Party of the New Zealand Government, established the Taskforce on Whānau-centred Initiatives. Its main objective was to construct an evidence-based framework that would lead to strengthened whānau (family) capabilities, an integrated approach to whānau well-being, collaborative relationships between state agencies in relation to whānau services, and relationships between government and community agencies that were broader than contractual. Improved cost-effectiveness and value for money were also to be important.

After receiving written submissions and undertaking an extensive consultation process with Māori communities, health and social service providers, tribal leaders and state agencies, a detailed report was presented to the Government outlining the rationale for adopting a new approach to Māori families — Whānau Ora (Well Families). 'Whānau Ora: Report of the Taskforce on Whānau-Centred Initiatives' recommended an independent trust reporting to a dedicated Minister of Whānau Ora, charged with the governance, coordination and implementation of Whānau Ora. A specific Whānau Ora appropriation derived from relevant government departments was also recommended in order to deliver whānau services that linked social, cultural and economic development and built whānau capability. The taskforce's third recommendation was that Whānau Ora services should be integrated and comprehensive, and focused on measurable outcomes that would contribute to whānau empowerment.

The report stressed the importance of a cultural dimension to Whānau Ora and the incorporation of a Māori cultural paradigm that endorsed whānau heritage and facilitated full participation in Māori networks. Further, all government agencies with responsibilities for any aspect of whānau well-being should commit to the Whānau Ora principles and support the Whānau Ora approach. Finally the taskforce recommended that regional panels be established to ensure Whānau Ora could contribute in positive and realistic ways in local communities.

Government did not immediately accept Whānau Ora. There were concerns that a policy geared mainly towards Māori could inadvertently marginalize Māori families; and social policy sector leaders pointed to existing programmes that contained elements of Whānau Ora. The relevant state departments also had to consider the impacts on their own budgetary appropriations of a new programme outside their immediate responsibilities. But by mid-2010 the New Zealand Government had approved the Whānau Ora policy and had taken steps towards implementation. A responsible minister was appointed and instead of an independent trust, as recommended, a governance group was established comprising the chief executives of three government

departments (Health, Social Development and Māori Affairs) together with three Māori community representatives, one of whom chaired the group. The implementation of Whānau Ora hinged on commitment to:
• a whānau-centred philosophy
• an integrated approach to service delivery
• building whānau capability as well as dealing with urgent problems
• utilizing outcome indicators to gauge effectiveness.

A whānau-centred philosophy required a shift in two directions. First, providers had to be mindful that people who needed assistance were members of whānau rather than 'self-actualizing' individual clients. Second, the goals of provider organizations were to be a lesser priority than the aspirations of whānau. The aim would be to work with whānau to establish their priorities and then to help them achieve their goals. Many Māori providers had already adopted a whānau-centred philosophy, but were often constrained by narrowly framed contracts that did not allow for the broader view. For many other providers the attitudinal shift represented a substantial departure from established practices; addressing problems within the whānau context was a new experience that required additional training.

Consistent with the whānau-centred philosophy, a dedicated fund was established to help whānau develop and then implement their own plans for improving the conditions of their people.

Even greater challenges arose in fostering an integrated approach to service delivery. For the most part government

All whānau have the potential to flourish. A young Māori family enjoy playtime together at their home in Aotearoa, New Zealand

funders had operated within clearly demarcated sectoral boundaries, and developing programmes where intersectoral cohesion was important presented some difficulties. Although Whānau Ora was to be a whole-of-government policy, in fact the main contributors came from the ministries of Health, Social Development, Māori Development and, to a lesser extent, the ministries of Education, Justice and Housing. Even then, unbundling funding agreements from different sectors so that providers could operate within a simplified contractual climate proved to be especially problematic. Many providers had contracts with a number of government agencies and often had several separate contracts with the same agency. Combining all contracts into a single overarching agreement was the aim. However, although it was possible to amalgamate contracts, the resulting 'single' contract had a number of schedules that reflected original agreements.

In addition to integrating government sectors, an integrated approach also required providers to adopt shared aims and practices so that whānau could experience a coherent and consistent service rather than one that was fragmented, duplicated or contradictory. Provider groups located in the same region were invited to form collectives and then to tender for Whānau Ora contracts. By the end of the third year more than 30 collectives had been established, each comprising a number of independent NGOs that had agreed to work under the Whānau Ora model. Collaboration was not a universally rewarding experience and some collectives (a small number) dissolved or restructured with different members. But the more common finding was that NGOs welcomed the opportunity to be part of an integrated system. The appointment of dedicated whānau 'navigators' who worked across providers to broker the best opportunities for whānau proved to be an additional opportunity for consolidating the aims of the new collectives.

Combining crisis intervention with capability building tested both providers and funders. Provider collectives, largely made up of health and social service workers, were more accustomed to dealing with family crises. However, the Whānau Ora approach not only included the resolution of a critical event for one or more members of the family, but also building strengths for the whānau as a whole. In order to address the dual emphasis the Whānau Ora team would need to include expertise in sport and exercise, Māori cultural heritage, nutrition, education, health and financial literacy, estate literacy (especially for whānau with land interests) and information technology. In effect the focus would shift towards addressing the determinants of disadvantage and the prevention of adversity. Phase two of the policy would place particular emphasis on building capability.

The adoption of results based accountability remains a key aspect of Whānau Ora. It will necessitate the use of indicators to determine whether or not interventions have improved whānau circumstances. Outcome measurements have not previously been a requirement for government contracts in social policy areas, but the increasing interest in social service bonds where 'payment for results' underpins contracts will align Whānau Ora with other similar programmes. However, it is not always clear what indica-

tors will be most appropriate. Reducing adversity (such as offending, rheumatic fever or inadequate housing) is of particular interest to government agencies; while measuring increases in family achievements (such as educational success, home ownership or cultural affirmation) is important for whānau who want to see their aspirations realized.

In addition to measuring gains made by individual whānau members, gains made by the whānau as a whole will need to be quantified. Collective measures relevant to whānau have not been employed to any great extent and measures of whānau 'success' are even less well formulated than measures of whānau disadvantage. A framework to address whānau success has been developed as part of a wider inquiry into whānau well-being. 'Te Puawaitanga o Ngā Whānau: Markers of Flourishing Whānau' identifies six markers of flourishing: whānau heritage, whānau wealth, whānau capabilities, cohesion within whānau, connectedness beyond whānau and whānau resilience. The markers enable the concept of flourishing as applied to whānau to be better understood and used to measure progress towards whānau 'success'.

Whānau Ora is a relatively new government policy, still in an evolutionary stage. The high-level aims are that all whānau should be self-managing, living healthy lifestyles, participating fully in society, confidently participating in Māori networks, economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation. They should be cohesive, resilient and nurturing.

While those aims are unlikely to be fully realized in the short term, they will be more achievable when there is ongoing government commitment and a significant attitudinal shift from funders, providers and whānau themselves. Importantly, a switch from focusing only on disadvantage and whānau deficits, to a focus on success and empowerment, will be a necessary precondition for realizing the Whānau Ora goals. That shift will be premised on the notion that despite adversity and hardship, all whānau have the potential to flourish. It will also recognize that empowerment requires a capacity for whānau to be self-managing and self-determining.

Three years after launching the policy, there is sufficient encouraging evidence to warrant optimism for Whānau Ora. Whānau have been shown to be capable of significant transformations manifested in the adoption of healthier lifestyles, a capacity for forward planning and more appropriate use of services. Moreover, there has been progress in inter-sector collaboration at both local and national levels, and despite the complexities of integrated contracts, social bonds and appropriate outcome indicators, the limitations of unisectoral initiatives have been well recognized. Similarly, for the most part, the more than 30 provider collectives have been able to adapt to new ways of working and to embrace a whānau-centred practice model that facilitates without undermining whānau leadership or initiative. But probably a more important sign of the relevance of Whānau Ora is the widespread enthusiasm from whānau generally for the concept. The policy has been accompanied by the spontaneous emergence of a range of programmes in Māori communities where whānau success has been fostered and celebrated.

Family-oriented policy

Bathabile Olive Dlamini, Minister of Social Development, Republic of South Africa

Following the end of apartheid and the establishment of a new democratic dispensation in 1994, the post-apartheid South African Government instituted various policy and legislative reforms aimed at, among other things, the realignment of the country's institutions, in order to transform South African society. However, the family was not explicitly addressed in many of these policies. Rather, it was usually inferred and, in consequence, most socioeconomic benefits indirectly filtered down to the family.

Past and present poverty analyses and strategies of intervention have also primarily concentrated on households, as opposed to families, thereby causing policies to overlook intrafamily dynamics in the country. It is against the above background that the absence of an explicit policy framework on the family in South Africa has, over the years, been identified by government policymakers, academics, civil society and concerned citizens as a critical shortcoming that needed to be urgently addressed.

Reducing poverty, unemployment and inequality remain South Africa's greatest challenge. Among the major causes of poverty in the country is lack of or low earned income. Essentially, employment creation has not transpired at the anticipated rate, and many people are still unskilled. This inability of many people to secure employment has led to many families facing additional burdens, due to limited or no income to secure family livelihood. This situation continues to place a huge dependency burden on families. Poverty still reflects apartheid settlement patterns, and virtually all poor households are found in the former Bantustans regions, informal settlements and townships. Great inequality income distribution persists[1] largely as a result of the reproduction of the disparities in ownership income, resource skills and other determinants of people's capacity to take advantage of opportunities.

As far as poverty is concerned, women endure a disproportionate burden of the outcomes of past policies. Whereas men worked in various industries during the apartheid era, many women remained in the rural areas to look after family members. Historically, women received income primarily in the form of remittance from their spouses. Cultural practices such as patriarchy also reinforced the exclusion of women from economic activities.

The gender division of labour continues to influence the way families function. Women typically assume more household responsibilities, spend a larger portion of their time on unpaid care work than men, and make up a greater proportion of discouraged work seekers.

Child poverty is another particularly worrisome trend in South Africa, and is a direct consequence of family disintegration.

A report of which analyses the 2005/2006 income and expenditure survey by Statistics South Africa was able to paint a clearer picture of this phenomenon.[2] According to the report, child poverty peaked at 65.5 per cent and remains more extensive than poverty among adults (45.2 per cent), thereby confirming that there is greater incidence of children in poorer households.

The country's response to confront family poverty was to develop a White Paper on Families which is a family-focused policy. The intention of the white paper is to make a significant contribution to the fight against poverty which affects millions of South Africans, including children, youth, families, women, people with disabilities and older persons. Furthermore a comprehensive social security programme such as child support grants, foster care grants, housing assistance and tax breaks, serves as a protective measure for families in need. In addition, short-term interventions such as an extended public works programme, community works programme, income generation project and women's cooperative projects are being implemented by government to address the socioeconomic state of the families in South Africa.

Ensuring work-family balance

Women are the primary providers of care and have been entering the labour force in greater numbers, hence the need

Image: Department of Social Development, South Africa

The South African Government has intensified the Early Childhood Development programme to support mothers

to provide care. As a result, through white paper on families, the Government has promoted family strengthening strategies to support these families.

Government also facilitated the balance of work and family responsibilities and promotes equal parenting care and responsibilities between fathers and mothers. The South African Government has made progressive policies such as maternity leave and family responsibility leave. The intention of these policies is to encourage family balancing between work and family responsibilities.

In terms of family support programmes, the Government has intensified the Early Childhood Development (ECD) programme to support mothers. ECD is a vital link in the continuum of services aimed at achieving positive social and educational outcomes. The growing number of children accessing ECD services demonstrates our determination to build human capital by providing opportunities for their cognitive development and early learning stimulation. ECD, together with investments in education and health, will contribute positively towards stemming the tide of the inter-generational transmission of poverty and increasing demand for the expansion of the social safety net.

Intergenerational solidarity

Programmes promote interaction, sharing and transfer of knowledge between youth and the older generations are needed to contribute towards the regaining of the lost morals, human-ity and 'Ubuntu' which are necessary ingredients for sustainable and cohesive families and communities. The indigenous socio-cultural knowledge and practice systems which had promoted, and continue to promote functionality and the strong sense of societal values of families are being eroded by these challenges.

Programmes bringing children, youth and older persons together have proliferated in communities around the country over the past three decades. These intergenerational programmes are the 'crea-tions' of community members, often human service and education professionals, who attempt to meet community needs and make good use of existing community resources for a stronger, more caring society. Improving school attendance, self-esteem, attitudes towards ageing and older persons, and reducing substance abuse, social isolation and troubled behaviour are suggested goals to be reached through intergenerational programmes.

Intergenerational programmes play an increasingly prominent role in communities as a strategy to bring people of different age groups to work together in meeting community needs. Such strategy is important because of the growth in the proportion of healthy, knowledgeable and experienced older persons in our population who can contribute immensely towards the decline of many social challenges that continue to plague young people, such as crime, drug abuse or academic difficulties.

Intergenerational programmes in South Africa are mainly clustered around the following areas:
- senior citizens
- extended families and communal living
- schools
- lifelong learning
- multipurpose centres
- edu-care
- moral regeneration.

Outcomes-based education is the official policy and focus on the educational process at school level in South Africa. This system has a strong focus on life skills, which requires that community members share their experience and skills with youth in the classroom. In many instances these commu-nity members include the older people in a community. Grandparents are encouraged to actively participate in the classroom to share their history and listen to children reading. Also playing a role in drawing older people into classrooms is the fact that class sizes are very big and teachers need assis-tance in order to function.

Another trend is that of the Government moving increas-ingly towards providing multipurpose centres, where old people can receive health care, pension pay-outs, entertain-ment and so on, but also where they in turn can provide a service to children and youth.

There is also evidence that young people have been and are being encouraged to serve the needs of older people on a voluntary basis. Some of this work happens through schools and colleges, where activities such as visitation, garden upkeep or doing errands are arranged, while in other instances they are community or church-based initiatives. South Africa has proven an important step to strengthen intergenerational dialogue through the youth and older persons dialogue that laid the foundation.

In conclusion, South Africa has laid a solid foundation by developing the White Paper on Families. This family policy has created an enabling environment that strengthens families and promotes family preservation.

Finally, South Africa will be celebrating the twentieth anniver-sary of the International Year for the Family by hosting a national family summit. The summit will be anchored by the sub-themes of confronting family poverty, ensuring work-family balance and advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity.

Image: Department of Social Development, South Africa

Intergenerational programmes play an increasingly prominent role in communities, bringing people of different age groups together to meet community needs

The Community-based Center for Family Development: working towards warm, strong and sustainable families

Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Thailand

Thailand has endeavoured to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) within 2015 through related policies and strategic planning. Proactive initiative projects and activities have been launched with a focus on the MDGs, and comprehensive progress has been spelled out through some success in achieving the goals.

For example, the proportion of the population living in poverty was reduced from 21 per cent in 2000 to 7.3 per cent in 2010. In achieving primary education, the enrolment of those aged 6-11 has increased from 81.4 per cent in 2000 to 90.5 per cent in 2009. Moreover, it has been found that the number of female students engaged in secondary schools and universities was higher than that of males. However, some constraints must be acknowledged. For example, in informal education, older women have less access to the learning sphere due to their household burden, resulting in lower working status and income compared to men. The increasing abortion rate in teenagers has led to some dropping out of school and to motherhood mortality. The Institute for Population and Social Research estimates that the child and working-age populations have been continuously decreasing while the old-age population has increased. In 2005, the number of people aged up to 60 was 6.4 million or 10 per cent of the entire population. In 2010, this figure was 7.5 million or 12 per cent, and it is estimated that in 2020, the number will have increased to 11 million or 17 per cent. After 2021, the number of elderly people will be equal to the child population. Such a change in the population structure is likely to bring about repercussions on Thai family status.

To tackle these obstacles and respond to the new paradigm shift, strengthening the family has been recognized as key factor contributing to achievement. The fact that the development of family potentials (with regard to maximizing the

Developing family potentials and maximizing the capacity of the elderly can lead to self-reliance, positive behaviours and resilience to social deterioration

capacity of those in old age) can lead to self-reliance, positive behaviours and attitudes immune to social deterioration has been highlighted and set as a priority in social development policy and strategic initiative programmes.

Thailand's initiative approaches to mobilize social policy on family strengthening have been established through national mechanism. The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, as the national focal point in family strengthening, has designed significant mechanisms at national and local level. The National Committee on Family Development Policy and Strategy, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, has functioned as a policy-oriented body responsible for the formulation of strategic measures for the betterment of family status. This is characterized by the five standards of family strengthening:
• good relationships among family members
• proper family roles in all stages of life
• family self-reliance in the economic sphere
• access to social capital
• ability to avoid risks and cope with difficulties.

To achieve its goals, proactive approaches to family protection and empowerment, such as the 10-menu for family practices, have been undertaken through initiative activities.

It has been recognized that fruitful outcomes of the above activities need to be mobilized through cooperation of the public and private sectors as well as other networks, especially local communities. In other words, the above strategic measures can be taken into successful actions only if active agency networks take part in joint ventures, especially at local community level.

The Community-based Center for Family Development (CCFD) is an organization of local public sector bodies that works to promote the strengthening of families in local communities. There are two types of CCFD: those under the supervision of local government administrative organizations, and those in the public sector that work in coordination with local government administrative organizations.

The final goal of the CCFD working process is 'Warm, strong and sustainable families'. The work process for this goal is divided into two stages: preparation for selection and setting up of the CCFD working group, and the implementation period of the CCFD.

In order to increase the efficiency of the CCFD, several areas of focus and notification are necessary. Executives of the local government administrative organization or those participating in selecting the CCFD working group should have capacities to scrutinize and make decisions at a certain level. Selected areas with information on families are necessary to ensure an effective work process. Further, the scope of work and expectations need to be clearly set, and there must be capable staff with knowledge and experience in planning and project management.

There are three levels of change:
• individual level: activeness, awareness, accountability
• working group level: learning and ability to analyse work approach, monitoring and evaluation of target groups
• network level: operational section, coordination and support section that feel content with the cooperation process.

The main objective is that the local government administrative organizations are aware of the value of working with target groups and demonstrate willingness to continue their support as their capacities allow. The target groups are protected and their problems are attended to and solved, both at the level of the individuals and through the group support process.

Good relationships among family members are crucial to strengthening the family

Warm, strong and sustainable families are the final goal of the CCFD working process
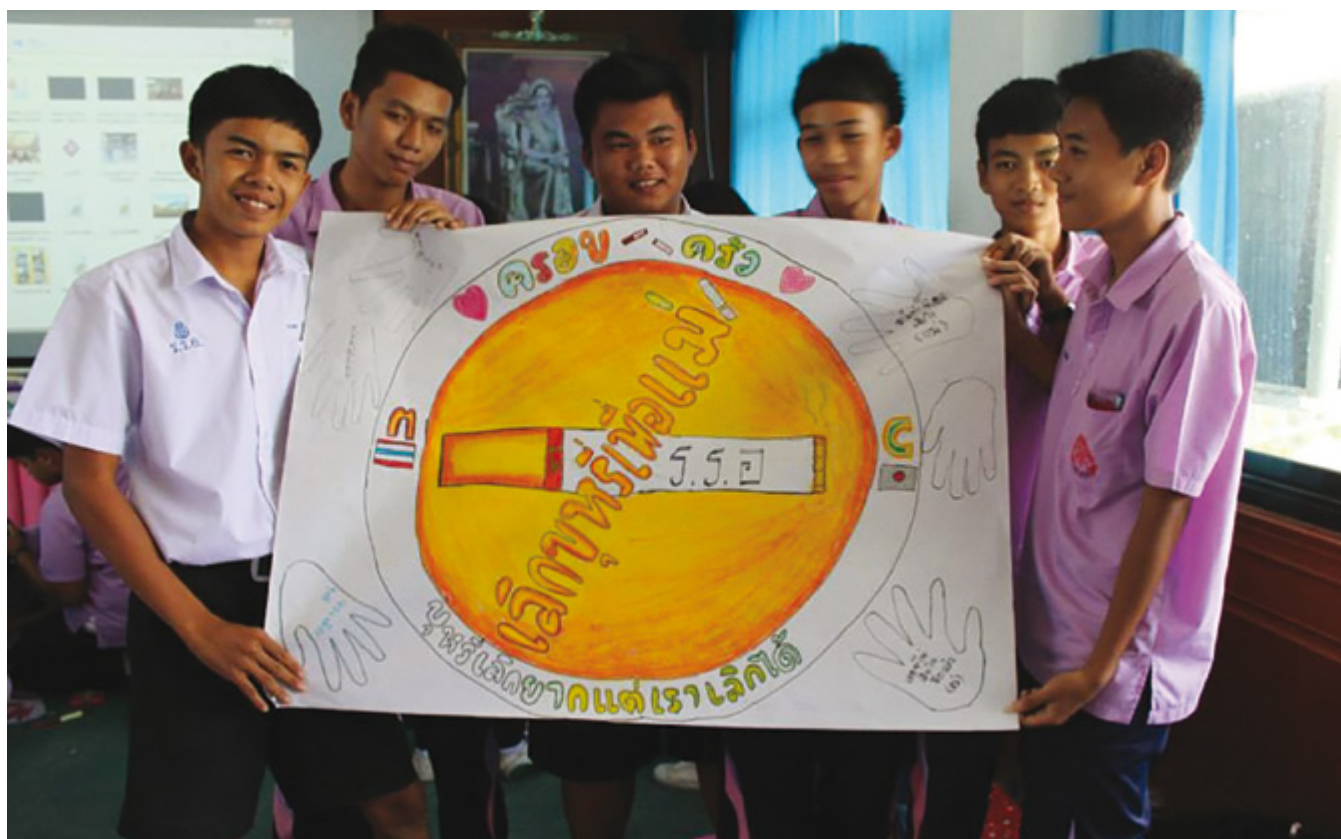
The CCFD's objectives are to transform specific target groups, such as families with problems, children and youth at risk

Strategy and implementation process

Each CCFD has similar sets of strategies and implementation processes. However, in reality, the CCFD working group of each centre will apply strategies and implementation approaches in accordance with their capacities, experiences and appropriateness of the local contexts and target groups.

One strategy is to provide support to families, with particular focus on the alleviation of problems so the family will be able to live their normal and meaningful lives, such as in Samutra Sakorn Province. The implementation approach for this would entail the CCFD working group conducting meetings and consultations to discuss problems in the communities. Once the families requiring assistance have been identified, the CCFD working group analyses the causes of the problems, the solutions, the kinds of support/rescue needed and the contributing approaches of such assistance.

Another goal is to use sociocultural capital and community networks to provide assistance to families, with particular focus on mutual assistance among the networks (volunteers in related fields such as social development and medical care). Here, the implementation approach would see CCFD working in partnership with local networks based on mutual care for the individual/family, with difficulties as well as exchanges of information among them. These local networks might include volunteers in related fields, the Children and Youth Council, village committees, and those working for surveillances/watchdogs. The tasks focus on survey and family data collection as well as home visits for the assessment of the target groups and proper response to the family in need of help or rescue. The implementation approach will be in parallel with cultural activities of the community.

CCFD also works as a co-partner of local government administrative organizations in coordinating the with relevant agencies to develop projects and activities for family development in communities. To implement this, the CCFD working group works in partnership with the local government administrative organization, as an integral part. Assigned by the organization, the CCFD undertakes projects or activities on its behalf.

Another example is the CCFD serving as the key unit in the development and implementation of projects and activities that are designed especially to strengthen families and to prevent and respond to family problems. The aim is also to transform the behaviour of the target groups through a family participation-based learning approach. This is achieved through the coordination of relevant agencies, institutions and organizations, both internal and external (besides the local government administrative organizations), such as schools, temples, police stations, correction facilities, the Office of Prevention and Suppression of Drugs, the National Office of Health Insurance and so on. In implementing this approach, the CCFD working group is the focal point of community mobilization through its initiative projects/activities in family development and in the prevention of and response to family problems. Its objectives are to transform specific target groups, such as families with problems, children and youth at risk.

Finally, the CCFD serves as a co-partner of local government administrative organizations to rescue victims in social problems according to the Government initiative policy, One Stop Crisis

Image: CCFD

CCFD is a key unit in developing and implementing projects and activities that are designed to strengthen families and transform the behaviour of target groups

Center (OSCC). In particular, the new initiative system 'OSCC in 24hr' is the provision service for 'prompt rescue' for people facing four social crisis troubles: unwanted pregnancy, human trafficking, exploitation of child labour, and violence against children/women/elderly and those with disabilities. The OSCC Social Rescue Center has been established to fulfill the above task through the cooperation and integration of all concerned agencies. Under the centre, mobilized and co-hosted by the Ministry, people are able to access one-stop service once they seek help. To meet the achievement of reinforced cooperation through online database and alarm systems, the Government has pushed the OSCC into concrete action under a memorandum of understanding signed by concerned ministries and non-governmental organizations, including the Ministry of Interior, under which are local administrative organizations. They have functioned as the help desk of Frontline 1 and the CCFD has worked as their co-partner. In implementing this strategy, the CCFD has helped its local administrative organization to receive and record notification of cases, provided primary rescue through local networks, and reported cases online to the responsible agencies as Frontline 2 for further actions. The OSCC system in the local community is expected to meet people's need and render reinforcement of the empowered family.

Challenges and recommendations

Using local mechanisms as a key to strengthening the family is an endeavour that demands continuous development. Future progress depends on several contributing factors and faces a number of challenges.

It is a priority to enhance the political will of decision makers at all levels in local administrative organizations which are the co-partners of the CCFD, in response to the related family development linking to MDGs and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic Community framework. We must also promote appropriate attitudes among policymakers and those working in the family field, including the CCFD working group. This means, for example, linking to gender perspectives in order to prevent gender bias in project design and activities. Capacity building of the CCFD working group must be encouraged. This should include practical skills and exchanged experience based on the development of the OSCC system and other related fields, especially the survey and analysis of local databases, design for project proposals, family counselling and other skills in a social and legal context. Further, there is a need to motivate the integration of work to be carried out by the CCFD and provincial government through concrete cooperation. CCFD best practices should be extended to other new local networks. To prepare for fruitful participation in the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015, it is necessary to create an ASEAN network in community family development, to exchange lessons learned and best practices. Finally, formulated policy and strategy on the empowerment of family members should be transferred to local administrative organizations through the CCFD, so that family members can access development in all stages of their lives.

Malaysia's initiatives for sustainable family development

Anjli Doshi-Gandhi, Deputy Director General (Policy) and Wan Hashim Wan Jaffar, Statistician, National Population and Family Development Board, Malaysia, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development

The Malaysian 2010 Population and Housing Census shows that the multi-ethnic population of Malaysia was approximately 28.3 million as compared to 23.3 million in 2000, growing at an average of 2 per cent per year for the period 2000-2010. Changing demographic trends have led to major changes in family structure and size.

The number of households/families has been increasing steadily over the last two decades. It is estimated that there were 6.4 million households/families in Malaysia in 2010, compared to 3.5 million in 1991 and 4.8 million in 2000. Extended families have become progressively less common. In contrast, the proportion of nuclear families has increased from 60 to 65 per cent during the same period and is estimated to be 70 per cent in 2010. The average family size also declined from 4.92 in 1991 to 4.62

A strong family unit inculcated with positive family values and shared responsibilities is the priority of the Government's development agenda

in 2000, and further declined to 4.31 in 2010. This decline is partly due to the lowering of the total fertility rate as a result of delayed marriage and the increased participation of women in the labour force.

In the 1990s and the early years of the millennium, Malaysia experienced rapid industrialization, urbanization and economic development. Family well-being in Malaysia has been affected, positively or negatively, by development. Currently, Malaysian families face many challenges as a consequence of the changes in their structure and dynamics, the increase in the proportion of nuclear families, the need to balance family and career, family relationships and changing lifestyles. Adaptations will have to be made in areas such as childcare and care of the elderly and the infirm, so as not to lose the family support system.

As such, a strong family unit inculcated with positive family values, shared responsibility among family members and a strong marriage institution will continue to be the priority of the Government's development agenda. Under the Tenth Malaysia Plan period (2011-2015), parenting knowledge and skills will be strengthened to support the needs of young couples and ensure an optimum work-life balance environment for Malaysian working parents.

Various initiatives to strengthen the family institution have been undertaken by the Government of Malaysia through the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD). Through its agency, the National Population and Family Development Board (NPFDB), the MWFCD has formulated, developed and implemented policies and programmes such as the National Family Policy, 1Malaysia Family First (1MF1st) and 1Malaysia Youth Empowerment and Support (1MYes) programmes, One-Stop Family Centres, and family education programmes such as the Strengthening of Marriage Institution (SmartStart pre-marriage programme), Parenting@Work, Smart Belanja@Lppkn (family financial management programme), KASIH Parenting Modules and counselling services.

To ensure sustainable family development, the National Family Policy (NFP) and its accompanying plan of action was launched in March 2011 and implemented by the NPFDB in partnership with other ministries, departments and related non-government organizations (NGOs). The aim of this explicit policy is to develop prosperous, healthy and resilient families to ensure social stability. The NFP is a key policy that focuses on aspects of family well-being

and development, providing direction for the development of family-friendly programmes and services for nurturing healthy and resilient families in line with the aspirations of Vision 2020. The policy advocates the concept of family well-being and work-life balance based on family values such as caring, honesty, respect, commitment, responsibility, justice and equity regardless of status, gender and age. The implementation of the NFP is based on the following three strategic thrusts and will be undertaken by all stakeholders to ensure the development of strong, resilient families and quality human capital imbued with exemplary values:

- increase the commitment and involvement of various stakeholders to prioritize 'family perspectives' in all socioeconomic development efforts
- ensure that laws, policies, procedures and the enforcement of laws and regulations prioritize family perspectives
- ensure that programmes, services and family-friendly facilities are accessible.

The Government of Malaysia has adopted innovative and creative strategies through the National Blue Ocean Strategy (NBOS) initiative, which is the brainchild of Malaysia's Prime Minister, Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak, to enhance public sector services and programme delivery. Through this strategy, it encourages the participation of the public, private and people (3Ps) in ensuring national development. The 3Ps approach involves the partnership of multiple stakeholders such as the government, civil society and civil society organizations in ensuring that the present and future generation is more peaceful, secure, tolerant,

prosperous and sustainable. This collaboration and commitment will lead to high impact achievement, low cost and rapid execution of government programmes and services which cut across boundaries and silos and emphasizes the 'People First, Performance Now' concept.

Among the initiatives under NBOS, the 1MF1st and 1MYes movements have been implemented under the ambit of the NFP, in recognition of the integral role the family plays in nation-building and development and to further ensure work-family life balance. In order to ensure accessibility to family services and to support young couples in early family life, family and marriage counselling services have been expanded in government service centres such as 1Malaysia Family Centres, Urban Transformation Centres and Rural Transformation Centres.

In 2012, the Prime Minister declared November as National Family Month, underlining the nation's commitment towards the important role of the family and its recognition that the family is the pillar of society. Among the incentives given under Family Month is 100 per cent tax exemption to any company for expenditure incurred in organizing family activities for employees.

Another initiative under NBOS is the Mobile Community Transformation Centre (CTC) aimed at bringing basic government services such as family health services to rural and remote communities. This is in line with the Government's aspiration to enhance the quality of life and family well-being of its peoples. These basic services are fundamental in bringing social transformation to rural areas, as well as inculcating a sense of well-being and togetherness in the nation-building process among people

Image: Nor Mazlan Mohammad/NPFDB

1MF1st and the declaration of November as National Family Month by the Prime Minister on 3 November 2012

Strengthening the family unit from the early stages can provide a strong and solid foundation for human capital development

who live far away from mainstream development. The Mobile CTC focuses on the cooperation and collaboration of various agencies by consolidating government resources from various departments and agencies in one concerted effort for the people, especially those living in rural areas.

Family education programmes aimed at building stable, healthy, happy and harmonious families have been implemented since the early 1990s. The KASIH Family Development Module Package consists of five key modules based on the family life cycle. It focuses on enhancing knowledge and skills for marriage preparation and developing a strong foundation for marriage; enhancing the parenting skills of fathers in shaping their children's development; parenting of young children; parenting of adolescents and adolescent development.

Recognizing the increasing participation of women in the labour force and the increase in dual career families, concrete steps have been taken to create awareness and provide knowledge and skills to parents on the importance

as well as the need to balance work and family. Therefore the Parenting@Work programme, conducted at the workplace, was launched in 2007 to provide guidance on parenting skills, ensure stable and resilient family units and to equip families to face modern-day challenges and work-life balance issues. Since its implementation, more than 500 workshops have been conducted with the involvement of over 20,000 participants. The programme was conducted at the workplace to increase male participation in family and parenting programmes.

The institution of marriage is the core and foundation for the formation of strong families in Malaysia. Strengthening the family unit from the early stages can provide a strong and solid foundation for the development of human capital among the younger generation. Realizing this, in 2006 Malaysia developed a SmartStart Package (a guide for newlyweds) as part of its efforts to help newlyweds successfully deal with the trials and tribulations of married life, as well as to strengthen and improve their relationships. This

package serves as a roadmap to a lasting and happy marriage. It contains valuable information, tips and advice for young couples in seven key areas: marriage preparation; marriage; family health; pregnancy and childbirth; parenthood; managing family resources; and managing stress and conflict.

Skills and knowledge on financial and expenditure management are important in order to achieve financial stability and harmonious family life. Realizing this, the NPFDB introduced a family financial management programme called SMARTBelanja@LPPKN in 2009. This programme is implemented in collaboration with the Credit Management and Counselling Agency (an agency under the Central Bank of Malaysia) and NGOs as one of the strategies to help families plan their expenditure wisely. Since its inception, 37 programmes have been implemented benefitting more than 1,490 participants.

The introduction of the National Policy on Reproductive Health and Social Education and its Action Plan in November 2009 has paved the way for increased access to reproductive health education, information and services for adolescents and youth, stressing religious and ethical values as well as responsible behaviours. A major milestone under this policy has been the integration of reproductive health and social education in the National Service Training curriculum in 2011, which covers more than 100,000 school leavers each year.

Fifty-eight One-Stop Family Centres have been established throughout the country to offer family support services and programmes such as counselling, therapy, reproductive health services, adolescent psychosexual development, and family education and training.

Another significant development by the MWFCD is the 1 AZAM programme (AZAM is an acronym for ending poverty). This is an initiative to lift low-income households out of poverty. Since it was launched in 2010, more than 63,000 households have been provided with various forms of assistance such as jobs, life skills training and entrepreneur guidance.

One of the best ways to ensure balance and harmony between work and family is through the implementation of family-friendly workplace policies and practices. To assist and support working families, the Government of Malaysia has encouraged ministries and government departments as well as the private sector to establish childcare centres at workplaces that will provide support to working parents and enable them to advance further in their careers. A one-off RM200,000 launching grant incentive is given to government agencies to establish childcare centres at the workplace. For the private sector, a 10 per cent tax exemption is given on the cost of building the childcare centres for a period of 10 years. Further, a monthly subsidy of RM180 for each child sent to these childcare centres is given to civil servants with a monthly total household income of less than RM5,000.

Pregnancy and early childcare are challenging times for working women and their families. In order to strike a balance between work and family, female government employees are given the flexibility of 60-90 days of maternity leave, subject to a maximum of 300 days throughout their service. Male employees in the public sector are given seven-day paternity leave to take care of their wife and newborn child, compared to the three days previously given. This is one of the initiatives to increase male involvement in family matters. As for the private sector, a number of multinational companies have started providing 90-day maternity leave for their female employees. This initiative was also implemented by locally-owned banks with the signing of a collective agreement between the banks and the National Union of Bank Employees in 2010.

Families constantly face new pressures and challenges due to rapid industrialization, modernization and globalization. Realizing that the well-being of the family is the primary goal in the development of the country, the MWFCD, through the NPFDB, has pioneered the development of the Malaysian Family Well-being Index. Developed in 2010, the index comprises seven domains that cover key family well-being components, namely family relationships, family economy, family health, family and community, family and religion, family and safety, and housing and environment. The index measures the subjective well-being of families. Currently, the Malaysian Family Well-being Index score is 7.55 out of 10, indicating that Malaysian families have a relatively high level of well-being and are able to manage the challenges of development. Data for the index will be collected every three to five years, to enable the monitoring of the well-being of families and to suggest or provide directions for the development of family-friendly policies, programmes and services.

The MWFCD, through the NPFDB, has implemented numerous programmes and services to ensure sustainable family development and strong, stable families. Through these key initiatives, it is envisaged that the realization of a caring society, quality population and progressive Malaysian nation will be realized.
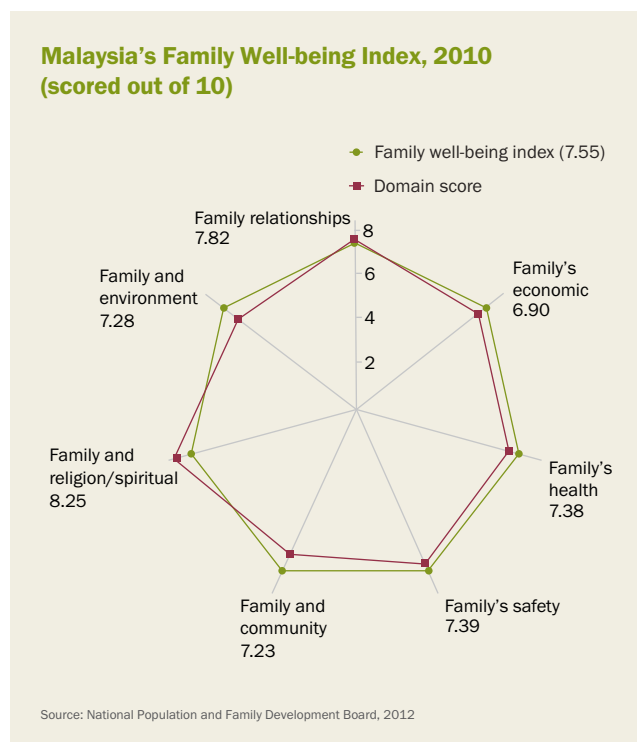
Malaysia's Family Well-being Index, 2010 (scored out of 10)

Family well-being index (7.55)
Domain score

Family relationships 7.82
Family's economic 6.90
Family's health 7.38
Family's safety 7.39
Family and community 7.23
Family and religion/spiritual 8.25
Family and environment 7.28

Source: National Population and Family Development Board, 2012

Bonding of the generations: promoting family values and intergenerational solidarity in Singapore

Leng Leng Thang and Ern Ser Tan, Associate Professors, National University of Singapore

It is generally agreed that family ties remain very important to Singaporeans. Research has shown a consistently high level of agreement among Singaporeans that they have a close-knit family, and a survey conducted by the National Family Council in 2010 showed that 91 per cent of Singaporeans regard the family as most important in their life. These positive responses ascertain the state policy's emphasis on the family as the basic building block of society, and the first line of care and support for its members. Strong family values and intergenerational relations are invariably significant in contributing to individual and societal resilience and well-being.

However, contemporary world trends in demographic and social changes have impacted national family trends in Singapore. The rapid pace of ageing; a persistently low birth rate as a result of delayed marriages and a rise in singlehood; and increases in divorces and distressed families have combined to place strain on the capability of families to provide intergenerational support. According to the Survey on Social Attitudes of Singaporeans conducted by the then Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (since renamed the Ministry of Social and Family Development), the number of Singaporeans who agreed that they have a close-knit family dropped by about 10 per cent, from 97 per cent in 2001 to 89 per cent in 2009; and the

number who agreed that they would give money to family members in financial need fell from 99 per cent to 90 per cent. Despite the sustained strong emphasis on the family, such current trends suggest that more efforts are necessary to meet the challenges facing families in the future.

Policies to promote strong families and intergenerational cohesion are especially emphasized in Singapore, as reflected in the 1999 Report of the Inter-Ministerial Committee Workgroup on cohesion and conflict in an ageing society. The policy recommendations centre on suggestions to promote extended family ties and reciprocity including, among others, that "the teaching of family values in school textbooks should also include illustrations of grandparents as an integral part of the family structure," that family-oriented concessions based on the extended family concept should be given at government-controlled recreational facilities, and that additional incentives should be granted to public housing applicants who choose to stay in close proximity to their grandparents as well as their parents. In the final point of the report, under 'promoting extended family ties', the family's role in the provision of care for older members is further highlighted. Here, the report reiterates that the measures will not "merely enhance intergenerational interaction or lessen intergenerational conflict" but "will also help to reinforce the role of the family in supporting senior citizens and expand the resource base of the family to do so." This "will help fami-

Mr Diez from Spain with his wife Georgina (Singaporean Chinese) and two children: cross-cultural families are on the rise in Singapore

It is common for extended families to get together for birthday celebrations

Bonding the generations

There are numerous efforts by the state, schools and communities to bond the generations — generally initiatives to promote intergenerational interaction between seniors and children/youth.

Such intergenerational initiatives might focus on strengthening grandparent-grandchild bonding, including one-off events such as an intergenerational cooking competition or Cosplay competition; or regular events such as intergenerational yoga interest groups in the community clubs, as well as the array of events organized around the annual Grandparent's Day. They could be learning projects and intergenerational learning programmes for the old and young, organized in schools and communities.

As a result of such extra-familial intergenerational initiatives, some students have become more interested in interacting with their own grandparents. Both intrafamilial and extrafamilial intergenerational initiatives thus play a role in promoting intergenerational closeness and understanding within the family.

Image: Sammy How

Robert Wong (age 70) and his five-year-old grandson Immanuel as Nintendo's Super Mario Brothers: winners of the Intergenerational section of the Cosplay competition held for Grandparent's Day in 2011

lies support their older members and lessen the conflict between the rich and the poor."[1]

Family policies and measures in Singapore, aimed at promoting intergenerational support within the family, focus on encouraging adult children and their elderly parents to live together or close by. The aged dependent income tax relief for taxpayers who support their (or their spouses') elders/handi-capped elders — including parents, grandparents and great grandparents (and in-laws) — grants up to 55 per cent higher relief if the elder dependent members are living together in the same household with the taxpayer. The Central Provident Fund Housing Grant for family offers higher government grants for applicants living with or near their parents or married children. The housing-related priority schemes, too, provide priority allocations in public housing under the Married Child Priority Scheme to married applicants staying near or with their parents or married children. For extended-family applicants, the Multi-Generation Priority Scheme offers further priority allocation when married children and their parents purchase a pair of public apartments close to one another. These measures to encourage co-residence or living in close proximity seem effective: surveys from the Housing and Development Board (HDB), the statutory body in charge of providing public housing for over 80 per cent of Singapore's population, show an increase of 5 per cent among residents aged 55 and above who were living with their married children between 2003 and 2008. In 2013, HDB further piloted a new type of three-generation housing unit with four bedrooms and three bathrooms, in line with the objective of promoting family bonding under one roof.

What, then, is the value underlying intergenerational support? In most so-called Confucian societies, the basis of intergenerational support and family bonding is best captured by the concept of filial piety, which prescribes that adult children have an obligation to support their parents if they are in need. Widely regarded as a normative factor regulating

intergenerational solidarity, this practice also corresponds to a rather parent-centric institution in which children are produced and raised as part of one's retirement planning.

Filial piety is actively promoted in Singapore. For example, information on the Inland Revenue Authority website on Parent/Handicapped Parent Relief overtly states that the relief is given to promote filial piety. But practising filial piety does have its challenges. During a 2010 campaign on filial piety launched by the then Ministry of Community, Youth and Sports, a short film accompanying the campaign with the tagline 'How one generation loves, the next generation learns' attracted many passionate comments. These included lamentations of the difficulties faced in practising filial piety, given competing work and family demands in a highly competitive society.

Most Singaporeans have, however, internalized filial piety as a value through the process of socialization. It is therefore a much taken for granted, incontestable value. Should they fail to inculcate this value, there is the force of moral sanction — and legal sanction through the Maintenance of Parents Act (passed in 1995) — to enforce compliance. This is not to suggest that filial piety is necessarily experienced as a difficult obligation. Indeed, where parents are wealthy, being filial may actually be beneficial to their children. Where parents are financially independent or when their adult children have sufficient capacity to support their dependent parents, it is likely that compliance with the value of filial piety would be largely unproblematic. However, where adult children lack the capacity to support their dependent parents there is a strong likelihood of non-compliance, notwithstanding the force of moral or legal sanction. This questions filial piety as a reliable basis for ensuring that adult children will take care of their dependent parents.

What, then, is a more reliable basis for the support of parents? We would argue that love is a more reliable basis than filial piety. Love is relationship-centric, as opposed

Reasons for providing financial support to aged parents (per cent)

Reason	Overall sample	Income		
		$1,999 or lower	$2,000-4,999	$5,000-7,999	$8,000 or higher
Love for one's parents	56	45	54	61	68
A repayment for raising one from young	17	24	16	16	12
It is expected of children to support their parents financially	27	32	30	23	20

Reasons for raising children (per cent)

Reason	Overall sample	Income		
		$1,999 or lower	$2,000-4,999	$5,000-7,999	$8,000 or higher
To have someone we could give love to	54	35	52	63	75
To have someone to take care of us in old age	25	39	27	16	9
It is expected of people to have and raise children	21	26	21	21	16

Source: National University of Singapore, based on Tan's 2011 survey on 'social orientations' in Singapore

to self-centric. Seen from this perspective, people choose to support their dependent parents, not because they are part of the latter's retirement planning or they are morally or legally obliged to repay a debt they owe their parents for having raised them, but because they are motivated by love for their parents. By the same token, people choose to have children because they desire to have someone to whom they can give love. This is a child-centric orientation which sees raising children in expressive, rather than instrumental terms.

If love is indeed a more reliable basis for ensuring that parents in need are supported, then there are good justifications to find out the extent to which Singaporeans are driven more by love than by obligation. Tan's 2011 survey on 'social orientations' in Singapore[2] indicates that 56 per cent of respondents select 'love for one's parents' as a reason for 'providing financial support to parents in old age', compared with 17 per cent who see intergenerational transfers as a form of transaction ('repayment for raising one from young'), and another 17 per cent who view support for dependent parents as an obligation or social expectation. Correspondingly, 54 per cent of the sample view raising children as about 'giving love', compared with 25 per cent who consider it as a part of retirement planning and another 21 per cent who see it in terms of meeting social expectations.

There is also a rather clear-cut, positive correlation between class and the basis of intergenerational transfers. Higher income people (68 per cent) are more likely than those in the lower income categories (45 per cent) to see 'love for one's parents' as a basis for providing financial support to

Fostering generational interdependence

Co-residence with or living close to parents and adult children are most commonly perceived to facilitate the care of aged parents. However, these forms of living arrangements should be more accurately regarded as fostering generational interdependence because the middle generation often benefits from the availability of grandparents at home or in close proximity, serving as caregivers of the grandchildren in dual-income families.

Grandparents are most preferred by mothers and are the most likely caregivers of the young after mothers. About one-third of families with children of 12 years old or below have grandparents as caregivers in Singapore.[3] Such experiences of care by grandparents in childhood affect the feeling of closeness between the grandchildren and grandparents in later life. Earlier experiences of caring for the grandchildren may in turn give justification for older people to receive reciprocal care from the younger generations in time, when they become frail.

dependent parents. Somewhat similarly, while 75 per cent of high-income people consider 'love for children' as the main motivation for raising children, the corresponding figure for low-income people is 35 per cent.

As Singapore becomes more of a middle-class society, one important implication from the above observations is that 'love' as a family value will overtake filial piety to predominate in the future. Moreover, because the social obligation associated with filial piety is not a reliable basis for intergenerational transfers, love should be more emphasized in public campaigns and efforts to strengthen family bonding and intergenerational solidarity.

Changing family structure and development transformation in Africa

Hassan M. Yousif, Senior Researcher on Population and Development, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Population and Youth Section, Social Development Policy Division

Development transformation and social change are usually intertwined processes. Economic development leads to improvement in human welfare, such as increasing income levels and improving people's standard of living and quality of life. In turn, these improvements are usually accompanied by modernization and social and cultural changes, including profound changes in intergenerational relationships, family structures and living arrangements. In addition, considerable changes occur in lifestyles and residence, social institutions such as marriage and households, social relations, norms and value systems.

Social and economic developments often lead to the gradual replacement of many of the traditional functions and roles of the family with private and public social institutions to meet the needs of people. When development activities succeed or fail, the social and economic consequences will impact directly on the survival and stability of the family.

In Africa, as elsewhere, the family structure is changing as a result of development transformation. Traditionally, the family in Africa played a key role in defining the production and reproduction functions of its members, and in determining their social relations and responsibilities in society. The extended family system placed high value on marriage, polygamy and childbearing as important institutions for procreation and social relations, and for providing social security and protection to family members. It also played a major role in communal ownership and allocation of resources such as fertile rain-fed land, forests and cattle.

These dimensions of the traditional social system have changed as a result of development activities in the continent. The changes in family structure and composition can be traced back to the colonial development policies which included, among other things, the establishment of large-scale agriculture and mining projects. These projects created a labour shortage that was covered through inducing migration and increasing birth rates. The development policies in

Modernization and cultural transformation are reflected in the outfits of the bride and groom at an urban wedding

Image: Hassan M. Yousif

Relationship of family size to per capita consumption of food, energy etc.

Source: Hassan M. Yousif
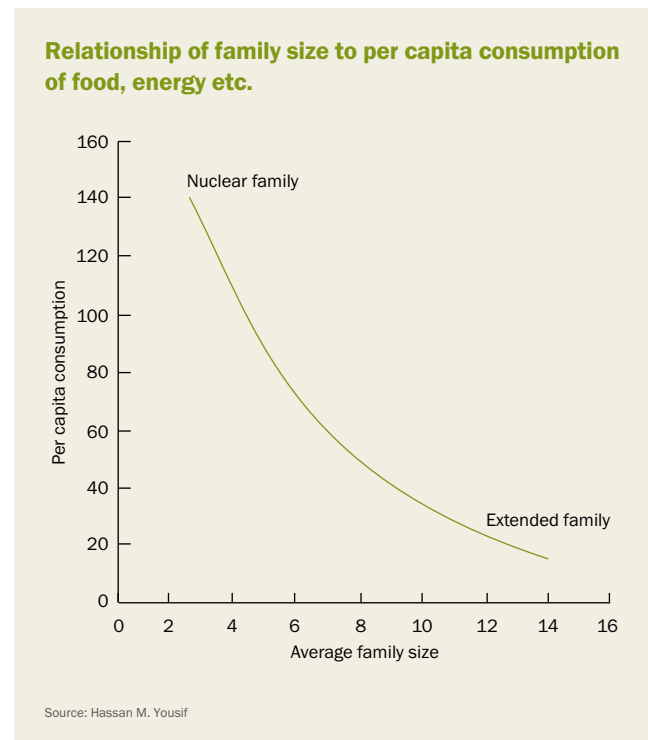
many countries imposed a wide range of restrictive measures in terms of access to land, water, forests and environmental goods to which families formerly had communal access.

After independence, in the 1960s and 1970s, African countries introduced ambitious social development policies and invested in the expansion of education and health services, and in the provision of housing, water and food for families. During these years countries started to experience increases in life expectancy and improvements in infant and child mortality, but fertility remained at high levels. However, the economic downturns that engulfed many countries as a result of policy reforms introduced in the 1980s created immense hardships for African families. These structural policy reforms included the removal of subsidies, restrictions on wage increases, devaluation of the national currencies, privatization of public enterprises and the retrenchment of public workers. The reforms failed to achieve their intended economic results. Consequently, family income declined, and poverty and food insecurity increased. Most of the social gains that were achieved after independence were lost during the 1980s and 1990s.

Many other factors have also adversely affected the structure, survival and welfare of families in Africa, particularly in rural areas where lack of resources such as land and livestock, in addition to taxation and fiscal policies, affected the survival and welfare of families. Foreign debt cumulated to unprecedented high levels, with adverse consequences for both social and economic development. Corruption spread fast in many countries. Poor governance, the scourge of HIV/AIDS, an increasing number of orphans and a worsening disease environment have adversely affected African families.

Hardships have generally affected African family structures and weakened their adaptability and survival strategies. For example, economic hardships drove many young males from the poor countries to migrate for work in the rapidly urbanizing and industrializing countries. The direct consequence of this pattern was an increase in single-parent families and female-headed households, and a decline in kinship ties. Women who were left behind acquired more education and became less willing to get married to men with lower levels of education.

The changes in family size that usually occur during the development process are often associated with changes in the demand for goods and services. Theories of modernization and development stipulate that the development process is often accompanied by a myriad of cultural and social changes, from traditional extended families living in rural areas to modern nuclear families living in urban areas. The immediate impact of such changes is the rapid increase in the per capita demand for resources such as housing, food and energy. The direct consequences of failures to meet these high demands will be increasing prevalence of poverty, homelessness, and low access to social amenities such as water and decent sanitary services. Such is the situation in many countries in Africa, particularly in urban areas where there is a high, unmet demand for resources and amenities such as food, housing and shelter, safe drinking water and sanitation. These gaps reflect social and cultural changes in living arrangements and conditions which are not equally matched with economic, institutional and social developments in Africa. The gaps necessitate policy actions that take into account the ramifications of changing family structure and dynamics.

The future prospects for the family in Africa will be shaped by some megatrends in the continent. At the outset, since the start of the twenty-first century the continent has sustained an average economic growth rate of about 5.6 per cent. This growth slowed down to 2.2 per cent in 2009 due to the financial crisis, but it quickly recovered to 4.6 per cent in 2010 and

Changes in per capita consumption of goods and services associated with family and household variables

Family and household typologies	Average size of residential unit	Average size of consuming unit	Per capita consumption	Social relationships
Rural areas				
Extended families — high number of births; living in compound residence	Large	Large	Low	Strong
Nuclear family and young migrant relatives living together	Large	Medium	Low	Moderate
Nomadic families	Medium	Medium	Low	Strong
Displaced families	Medium	Small	Low	Weak
Urban areas				
Nuclear families — declining births; living in small residential unit	Small	Small	High	Weak
Nuclear family and some close relatives	Medium	Small	High	Moderate
Families displaced as a result of conflict and war, living in slums	Large	Small	Low	Weak

Source: Hassan M. Yousif

Today's urban communities celebrate marriage with lavish and expensive ceremonies such as this one in the Sudan

5 per cent in 2012. Currently, the economic growth rate stands at about 4.2 per cent. Twenty-six countries are currently classified as lower-middle and upper-middle income.[1] By 2040 most of the countries in Africa will be in these two categories, while some will definitely graduate to high income level.

With this impressive development, the African economies are likely to be highly competitive, more industrialized and urbanized. The scale of the economies will expand, and the continent will experience significant progress in infrastructure, energy, food production, peace and security, all of which will impact on the structure and composition of the family. This will provide financial space for governments to set their national development priorities and strategies for the future, and to decide more freely on how to partner with the private sector, non-governmental organizations, agencies and donors.

Rapid urbanization is another important megatrend that will undoubtedly impact on the structure and composition of the family in Africa, and on social and intergenerational relationships. Though Africa is the least urbanized continent, its rate of urbanization is the fastest in the world. The urban population grew from 33 million people in 1950 to 414 million in 2011. They will reach 471 million in 2015 and 744 million in 2030. The share of urban inhabitants in the total population increased from 14.4 per cent in 1950 to 39.6 per cent in 2011, and will reach 47.7 per cent by 2030. These increasing numbers show high urban growth rates of above 3 per cent per year, which produces a doubling of the urban population in only 24 years, through 2025.

These megatrends and their accompanying social changes make it necessary for development planning in Africa to give priority to the family and its changing and evolving structures. In particular, the family should be prioritized when establishing policies and priorities for economic and social development, and when planning programmatic interventions aimed at social groups such as women, children, orphans and

the elderly. The family must be pivotal for social and economic policies which directly and indirectly affect the welfare of its members and its integrity and structure as a unit of society. Therefore development policies should integrate and streamline the family and its changing structure and roles in the design and implementation of economic and social activities. Moreover, the impacts of development activities on the family should be part and parcel of the monitoring and evaluation of socioeconomic and development impacts. Family-sensitive development policies and activities are important for development transformation and for the social integration of societies and communities in Africa.

Intergenerational linkages are clear as young and old meet at a wedding to provide support and blessings

Lessons from the community level in Ghana

Charles Abbey, Executive Director, African Development Programme

In a typical Ghanaian community, almost every family is both nuclear and extended. Families are associated with each other through intermarriage, religious, traditional and cultural practices. Almost everyone knows everyone.

The Ghanaian family is key and instrumental for social and economic development, local governance and authority, confidence building and conflict resolution. It is now common knowledge that since the not too distant past, the average Ghanaian family at the community level has been under severe threat from challenges that confront its health and survival. These continue to increase with such subtlety, and sometimes aggression, in each passing year that worthy initiatives such as the United Nations International Year of the Family must not only be sustained, but must also be well resourced and expanded.

Over the past several decades, the family at the community level was held together by valued traditional and cultural practices, strong commitment and dedication to religious beliefs and practices. After supper, the evenings were generally devoted to sharing the day's school and farm experiences, and story-telling by the fireside. In urban and peri-urban communities, the evenings were generally spent discussing performance in school and some political developments. Parents loved to tell life enrichment stories and children were eager to listen and ask questions. A well-ordered family was recognized for its sanctity and properly accorded its place in society.

On Fridays, several families would be seen on their way to the mosque, and on Saturdays and Sundays most families would make their way to church. Those who practice traditional worship were seldom left out. These weekly, and mid-week, religious activities provided much-needed opportunities for family spiritual reflections. Many hundreds of stressed and distressed souls, parents and children and in-laws, were refreshed and strengthened. Many a soul contemplating suicide was saved. The importance of unadulterated religion and its spiritual benefits was not lost on the family.

Parents spent quality time with their children and among themselves, and it was a joy and a blessing to see parents asking their children about how they fared in school each evening. Parents were eager to pay visits to their children in boarding schools and were proud to provide them with their provisions, school fees and extra educational materials. Children always looked forward to such parental visits as evidence of love and social cohesion. On any given holiday, it was common to see families travelling to the big cities and other places of interest for vacations or sightseeing. These, and many more positives, have paid lasting dividends.

But in recent years, the family unit has come under increased pressure to the point of near disintegration. The global economic downturn and economic policies that are

The traditional and cultural practices, strong commitment and religious beliefs that have held Ghanaian families together are now under threat

not well aligned with social consequences have brought in their wake massive unemployment and under-employment. Parents are no longer able to cater well for their children. Children are not attending schools and do not have access to quality affordable health care. There is domestic tension.

As a result of the economic downturn and what often seem to be irreconcilable differences among parents, spouses are now living far apart from their children and therefore rely very much on telephones and the Internet to parent their children. This form of 'teleparenting' does not adequately enhance family and social cohesion and development. What the children, parents and family need is the personal relationships that come from the inner souls of each member of the family to each other. Teleparenting must rather build on direct interpersonal family relations, particularly during brief periods of separation.

On 22 November 2013, a CNN news item under the heading 'When God isn't on the guest list' highlighted the increase in marriages that are contracted without any reference to God, Christianity (or any religion) and the active involvement of family members.[1] The true sanctity of marriage, which forms the bedrock of the family, is fast being thrown away by 'modernists'. Many modernists are also eloping to get married later, with many regrets coming soon after. When society sows to the wind, it must be prepared to reap the whirlwind.

The causes and effects of divorce in marriage are too many and varied to be enumerated in this short article. It must be stated, however, that the consummation of marriage and the establishment of the family unit by many a person — particularly the young aged 15-19 and 25-29 — and based on infatuation and lust is very alarming and must be the concern of all.

On 28 January 2007, the *Public Agenda* newspaper published the banner-headline 'Alarming Divorces in 2006', stating that divorce cases had reached a record high in Accra, the nation's capital.[2] In 2006, a total 1,714 marriages were registered and 633 were dissolved. In 2005, 2,199 were registered while divorce cases stood at 484. These are just the reported cases. The consequences are very dire for children, parents and society. In its 12 January 2012 edition, the *Public Agenda* published a research finding which indicated that "if marriages last more than 10 years they are likely to survive."[3] The report said that the common time to separate was "soon after seven years". According to some social watchers, the tragedy is that the number of divorces and disintegration of families after four years is probably rising.

A further addition to the challenges and near breakdown of the family is what is seen by the population to be the sudden influx of foreign cultural practices that are inimical to local values, virtues and family cohesion; irresponsible social behaviours; and the breakdown of law and order. New distortions of the existing knowledge of marriage and family are a big worry to the majority of Ghanaians.

To cite some examples, on 20 November 2013 a Ghanaian media site, radioxyonline.com, reported a statement by the Ghana Health Service that 750,000 teenagers between the ages of 15 and 19 had got pregnant within the past 12 months. Most of these teenage mothers come from disintegrated families — families with virtually no economic or social capital and as a result no social support systems from the local communities.[4]

ADP is working with organizations to promote the sanctity of marriage

Recently, a St Aquinas Senior High School graduate committed suicide by hanging himself after attaining an aggregate that was too low for him to gain admission to a medical school. Investigations revealed that this student had little or no family support.

Since 1993, the Africa Development Programme (ADP) has been working with partners to promote good family existence and relations through church worship, seminars, social and economic empowerment of women and youth development programmes.

In 2010/11, ADP collaborated with the SNV Netherlands Development Organisation and other civil society organizations to monitor and evaluate the Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP). The GSFP aimed to provide one nutritious hot lunch each school day for pupils in deprived communities, in order to increase the enrolment and retention of pupils. As a cross-positive impact it helped families to identify with the educational and social needs of their children.

In 2002/3, ADP was the regional coordinator/lead nongovernmental organization for the implementation of the Food Marketing Programme for Small Scale Marketers in the Eastern Region of Ghana for the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Regional Integration. This programme provided funds for women to purchase food at the farm gates so they could earn income to support their children and family's welfare.

Of particular importance is ADP's collaboration with the Accra West District of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church to promote the sanctity of marriage and the family. More recently, through its executive director, ADP co-facilitated the development of a 10-year strategic plan of action for the church district. The plan incorporates the establishment of a multi-complex facility that will offer support for couples

The traditional and cultural practices, strong commitment and religious beliefs that have held Ghanaian families together are now under threat

aspiring to marriage, married couples and children under the church's Family Life Enrichment Programme, and promote families' access to quality education and health services. The multi-complex facility will include a women's centre for vocational and entrepreneurial skills development. In this direction, the church has acquired a 16-acre plot of land at Apra in the Central Region of Ghana. Conscious efforts are being made to secure external partnerships and support to bring this laudable project to reality and reach a catchment area population of over 10,000. This social and economic empowerment of the people, with a special focus on family and marriage, has gained the interest and support of the local chiefs and traditional authorities as well as decentralized government authorities. They all have pledged their commitment to the successful implementation of this initiative.

ADP is also encouraging families in its operational areas to share experiences and opportunities through networking and collaborative efforts. These are being done through joint family retreats, counselling, mentoring, community-based activities and creating opportunities for regular church worship and family devotions. It is gratifying to note that these initiatives are yielding good dividends as these families are now building the confidence of their children for the responsibilities of adult life. Fathers and mothers are better able to respond to their love for each other and work towards the peaceful resolution of domestic conflicts.

In the midst of global and national economic challenges, negative external cultural practices that destroy family values and other unsupportive macroeconomic and social policies and practices, there is hope for the future.

There is a need for families to form strategic friendships and alliances with and among each other for intergenerational solidarity. For the past 20 years one of the Abbey families in Accra, also known as the Mount Pisgah family, has adopted an intergenerational solidarity with eight other families in parts of Ghana as a network for various forms of support,

growth and development. These eight other families are also impacting on the family lives of several other families and couples aspiring to marriage. It would take an eternity to fully appreciate and evaluate the multiplier effect and impact of this intergenerational solidarity. If only thousands more families would engage in this worthy exercise.

It is time to adopt new strategies to meet the new challenges threatening the existence of family structure and relations. This is not just about policy reforms but, importantly, the need to re-enforce existing good family values and virtues. It is the candid opinion and belief of this writer that every energy and resource available must be mobilized to promote and enhance what true family stands for. Families with or without children must be recognized and supported.

There is a need to look at laws that regulate marriage within the traditional and cultural, religious and ordinance settings. These should be made more proactive and supportive. Equally important is the need to look at all the factors that militate against the family structure and cohesion, and therefore provisions must be made for both structured and unstructured support for the family. Family centres should be considered and established at local community level to provide professional care for stressed families. Social work and social workers must be backed up with adequate legislature and resources to offer professional support. It is not just about new policies; it is also about new implementing strategies.

The father, mother and any children need each other. Therefore unfettered love and deep spiritual links must continue to be the strong cords that bind the family. The family, in its truest sense, will continue to be the key to social cohesion, social development, social justice and economic growth.

Ghana and the global community cannot afford to destroy the place, function, benefits and blessings of marriage and the family. The International Year of the Family 2014 is another welcome opportunity to support and strengthen the sanctity of marriage and the family.

Building on traditional cooperation among women for sustainable rural development

P. Ceci, P. Wolter, L. Monforte, F. M. Pierri and B. Rice, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, Italy; and F.B.S. Diallo, University Assistant, Centre for Environmental Research, Gamal Abdel Nasser University of Conakry, Guinea

The 2014 International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) aims to raise the profile of family farming by focusing world attention on its significant role in eradicating hunger and poverty, providing food security and nutrition, improving livelihoods and managing natural resources in a sustainable way. In order for this potential to be fully realized, there must be the development of agricultural, environmental and social policies; increased knowledge, communication and public awareness on the importance of family farming; and improved understanding and action in terms of family farmers' needs at a technical level.

The goals of the IYFF make it a subject of direct importance in terms of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of Family. Family farming has the power to eradicate poverty, starting at the level of the family unit and eventually impacting entire economies. Women and youth are central in this process but many challenges persist. The rural exodus of young people to the cities has huge implications not just for future agricultural productivity, but also for social cohesion and intergenerational solidarity in the context of families. Women farmers face a gender gap, which negatively impacts families and the viability of family farming. The key role played by women in family farming is not recognized in terms of income earned and asset ownership.

The IYFF is a chance to highlight and impact the millions of farmers across the world who contribute to food security through family farming, along with the projects and policies that enable this process. One such example is the work being done regarding the utilization of women's interest groups for sustainable rural development in the Fouta Djallon Highlands (FDH). The project shows how the marginalization of women in terms of decision-making and access to productive resources and markets can be overcome. In this project, social cohesion is reinforced through traditional modes of cooperation and collaboration, in order to strengthen family farming as a viable, income-producing endeavour.

The FDH is a series of high plateaus ranging from 900 to 1,500 metres above sea level, concentrated in the central part of Guinea and extending into Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Senegal and Sierra Leone. The highlands are the point of origin of a number of regionally important rivers including the Gambia, Niger, Senegal and Konkouré Rivers and, together with the surrounding foothills, harbour a rich variety of savannah and humid forest ecosystems.

The FDH area is predominantly inhabited by the Fula ethnic group and extensive subsistence agriculture is still the principal source of livelihood for most households. This case study is based on the results of a survey of 95 households and seven interest groups conducted in June 2012 in the Guetoya watershed, Sub-prefecture of Bantignel, Prefecture of Pita in Central Guinea.

Women and young people are the most vulnerable in the rural society of the FDH. Women play a crucial role in the household economy, from agriculture to livestock breeding, from nutrition to health care, and including all domestic jobs — preparation of meals, water and fuel wood collection, house cleaning and laundry — activities in which they are usually assisted by daughters or granddaughters. They increasingly take on various responsibilities in agricultural production, processing and small-scale commerce, including traditional male duties, as men and young people leave

Women tilling a kitchen garden for sowing in Heïrè, Bantignel

in search of work elsewhere.[1] Of the 95 households surveyed, 168 former members were found to have out-migrated, a trend concerning 71 per cent of the sample and a warning for a critical level of dependence of the local economy on external remittances.

Widespread polygamy often results in a multiplication of split widow-led households where, in an already difficult environment, women must fulfil all family needs. The massive outmigration of work-age men is significantly increasing the number of female-headed households.

Twenty-four per cent of the households surveyed are female-headed, of which 70 per cent are due to widowhood and 30 per cent due to the outmigration of the household head. In 38 per cent of the households, women entirely or partially contribute to children's educational costs, and in 46 per cent they do so for health care expenses.

While legally recognized as equal to men, rural women are still disadvantaged in many ways. Most of them suffer from marginalization, social and cultural discrimination, and illiteracy. The low level of education among women directly affects their ability to access information, agricultural extension services and inputs, improved technologies and decision-making. Where ownership or usage of land is concerned, men habitually claim priority and hereditary rights.[2]

Striving with often uncomfortable situations, women have learned to come together and share burdens and difficulties. Traditional forms of solidarity and collaboration among Fula women in the FDH imply mutual assistance in case of need in terms of both exchanges of food and resources and of labour for agriculture.

Family farming in the FDH

Seventy-five per cent of the households surveyed acknowledged agriculture as the main source of livelihood and 38 per cent of them practice both rainy- and dry-season agriculture. Farming is often complemented by small-scale livestock rearing. Due to the mountainous topography of the area, several types of land are exploited for agricultural production. They include kitchen gardens, delimited by fenced perimeters surrounding the houses and cultivated exclusively by women, as well as external fields in the valley bottoms, the plains and on the slopes.

Typical crops of kitchen gardens are maize, cassava, taro, sweet potatoes, groundnuts, beans and vegetables for daily consumption, including tomatoes, eggplants, chilli peppers and okra. On the slopes, mountain rice and fonio, but also cassava, maize and groundnuts are cultivated with the slash-and-burn system. In the plains, fonio is mostly cultivated. In the fertile bottom valleys, where dry-season agriculture is more easily practicable due to adjacent streams, the main crops are tomatoes, cabbages, eggplants, onion, chilli peppers, potatoes, sweet potatoes, beans, okra, lettuce, paddy rice and maize.

With the exception of lowland vegetable production, all agricultural stock produced is destined for household self-consumption.

Land, if not personally owned, is allocated to villagers by the most influential families — the descendants of those who came first to the area during the Fula colonization of the highlands. Normally, one tenth of the seasonal agricultural production is due to land owners in exchange for land use rights.

Work division by gender assigns to men the heaviest tasks, including preparation of wooden fences, clear-cutting, cleaning and burning, ploughing, sowing, harvesting and threshing. Common women's tasks are weeding, sprinkling and winnowing, while children deal with surveillance and the carrying of tools and crops.

Image: P. Ceci

Women of a market garden group and villagers in Fello Férobhè, Bantignel

A woman watering tomatoes in the market garden of Gaggal, Bantignel

Since the 1980s, building on these already existing social practices, development projects have worked to establish women's interest groups and facilitate their legal recognition. Their aim has been to strengthen community solidarity, improve agriculture production and increase and diversify household incomes.

Interest groups are effective instruments to reach women, inform and train them, thus contributing to improved living standards. Groups targeting men's activities also exist, addressing livestock rearing and reforestation, but women's groups specializing in vegetable production in the fertile bottom valleys and, to a smaller extent, in dyeing and soap-making, prevail in the FDH. As a result of the establishment of these groups, a considerable boost was witnessed in the production of cabbages, tomatoes, aubergines, chilli peppers, lettuce, spinach and so on. The increased yield from horticulture allowed women to enrich the daily family diet, to become more financially independent and to contribute to school fees, resulting in increased enrolment rates. Forty-seven out of the 95 families interviewed participate in interest groups. Thirty-seven per cent of the women living in the households surveyed are members of groups, or 49 women compared to 18 men.

In this context, the FDH Integrated Natural Resources Management Project, executed by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), is assisting farmer groups. In 2012 the project trained 19 interest groups in five pilot sites — including Guetoya — in anaerobic compost preparation and the manufacture of improved stoves, which can significantly reduce cooking time and wood consumption. Some 449 people were trained in improved stove production, out of which 360 were women, while 244 out of the 306 people trained in compost preparation were also women. In other sites, the project assisted farmer groups to fence and secure agricultural fields against livestock encroachment as well as to improve access to water resources for dry-season agriculture.

Common price fluctuations of frequently marketed commodities and average seed costs

Commodity	Local name	Minimum final market price	Maximum final market price	Average seed cost
Tomato	Tamati	600 Guinean Frank (GF)/kg	1.400 GF/kg	32.500 GF/hg
Aubergine	Giakatou; Kobö kobö	600 GF/kg	800 GF/kg	25.000 GF/hg
Lettuce	Saladi	300 GF/head	1.000 GF/head	60.000 GF/hg
Cabbage	Chou	1.000 GF/head	2.500 GF/head	66.000 GF/hg
* Exchange rate at the time of the survey: €1 = 8.890 GF				

Source: FAO

Cochineals affecting cabbage plants in the women's market garden of Gaggal, Bantignel

Traditional forms of women's mutual assistance

Several forms of mutual assistance exist among Fula women. The most widespread is the Kilé that can be called upon by one of the household head's wives at the beginning of the rainy season when the most demanding tasks in the agricultural cycle are due.

The Kilé confers on women the right and privilege to spell out a collective invitation to the entire village, normally to work on steep slopes. Farmers go with their own tools to the field of the convener, who offers a copious midday rice and meat lunch, accompanied by traditional cola nuts.[3] However, this particular arrangement is rather costly and, therefore, restricted to the social class that has the means to organize it. A reduced version of Kilé is called Kilé Futu and is convened by old women who periodically gather their young nephews and nieces to help out.

Other forms of mutual assistance include the Ballal, which appeals to family solidarity based on the principle of reciprocity, for instance all the women living in the same concession work together. There is also the Yirdè, associations of youth of the same age who provide assistance in exchange for meals or small compensations. Under the arrangement of the Tontine, women periodically take up a collection of money that, in turn, is given to each of them according to needs. Remunerated work, which replaces slave work, can also be a solution for those who have the means to hire daily labourers.[4]

More recently, household-leading women who are not able to rely on sufficient economic resources started coping with the situation by joining forces and reciprocally assisting each other in heavy agricultural tasks.

In its second phase (2014-2019), the project will pursue a two-pronged approach to target both women's groups and innovative individual farmers for business development, encouraging their adhesion to the Fouta Djallon Farmer Federation. Activities will include diversification of agricultural production by introducing innovative techniques and crops, the promotion of pest-proof storage bins, and training in integrated pest management and improved processing techniques.

In connection with the increased vegetable production of women's groups, it was observed that the simultaneous influx on local markets of unprecedented amounts of perishable products and the lack of access to wider market networks is likely to occasion severe seasonal price drops. Gross-buyers from Conakry dictating daily market prices, combined with the lack of negotiation power of sellers, result in little income and can even make groups incur losses after the hard work in the fields.

In order to reverse this undesired effect and to provide farmers with more economically viable alternatives, the project plans to test and promote sustainable conservation and transformation techniques for surplus agricultural production, and to develop capacities for an increased level of organization of women's groups and for business development. High attention will be paid to the labelling of high-value processed products from organic agriculture, grafted fruit trees and native tree species (such as Shea butter and Néré), and to developing market networks and inclusive value chains. The linkages between nutrition and health will be demonstrated, for instance by testing local production of groundnut oil to replace the use of imported and less healthy palm oil.

Governance and land tenure issues will also be looked at. Men tend to occupy managerial positions even in women's groups — including presidency, secretariat and bookkeeping — with a resulting imbalance in decision-making and power distribution that the project will have to address. Land is normally borrowed by groups from the wealthiest families based on 10-year written agreements. Given that the project is investing in this land also in terms of irrigation infrastructure, agricultural facilities and equipment, access issues will have to be carefully monitored and eventually rectified in the coming years.

The strength of the interest-group approach presented here lies in its potential to reach a higher number of people for training purposes and to trigger a farmer-to-farmer process of knowledge transfer. It plays for long-term sustainability, as it builds on motivation, interest and commitment expressed by local actors who join forces to pursue common objectives. Notwithstanding, past experiences show that innovation and entrepreneurial skills are equally important in order to identify market niches, diversify groups' activities and develop cost/profit positive ventures. This highlights the need for leadership considerations and to empower women to take on decision-making responsibilities as well as to increase their negotiation capacity especially in market contexts. The current project executed by FAO, as well as similar initiatives active in the region, are expected to harvest more tangible results if they embark on a strengthened collaboration with women's interest groups.

Family farmers around the world face a number of challenges, from lack of access to services and markets to unfavourable policy environments. Group formation and collective action as depicted in this case study go a long way in overcoming these impediments. The gender gap in agriculture has enormous implications for family cohesion, agricultural productivity and income levels. The FDH Integrated Natural Resources Management project executed by FAO seeks to overcome these challenges. From compost preparation to improved techniques, storage, processing and marketing — the project is enabling family farmers to succeed, with women's interest groups leading the way.

From disintegrating families to family solidarity

Eunis Vu Kit Teng, Shirley Ng Wai Ngan and Lai Wong Suet Wing, Hong Kong Family Welfare Society

Among all species, human beings need the longest period of protection and rearing before they can live independently. Family is the basic building block in a community that cares for the dependent and passes important values — including love, respect and responsibility — from one generation to another. Yet, some families lack these functions, particularly when the marriage has been broken up.

The 2011 census revealed that the divorce rate in Hong Kong had increased by 46 per cent, contributing to a 30 per cent increase in single-parent families (81,750 families over 10 years). The higher divorce rate also leads to increases in second marriages or partnerships, which negatively affect parenting due to confusion and uncertainty. Even in those families that stayed intact, there are signs of disintegration. The number of reported spouse abuse cases in Hong Kong was 2,734 in 2012. Among them, 87.7 per cent were classified as physical abuse. These disintegrating families have difficulties in passing on important family values to the next generation. Good parenting carries love and support to children. Inconsistency between parents weakens the effect of parenting, and trauma and family violence will cause long-term damage to the psychological health of children. According to recent research by Dr Daniel Shek[1] in Hong Kong there is clear evidence that, on average, children with separated parents have poorer emotional well-being than those in intact families. At the same time, children of parents with a hostile inter-parental relationship, regardless of family type, tend to have poorer emotional well-being too.

The Hong Kong Family Welfare Society (HKFWS) has witnessed these changes while serving Hong Kong families for 65 years, and has developed a series of services to meet the needs of disintegrating families, especially those suffering from divorce and violence. HKFWS began providing specialized services to separated and divorced families in 1988. These packages of innovative services, designed to meet the changing needs of families, have been delivered through service centres established in different locations and at different times, namely the Family Resource Centre (FRC), the Mediation Centre (MC) and the Women and Family Enhancement Centre (WFEC).

With the current review on 'parental responsibility' by the Labour and Welfare Bureau and the adoption of the Practice Direction of 15.10 and 15.13 in the Judiciary, emphasis on the Family Mediation Practice and the Children's Dispute Resolution Pilot Scheme manifests a shift of societal values and judges' views on the need for change. For the children's sake, co-parents have continued to interact with each other in child-rearing matters, especially in terms of collaboration and

a focus on the children. Hong Kong is an international city and bound by the international treaties — the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (UNCRC) stresses children's rights to protection and to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis if they are separated from one or both parents.[2] Article 18(1) of the UNCRC also emphasizes the responsibilities of parents. In line with HKFWS's mission and vision, we believe that the parent-child relationship should not end despite the termination of the marriage. Divorce does not dissolve the family; rather, the family is reorganized from a one-home structure to a two-home structure. How parents navigate the separation colours the impact of divorce on children. A new project, A Beam of Hope — Pilot Project on 'Child-focused' Parenting Coordination and Co-parenting Services for Divorced Families,

Transforming from service user to befriender

"Love is action…not words." Fong with her two sons

Fong was a single mother who had brought up her two sons, aged six and four, since early 2012. Reasonable access by the children's father was granted by court order. However, the visits seemed unsatisfactory and Fong found that this was due to a lack of communication and cooperation between co-parents. In view of this, Fong joined the new project: A Beam of Hope.

Fong said: "I experienced a change in attitude from the couple role to the co-parents role. It is of immense importance for us as co-parents to let go and transform; and to keep up communication on children's matters for the best benefit of our sons."

Fong was significantly stepping forward to cooperate with the father of her sons, and this resulted in an improvement in communications and the relationship between co-parents. In fact, Fong also volunteered as a befriender to help other divorced parents.

under the sponsorship of the Community Chest, commenced in October 2013. It aims at cultivating parental values to free the children who are caught in the middle as scapegoats, assisting separated and divorced parents to develop a child-focused perspective and maintain healthy co-parenting relationships for the best interests of their children in society. The ultimate goal is to facilitate win-win solutions between the parents so that their children can receive proper care and concern.

Our work focused on helping separated parents to shift from 'conflicting couples' to 'cooperating co-parents' with the common goal of children's welfare, so that the children can still develop solid parent-child relationships with parents who are not living together. Our services include assessment, education and conflict resolution with different levels of intervention by FRC, MC and WFEC; and co-work with partners like the judiciary, legal professionals, social service agencies and schools as alliances in promoting co-parenting values. Our Family Mediators and our Parenting Coordinators (trained by Cooperative Parenting Institute of the United States) provide expert services to enable co-parents to resolve recurrent disputes concerning the formulation and implementation of parenting plans. With years of experience accumulated in divorce work, support among users was so encouraging that they volunteered to form mutual help groups to help other needy divorced parents. More than 80 divorced parents

Highlights and milestones for HKFWS divorce services

1988	Establishment of Family Resource Centre (FRC) and publication of 'Tsin' — a newsletter for single-parent families
1991	Research and study on needs of single parents — a comprehensive study
1991	Publication of single parents' self-help guide
1993	Establishment of mutual support group for single mothers — Lok Fai Club
1997	Commencement of family mediation service
2000	Research for needs of single parents and their children
2004	Rainbow Pioneers — a befriender support project for divorced women and single mothers
2013	Expansion of Rainbow Pioneers
2013	A Beam of Hope — pilot project on child-focused parenting coordination and co-parenting services for divorced families

Source: HKFWS

Highlights and milestones for HKFWS anti-violence services

BIP pilot project	
1995	• HKFWS was the first NGO to run therapeutic groups for male batterers in Hong Kong • Theory-based treatment group manual of Batterer Intervention developed with the aim of establishing an evidence-based clinical intervention approach to this target group
Since 2005	• An in-depth BIP treatment group model designed to help batterers stop violence in spouse/cohabitant battering relationships • Mutual aid groups/programmes for batterers conducted

As a recognized NGO on the list of court order to run AVP-SWD	
Since 2007	• Many group facilitators have been trained during the running of BIP • Rich and solid experience has been accumulated from serving batterers as well as training for social workers

Women Helping Women against Violence Project	
2012-2014	• An educational project to enhance public sensitivity and awareness towards the importance of stopping violence in families • Various educational programmes, workshops, talks and groups held for women who are at risk of family violence, to increase their understanding on the impact of domestic violence and help them learn skills for self-protection

Educational Programme on Stopping Domestic Violence	
2013-2015	• Act as 'first aid' class to urgently help batterers within four weeks' time • For batterers to learn skills in breaking cycle of violence

Source: HKFWS

The HKFWS project 'Little Eyes, Little Ears' provides guidance on time out and anger management for at-risk children

have been served by our befrienders since the start of the Rainbow Pioneers befriender support project for divorced women and single mothers.

Our specialized services for families suffering from violence started in 1995. A territory-wide pilot project, the Batterer Intervention Programme (BIP), was conducted from 1995 to 2008, enabling batterers to join a 12-session therapeutic group. Due to the proven effectiveness of the programme, HKFWS is one of the few recognized organizations on the list of court orders to run anti-violence programmes since 2008. From 2009 to 2012, BIP groups were conducted in Integrated Family Service Centers in order to end violence in intimate partner relationships. In 2013, the Educational Programme on Stopping Domestic Violence was launched with four 'first-aid sessions' intended for batterers, so that they would have more understanding about anger management and develop non-violent communication patterns.

Objectives of the BIP include educating abusers on their accountability by changing batterers' beliefs, helping them to find alternatives to abusive behaviours and enhancing local awareness, as well as accumulating clinical knowledge in handling partner battering. The core contents of BIP groups are covered in 12 weekly two-hour sessions including anger management, violence responsibility enhancement, development of respectful trust and so on.

Partnerships are very important in the identification and referral of families suffering from violence. Various

HKFWS anti-violence intervention strategies

Primary level	• Universal preventative intervention for the general public • Anti-violence education/campaign, promotional and publicity programmes; ambassador programmes; a volunteer programme to promote peace and to reach 'hidden' batterers
Secondary level	• Selective preventive intervention to families or individuals at risk • Outreach work by large scale outreach visits to community 'gatekeepers' to detect high-risk families; district-based sharing dinners for potential participants of the BIP groups to raise their awareness of domestic violence
Tertiary level	• Indicative preventive intervention to treat individuals with violent behaviours to prevent escalation of violence • BIP groups using cognitive-behavioural therapy for male/female batterers. BIP Mutual Aid Group for BIP completers

Source: HKFWS

Police receive training on understanding domestic violence

Experiences of a BIP participant

Mr Ng was a 45-year-old taxi driver who had been married for more than 14 years, living with his wife and two teenage sons in a public housing unit. Before Mr Ng joined the BIP, he had fights with his wife and was on the verge of getting a divorce. He thought that his violent behaviour was triggered by unemployment and his poor mood. He admitted that he was responsible for the fights as he had used physical violence, but he considered that violence helped to control his wife's emotions.

After joining the group, he realized that his temper control had improved. He owned his responsibility for violence and admitted that he had not treated his wife well in the past. He perceived that the group had helped him to reduce his bad temper by half, if it could be measured. He quoted his wife as saying that he was less irritable than before. As a result, his wife also reacted less fiercely to him. As an overall remark, he used the word "nice" to describe his state after joining BIP.

studies have shown that families with violence were usually socially isolated. Spouse abuse was often treated as a family secret in Chinese society and was covered up. The abusers, victims and their children were hesitant to seek help. Hence, it is important to offer intervention once the problem is identified and before it gets worse. A total of 101 community agencies/units, including the medical profession, police, lawyers, district organizations, schools, housing estates and churches, as well as 35 media exposures helped to publicize BIP, contributing to the 49 per cent agency-referrals of BIP participants.

The effectiveness of the BIP groups was evaluated by a number of outcome measures including abusive behaviours, abusive beliefs, battering knowledge and motivational level. Comparisons between the pre-treatment and post-treatment measurements suggested that there were significant reductions in both physical and psychological forms of aggression, with improvements in negotiation skills. Changes also occurred in terms of abusive beliefs and knowledge about battering. Positive change towards less abusive attitudes was shown and the effect was found to be impressive. Gains in knowledge about battering also significantly increased. Although most of the participants started with low levels of motivation to change, progression in stages of change was shown after treatment, suggesting that they were more motivated to correct their behaviours.

Building on BIP experience, we continued to render family peace-related projects including Harmony@Home, a project which served 150 participants aiming at relationship enhancement and anger control. Demonstrated improvements in harmony and happiness were found in its pilot study in 2009 and this project will further expand. The Women Helping Women Against Violence Project started in 2012, aims to strengthen the coping capability of women at risk in facing critical situations and raise public awareness to cultivate 'zero tolerance'.

Collaborative efforts in the community with different sectors, including the legal profession, police, social welfare, education and mass media, are crucial in referring potential service users, getting funding support, sustaining service impact and building a positive social culture.

From our experience in helping these disintegrating families, we are fully aware that 'prevention is better than cure'. We advocate the provision of more family life education and family activities to build up family solidarity for the prevention of tragedies. According to Luther T. Jansen,[3] family solidarity is defined as the closeness of family members to each other and is observable in eight types of interaction: cooperation, agreement, concern, interest, enjoyment, admiration, affection and trust. More couples are from nuclear or single-child families who need time to learn close cooperation with family members in their roles and responsibilities, and understand their family members' underlying needs, difficulties and perspectives to reach common agreements. In such a competitive city, parents need to refocus their priorities on their concern for their family's needs rather than always being preoccupied with their work and children's studies. In the information and communication technology era, it is becoming more difficult to have quality family time to develop common interests, enjoyment and admiration for each other. Even when family members are physically together, they are often doing their work or enjoying leisure time individually through digital devices. People need to resist temptation from digital devices and have in-depth human encounters to fulfil their need for affection, and resist extra-marital affairs that undermined the trust between couples. Last but not the least; we can enhance mutual support among families at different stages of similar struggles, and help to build generational solidarity to pass family values to the next generation.

For further information about the Hong Kong Family Welfare Society and its programmes and services, please visit www.hkfws.org.hk

Cherishing the family

Family Council of Hong Kong

Cherishing the family is a core value of our community. The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region attaches great importance to family and recognizes it as the cornerstone of our society. The objective of our family policy is to enhance family harmony with a view to building a harmonious community and alleviating social problems. This may be further elaborated as promoting family core values, engendering a culture of loving families and creating a pro-family environment.

In order to achieve the objective of the family policy, the Government adopted several key policy measures. Among these, the Family Council[1] (the Council) was established in 2007 to provide a cross-sector and cross-bureau platform to study and address family-related problems. It aims to provide high-level steer and advice and foster effective coordination and collaboration to maximize efforts and achieve synergy.

With effect from 1 April 2013, the established approach of including family perspectives in the policymaking process has been further enhanced by introducing a mandatory assessment of family implications and impact on family for all policies. Bureaux/departments (B/Ds) are encouraged to consult the Council on new policies which carry family implications. In order to implement these new initiatives and strengthen its advisory role, the Council was reconstituted under a non-official chairman. The Chief Executive appointed Professor Daniel Shek Tan-lei as the first non-official Chairman of the Council.

Although the Council has a relatively short history of establishment, its efforts in promoting the well-being of family have borne fruit, particularly in:

- working with the Government to ensure that due weight is given to family perspectives in the policy formulation process
- working to advocate cherishing the family as a main driver for social harmony.

The work of the Family Council

Since April 2013, a mandatory assessment of family implications has been introduced for all policies. B/Ds are required to use the three sets of family core values ('Love and Care', 'Respect and Responsibilities' and 'Communication and Harmony') as identified by the Council, as well as considering the impact on family structure and functions as the basis for assessing how their policies will affect families. They are also encouraged to consult the Council on new policies which

may affect the family. Since the implementation of the mandatory assessment, various B/Ds have proactively consulted the Council on policies which carry family implications. In 2014, the Council will continue to work with the Government to ensure that due weight is given to family perspectives in the policy formulation process.

The Council has been dedicated to advocating for cherishing the family and promoting family core values as a main driver for social harmony. Throughout the past seven years, it has been organising a territory-wide Happy Family Campaign (the Campaign). Leveraging on the social awareness already established, the Campaign aims at reinforcing and further promoting family core values through different forms of collaboration with various stakeholders. Activities include funding support to the Uniformed Groups[2], large-scale publicity events, television and radio programmes, and experience-sharing sessions.

In addition, the Council has set up a 'Happy Family Info Hub' which is a multisectoral, interdisciplinary and interactive support network and platform for the exchange of

Elderly volunteers perform a puppet show as part of the LARTE Campaign to promote filial piety and intergenerational solidarity

information. It seeks to promote family core values and introduce family education and support services, with a view to better addressing the multifarious needs of families and enhancing the role of the family as a main driver for social harmony. Since its launch in May 2010, the Happy Family Info Hub has been very well received. The average monthly hit rate is around 700,000.

A further role of the Council is to promote work-family balance. The Government is dedicated to encouraging employers to adopt good employee-oriented management measures and to implement family-friendly employment practices (FFEP) with a view to helping employees balance their roles and responsibilities in work and family. While the Employment Ordinance already provides for various kinds of leave so that employees can cater for their personal and family needs, employers are encouraged to grant their employees benefits that exceed the statutory requirements and provide them with flexible and varied work arrangements and support. For example, employers can take measures such as implementing a five-day week, flexitime, home office or remote work and job sharing; granting compassionate leave and special casual leave; and providing childcare services and counselling services on stress or emotional management to employees.

To echo the Government's endeavour in advocating the wider adoption of FFEP in the community, the Council plays an active role on the promotional front. In 2011, it launched the first territory-wide Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme under which businesses were awarded for the family-friendly measures they implemented. Some 1,000 companies were awarded. Many award-winning companies have put in

The successful Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme has been expanded to include businesses, non-governmental organizations and social enterprises

place diversified and flexible FFEP, including 'parent-day' leave[3], paternity leave, flexi-working place and family care leave. This demonstrates the business sector's increasing recognition of the importance of FFEP.

In view of its success, the Council relaunched the Award Scheme in September 2013 and expanded its scope to cover organizations outside the business sector, including non-governmental organizations and social enterprises. Following the close of applications in January 2014 with 1,814 enrolments, the Council will conduct the adjudication process with a view to announcing the results and staging a prize presentation ceremony in the second quarter of 2014.

In addition to the Council, the Labour Department has been acting as a facilitator in encouraging employers to adopt FFEP and disseminating relevant information to the community through a wide range of publicity channels and various promotional activities. These include publications, large-scale seminars, thematic exhibitions, educational DVDs, newspaper supplements and feature articles, as well as regular meetings and exchanges with business executives and human resources managers. Employers are encouraged to adopt different types of FFEP with regard to their size, resources and culture, to serve the best interests of their organizations and employees.

Recognizing that members of different generations and genders can contribute to harmonious family relationships, it would benefit society if family members put their strengths and wisdom collaboratively to good use. The collaborative act of sharing could only be sustainable if underpinned by mutual care and a strong sense of filial piety, a powerful cultural value governing the function of family. In 2012/13, the Council joined hands with the Commission on Youth[4], the Elderly Commission[5] and the Women's Commission[6] to launch the Love and Respect Thy Elders (LARTE) Campaign. The LARTE Campaign aimed at encouraging and mobilizing every member of the family to respect their elders by putting 'Love', 'Concern', 'Respect' and 'Care' into practice. Large-scale, territory-wide publicity programmes, including musicals performed by young students, workshops and various competitions with filial piety as the theme, were organized. Through these publicity efforts, the message of intergenerational solidarity has successfully cascaded to different sectors of the community. The Council will continue to collaborate with relevant stakeholders to foster intergenerational solidarity.

With a view to strengthening family core values and better utilizing the Happy Family Info Hub, the Council has stepped up its work on family education through the introduction of a series of family education packages including '18 Handy Tips for Parents' and 'Family Therapy' packages in 2011, and 'Marital Relationship' in 2012. All these family education packages have been uploaded onto the Happy Family Info Hub, and have met with a very positive response with accumulative hits of around 200,000. The '18 Handy Tips for Parents' and 'Marital Relationship' education packages are broadcast at 67 Integrated Family Service Centres under the Social Welfare Department as well as 31 Maternal and Child Health Centres under the Department of Health throughout the territory. New family education packages are planned to be launched in the third

The Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme has helped to promote work-family balance by encouraging employers to adopt good employee-oriented management measures and to implement family-friendly employment practices

quarter of 2014, with a special focus on addressing the needs of young families and New Arrival families.

To promote better understanding of matters relating to the family, the Council has been engaging tertiary institutions/research organizations to conduct researches and surveys. Their findings provided useful insights to relevant B/Ds in their formulation of policies and strategies to support and strengthen the family.

Insights from the 2013 Family Survey

The Council is mindful of the challenges faced by Hong Kong families. With a view to understanding the current state of Hong Kong families in a more comprehensive manner, a biennial survey has been conducted on a regular basis since 2011. It covers a wide range of areas including attitudes on family core values, work-life balance, parenthood, family functioning and satisfaction with family life. The 2013 Family Survey[7] has revealed several key findings:

- most traditional family values[8] are still quite prevalent, but not strong (13-50 per cent of respondents agreed with the statements)
- the majority of the respondents are willing to live with their parents (65 per cent) and support their living (87 per cent)
- a large proportion of respondents agreed that marriage is a necessary step in life (60 per cent) and childbearing is important in a marriage (53 per cent)
- more than half of the respondents accepted divorce as the best solution for a married couple who could not live together harmoniously provided that they did not have children (57 per cent)
- the majority of the respondents considered that their families functioned very well (72 per cent) and they were satisfied with family life (76 per cent)

- quite a number of parent-respondents (64 per cent) found the stress of raising their children overwhelming
- nearly half of the respondents (45 per cent) found it difficult to balance family and work
- the majority of the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their family life (76 per cent).

The findings indicate that families in Hong Kong in general function quite well and respondents are satisfied with their family life. However, findings on the stress of raising children as well as balancing work and family are matters of concern.

In meeting these challenges, the Council will continue its endeavour to collaborate with various stakeholders in creating a pro-family environment in the community. The year 2014 marks the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF). The Council, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders including the Hong Kong Council of Social Service and the Consortium of Institutes on Family in the Asia Region, will organize a range of activities to echo the IYF themes of alleviating family poverty; ensuring work-family balance; and advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity. These activities will include:

- a series of territory-wide publicity programmes throughout 2014 to underline the importance of family
- a Family Summit to be held on the International Day of Families on 15 May 2014 and a regional symposium in the fourth quarter of 2014 to raise public awareness on family-related issues as well as promoting intergenerational solidarity and work-family balance
- production of family education packages to address the needs of young families and New Arrival families for release in the third quarter of 2014.

Building Cercanías between the state and families in Uruguay

Beatriz Rocco, Valeria Gradín, Gustavo Machado, Marina Cal and Luis Orbán,
Ministry of Social Development – Cercanías Coordination Program

Uruguay is a small country with a population of almost 3.3 million. Having built a welfare state early on, the country now has the lowest levels of inequality in Latin America.

Real de Azúa, a Uruguayan intellectual of the twentieth century, described Uruguay as a 'country of the cercanías' ('cercanías' means neighbourhood, proximity or commuter), of the 'middle class'. He said the country was favoured by

its geographical accessibility (a gently undulating peneplain) and, by extension, by the proximity of the different social sectors and identification with a common historical tradition.

However, since the crises of the 1990s, and especially since 2002, this society and the construction of identity that accompanies it has been fractured by a sharp increase in poverty and social fragmentation. These effects have been significantly reversed, with continuous reductions in poverty since 2005. Currently, 8.2 per cent of Uruguay's families are in poverty, and 0.3 per cent in extreme poverty. However, the basic rights of a significant number of families are still being violated through social exclusion, employment, and educational and residential segregation.

The role of the state in guaranteeing these rights is key, especially in the definition and implementation of public policies to promote access for these families to substantial services and improved quality of life.

The National Strategy for Strengthening Family Capabilities (Cercanías) is an inter-agency initiative that prioritizes families in extreme vulnerability. It involves the coordinated action of the agencies involved to ensure effective access to benefits, rights and services.

Cercanías is integrated by the Ministry of Social Development (MIDES), Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ministry of Public Health, Managing Health Services, National Public Education Administration, Institute of Social Security and the Institute for Children and Adolescents of Uruguay. Activities are organized at the national level by the Political-Technical Commission, and at territorial level by interdepartmental or regional committees formed for local joint strategy. Cercanías's actions focus on three areas:
- managing change in social policy, including work to address problems connected with the population, individuals or age groups, and comprehensive work with families, with a diversity of projects focusing on subjects such as rights
- articulation of policies, public programmes and services to ensure priority access to basic social services
- technical support to families in extreme vulnerability, such as articulated proximity programmes and local support networks.

The strategy seeks to contribute to change in public institutions in order to overcome fragmentation and overlapping, improve coordination of services at the local level, and promote networking and comprehensiveness in primary

The need for the Cercanías strategy

"In today's Uruguay, with sustained economic growth, increased investment in social policies and programmes and low levels of unemployment, a number of families still face structural vulnerability.

The efforts made in the country to provide financial transfers to meet the basic needs of these extremely vulnerable families are essential, but must be accompanied by a technical team of proximity to strengthen their parenting skills, labour processes, education, and social and territorial inclusion.

The family has gone through various developments so that today, is not possible to talk about 'the family' but about families, family arrangements, single parents, family composition etc. When thinking about how to intervene, how to reach these nuclei, it is essential to understand this process of transformation.

We understand families as nuclei where, through established links, we create a privileged space of intervention through which we can help them strengthen ties, support processes, identify problems, and discover possible solutions and alternatives.

We have been working with family members in various areas including classrooms, social approaches, health and community spaces among others. But it is a reality that while each of them can attain many achievements or developments by themselves, they cannot support these due to a lack of back-up, support or understanding in the family.

The house and the family are spaces that enable, but which can also clog and hinder. In this understanding lies our belief that visiting families allows for more in-depth work and brings us closer to another reality that can enable us, using technical knowledge, to work with families to build other alternatives and supports.

We know that families are private spaces where it is not easy to enter. Therefore, developing this strategy is a major challenge. For the same reason, properly recording each intervention will give us many inputs that enable us to know family realities in new ways. These will certainly provide great input for future policy design.

We believe that close accompaniment is an appropriate strategy to ensure social inclusion and to change the system that has previously excluded people to one of universal social benefits."

— Daniel Olesker, Minister of Social Development, Uruguay

Uruguay has seen a sharp increase in poverty and social fragmentation since the 1990s

care. It also aims to develop a second level of specialized care in outreach work with families that have the most critical needs and those suffering socio-familial vulnerability. This will ensure fast and efficient access to existing basic social services and promote the intrafamily and relational changes necessary for families to independently sustain the improvements achieved.

It is understood that without changes in the material conditions of life there will be few changes in other aspects of everyday life, such as family ties, relational structure, capacity building and learning. Conversely, if there is no socio-educational process to accompany and sustain the material production of these changes and promote understanding and subjective appropriation, only the immediate survival needs of families will be addressed, without generating transformations that can be sustained over time.

Cercanías bases its actions on institutional linkages with other programmes, institutions and existing services in the territories (utilities, in agreement with the state or provided by civil society). In particular, it communicates with other programmes aimed at the population in most critical situations, such as Uruguay Crece Contigo and Jóvenes en Red.

To guide its actions, Cercanías first seeks to conceptualize the term family, understanding this as: "A group of individuals united by affective relationships and/or relationship, forming a matrix linking around the breadwinner and social, cultural and/or biological reproduction. Shares a temporal-spatial dimension of everyday life, with unique identity, history and future prospects."

This definition not only represents an important conceptual agreement, but also has methodological derivations that

place the family in a larger social totality and in a relationship network that exceeds the support group. It is also well understood that families and contradictions express themselves as manifestations of that totality, in the context of a system that produces and reproduces unequal relations based on domination, oppression and expropriation of socially produced goods.

Within this system and the relations promoted by it, the rights of a large number of families are violated for various reasons, creating a situation of inequality in access to the opportunity structure, material and symbolic goods. Many of these families fail to conform to the logic and requirements imposed by that structure, and most do not even have the minimum potential in terms of resources, services or rights exercised.

In order to understand and recognize the diversity of family arrangements, the demands of production and reproduction imposed by daily life and the vulnerability to which many families are exposed, it is necessary to distance conceptualizations that do not take into account cultural, historical and social aspects, and to see those conceptualizations as 'problematic', 'dysfunctional' and so on.

"There is in our country a lot of families that are being violated in their rights, their social and labour living processes and by educational exclusion and residential segregation. They have acquired particular characteristics depending on their unique paths and the resources available to them. In turn, family functions in general have changed and existing institutions must achieve appropriate responses to the needs of this population sector." This finding requires that the state, as the public actor responsi-

Cercanías aims to strengthen families so they can care for dependent members, and to help households access social benefits, rights and other community resources

ble for collective welfare, has a duty to guarantee the rights necessary for people to build careers and overcome vulnerability (such as education, health, employment, housing and sociocultural rights). These rights must be guaranteed by the possibility of access to resources, services and facilities necessary for families to develop their productive and reproductive cycles.

This framework is conceived as a suburban comprehensive strategy and inter-agency approach with families that are socially vulnerable. It has three core components:

- developing a proximity strategy with families to develop family skills
- strengthening local support networks
- implementing changes in the governance of public policies to respond rapidly and comprehensively, by making various services accessible to those in vulnerable situations such as extreme poverty and destitution.

These three components are inseparable and indispensable in responding with the integrity required to give coherence to a framework that seeks to overcome fragmentation and the dichotomies that conceal contradictions.

"The axis of social benefits is central, because if changes in the material conditions of life are not built then other aspects of everyday life can hardly be changed: the links, the relational structure, capacity building and learning. In turn, if there is no process of psycho-socio-educational support to cooperate and commit to access or restoration of violated rights, it is unlikely the transition to processes of inclusion and social well-being will be sustained over time."

In connection with the foregoing, we should note the relevance of the territory in this view and approach: "The services and goods available, and the local networks that provide social protection are varied depending on the characteristics of each area of technical services and equipment present. The proximity of existing community networks also helps to identify the particular and institutional interventions and to approach families not contacted by the healthcare and social protection network."

Being precise in the above implication seems central. Generally there are no major repairs or discussions about the need for support and proximity to areas of poverty and destitution. There needs to be agreement on the importance of this aspect, provided that it does not compromise the skills, responsibilities, and processes of autonomy or generate unnecessary dependencies.

However, the development of social policies aimed at the most excluded population has focused on cash transfers and still tends to be accompanied by insufficient material resources. The relevance of the material aspects in transforming the living conditions of the poor and destitute social sectors runs the risk of being hidden behind 'psychologizing' and/or 'responsibilizing' (sometimes even blaming) explanations of the situation for families. Therefore, to emphasize its relevance seems central to avoiding undesired political, theoretical and methodological approaches and effects.

This position involves multiple challenges and transformation processes at different levels and with different responsibilities according to the various stakeholders. Statewide, it involves rethinking the orientation of the production of public goods, which has so far been directed towards individuals as subjects of intervention and considered from a homogenizing suburban perspective. Thus, it represents a challenge and an invitation to reorientation, looking at the various family arrangements in their

diverse and uneven paths as subjects to whom the production of public goods should be directed, and the required cross-agency management this requires. This proposal also underlines the necessity for the integrity and promotion of rights to be made from public policy, with its inter-logic and recognition of actions and potentials both in families and in communities from different public actors operating privately in the territories.

Cercanías has formed a management team to ensure level design and implementation, technical supervision and attendance, and to develop the above conceptualization. It also integrates a permanent inter-institutional dialogue with the National Monitoring and Evaluation Direction (DINEM) to monitor the results, and to form a team that integrates theoretical and methodological approaches that account for the complexity of a historical-critical perspective and the qualification of equipment, with the necessary care and ethical components (for the teams themselves and with families) required by this intervention, proximity and privileged communication between families, outreach teams and the state.

The guiding principles of the this programme are:

- consolidating inter-institutionality at the territorial and central level with the national level, through the creation and/or strengthening of local protection systems, involving civil society and the state
- working with families as subjects of rights and social services programmes to provide comprehensive care, considering the plurality of existing arrangements and the dimensions of gender, generation and ethnicity
- developing a proximity methodology to strengthen the capacities of family autonomy, encouraging process participants and ensuring access to public programmes that help improve their living conditions
- coordinating the work of interdisciplinary outreach teams with local service networks, based within a unified inter-agency management structure that ensures quality work
- establishing a system of benefits and priority transfers to participating families, which allows for simultaneous and complementary work on the sociocultural aspects and dynamics of households and unmet basic needs, understanding them as a bridge to access social rights and universal policies
- establishing a monitoring system, training and continuous monitoring of actions to ensure a qualified work, based on a rights perspective and generating relevant information for setting the strategy and social policies in general.

Direct work with families is developed from the Territorial Family Attention Teams (ETAF). They are innovative components, working on a weekly basis with selected families as an integral device and proximity. The strategy began in 2012 with 27 ETAFs and grew in 2013 to comprise 55 ETAFs nationwide. The programme's objectives are to strengthen families for the fulfilment of duties of care, socialization and upbringing of dependent members, and to contribute to household access to social benefits, rights and other community resources.

ETAFs work directly with selected families on a weekly basis

Most of the ETAFs are managed by a civil society organization (CSO) and supervised by the Management Unit, each serving 40 families included in a department or location. Teams are comprised of four or five specialists (a total of 120 hours per week) in social work, psychology, social education and other social and human disciplines.

Households to be approached by ETAF to participate in Cercanías are selected from an index that includes the extreme poverty and socio-familiar situation of vulnerability. Extreme poverty is measured from the Gaps Index Reviews, helped by National Assessment and Monitoring teams (DINEM-MIDES). Socio-familial vulnerability is assessed from a technical social report completed by operators of various public services or social networks. By crossing the two sources, a list of indices and situations is generated for the Centralized Management Unit, which coordinates with DINEM to georeference the situations in the ETAF area. Before visiting the family, corresponding coordinates are checked with the institutions involved so as not to overlap or affect the operation and, if applicable, to refer to another service. Regional committees support this process, ensuring equity of access, giving priority to the most critical situations and facilitating access to the benefits, services and rights that apply.

In the process it is essential to consider the confidentiality of the information used in these technical fields. Currently, 1,503 families are being met across the country, with a target of 2,300. All of them have accepted the escort team .

The challenges are articulated by Cercanías to consolidate the national social protection system, in which families are progressively the subjects of social policies and programmes, and to contribute to the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of that system.

Colombia — a country that doesn't forget its roots

Jose Ignacio Rojas, Director of Families and Communities and Karen Gaviria, Communications Adviser for Family and Communities, Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar

Colombia is widely-known in the world for its biodiversity. For hundreds of years, its environmental conditions have also favoured the preservation of an ethnic and cultural wealth, offering the prospects of another, much less widely-known country.

Ethnic families today account for over 15 per cent of Colombia's total population. Their complicated history of settlement and migration has today left us with 22 indigenous peoples spread across the country, representing 4 per cent of Colombia's total population and speaking 64 Amerindian languages. There is the Afro-descendent population, accounting for over 10 per cent of the total, with 433 Community Councils and hundreds of ethnic black organizations; there is the raizal community in San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina, with a total of over 30,000 families; and there are 11 gypsy kumpanias of Russian origin who arrived in Barranquilla in two waves at the end of the nineteenth century and after World War Two, and are now settled in many parts of the country.

The ethnic peoples are generally formed by families that are closely united to each other by history, territory, culture and kinship. These relationships form the basis of the organization of family and society, and help to preserve cultures and traditions.

A range of historical events has left the ethnic groups on the sidelines of public administration and access to the social and economic opportunities available to other Colombians, thus making them highly vulnerable in the context of the internal conflict. Other factors, such as difficulties of access to their settlements and the loss of sacred ancestral territory, all contribute to marginality and social exclusion; and this in turn has become one of the main challenges of social policy for the prosperity of the people of Colombia.

The Government is therefore engaged in projects for the recognition and rescue of ethnic diversity, generating programmes to attend to these groups and guarantee their rights. The programmes aim to strengthen local government and the management of national affairs within their territories. There is support for processes to secure civic coexistence and to overcome extreme poverty through the articulation of different levels of government, with the promotion of stronger investment in the rural sectors of production. And there is the defence of human rights, the implementation of social projects addressed to the family and children, and support for productive initiatives for self-sufficiency in food.

Colombia's family welfare agency, Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (ICBF) pursues these government policies by moving forward in the generation of initiatives designed to strengthen care and protection for ethnic families and the healthy coexistence of all their members, especially children and adolescents. ICBF promotes the social and cultural strengthening of communities, stimulus for organizational capabilities, and actions to prevent and improve local situations of nutrition risk.

Colombia's ethnic peoples are united by history, territory, culture and kinship

Family and society are built on relationships that also help to preserve cultures and traditions

One of the main elements in this intervention in ethnic families is the quest for social integration and intergenerational solidarity. This is the only guarantee of the cultural, linguistic and racial survival of these peoples. It is a strength in the face of cultural absorption and a mechanism to build new opportunities for social inclusion, inter-ethnic dialogue and relations between the communities and state agencies.

In order to satisfy these needs ICBF, in coordination with its regional offices, is implementing the project 'Support for Strengthening the Families of Ethnic Groups', engaged in areas of welfare, culture and the social strengthening of indigenous, black, afro-descendant, palenquera, raizal and rom communities.

One of the most important actions of the project is to engage the traditional authorities in areas of action that strengthen intergenerational relations through dialogue and wisdom. This will enable the elders to share and provide guidance to the children and young of their communities based on their experiences and visions of the cosmos.

In Departments such as Arauca, Putumayo, Nariño, Guajira, Cesar and Meta, among others, there have been successful experiences in intergenerational issues. One example is Mocoa, capital of Putumayo, in the Yunguillo Reservation of the Inga communities, where work has been done on the 'Strengthening and transmission of ancestral wisdom for the permanence of cultural identity'. Another is the Inga Council of Valledupa, Cesar, which focuses its proposal on the strengthening and preservation of cultural roots and material culture through the establishment of a cultural protection plan. Both communities are using workshops to improve educational and ethno-cultural processes and the transmission of craft knowledge to children and the young, enhancing their identity as Inga people.

Each ethnic group has its own particular way of organizing itself along father-son or mother-daughter lines, which in turn defines how power is exercised. In most cases, however, there are two figures whose authority stands out: the shamans, who are the traditional doctors — old men who wield spiritual authority — and the Indigenous Governing Council and its members, who are the political and administrative authorities. So, in many of these peoples, there is a struggle against the loss of spirituality and the relationship with the gods and nature, a battle that is fought by rescuing their own forms of medicine and the ancestral rites of their authorities. In the Department of Arauca, the Association of Traditional Councils and Authorities engages in 'Promotion, strengthening and learning of traditional practices in medicine and the intercultural approach between the Sikuani people's reservations'. Boys, girls and adolescents engage in 'nursery' groups for systematization, traditional medicines and traditional plants. This has brought about improvements in some community health problems and the dependence on some substances that are harmful to their ethnic development.

These activities in dialogue between generations seek to hand down knowledge of the wisdom of the elders, such as the sense and meaning of traditional crafts and, in cultural areas such as music and dance, the recovery of native rhythms. Further, in the area of food sovereignty, one of the most important actions has been to recover and preserve traditional foods and encourage the young to discover, cultivate and consume their own foods.

In this regard the Department of Nariño is pursuing a proposal to strengthen and recover indigenous wisdom through the oral

Family roles are defined by the vision people have of the world and the way they relate to their immediate surroundings

traditions of the elders, seeking to transmit the culture, principles and values to the new generations of their communities of the Eperara Siapidaara. Spaces for encounter between the elders and the young are arranged in order to strengthen cultural identity and recover historic memory tough the oral traditions of these pillars of wisdom of their communities. These experiences bear witness to ICBF's work among ethnic families in which there are reflections on the relationships of power between genders and generations. The result is recognition of the capacities of women, men, children, adolescents and the elderly and their roles in the family group, as defined by their vision of the cosmos and the way they are related to the world around them.

In respect of the use of free time, the project involves boys, girls and the young in intergenerational integration activities. Workshops are held to sensitize them to knowledge of their ancestral trades and the importance of the oral tradition.

The work done with ethnic families includes reflection on the relationships of power and gender and between generations within families. The capacities of women, men, children, adolescents and the elderly are all recognized, with their roles in the family group defined by the vision they have of the world and the way in which they relate to their immediate surroundings.

The interaction between family and community has acquired special relevance in the ethnic peoples. In some sensitive issues, such as child-rearing, there is a very subtle dividing line between family and community, because the community takes the lead in actions for care and protection. This demands strong articulation between the two elements in daily life and work, with an emphasis on the family as the agent of local and community development, while at the same time being the quintessential protective environment.

Colombia is a multi-ethnic country that does not forget its roots; a country with major challenges in the protection and development of its ethnic communities. With initiatives such as those mentioned here we are moving forward along the road to guarantee social inclusion and prosperity for thousands of families who struggle to preserve their culture. They are finding that intergenerational dialogue is a secure and sustainable means to hand down ancestral traditions to future generations.

Strengthening family welfare and social development: The Republic of Azerbaijan

Prof. Hijran Huseynova, Chair, State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Family is the first institution of society and one of the oldest and most unique forms of communication. It is considered as a 'little state' that is the core of society. The improvement of society depends on the development of the family institution. Every nation, including Azerbaijan, has its family model. Over the centuries, the values of the Azerbaijani family model have made it an exemplary social institution. The mentality of the Azerbaijani nation includes varied and noble characteristics such as hospitality, friendship, loyalty, precision, respect to the elderly and parents, and tolerance. These moral norms and values are preserved in our daily round, traditions and all genres of folklore, and will be transmitted to our future generations.

Azerbaijan families are distinguished by their longevity and strength, which comes from the national mentality. Warm and sincere relations among family members, respect for older members and the proper formation of parent-child relations are major characteristics of the Azerbaijani family. Our mothers bring up their children with national-moral values from the day of birth. Families educating and bringing up their children according to national customs and traditions constitute the welfare of our nation.

One of the expected features of Azeri masculinity is deference to ağsaqqal (literally 'the white beards' or elderly men) and ağbirçək ('the white fringes/hairs' or elderly women), which are among the fundamental institutions of the Azeri culture. This can be shown in the form of special attitudes and etiquettes such as making way for elders and — most important — listening to their advice in all aspects of life. The existence of this institution plays an important role in the formation of relations among families and the transmission of family values from generation to generation.

Azerbaijan is a multinational republic. Different nations, national ethnic groups and national minorities live in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan is distinguished by its tolerance and its secure, comfortable and peaceful accommodation of people

A typical Azerbaijan family: the tradition of respecting elderly men and women plays an important role in building relationships and transmitting family values from one generation to the next

The growing number of families in Azerbaijan, 2007-2012

Year	Number
2012	1,988,200
2011	1,936,000
2010	1,911,900
2009	1,895,941
2008	1,865,700
2007	1,817,500
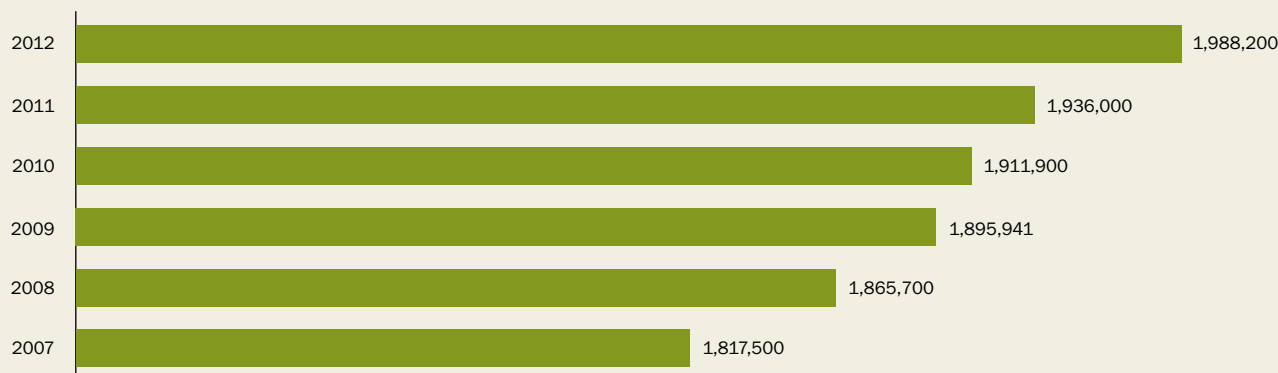
Source: State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs

with different faiths and nationalities. Regardless of their nation or religion, people respect all other cultures, traditions and moral values. By entering into mixed marriages, these nations preserve and diversify their family culture.

As a whole-world community, Azerbaijan also celebrates Family Day on 15 May. A series of events are held over 10 days in different cities and regions of the republic in order to protect national moral values, educate the younger generation and advocate a healthy lifestyle.

Since 2009 the Azerbaijan Government has been conducting a film festival entitled 'Azerbaijan family' as a part of enlightenment measures to help protect family values. Special attention is paid to films reflecting issues such as family values, respect for older people, childcare, socialization and family problems. Large-scale projects are also realized in interfamily relations, family values, and the preservation of respect and love to the older generation.

Improvements in society depend on the improvement of the family. The power of the family institution leads to the strengthening and improvement of society and state.

Family legislation in the Republic of Azerbaijan focuses on strengthening the family institution, the formation of family relations on the basis of mutual love and respect, and sharing responsibilities among family members. Important reforms have been made in national legislation by the state under the government-ratified international convention. As a result of successful state policy, Azerbaijan has adopted the following:
• Family Code
• National law on 'Family farm'
• Provision of gender equality
• Combating domestic violence
• Children's rights law
• Prevention of invalidity and limitation from health, and rehabilitation and social protection of invalids and children with limited health conditions
• Social protection of children who have lost their parents and are deprived of parental care
• Nourishment of early-aged infants and children
• Compulsory dispanserization of children.

Amendments and additions have also been made to the Family Code and Criminal Code.

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mr.Ilham Aliyev pays special attention to the family related issues and one of the main objectives of the state policy is focus on young families.

The Heydar Aliyev Foundation, headed by Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva, the first lady of Azerbaijan, is the leading NGO paying great attention to children and family issues as well.

Today Azerbaijan aims to enable active and powerful families to provide valuable social and moral development. Protecting and preserving the model of the Azerbaijan family; family values; raising the younger generation in a spirit of family values; promoting the increasing role of the family in society; and strengthening the social protection of mothers and children are among the main directions of state policy.

Citizens and their social welfare are at the centre of government policy. Proper measures have been taken to ensure the realization of projects serving this policy. These include the adoption of state programmes supporting regional economy, the realization of projects such as hypothec credit aimed at solving the accommodation problems of families, and other state programmes and services for the protection and control of human resources. Social protection of employed and unemployed women, single mothers and one-parent families is carried out by special state programmes.

Regular measures in the fields of family development provide protection and state care for families. Today our society aims to enable the formation of active, strong families that can provide valuable social-moral development and are able to realize their life strategy. Important measures are taken for the improvement of family welfare in our country. There are 1 million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), more than 400,000 women and 250,000 children faced with serious social-psychological obstacles as a consequence of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. Most of these problems have been solved through special state care to refugees, IDP families and low-income families.

The opening of new workplaces and improvements to infrastructure have led to the formation of a cultural-intellectual

Azerbaijan families are distinguished by their longevity and strength — this couple from the Zardab region has been married for 60 years

environment in the regions. A series of state programmes including 'Socioeconomic development of regions', 'Poverty reduction and sustainable development' and 'Employment strategy', contain measures for the restoration of historical employment traditions in each region of the country. Some 2,700 schools, 500 hospitals, 35 Olympic centres and youth centres were built and opened in the regions.

Rural areas of the country are being developed as a result of these projects, and the measures prevent the flow of people to the cities. Improvement of infrastructure in the villages leads to the increase of social welfare for children. Systematic works are undertaken for the protection of low-income families.

Researches and awareness have great importance in the realization of family policy. Conducted analysis and programmes provide grounds to study the current situation and take necessary measures. The Azerbaijan Government has conducted such projects as 'Say no to violence against women'; 'Combating Domestic Violence'; 'Twenty-first century without violence against women'; 'Family and marriage institution in Azerbaijan'; 'The role of intergenerational relations in the formation of society'; and 'A healthy family is the basis for a healthy society'.

The new concept of future development contains the main strategic views and priorities for the Azerbaijan Government. The development concept 'Azerbaijan 2020: look to the future' aims at the protection of family improvements and social guaranty, the protection of women and children's rights. Future directions for reforms and the development of society and state were determined under

this conception. These projects show the concept's positive results in all spheres.

In September 2013 the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, in cooperation with the Trade Union Confederation of the Republic of Azerbaijan, launched a project called 'The role of the modern family in the development of society' which is carried out in the cities and regions of the republic. It focuses on awareness-raising among members of the confederation in the field of solving family problems, researching the influence of family problems on the work process and the problems of those who have family duties, and increasing public control. The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, together with the Trade Union Confederation of the Republic of Azerbaijan, conducts enlightenment projects on obstacles that women face during the work process, psychological influence and youth employment. Informative booklets are published and delivered to the trade unions.

Developments across the world directly affect society and families. Wars and commotions should be prevented. Development and the protection of family traditions should be a focus of activity for all states in the twenty-first century. We ask international organizations such as the United Nations, the European Council, the European Union and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and countries around the world to join in this endeavour. Let us unite our efforts under the logo: "happiness to each family, happiness to each child."

Family Education Programme: advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity in Turkey

Emre Ertekin and Serdar Özhan, Ministry of Family and Social Policy, Republic of Turkey

Located at the crossroads of three continents connecting east and west; north and south, Turkey includes six different climate cultures: Mediterranean, Black Sea, Balkans, Caucasian, Middle East and Europe. Some 97 per cent of Turkey's territory is in Asia and 3 per cent is in Europe. Turkey has a history of three major empires at the very heart of the land, which was called Anatolia throughout the last millennium. These are the Eastern Roma, Seljuk and Ottoman empires, which have enabled the country's settlers with a culture of welfare.

The Turkish Republic has a distinctive culture, being both a convergent and divergent point of Western and Eastern civilizations with more than 19 million households and a population of 75 million. The average household size is 3.7, which is comparatively higher than the average for European countries and lower than that of Middle Eastern countries. These households cover the full range of the social and cultural complexity of terra Anatolia — the entire social spectrum from professional to unskilled occupations; from affluence to poverty; from Muslims

to Christians and Jews (with different sects from Sunnis to Shias; Roman Catholic Church to Greek Orthodox Church); from passionate believers to nominal and irreligious ones; from Turks to Roma, Kurds and Arabs. This diverse structure of households also covers house owners and renters; the long-married and newlyweds; wide composite three- or four-generation households and households of people living alone; families with numerous relatives living close at hand and families whose kin are thin on the ground and widely scattered beyond the borders, mainly including Germany, France, Austria, Bulgaria, Eastern European countries, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Azerbaijan.

With all these distinctive characteristics the family in Turkey, like families the world over, is accepted as a pillar institution. It functions as a primary actor in the whole socialization process whereby the individual is integrated into culture and society at large. Family still means a lot in Turkey as it forms a significant universe of meaning in the lives of individuals, giving direction to life by both causing and dismissing tensions. As the family's multifunctional and contrasting features are still essential to the formation of an individual's existence and identity, the expectations from the family are comparatively high in Turkey.

As the state in Turkey aims to build up welfare, the question of how to allocate welfare production and responsibilities between market, family and government has become a more erratic issue since the 1990s. These three institutions are mutually interdependent: the market produces material welfare including income and employment facilities; the family produces emotional welfare including security and care services for family members; and the state decides on the distribution of responsibility between market and family. Because Turkey has a transitory economic structure, fluctuating market conditions have blurred the future, raised the risk and caused many crises. Global and local risks causing crises and failures in the markets have intensified the importance of family in terms of its capacity to absorb and compensate in the event of the failure of individual members. Hence, in transitory countries, governments pay much attention and spend more on family policy, to empower the family's problem-solving and care-providing capacities.

As mentioned above, household sizes in Turkey are bigger than those in developed countries. Although the nuclear family seems widespread in Turkey, the average household size and close blood agnation between families builds up an environment for the socialization of individuals in which family is the prime actor, designer and stage director in constituting networks, commitments and convictions. Moreover, studies on urban and rural areas show that there is vast variation within Turkey in

Image: Veysel Kaya

The family is seen as a pillar of society in Turkey, forming a universe of meaning in the lives of individual members

terms of the responses of families to both changing economic conditions and household, family structures.

The Turkish Republic Ministry of Family and Social Policy has initiated many nationwide studies, both on family and on social issues related to family. These studies have aimed to:

- collect data
- turn the data into information
- publish information for the use of experts, policymakers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- use the outcomes to constitute social policy.

The Ministry of Family and Social Policy has a duty to conduct scientific studies on national and international levels. This falls among its many other duties aimed at identifying social problems in Turkey as well as formulating their solutions, maintaining the integrity of families and increasing social welfare in the country. There is no doubt that these studies make it possible to outline and understand the transitions that have led to the change in family structure and to make up new family policies to resolve the tension stemming from the change and crises.

The first step towards developing a Family Education Programme was the Study on Family Education Needs Analysis in 2009. The outcomes of this study were used to construct the Study on Developing a Curriculum for the Family Education Programme. Within the context of the Study on Developing a Curriculum for the Family Education Programme, 23 chapters in five distinct fields (Family Communication, Health, Finance, Law and Media) have been developed.

In 2010, family education materials, aimed for the use of participants, facilitators and trainers in family education were published. After developing the curriculum and materials, Training the Trainers of the Family Education Programme began, with training programmes for 2,000 trainers throughout the country.

The crucial importance of the prenatal period and all the periods of parenthood for the health, stability and well-being of all children and adolescents has been confirmed by recent scientific studies in the fields of medicine, genetics, biology, sociology and psychology. As a result, parents hold a critical role and responsibility for the future of their children and thus for the future of their country. In this respect, one of the most crucial and potential outcomes of the Family Education Programme is providing family members with programmes to help them get ready for parenthood.

Furthermore, the Family Education Programme aims for happy, healthy and resilient families in general. In order to pursue this, it aims to help families to benefit more efficiently from services in education, law, economy, media and health; to functionalize internal processes such as communication, education, housekeeping and parenthood within the family; to encourage efficient management of family resources; and to contribute to preventative measures against possible risks faced by families.

The Family Education Programme's 23 chapters and five sections have been prepared taking into account the basic needs of all families. The section on Family Communication comprises of four chapters: 'First quarter of life (development between 0-18 years)', 'Marriage and family life', 'Family life skills' and 'School and family'. It aims to approach family life as a whole with an understanding based on cooperative balance, to provide information about problems that can occur in the family life cycle,

to equip individual family members with the appropriate skills and awareness to help resolve these problems, and to cultivate preventative and socially constructive practices within the family.

The Law section aims to provide the legal knowledge necessary for the daily life of a family in simple and straightforward language, which encourages family members to improve their awareness of their rights and responsibilities. This section includes five chapters: 'Legal literacy', 'Personal rights', 'Family law', 'Business life and law' and 'Rights of vulnerable people'.

The five chapters of the Finance section are: 'Family budget', 'Financial literacy', 'Energy saving', 'Family and shopping' and 'Micro-entrepreneurship'. This section aims to equip families with an awareness about financial mechanisms, to enable them to use their current financial resources productively and effectively, help them to obtain information about small ventures, assist them in tracking expenses and spending in accordance with the family's needs, and to foster a family lifestyle that relies on a sustainable environment through frugality.

Through its three chapters: 'Media literacy', 'Understanding media' and 'Conscious use of media', the Media section aims to strengthen and equip the intellectual, emotional, aesthetic and ethical understandings of family members against the side effects of media. It seeks to help families to use media in the best way possible and minimize its potential harm through empowering them with necessary knowledge and skills.

Finally, the Health section aims to protect and improve family health and quality of life through medical science. It also aims for a stronger society through improving family health, fighting diseases, decreasing health costs and increasing productivity. There are six chapters in the section: 'Health literacy', 'Healthy living and prevention of diseases', 'Child and adolescent health', 'Reproductive health and healthy motherhood', 'Geriatrics' and 'First aid'.

Image: Barış Cengiz

Family Education Programme training specifically focuses on people who are married or preparing for marriage

Empowering families is one of the most effective ways to tackle social and economic risks

The Family Education Programme works by contracting with organizations which have the capacity to organize and implement its trainings in their own field. Currently, a number of organizations provide various information and training to families. The following organizations can directly implement Family Education Programme practices or become partners in organizing training.

The main facilitators of the Family Education Programme are NGOs which are in the forefront of social organizations that can reach people effectively. They can provide individuals and families with more systematic training. Other important stakeholders for the programme include public and private counselling and research centres, social services and Child Protection Agency counselling centres, cultural centres, state institutions and organizations, institutions providing education at K-12 level, institutes of non-formal education, institutes of higher education, religious institutions, health institutions, trade associations, unions and other similar organizations.

Moreover, professionals from diverse fields of social and medical sciences such as psychology, social work, law, sociology and pedagogy have received 'Facilitator' certificates to organize Family Education Programme sessions. It is also possible for individuals to get in touch with the programme online and through partner organizations. All Family Education Programme sessions and the materials provided for the facilitators are free of charge in this respect.

The Family Education Programme Facilitator Training Programme is provided to volunteers who are willing to learn the Family Education Programme and specialize in the fields of its management and training. Professionals who join the programme are equipped with skills to educate families and individual adults, to guide training in various cities throughout Turkey and to organize training programmes.

The Family Education Programme aims to provide life skills that are necessary for all family members. The target group for most of the programme chapters is the whole family and thus the whole of society. However, the programme's training specifically focuses on people who are married or preparing for marriage.

Special training programmes were also developed by facilitators for areas that necessitate special training. In coming up with these specialized training programmes, the stage of the individual's family and marital status are the main determinants.

Adult family members who are within the scope of the defined programme categories can apply for training. Family members are categorized as follows: single adults; people who are preparing for marriage; married people with no children; married people with children; married people whose children have left home; and single parents. Individuals who are at the legal age where they can get married but who are not in the process of doing so are categorized as single adults. Those who have decided to get married or who are engaged are categorized as people who are getting ready for marriage.

In conclusion, as a country that has a transitory economic structure and fluctuating market conditions, Turkey is facing global and local economic and social risks causing crises and failures. It is clear that one of the most effective ways of tackling these risks is to empower families and their members with respect to their capacity to absorb, compensate, solve problems and provide care services. In this context, the Family Education Programme is designed to help and empower families to accomplish their capacity of compensation, problem solving and care provision.

II
Confronting
Family Poverty

To build the future, read the present: the challenges of transnational families

Paola Panzeri, Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union

A few days ago, somebody told me about her experience of moving away from home to find work: "Now, with this job, I have papers, but when I arrived I had to wait eight years before I could go back to my country and visit my family. Do you know what it means, not seeing your family for eight years? I was getting crazy, I dreamed about them every night and I was starting to hear their voices in my mind." This person lives and works in Italy, taking care of an old lady; she is one of the thousands of 'badanti' (carers) that leave their families behind in their country of origin and come to Italy to fill what we call a labour shortage in the care sector.

This story is just a fragment of a bigger picture that involves hundreds of thousands of families around the world. It is not rare, regardless of which continent we live in, to know someone who works in our city or town but whose family is in his or her country of origin, or to know a family that has a member who left, looking for employment abroad.

The reasons for leaving differ from one person to another — or perhaps it would be better to say from one family to another. The decision to move abroad is rarely taken by the individual alone, but discussed and prepared within the family, whether that is the closer family circle or the extended one. In many cases, this decision is seen as a last resort; in others, it is seen as an investment — especially when it is done to continue education — and it may involve the pooling of the necessary resources to make this travel possible.

Poverty, hardship and hope for a better future for children and the family are behind many of these separations. It is an extreme decision, a last resort to trigger a change for families living in poverty all over the world. Departure of a family member is a difficult decision and will have a direct impact on all family members. Roles and responsibilities within the family will change significantly, not to mention the emotional and psychological impact that the departure of a close relative can have, especially on children.

Therefore, family expectations and the weight that, culturally, family approval has on the individual may influence the duration of the separation and effective family life during this time. Most departures are seen as temporary, lasting only for the time needed to collect the money necessary for the family's needs at the time of departure. However, this period is often increasingly extended. Debts made to cover travel expenses need to be paid back, sometimes putting families and the migrants themselves

Poverty, hardship and hope for a better future for children are behind many decisions for a family member to move abroad

into a position where they can no longer decide over their situation. Once in the host country, the migrant has to establish a new life, find a place to live, a job — and even when this is done, things do not automatically get easier.

Two key points are worth mentioning. First, there is the power of the economic dependency between the two sides of the same family. For many families with a relative abroad, remittances are the main source of income. Unfortunately, with a growing trend of economic migration, some countries are themselves becoming dependent on remittances, with consequences for their economic stability, sustainability and development. Dependency on a family member abroad can trigger a vicious circle that can affect transnational family life and its duration. During long separations, the family inevitably changes shape. Some members may get married, new babies are born, children grow into adults or adults become too old to work. This entails changes in the needs of the family and has implications for both the emotional and economic relationship between members of a transnational family. How do they establish when the needs of the family back home have been met?

Second, it is not rare for migrant workers with poor living and working conditions to feel ashamed and hide their condition from the rest of the family back home. A sense of guilt and/or an inability to provide may interfere with communication, which can also be very difficult due to material conditions between the two sides of the family.

Concerning communication between the two (or multiple) locations where a transnational family has members, we cannot ignore the important role played by mobile phones and the Internet. Being able to contact a family member in another country at any time has definitely changed the way transnational families communicate. It gives the possibility for more frequent contact and engagement in bilateral and more private conversations, with a huge impact on long-distance parenthood and care, and

its perception. However, this does not work for everyone. Those who live in areas where there isn't a proper communication infrastructure, or who have not been empowered by learning how to use such devices, are unable to exploit this potential. Therefore, those families, which are often the most vulnerable, will have to use more traditional communication tools, which are by far more expensive.

Low literacy, little information about their rights or simply poor knowledge of the local language in the host country are also common barriers in accessing services that are necessary for transnational families, such as money transfer or shipping services. The situation becomes even more complicated when the family member is undocumented.

For transnational families, access to employment is fundamental because it is the key for a regular residence permit. However, finding a job can often be difficult for a migrant, especially when it comes to the recognition of foreign degrees and diplomas and ability to work in the host country's local language. Therefore, migrants are often forced into low-skilled jobs and into the black market. Moreover, work contracts for migrants are mainly temporary. Labour market policies and regulations often limit the possibilities for amelioration of employment conditions of migrants, including difficulties in accessing stable jobs. In the European Union (EU), for example,

The transnational family

The transnational family is a new family model. It can be characterized by the geographical dispersion of a family because of the migration of one or more of its members who, nevertheless, continue to keep tight relationships across borders. Bryceson and Vuorela say that transnational families are "families [where family members] live some or most of the time separated from each other, yet hold together and create something that can be seen as a feeling of collective welfare and unity, namely 'familyhood', even across national borders."

Image: Soleterre NGO/ www.soleterre.org

Being able to contact a family member in another country at any time has changed the way transnational families communicate

Elia's story

Elia moved from El Salvador to Italy in 2008, when she was 35 years old. She left her son Brayan, four years old at the time, with her sister. After two years she found a stable job and started thinking about applying for family reunification, to have Brayan come to Italy. She succeeded and they have lived together in Italy since 2012.

Since 2008, Elia has had to face several difficulties to keep her family life with her son and her sister, who was the principal caregiver back home. Her role in the family as provider, through the remittances she kept sending, changed the relationship between her and her family, who were in charge of daily care for Brayan. Her sister tried to resist the family reunification that brought Brayan to Italy, both because of the strong attachment that grew with the child and because of fear of losing the money Elia was sending, which became an important economic asset.

Elia is now living in Italy with Brayan and both have a good relationship with the rest of the family in El Salvador. This has been possible thanks to the ongoing psychological, social and legal support that Elia, Brayan and her family in El Salvador received from Soleterre, an Italian non-governmental organization that works to support transnational families through an international network of twin centres in Italy and sending countries.
www.soleterre.org

Mobile phones and the Internet are important communication tools, but they depend on a good communication infrastructure and knowledge of how to use such devices

migration policies are designed to meet EU labour market shortages only, and tend to consider the individual migrant only as a worker, in a utilitarian view. Changing their status from temporary to long-term worker is surely not a straightforward process. As a consequence, many workers who wish to stay in the EU when their temporary contract expires are paradoxically forced into being undocumented by the difficulties of changing status. Moreover, while an increasing number of policies and legislations are put forward in favour of temporary, circular and seasonal workers and those who work in the health sector to fill the labour market shortage, no specific policies are put in place to prevent risks and protect families.

Finally, while migration is increasingly demonstrating to be a family business, policymakers still shape migration policies around the individual alone. Whether this is through choice or a lack of understanding of today's society, there is an urgent need to invert this tendency. For these reasons COFACE is working to raise awareness of the difficulties that transnational families specifically go through and advocating towards the EU institutions for migration policies that consider migrants' families not as a burden but as part of the process. The number of transnational families is growing and will not stop, even if we keep ignoring their existence. The future of these families, and of the people who belong to them, is in the hands of today's leaders and we cannot risk the future of these people because we choose to turn a blind eye. We need to look at today's world and society, remembering that the world economy is not made of numbers but of people.

Public attitude to migrants

Unsuccessful integration may be the result of 'unwelcoming' attitudes to immigrants, which may in turn be reinforced by the social problems linked to their poor integration. This situation may make it politically unacceptable to receive more immigrants. Eurobarometer survey results indicate that, on average, only 40 per cent of EU citizens feel that immigrants contribute a lot to their country, while a majority of citizens (52 per cent) do not agree with this statement. However, there are significant differences across countries. While 79 per cent of Swedes and two-thirds of Portuguese have a positive opinion of immigrants' contribution to society, only 12 per cent of Slovaks hold this view. In general, citizens in the old member states are more positive about migrants' contribution than those in the new member states.

Immigrants with jobs are more closely bonded to their host society. Equally, employed migrants contribute to a positive public image of immigrants (i.e. as hard-working, rather than as a drain on public resources). However, in a recent Eurobarometer survey on discrimination in the EU, most EU citizens acknowledged that foreigners would stand less chance of getting a job or traineeship, even with the same level of qualifications as other candidates. On average in the EU, 58 per cent of people thought that foreigners would be less likely to be successful compared with native born workers of the country. Countries with the highest shares of respondents expecting foreigners would be less likely were Belgium, Finland, France, the Netherlands and Sweden, all with rates over 70 per cent. As shown earlier, these are among the member states with the largest gaps in employment rates between migrants and the EU-born. Discrimination not only hinders labour market performance of immigrants, but by decreasing returns to human capital lowers their incentive to invest in host-country-specific human capital, which in turn results in lower labour market performance.

— **Employment in Europe Report 2008, European Commission**

Can or will the family succeed?
A family-centric approach to poverty alleviation

Dr Catherine Bernard, Founder Director, Service and Research Institute on Family and Children

In societies where male domination is far more prevalent than gender equality, one would expect the implications of 'male power' to be highly recognized. What we find instead is that men are rarely mentioned in programmes or policy documentation with regard to poverty, family breakdown, violence against women, women's empowerment or families mired in poverty.

Perhaps it feels more comfortable to use euphemisms such as 'feminization of poverty', 'deprived children', 'marginalized communities', 'below poverty line' and the like when referring to the poor. No wonder the impact of poverty on family, gender equality and child protection is understood vaguely, and that so much is left to the imaginations of policymakers.

The family is a social unit and family breakdowns have serious impacts and consequences on each member of that unit. This basic fact is the reason why poverty must be treated as a family issue. I have previously identified family breakdown as the womb of social ills,[1] of which poverty is primary and serves as an incubator for other social ills. These social ills are not isolated. They have ramifications for present and future generations. Hence family-centric initiatives necessarily involve an integrated approach and long-term commitment to marriage along with concern for the well-being, security and education of children. Poverty, on the other hand, compels families to remain embedded in immediate short-term concerns because their focus tends to be mere 'survival'. It needs to be admitted that society has yet to realize and come to terms with the fact that marriage and family stability serve as long-term foundations for eradicating poverty, and form the basic social protection floor for humankind.

Family life in conditions of poverty is unpredictable. It is prone to serious vulnerabilities and living itself is a risk. For the poor, there is no such thing as 'tomorrow'. Their lives are subject to different forms of uncertainties and threats, such as forced evacuation, compelled migration in search of work, displacement or refugee status because of natural disasters, water scarcity, unemployment, addictions, hunger, violence, abuse, seeing homes go up in flames or vanish under water because factories have to be built or dams made, and many more experiences. What happens to the children in these families is of least or no importance in such operations.

Poverty has manifold corrosive effects on a family's health, developmental stages and mental capacities and in the physi-

The family is the foundation from which poverty can be minimized and eliminated, and should be part of any developmental process

Family poverty often gives children responsibilities that inhibit their academic performance, with many lagging behind or dropping out of school

cal growth of children due to poor food, nutrition, hygiene and housing. Poverty limits the resources needed to eat well and live a life befitting human dignity. Being malnourished or poorly nourished, members of such families are unable to build resistance to epidemics and contagious diseases which create ill health and pandemics, in turn leading to forms of social isolation and further increasing victimization and social drifting.

Family poverty often leads to children being involved in household work and outside employment so as to augment the family's income; looking after siblings; looking after cattle; and doing heavy chores because the mother has to go out to work in fields, the construction industry or other such semi-skilled or unskilled areas. This 'need' often causes poor academic performance, and participation in school life is inhibited as the children juggle home chores and studies. Most often they are forced to study by the light of a kerosene lamp, in a neighbour's house or under a street light. Such children often lag behind in their school work, give up and/or drop out.

Poverty affects the family's entire environment. There is more to poverty than having a low income. Poverty affects and inhibits the social, cognitive, emotional and physical development of children, and in adults it does not allow for adequate parenting. Hence the inability of parents to raise children and respond to developmental needs and tasks. Lack of basic amenities blunts their capacity for any form of engagement. This shortcoming is transmitted to successive generations and continues as a vicious cycle if it is not interrupted with appropriate interventional measures which will need to be combined with psychological and emotive counselling.

These are the essential constituents of poverty. Most countries have not identified, sufficiently comprehended or contextualized effective policies to combat, confront and eradicate poverty. There seems to be little political will and courage to really confront poverty. Yet, in all countries it is families who subsidize the cost of democracy, as the adults enthusiastically cast their vote hoping that it will lead to better days in their lives and for their children.

To be poor is to be 'classified' as unimportant and to be made to feel unimportant.

The Service and Research Institute on Family and Children (SERFAC) believes that:
- a family-centric framework for poverty eradication must place people and their human security at the heart of the development process
- the process must focus on the family as a social unit and engage in a strategically unified and multidimensional approach covering the whole gamut of relationships.

Based on insights into ground realities gained from observations made during various field experiences in India and other Asian countries, SERFAC was established with the conviction that the poor can change their lives for the better if they are given adequate emotional and physical support for working towards this goal.

Several experimental initiatives took place over a decade, trying to identify possible and probable reasons for poverty in the family. Among the major findings was that lack of stability in the marriage and family due to abuse, and different forms of violence in the home between husband and wife and parents and children, resulted in the breakdown of family relationships at several levels and in different ways. Both causes and consequences were intertwined and intricately enmeshed. Any solution had to address the complexities of the problem and simultaneously address its consequences, giving priority to the source of the problem(s).

A unified and integrated approach helped to identify an entry point as well as its branch areas/ramifications, which pointed to the need for fertility regulation. Such an approach also clarified the role of parenthood. It took into account the need for gender balance and recognition of the wife as woman

The Billings Ovulation Method has helped to raise the status of women and enabled family planning through joint decisions

Valuing the work of families

Human relations are unique and family relationships matter. This foundational premise was developed over several years and the approach has recently been confirmed.

Fertility regulation using the Billings Ovulation Method of natural family planning (not the rhythm method), which is a well-researched, scientific and reliable method:
- recognizes that a decision regarding pregnancy is a joint decision involving both husband and wife
- raises the status of women, as they begin to speak out about their fertility and infertility cycle
- helps men to understand their wives and become more interested in them
- provides an instrument of dialogue between husband and wife through a chart on which women mark their fertility patterns.

SERFAC worked with couples on aspects like budget, income-expenditure and saving, and taught them to maintain small bank accounts. These were additional tools for dialogue between husband and wife on economic areas and the well-being of the entire family.

It became clear that mere economic alleviation and providing short-lived schemes offered only temporary respite. Poverty alleviation must be addressed, keeping in mind long-term and lasting goals. This approach calls for a belief in human capacity, which has its genesis in the family.

and partner. Further, it fostered dialogue among family members, especially between husband and wife. It initiated change in family management and prioritized the needs for educating children, work management, budgeting of money, decent clothing, healthcare and socialization of children.

This approach called for designing appropriate modules for programmes, assessing the manner and method in which poverty eradication was being addressed at different levels in the family, and evaluating it against the parameters stated above.

Questions were then raised about the meaning of development. Who controls the destiny of humans and who controls development moneys? Where does development start, end, exist? More basically, what do we understand and imply by development? Is it mere economic well-being, commodification of life, market economies, trade, excellent infrastructures, shopping malls and material benefits, or does it need to go beyond commodification and materialism? How do policymakers understand development? Is structural development spoken of and made synonymous with human development?

The goal of each different strand that constitutes development, such as technological development, structural development and economic development, needs to be identified. Economic development cannot be an end in itself; it needs to be used towards sustainable human development. As long as inadequate understanding and lopsided approaches continue, political will cannot be galvanized or maximized and poverty will remain. Millions of dollars will continue to be spent on different forms of development and the problem will be addressed from the wrong platforms and by the wrong voices.

An evaluation of three years of this approach indicated that many marriages showed signs of stability. Decisions on most areas of family life were joint ones. Couples manifested a new degree of confidence because:

- they held the keys to their fertility and could plan their families through joint decisions and shared responsibility in family life
- they were empowered to plan, space and nurture the newborn baby until he/she was old enough to take care of his/her little world before the next baby arrived
- the dialogue between husband and wife was reflected in almost every area of their life
- child spacing was a choice willingly adopted and freely followed, with no side effects or complications
- the couple was happy and the family was in control of its own destiny with the members contributing to their own human development process.

The connection between family breakdown and poverty transmission was a focus of SERFAC's Millennium Development Projects in rural areas. With the insights and experiences gained over a decade, I trained co-workers in understanding social problems and the strain and systems of poverty created by social and relationship violations. These social violations in turn become feeders to existing systems of poverty and family breakdown. We continued to focus on the family, primarily the couple, over a period of time and tried to understand what poverty was doing to them,

the effect of want, inability and deprivation on their lives, and how they could emerge from it. It was also important to help them understand how borrowing money creates a cycle of debt. We showed them how dowries paid by taking loans set a debt trap for young couples. Through this and similar means, we were able to minimize borrowing and wipe out the dowry system from two villages with a total of 420 families. Gambling was considerably reduced and so was the use of alcohol by men.

Many young couples were taught the Billings Ovulation Method of natural family planning and were happy in their married life. They began to appreciate the value of contentment and unity.

This work was demanding but worthwhile. Our perseverance was time-tested. Funds were almost absent because the family is unimportant to and does not find a place in anyone's or any agency's agenda. Every agency funds the measurable and the visible, but work with families most often cannot be measured and results are not tangible. Despite these severe limitations, changing social climates and the lack of understanding from all sections of society which policymakers and religious groups experience, SERFAC took up the challenge and, on the basis of over 25 years of work, asserts that the family-centric approach is the most effective way of poverty alleviation.

SERFAC has established three basic principles for family-centric poverty alleviation:

- marriage stability
- gender equality
- family well-being: child spacing; supporting the care and positive socialization of children; health, education, training, employment/work; elimination of discrimination against the girl child and elimination of sex selection, female foeticide, abortion and infanticide; intergenerational equity and equality; and care and protection of the elderly.

To establish a positive vision for future families, SERFAC has coined the phrase 'Family: the missing link in human development'. Contrary to undertakings which propound the theory that only the community and larger institutions are participants in the development process, SERFAC believes:

- in investment in human capital and that the family is the first experience of one's humanity
- that the family is the first and indispensable line of social protection
- that the family is the foundation from which poverty can be effectively minimized and eliminated.

These elements are profoundly essential to human development which is sustainable and effective, and need to be incorporated in any developmental process.

The importance of the family in poverty eradication is summed up by the International Year of The Family paper 'Families, Agents and Beneficiaries of Social Education and Development'[2] which says: "Seeing families as key actors in social development encapsulates a future orientation that places valuing of children and future generations as the central objective for the elimination of poverty and inequality."

Latin American families: the challenges of poverty and childcare

Maria Nieves Rico, Senior Social Affairs Officer, Heidi Ullmann, Associate Social Affairs Officer and Carlos Maldonado Valera, Social Affairs Officer, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Latin American families have changed significantly over the course of the last two decades, owing to marked declines in fertility throughout the region, an increase in female labour force participation, and shifting attitudes and norms regarding cohabitation. However, these changes in family structure have not occurred in a uniform manner across the socioeconomic spectrum. This line of analysis is particularly relevant in the Latin American context given the persistently high levels of economic inequality in the region.

According to recent estimates by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), while the average household size in Latin America has decreased, lower income households are still more numerous than wealthier households. In 2010 lower income households had, on average, almost two more members than wealthier households. This difference in average household size, which reflects differential patterns of fertility and living arrangements, has implications for the level of dependence and the needs of different types of households along the income distribution.

Besides household size, family composition also differs depending on income level. A salient feature of households in the richest income quintile is that they are increasingly non-family households: single-person households comprise over 20 per cent of households in the richest income quintile, and nuclear households without children just under 20 per cent. In contrast, households in the poorest income quintiles tend to be two-parent nuclear families with children, two-parent extended households and single-parent nuclear households, primarily headed by women.

Regardless of the type of household in which they reside, households with children are overrepresented in the poorest income quintiles. At the regional level, the majority of households in the poorest income quintiles are households with children, while in the richest income quintile, this trend is reversed and most are households without children.

The link between poverty and households with children is maintained even when the proportion of households with children is reduced. For example, although the majority of Uruguayan households do not have children, an overwhelming majority of poor households do. This does not imply that children make the household poor; rather, more children are born to parents with low educational attainment and weak labour market insertion. This, together with the absence or inadequacy of social policies and programmes, in particular mechanisms for social protection, translates into increased vulnerability for households with children, which is especially true for single-parent households headed by women.

Many countries in the region have implemented conditional cash transfer (CCT) programmes to address the challenges faced by poor families with children. The basic structure of CCT programmes entails the transfer of monetary and non-monetary resources to families with children, living in poverty or extreme poverty, on condition that they fulfil specific commitments. These programmes have a two-pronged approach to addressing poverty in families: in the short term, they aim to increase family consumption through monetary transfers. A longer-term objective of these programmes is to increase human capital in order to disrupt the intergenerational transmission of poverty by requiring that children and adolescents in recipient households comply with school attendance requirements and participate in regular health checks.

Currently, there are 25 CCT programmes targeted at families in 20 countries in the region. These programmes target the family unit as a whole, rather than its individual members, and give a leading role to women who are primarily responsible not only for handling the transfers but also for fulfilling the commitments. In the vast majority of cases, the transfers are actually paid to the mothers on the assumption that they will use the resources to improve the well-being of the family as a whole and of their children in particular.

Although the evidence regarding their impact, particularly their long-term impact, is mixed, CCT programmes have helped to sustain consumption among the poorest households and they appear to have had an impact on poverty, especially extreme poverty and in rural areas. In Mexico, transfers from one of the longest-standing programmes, Oportunidades (formerly Progresa), represent approximately 10 per cent of the income of the poorest families. Other evaluations of Progresa-Oportunidades, one of the most extensively assessed CCT programmes in the region, reveal positive impacts in other dimensions, mostly observed in rural settings. These include reduced gender gaps in school enrolment, greater educational opportunities among recipients, increases in school enrolment, reduced dropout rate among adolescents, and improved transitions from primary to secondary school. Others have documented positive effects of this programme

on behavioural problems, language development and long-term impacts on nutritional status as measured in height.

Despite these encouraging results, debates have emerged regarding the limits of CCT programmes. One aspect relates to the obstacles that some programmes have experienced in trying to achieve their goals, both in terms of incorporating the potential beneficiary target population and in compliance with the commitments. In some countries, the physical terrain and distances restrict the access of beneficiaries to health and education services. In many other cases, weak infrastructure has limited access to services and hampered compliance with the commitments. A second point of contention concerns the potential of CCT programmes to generate sustainable long-term changes in the situation of families, particularly to achieve gains in job placement and employment. A related issue pertains to defining the programme exit criteria.

A final area of concern is the gender biases that may be built into the programmes by requiring that mothers be responsible for ensuring compliance with the commitments, for attending programme activities and for the administrative procedures involved in receiving the monetary transfer. While earlier studies indicated that CCT programmes empowered women by giving them more economic autonomy and decision-making power within the household, more recent evidence suggests that the way in which programmes are structured reinforces existing inequalities between men and women around the distribution of paid and unpaid work within the home. The heavy time demands imposed on mothers by the programmes may also infringe on the time that they can devote to other activities, namely paid work in the labour market. This is problematic since the process of incorporating

women into the labour market in Latin America is imperative for long-term poverty reduction, particularly among children and adolescents. Female employment represents an important contribution to total household income, contributions that in many cases prevent the household from falling into poverty.

Although female labour force participation has increased markedly in recent years in Latin America, women are still almost exclusively responsible for domestic tasks, including childcare and care of other dependents. This overload creates a series of tensions that fall most acutely on women of low-income households. Time use surveys allow a comparison of the distribution of unpaid domestic work carried out by men and women. These surveys reveal similar patterns across the region. Indepedent of household economic status, men dedicate considerably less time to unpaid domestic work than women and this trend varies little across income quintiles for men. In contrast, poorer women spend more time on unpaid domestic work compared to wealthier women, who in turn spend more time on paid work. In terms of care provision specifically, both poor men and women spend more time on care responsiblities than their wealthier counterparts, although poor women do so at levels that are far superior to those of poor men. Due to these realities, two levels of inequity converge in the provision of childcare in Latin America: gender and socioeconomic.

In many Latin American countries there are regulations for the provision of childcare that apply mainly to women employed in the formal sector, often based on the number of employees in the company. As such, these regulations often exclude women working in small and medium enterprises, and by definition women working in the informal

Latin America (18 countries): average household size, total and by income quintiles, 1990 and 2010

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of tabulations of household surveys in the region
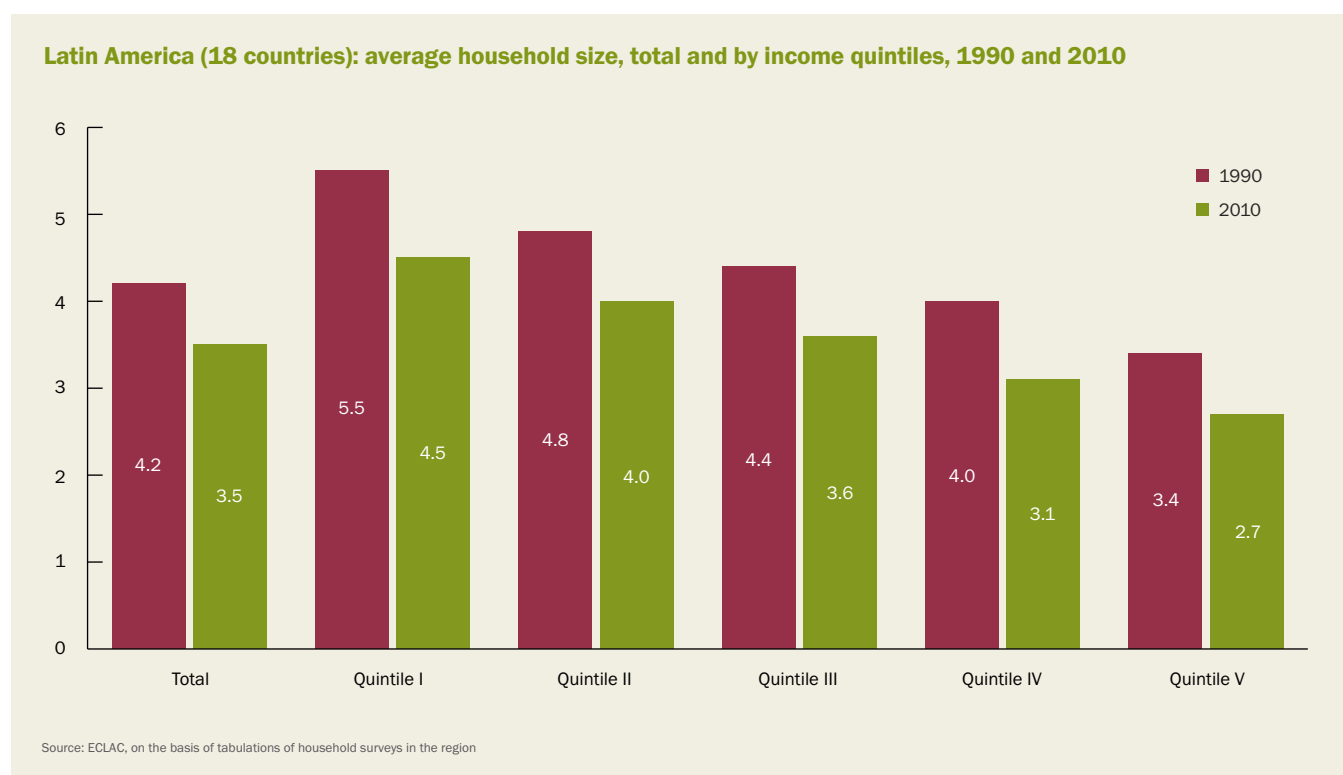
Latin America (18 countries): composition of first and fifth income quintile according to family type, 1990 and 2010

Family type (legend)
Blended
Single-parent extended
Two-parent extended
Without children
Single-parent nuclear
Two-parent nuclear
Single-person

Quintile I — 1990: Blended 4, Single-parent extended 7, Two-parent extended 15, Without children 4, Single-parent nuclear 9, Two-parent nuclear 59, Single-person 2

Quintile I — 2010: Blended 4, Single-parent extended 8, Two-parent extended 14, Without children 5, Single-parent nuclear 13, Two-parent nuclear 51, Single-person 5

Quintile V — 1990: Blended 6, Single-parent extended 3, Two-parent extended 10, Without children 14, Single-parent nuclear 9, Two-parent nuclear 45, Single-person 13

Quintile V — 2010: Blended 6, Single-parent extended 4, Two-parent extended 7, Without children 17, Single-parent nuclear 11, Two-parent nuclear 33, Single-person 22

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of tabulations of household surveys in the region

sector, either those who are self-employed or those in other informal enterprises.

While there is some heterogeneity in the group of women who are self-employed, women in this group tend to be of low socioeconomic status with few options to access childcare services outside their family network. For women who do not have family support to meet their childcare needs, the opportunity cost of continuing to work may be high enough to induce them to stop working for pay, which adversely affects household income. Therefore, by creating differentiated opportunities for women to be integrated into the labour market, the supply of and/or unequal access to childcare options reinforce social and economic inequalities.

Moreover, unequal access to childcare and early education can also perpetuate socioeconomic inequality in future generations. From this perspective, childcare not only facilitates insertion into the labour market or enhances reconciliation of family and work responsibilities for low-income women, it also affects the future performance of their children. Extensive evidence shows that early stimulation and education have positive and lasting social and economic impacts and are associated with better educational attainment, lower levels of teenage pregnancy and lower involvement in risky activities.

Outside the family, the supply of childcare services in the region comes from a poorly articulated combination of public, private and community initiatives. Usually public initiatives are managed from ministries or institutes relating to the family and social development, or in some cases the Ministry of Education. Instead of providing the services directly, the state also encourages the development of childcare services through grants to non-state institutions, including private for-profit providers and non-profit religious and community organizations.

There is a high degree of heterogeneity in net attendance rates to early education or childcare services in Latin America. According to ECLAC, the net attendance rate for children between birth and three years old ranges from 5 per cent (Guatemala, Honduras, Dominican Republic and Paraguay) to 20 per cent (Cuba and México). For children aged three to six it is considerably higher, but only in Cuba and Mexico does it approach universal coverage; in Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Peru, Colombia and Panama net attendance rate for children aged three to six is between 60 and 75 per cent.

In recent years several countries in the region have expanded infrastructure and increased availability of early childhood education and care services. In Mexico, preschool education and childcare is provided by the Mexican Social Security Institute (directed at employees in the formal economy) and, starting in 2007, a system of services promulgated by the Secretariat of Social Development (SEDESOL), aimed specifically at low-income working mothers who do not have access to social security benefits. The SEDESOL programme seeks to facilitate the incorporation of these women to the labour market and at the same time create jobs. The model subsidizes both the supply and demand of childcare services. Money is transferred to individuals, in most cases women or social organizations, to adapt their spaces into childcare centres and subsidies are paid to families for every child who uses these services, covering 35 per cent of the cost of the childcare. To enrol their children and receive the state subsidy, parents must meet certain requirements, including that the mother be working, looking for work or studying, household income requirements, and that the household should not have access to childcare provided by the Mexican Social Security Institute. To qualify for the subsidy, the service provider does not need

Latin America (16 countries): households with and without children (<18 years of age) by income quintile, around 2010
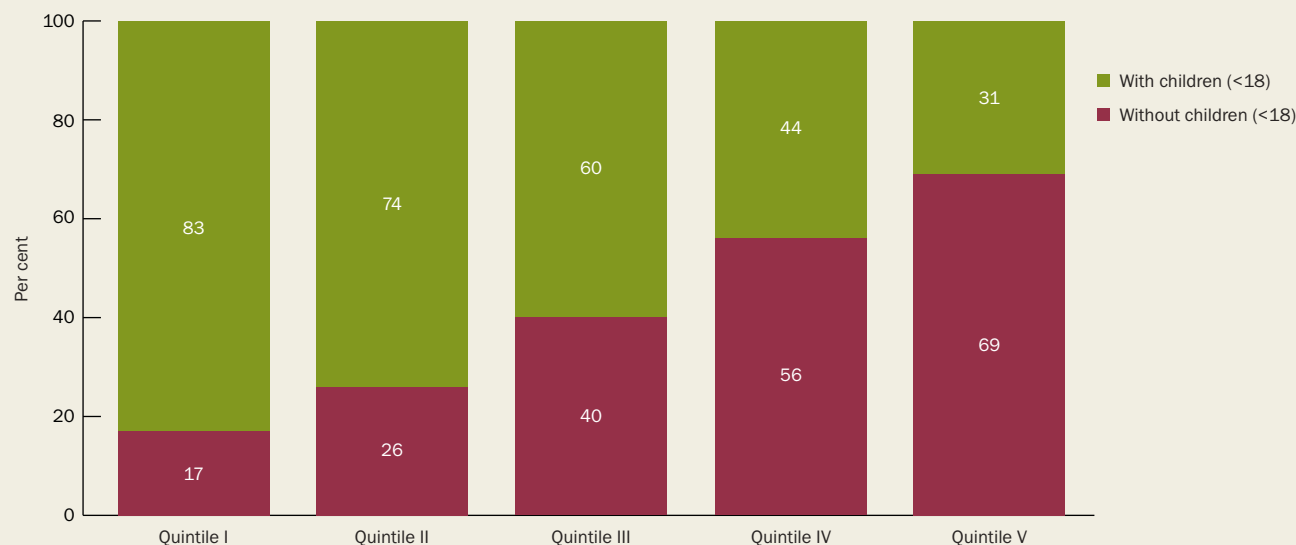
Source: ECLAC, on the basis of tabulations of household surveys in the region

any special training or previous experience except for having completed secondary school, passed a psychological exam and participated in training courses. In practice, service providers are poor housewives with children who open childcare centres in their homes. This initiative resulted in a considerable expansion of early childcare services in the country. However, it currently faces the challenge of both consolidating basic quality standards, and guaranteeing that caregivers under the programme do not become informal and low-paid female workers themselves.

Uruguay has also significantly increased coverage of child-care services through the expansion of the Childhood and Family Care Centres (CAIF) Plan. The plan follows a service model managed by social organizations but financed entirely by the state, directed at low-income families. The centres are for the most part located in areas of high social vulner-ability. Currently the CAIF Plan serves more than 45,000 children aged between birth and three years, providing inte-gral quality care which combines educational and nutritional components, as well as counselling with the families.

Finally, some countries in the region have also imple-mented legislation that requires companies of a certain size to provide childcare services. For example, in Chile this requirement applies to companies with more than 20 employees. Should this figure be reduced, the employer may stop providing the service (except for mothers whose children were using the service prior to the change in the number of employees). Currently, only mothers are entitled to this benefit, except in cases where the mother dies, in which case the father is entitled.

While it is encouraging that childcare policies seem to be entering the public agenda and it is increasingly recognized that the provision of this care requires the active partici-

pation of the state, for the most part, these advances are concentrated in a few countries of the region. Much remains to be done in order to achieve the goal of implementing public policies that create a greater balance between work and family life, to provide quality and affordable alternatives that would meet the specific needs of the most vulnerable families, and to promote cultural changes with regard to the division of housework and care between men and women within households. It is clear that family policies, particu-larly those aimed at improving work-family balance, relate directly to social protection and productive potential by promoting female employment and labour conditions among workers. These policies are an investment in the future. Without these types of policies, countries in the region will continue to bear the high costs of the underutilization of female employment potential and its direct effects on economic development and poverty.

Above all these challenges, although the expansion of child-care helps reduce the burden of unpaid care for women, these policies largely reinforce traditional notions regarding the organization of care work within the home, by placing the responsibility to provide or to find someone to provide care exclusively on women, especially poor women. Policies and programmes still rely heavily on an outdated and traditional family model, with a male breadwinner and female caregiver. In view of this and the patriarchal patterns that persist in the family in Latin American society, it is absolutely essential to develop policies aimed at both men and women, in order to promote responsibility and redistribution of the burden of unpaid work and care. Without such an emphasis and incen-tives, policies will not achieve a better reconciliation of work and family life, because family responsibilities will continue to fall disproportionately on women.

Voice of the Family in Africa: strengthening the family in Africa

Raymond Mutura, President, Voice of the Family in Africa International and the Program for Family Development

Theory and practice are two words that interplay constantly in efforts to solve the world's problems. The philosopher Aristotle says that theory is a knowledge of the principles and causes of things which begins with the senses (observation) before developing into concepts, while practical knowledge is motivated by the need to 'move' to a decision amid various options or choices. Aristotle says that wisdom is a combination of theory and practice.

In Africa, wisdom is highly regarded, as illustrated by the African proverbs: 'Ũũgĩ ndũambaga' (one is not born with knowledge) and 'Gũtirĩ mũndũ ũciaragwo arĩ mũũgĩ' (nobody is born wise).

While Aristotle's views and the African proverbs are true, this was not an obvious foundation of the first African Family Congress, which took place in Nairobi, Kenya in 2005. The story began in 1998, when the architects of the congress founded a youth organization called True Love Waits, whose aim was to cultivate an abstemious approach to decisions regarding youth sexuality. This led to conferences where they began to appreciate the policy side of social issues, with

Delegates from Congo, Kenya, Ethiopia and Nigeria take part in a Network of African Family Scholars colloquium

policy-focused meetings in Geneva (1999) and the United Nations conference on Beijing+5 in New York (2000). One outcome was the formation of the African Region of the World Youth Alliance.

The conclusion of the 2005 congress motivated the formation of Voice of the Family in Africa (VOFA), a think tank and umbrella organization whose mission is to promote a culture favourable to the family through policy intervention based on scientific research and education. Nine years later, the merging of theory and practice is slowly taking place. VOFA has motivated the development of 'the theory around family' through the formation of several research initiatives. Various practical initiatives have also been strengthened or commenced to promote the family in Kenya, Congo, Nigeria and Uganda and Ivory Coast.

In the past, most of Africa's initiatives have followed a bottom-up approach (alleviating problems touching the majority such as poverty eradication, water and health) with little done to influence the potential decision-makers and policy advocates. However, a lot of the initiatives connected to the VOFA agenda have taken a top-down approach, focusing on the theory generated through research, availing policy interventions and working with major influencers of society, government and key professionals. This approach will make it easier for those who effect or influence policy at country level to trickle down good practices to other people in their circle. We are now beginning, through some of the initiatives, to reach the masses and it is time for Africa to celebrate once again the family as the fundamental unit of society.

Here are some stories from Africa. Our journey will take us through Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Congo. Most of the people who founded the initiatives in those countries were critical to the first Family Congress in Africa, and/or their initiatives were launched or strengthened after the congress.

In Nairobi, Kenya, the Program for Family Development (PFD) and the Centre for Research on Organization Work and Family at Strathmore Business School (SBS) focus on work-family balance. SBS's Centre for Research on Organizations, Work and Family (CROWF) aims to help companies become family and socially responsive by conducting and disseminating sound research on the management of employees, with particular emphasis on work and family reconciliation. CROWF communicates and promotes human resource management practices that facilitate work and family balance through research forums, practitioners' seminars and specialized courses.

PFD runs International Federation for Family Development courses in Kenya. Since 2006, PFD has collaborated with CROWF in addressing the work-family balance challenge to couples. There are six courses, including 'Married Love' (for couples), 'First Steps' (for parents of children ages between birth and three years), 'First Letters' (children aged four to eight), 'Adolescence' (children aged 9-13), and the 'Teenager Programme' (children aged 14-19). For unmarried professionals a course called 'Maisha (life): the Personal Project' is run. PFD is currently running the courses in two major schools in Kenya (Strathmore and Kianda School) reaching about 400 couples and close to 50 unmarried professionals each year. Its revived vision since 2012 has been to run the courses in 'every school, in every village, in every town in Africa'.

To ensure that enough facilitators are prepared to help in moderating the courses, PFD and CROWF have designed a one-year course called 'Managing Core People', which provides appropriate theory around the issues regarding marriage, parenting and work-family balance.

In Lagos, Nigeria, the Institute for Work and Family Integration (IWFI) was founded in 2005 by a group of professionals. Its mission is to provide solutions through research, advocacy, training and advisory programmes that enable work and family integration for better productivity at work and home, towards a better society. In addition to running many programmes for medium-size groups of people, IWFI is building up a database of resources to make knowledge accessible to the many people who are not able to attend its activities in person. Another objective is to reach out to lawmakers and government officials in order to influence policy. Current programmes include educators' seminars, 'Work-Life Balance: an awareness workshop for HR professionals', a work-family integration couples retreat, and an Internet safety seminar.

Since 1985, families have been strengthened in Lagos through the Nigerian Association for Family Development (NAFAD). NAFAD has organized courses for parents of primary and secondary school students, factory personnel, banking industry executives, postgraduate business school students and personnel, various church groups and mixed groups of couples with children of various ages. Other than Lagos, NAFAD is presently working in other cities including Aba, Abeokuta, Abuja, Benin, Ilorin, Onitsha and Owerri. It also collaborates with IWFI to train potential moderators through the Postgraduate Certificate Family Advisory Programme. Through running the courses in schools, NAFAD is influencing almost 500 couples every year.

In Kampala, Uganda, Family Enrichment Uganda (FEU) was set-up in 2004. FEU is a not-for-profit organization that aims to contribute to a better society through strengthening families through a professional approach to family development and parenting. It currently reaches 100 couples every year.

Another initiative in Kenya since 2006 has been the establishment of the Network of African Family Scholars, a collaboration between CROWF and the (now) Doha International Institute of the Family. Since 2006, three colloquia have taken place in Nairobi. The aim was to develop scholarship in the areas of the family. Over 60 papers have been presented in these conferences.

In Nairobi the Family Network International and the Shani schools were established in 2004 by a group of parents who wanted to promote family values and the human and spiritual development of parents, teachers, children and child-minders. In addition to its work for children, Shani focuses on addressing parents and teachers. For the parents, the school organizes seminars aimed at promoting and strengthening the family unit by developing a deeper understanding of the nature of marriage and the family, as well as its potential for personal growth. Shani focuses on teacher development programmes, enabling

A light-hearted moment during a Shani teachers' seminar

teachers to enhance their professional skills for optimum performance while providing an increased awareness of the important role of teachers in children's development. The school also runs short seminars for child-minders. Since many parents work outside the home, child-minders and home-helps play a vital role in the upbringing of young children. The school therefore runs a seminar programme to help child-minders acquire skills for effective early childhood development. The school currently attracts and influences 500 families every year.

Since 2006, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Association for the Family (AFA) continues to work to defend and promote the family. The main activities take place around two schools supported by the association: the Lycā Minzoto for girls and the College Bilombe for boys. To date, these two schools have had 990 students, representing nearly 200 families chosen on the basis of parents' personal involvement in their children's school education. AFA is very involved in the training of parents. Accordingly, it organized study days on the family, a programme on family orientation in which 50 couples have already participated, and a club providing training for the school's mothers and their friends. Nearly 200 women participate every month to discuss topics such as the care of small family matters, family budget management and the involvement of children in school life.

In Côte d'Ivoire, since 1989 the Family and Education Association has trained about 1,560 couples in the cities of Abidjan, Yamoussoukro and Yopougon. Since 2000 the 'Ivorian Family Day' has been held on the first Sunday of December each year, attended by 450-500 people. The association has also established two schools: the Etimoe girls' school and the Makoré boys' school. Today, these two schools total 378 students from around 200 families. Most of the families have participated in the association's family enrichment courses and attend various training programmes to develop their abilities as parents and educators.

Kianda Foundation was set up over 53 years ago to reduce levels of poverty through empowering women, who are the bedrock of the family. In Kenya, 45.9 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line. Consequently there is a huge population that has little or no access to basic human needs such as education, health, housing and water. At the time of the foundation's inception very few women had access to education because society was highly patriarchal. The foundation initiated the Kianda College project in 1961 and currently supports several projects within the thematic areas of education, economic empowerment and health. The projects include the Kianda School, Kibondeni College, Kimlea Girls Technical Training Centre, Tewa Training Centre, Gatina and Maramba Nursery Schools, Kimlea Clinic, Children's Health Program (CHEP), Trainer

The story of George Gitahi

Studying at ISBI has enabled George Gitahi to set up his own electronics supplies and repairs shop

Twenty-four-year-old George Gitahi is from Outering estate in Eastlands, Nairobi. He is the sixth of nine children in a family that is not well off. His father works at many odd jobs while his mother sells mitumba (second hand clothes) at their doorstep. With many mouths to feed, paying school fees was not the family's highest priority.

Despite these challenges, and the negative peer pressure that saw two of his primary school friends were shot down soon after they began stealing, George managed to complete his high school education. But even those who are fortunate enough to acquire some tertiary training often have to overcome the challenges of poor professional preparation because of the irrelevant courses they took, or lack of capital to start a business.

George came across these challenges after high school. His tough schooling experience impacted negatively on his final results and going to university was ruled out. He tried his hands at many things. "I once sold key holders, worked for a courier firm, did volunteer jobs among others, until I got the opportunity of joining the Informal Sector Business Institute," he says.

Like many other students, George learned about ISBI through his friends. He enrolled for classes at ISBI's Eastlands Centre, which opened up horizons for him: "It is like my vision was clouded, but now I can see clearly," he says.

At ISBI, George enjoyed learning how to use the computer, receiving entrepreneurial ideas and attending the life skills sessions. He specialized in electronics, which gave him the most memorable experience both in classes and his ongoing internship.

George feels that he has improved ethically thanks to the business ethics class, and he is grateful for the practical advice he received to help him solve day-to-day problems: "I used to be very shy. I couldn't face people and when I did, I was very casual with them, both the old and the young. Thanks to the programme, I have overcome that."

George now has his own electronics supplies and repairs shop where he has one permanent employee and takes on casual workers when needed. He plans to bring his family out of poverty and to help his other siblings achieve their dreams.

of Trainers Business Skills Programme for Rural Women and the Wanjohi Farm for Internally Displaced Persons.

These projects support families by ensuring that financial challenges are dealt with as much as possible. For instance, Gatina and Maramba nursery schools were established in the tea plantations in 1995 to provide early childhood education for over 140 of the tea and coffee plantation workers' children in the Tigoni area. Tewa Training Centre has targeted over 60 women and girls from financially challenged backgrounds in Kilifi County. Kimlea Girls Training Centre was established in 1992 and offers technical skills to around 50 girls annually from poor backgrounds and mostly living in the Tigoni plantations. Kimlea Medical Clinic was established in 2006, targeting many tea and coffee plantation workers in Tigoni who had little or no access to health care due to high levels of poverty. Over 10,000 people are annually treated in the clinic. CHEP was initiated in 2009 to cater for the health needs of children in the Limuru area, because lack of access to medical care for many of the children in primary schools near Kimlea Training Centre was leading to high levels of morbidity. Currently 3,502 children have medical cover under this programme. The Wanjohi farm was acquired by the Kianda Foundation in 2008 to resettle internally displaced persons (IDPs) who had been camping at Limuru following Kenya's post-election violence in 2007/8.The IDPs in turn are repaying the cost of the land and on completion each is issued with a title deed. For 230 families, a housing scheme was begun in order to provide proper shelter for the IDPs as well as a scholarship programme for primary and secondary school children. In addition, water pipes and water tanks were installed to provide clean water for the population.

The Educational Initiatives Trust promotes the Informal Sector Business Institute (ISBI) and the Eastland Centre in Nairobi. ISBI's flagship course is the Youth Empowerment Project and a Business Training Course for small-scale traders and entrepreneurs in the jua kali (informal sector). Since its inception 10 years ago, over 5,000 people have been trained in various skills.

Eastlands also doubles up as a cultural centre with after-school programmes that cater for primary and secondary school boys. They are mentored and helped with their schoolwork and given study facilities. Often, the boys may not have the time, space and facilities such as books, lighting, desk and chair to study as they come from poor homes. Parents are also engaged in the education of their children and come for meetings and special sessions organized at the centre. Some receive bursaries from beneficiaries abroad and manage to educate their children through high school, tertiary colleges and even university.

Eastlands Centre also started a soccer academy that will hopefully grow to nurture talent and provide all-round development. In 2009, some boys from the academy were sponsored take part in a soccer trip in Madrid courtesy of Deporte y Desarollo, an NGO in Spain.

The nine years of work was boosted significantly when VOFA, in conjunction with the Strathmore Law School, hosted a preparatory meeting for the United Nations International Year of the Family in January 2014 in Nairobi. Many of those undertaking initiatives on the family shared progress in the conference. Aristotle observed that society and, by extension, politics are natural institutions — and that both are an extension of one fundamental natural institution: the family. It remains for VOFA, Africa and the world to see how to duplicate these projects; then we will truly be able to strengthen the family in Africa.

Boys from the ISBI soccer academy at the Eastlands Centre on their visit to Madrid in 2009

Social development programmes for family well-being in Kenya

Stefanie O. Bitengo, Principal Gender and Social Development Officer, Department of Social Development, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Services, Kenya

Poverty, ignorance and disease have remained Kenya's priority areas of intervention since independence in 1963. As the country marks its fiftieth anniversary, considerable progress has been made in mitigating these challenges. However, chronic poverty incidences remain high and persistent among an estimated 46 per cent of the population. In an increasingly unequal society, access to basic needs such as education, health, clean water, adequate housing and sanitation are still unreachable to the bottom 30 per cent of the population who only have access to 10 per cent of the national income. The main determinants of poverty in Kenya include geographical (rural or urban) location, the gender and education level of the head of household, high unemployment and underemployment.

Kenya, like many African countries, is home to many peoples and nationalities who embrace diverse cultural orientations. Despite these, the family remains a common unit which enjoys recognition and the protection of the state.[1] In the African context, the traditional family referred to a larger kin group beyond the nuclear family of father, mother and children. It embraced an extended network which often served as a source of security and livelihood for its members. The traditional extended African family provided the required social capital: if one of its members had a source of livelihood, then it was assumed that the family's well-being was catered for. With the family structure irreversibly changing from this extended model to more nuclear forms, livelihoods at family level have deteriorated.

The effects of social change and the resulting breakdown in the traditional extended family support network have exposed the family to varied problems, leaving its members vulnerable and in need of social protection and support. As a result, the family now bears the greatest burden of poverty and vulnerability; a situation that calls for multi-pronged and concerted efforts from all stakeholders to realize enhanced family well-being.

Since independence, the Social Development Department within the public sector has been instrumental in coordinating policies, programmes and activities focused on improving family well-being. Interventions targeting family well-being have been numerous, and cut across various government ministries.

Until now, the department has existed under different portfolios. Since 1922, department functions have evolved through a series of colonial and post-independence policy frameworks, sessional papers, national and community development plans, circulars and, more recently, the Constitution of Kenya 2010.

It has made significant strides in the country's social development, transforming from social welfare to community development in the 1950s and leading to the creation of Kenya's first Community Development Ministry in 1954, with functions that included adult education, approved schools, juvenile remand homes, rural betterment schemes, youth sports, music, women's clubs and recreational activities. The overall objective of the department has remained focused on mobilizing and building the capacity of individuals, communities and community groups to attain self-reliance. This objective contributes both directly and indirectly towards family well-being.

Several interventions have been prioritized under social development, including community mobilization and development programmes; social welfare programmes and services to vulnerable populations; gender and women's empowerment, as well as the development of policies aimed at providing overall direction on matters of gender and social development. Social development policies in community development, older persons and persons with disabilities (PWDs) have continued to provide frameworks for Kenya's legal and programmatic interventions on addressing the poverty of the most vulnerable families.

Under the community mobilization and development function, the department has spearheaded a successful self-help movement. It has cumulatively facilitated the mobilization and registration of over 1 million community groups with an estimated membership of over 20 million individuals, participating in socioeconomic activities that include interventions in education, health, agriculture, water and financial services. These interventions are strengthened by the concept that the potential for poverty alleviation at household level lies in the ability of members to participate effectively in development processes and interventions at the community level.

Studies have shown that poor people are often left out of development initiatives either because they are not able to meet requirements for participation, or they lack the confidence and self-esteem to be part of development ventures. This curtails their opportunities to benefit from the development intervention and denies them an opening for building capacity for future participation, thus keeping them in poverty from one generation to the next. Efforts by the department to promote community mobilization and group formation, and build the capacity development of group members, were seen as a way of providing the poor with an opportunity to pool their resources and build the ability

to participate in development processes. Most of those that form groups are from the lower income quintile. Through this intervention, the poorer populations have been able to build infrastructure to access basic needs such as health services, education, water, clothing and so on.

The concept of community mobilization and development, popularly referred to as 'harambee' ('pooling together'), was a slogan adopted in early independence. It has evolved from traditional organizations, mainly formed from neighbourhood associations where poorer members of the community came together to support each other in tilling their land, harvesting or building living units. Through this philosophy, rural communities formed community-level movements that saw the building of schools, dispensaries, water projects, housing units and even the purchase of water tanks. Efforts that helped the family meet its basic needs included raising school fees, meeting hospital bills and managing burial arrangements. In present day Kenya, community-supported schools, water projects and health centres continue to provide basic services to community members with much lower and affordable arrangements than those purely built by government or other interventions, as households are seen to own some form of shareholding. This enables an assurance that poor families can access services and have opportunities to build their own capacity to participate, build confidence and self-esteem, and have a shot at breaking the poverty cycle. Belonging to community groups has helped many families pull out of poverty. Findings from a recent internal evaluation undertaken by the Community Development Division in the department reinforce the role of groups as largely forming to provide support to their members, initiate income-generating activities and basically address matters, such as food security, that contribute to family well-being.

Over the years, recognition of the role of community mobilization and development in helping the poor transit from poverty has guided development support, forming the entry point for government and donor support to communities. Between 1995 and 2005 the department, through support under the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), implemented a community-level programme. This initially started as a community-based nutrition programme, offering skills on basic nutrition to mothers and their families. It then expanded to a community capacity support programme (CCSP) that recognized the ability of communities to identify their needs and come up with strategies to mobilize resources and sustain mechanisms to intervene on their poverty at household level. Through DANIDA, the department facilitated the formation of village-level committees popularly known as Village Development Committees (VDCs). These led the process of participatory community-level appraisals and came up with village community action plans across 13 geographical district administrative units, with at least 12 VDCs in each unit. Through this programme, communities initiated and implemented a wide range of development initiatives that have seen many of their members access services for clean water, irrigation, health and education, and thus improve their livelihoods.

Similar interventions have been undertaken under programmes supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), in which the department played a central role in the mobilization of communities to participate in development. Through IFAD, the formation of Focal Area Development Committees saw community groups overseeing the development of larger area initiatives, leading to access to piped water and irrigation schemes at

The objectives and activities of community groups in Kenya

Objectives

- Promotion of IGAs: 55%
- Food security: 39%
- Employment creation: 4%
- Others: 2%

Activities

- Income generation: 51%
- Support to members: 36%
- Food security: 8%
- Promote savings and credit: 4%
- Others: 1%
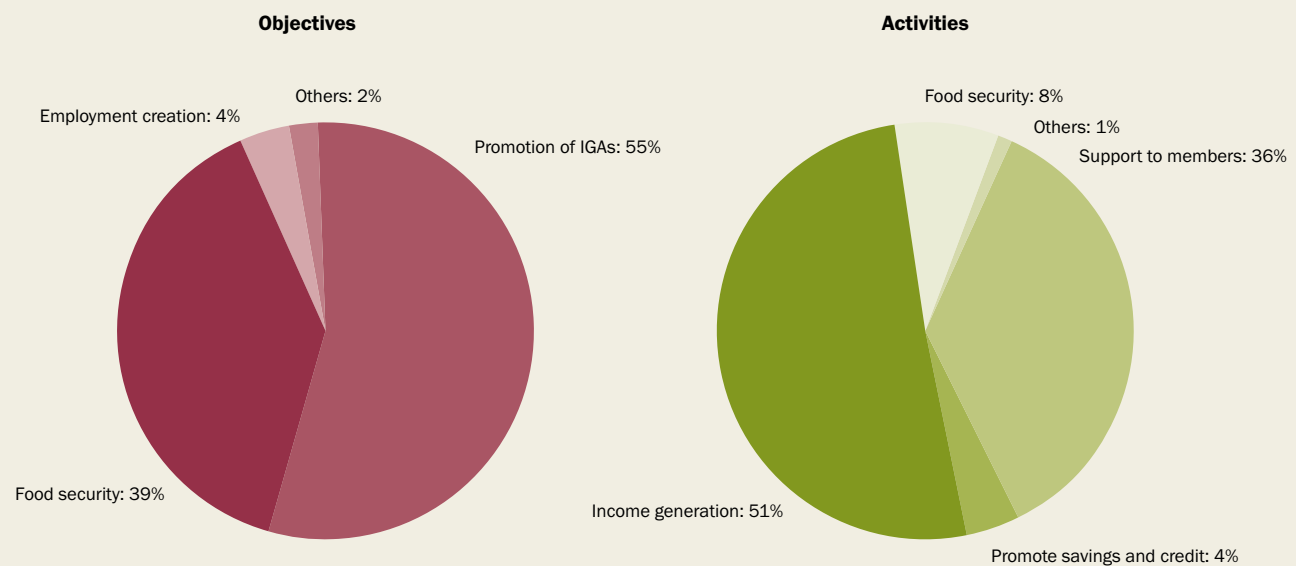
Source: Impact assessment of grants to self-help groups and communities objectives

the household level that were solely under the communities' management. Today, these community groups have been recognized as water service providers to their communities and have successfully enhanced incomes at family level.

The 1980s and 1990s saw the department revolutionize the women's movement, working hand-in-hand with the government of the day to give women a voice and opportunities to participate in and benefit from development initiatives. While this may have been seen as a token gesture, the period did see the rise of women leaders in the country. Hundreds of women's groups were registered, bringing together millions of individual members and providing an opportunity for capacity building for women's leadership, and mobilization of a huge resource base for direct support to poor families. This resource base has seen the rise of strong financial foundations for women-specific programmes. Housing programmes have emerged and land-buying investments and other initiatives have helped put financial power into the hands of women, along with the ability to negotiate in an environment that was largely male-dominated.

This movement culminated in the birth of the present day women's enterprise and youth enterprise funds, which receive a sizeable amount from the exchequer to support populations that have previously been marginalized. Under both the CCSP and the Central Kenya Dry Area Project, strong leadership for women emerged that led to the formation of revolving fund women's groups, some of which now run savings and credit cooperatives. Building the capacity of women in Kenya remains a key strategy for confronting poverty at the family level, and this has been a key area of focus for the department's efforts. Having evolved through programmes that supported women as caregivers at the household level to intervening through women-specific projects that popularized the slogan 'to educate a woman you support a whole family', the department has left footprints in the history of the country as the driver for women's projects focused on uplifting the status of the family.

Outside existing family networks and other social capital systems among the different nationalities and peoples of Africa, formal interventions in the area of social welfare and social protection have often been approached with tokenism. With the breakdown in traditional systems, families and populations already in the poverty bracket are increasingly falling into chronic poverty and vulnerability. Governments across the majority of least developed countries are now embracing other poverty intervention measures within the broader social security spectrum. Cash transfers to the vulnerable have become one of the most common strate-

Julia Charo Kalama

Images: Stefanie O. Bitengo

Julia has been able to improve her house and buy a herd of goats to generate income

Older people in Ganze Sub County, Kilifi County were enrolled in 2009 to the Cash Transfer Programme. Julia Kalama, from Kari village in Bandari, is one of the beneficiaries.

At the time of enrolment, 72-year old-Julia faced many challenges. Not only had her life deteriorated because of poor health, but her homestead was equally in a bad state: her hut was almost collapsing, posing danger to her. In addition, Julia could not afford decent clothing.

After the first payment Julia bought three goats for income generation. She spent some of the money on hospital check-ups to ensure that she remained healthy. She used the rest to purchase a few decent clothes. She also spent money on improving her hut.

Julia now lives in a decent house (the walls are made of mud and sticks while the roof is made of iron sheets). She also engages in business by selling her goats at the market. She supports her grandchild by paying school fees with the money she gets. Now she sells at least five goats a year and maintains 10 in her herd for easy upkeep. It is evident that Julia's living standards have improved through this programme.

gies embraced. The department implements cash transfer programmes for older persons and persons with severe disability, which started in 2005 and 2010 respectively, albeit on a small scale. In the short period they have been in operation, evaluations have shown that these programmes are starting to have a huge impact on addressing poverty and vulnerability at the family level.

Cumulatively, the cash transfers (including transfers to orphans and vulnerable children under the Children Services) reach an estimated 500,000 households living in extreme poverty and vulnerability. Given the poverty status, this remains a small drop when compared to those in need. Kenya, through promulgation of the new constitution (2010), recognized the need for government to increasingly take care of the vulnerable, in a progressive approach towards realization of a universal mechanism. The cash transfers, along with other programmatic interventions, remain critical in confronting poverty at the family level. Earlier evaluations have shown clearly that families' and households' livelihoods are being improved directly and through social investments that have been made possible by the transfers.

The 2009 census identifies the households of PWDs as constituting a high percentage of individuals living in poverty. Although the disability movement in Kenya has grown immensely, moving from a state of 'don't see, don't hear' to embracing affirmative actions towards those that live with disabilities, PWDs still live in extreme poverty while experiencing much discrimination. The department has walked this journey with the country through programmes focused on mobilizing and supporting groups of PWDs. These initiatives led to the development of the Disability Act 2003, which has increasingly pushed for realization of rights for PWDs, and opened space for their participation in mainstream development. It has made provision for institutional mechanisms to enforce implementation and created a national funding mechanism. The disability movement has come a long way since the 1970s, moving from a blind eye to matters of disability to full recognition that disability concerns and interests must be represented at all levels of national development through disability mainstreaming.

Certainly, many challenges abound in the delivery of these services that hamper the effectiveness and realization of enhanced family well-being in Kenya. Many lessons have been learned, and the room for improvement is immense. Nonetheless, the efforts the department has put in place towards confronting poverty at family level remain commendable and form an entry point for mitigating family poverty.

Rukanga Water and Sanitation Company

The journey in search of water began 20 years ago for the Rukanga Water and Sanitation Company (RuWaSCo). Their poor quality of life necessitated a solution: women would walk 8 kilometres every day for water and development activities took a back seat; farming was for sustenance, and with livestock also using the river, the spread of diseases was unchecked and injuries on the banks were all too common.

Community members formed a self-help group in 1989: the Rukanga water project. The initial registration fee was Ksh 50 and the starting capital share was Ksh 1,000 per household. Twenty years later, IFAD began to engage with and support the community. Share capital contribution increased to Ksh 2,500. The community contribution was 25 per cent of the project, 5 per cent of which was cash and 20 per cent labour — trenching the 23 kilometres of main line and 60 kilometres of branches that made up the 83-kilometre distribution network.

The project was officially opened in March 2005. "We were overjoyed to see the first signs of water in our homes," recalled RuWaSCo member Mrs Githure.

Without the daily trek for water, the women now have more time for entrepreneurship activities. There is a sense of dignity as the women no longer have to bathe on river banks while fetching water. Incidents of water borne diseases have been reduced; local artisans have been trained and employed, while attendants serve at communal water points to those without direct access to water in their homes.

Members envision that all households, including non-members, will be able to access water directly. The Rukanga water committee is testament to the realization of a dream.

Members of the RuWaSco outside their offices, and the water treatment unit built through IFAD

Images: Republic of Kenya, BFFS, IFAD, 2011

Social policy for families

Rosario Robles, Secretary of Social Development, SEDESOL, Mexico

María Antonia López López, from the municipality of Las Margaritas in Chiapas, died while giving birth to her sixth child. She was a single mother and had few resources to sustain her children, to the point that she had no money to buy shoes for any of the family members. Her house lacked basic services such as piped water, electricity or sewage. She left her children Leticia, who is 13 years old; Magdaleno, 10 years old; Elizania, nine years old; Armin, six years old; Guadalupe, two years old; and her newborn baby. Luckily, they all have their grandmother, Josefina López Gómez, and they also have the benefit of the Life Insurance for Women Heads of Household which was introduced at the beginning of President Enrique Peña Nieto's administration. Thanks to the insurance, Josefina receives monetary support every month for each of the children, to enable them to keep attending school.

Life Insurance for Women Heads of Household is just one of the programmes that form part of a new generation of social policy. This policy has families and communities as its pillar and adopts a life cycle vision to address families and their members at different stages, from early childhood to late adulthood. The social policy goal is to ensure effective social rights for everyone, such as the right to food, the right to health, the right to education and the right to decent dwelling. The idea is to build a basic level of welfare for the whole population, starting with the extreme poor.

The most recent poverty figures for Mexico (2012) report 53.3 million multidimensional poor people, 45.5 per cent of the population. The poor are defined as those with at least one out of six social deprivations and income below approximately US$6 a day per person in urban areas or US$4 a day per person in rural areas. Among the poor, 11.5 million are considered to be extreme poor, which means that their income is below US$3 a day per person in urban areas and US$2 a day per person in rural areas, and they have three or more out of the six social deprivations. The six social deprivations of the official multidimensional poverty measure in Mexico are: education, access to health services, social security, dwelling materials and space, dwelling basic services and access to food.

The social deprivation that has the highest incidence is social security, with 61.2 per cent of the population lacking

Life Insurance for Women Heads of Household supports families like Josefina López Gómez and her six grandchildren, whose mother died in 2013

this in 2012. Therefore, it is really important to use policies to overcome this situation. Life Insurance for Women Heads of Household is one of those policies, but other programmes are also very important to families, such as the universal pension for later adults, Oportunidades benefits and the coordinated actions of the National Crusade Against Hunger.

The famous conditional cash transfer programme Oportunidades has been replicated all over the world. The programme started in Mexico in 1997 under the name Progresa and since then millions of families have transformed their lives. One of those cases is the family of Rigoberto Chavira Quintero from San Luis Potosí. Rigoberto in now a high school professor and a PhD candidate, but his childhood years were hard. Raised in a peasant family in a poor region, Rigoberto's only chance to study was with Oportunidades support. Encouraged by his parents, he was able to finish high school and then take a degree in mathematics, followed by a masters degree. He is currently studying for a doctorate degree.

In order the get the cash transfer, beneficiaries of Oportunidades have to attend school regularly and go to the clinic for periodical medical supervision, and their parents must attend lectures and workshops about health self-care. There is no condition on how they spend the money, but families usually spend it on food and school supplies, although sometimes it is also spent on things like household goods or dwelling repairs.

As a human development programme, Oportunidades has been an effective way to increase poor people's capabilities and help them aspire to better futures, but it has not been enough to decrease the poverty figures. That is why Oportunidades is being redesigned, keeping the original scheme but also including a link with productive life. That

way, when young people graduate from Oportunidades it is easy for them to continue their education, find a job and fulfil their dreams, just as Rigoberto did.

One more family-centred programme is the provision of childcare facilities for working mothers and single fathers. More than 9,000 childcare facilities support working mothers like Cinthia Nieto Marín, who has a one-year-old baby girl but, like her husband, needs to work. Without the programme Cinthia would probably have to quit her job to take care of the baby, a luxury that poor people can hardly afford.

While these programmes benefit mostly children and their parents, it is important not to leave the other end of the life cycle unprotected. That is why there is a universal non-contributory pension for people of 65 years and older who do not have another form of pension. The programme, called +65, helps later adults like Doña María del Socorro Cáceres y Gómez, who is 70 years old, and her mother Doña Aidé María Gómez y Ocampo who will be 107 this year. They live in Merida City, in the southern state of Yucatán. With the money from +65 María del Socorro buys food and medicines, as well as nappies for her mother.

With +65, later adults without a contributory pension have not only considerably increased their income. They have also been empowered since they are no longer seen as a burden for their families and they feel protected, cared for and happier, just like María del Socorro and her mother. As a matter of fact, +65 is currently one of the social programmes with the biggest budget and the projection is that, as new beneficiaries are incorporated, its budget will be even higher in the coming years.

This new generation of social policy is prioritizing resources to the poorest with the objective of making social rights

Image: SEDESOL

Oportunidades support enabled Rigoberto Chavira Quintero to go to university: he is now a high school professor and a PhD candidate

Social Development Minister Rosario Robles Berlanga with Doña María del Socorro Cáceres y Gómez, a beneficiary of the +65 programme

Women working at one of the National Crusade Against Hunger community kitchens

achievable for everyone. The National Crusade Against Hunger is probably the best example of how this works, since it is focused on the population that suffers hunger with the aim of guaranteeing their right to food. For the crusade, hunger is defined as a situation that faces the extreme poor as explained before but, in addition, access to food is one of the social deprivations they suffer. In 2012 the population with these characteristics added up 7.01 million people distributed all over the country.

The National Crusade Against Hunger's approach is holistic and puts the family at the centre. For example, with the scheme SIN-HAMBRE 290, thousands of families have a card to buy basic foods in Diconsa stores. On the other hand, Liconsa distributes fortified milk among families with scarce resources to improve their nutrition. Food supplements are also distributed to pregnant women, school breakfasts for children and food supplies for seniors.

However, the National Crusade Against Hunger does not stop at providing assistance. It has a productive branch where the family also plays an important role. For example, it encourages backyard animals for home consumption, the creation of kitchen gardens and community kitchens. With these, families have access to food they grow themselves and their vulnerability to food supply and price volatility is reduced.

Furthermore, the crusade also provides a series of programmes to improve families' income through training, technology innovation, infrastructure and equipment, among others. One of the most important of these programmes is called Productive Options. It finances the entrepreneurial ideas and projects of poor families that wish to start a business. Another programme to support families' income is the Temporal Employment Programme, with which people with seasonal jobs can work temporarily in projects of common benefit.

In addition to the improvement of education, health, access to food, employment and income, there are programmes to improve dwellings — for example, with respect to materials in floors, walls and roofs, or expanding the provision of basic services such as electricity or piped water. In this way, the crusade also takes into account actions to improve the family's vital space and its community. As a matter of fact, social participation is one of the greatest pillars of the crusade and of the social policy in general. Social participation has been encouraged through thousands of community commitees, as well as through NGOs. It is through social participation mechanisms that communities prioritize their needs and channel their demands to local and federal governments. In other words, we are putting the communities in the driver's seat in their development process and, at the same time, we are reconstructing the social fabric.

Overall, Mexico has a social policy with a life cycle perspective, and the Government's programmes and strategies are targeted to provide a holistic approach to the family. There is an institutional framework that cares for all family members in their different life stages. In addition to the various programmes, there are institutions that promote actions for the youth, the disabled and later adults.

We are pushing for policies and reforms to move Mexico and its families, closing inequality gaps, promoting inclusive development and reconstructing the social fabric. The task is immense, but the effort is worthwhile to create a system of social policies and programmes that allow poor families to have a basic level of welfare.

Māori whānau well-being: addressing child and family poverty

Tracey McIntosh, PhD (Tūhoe), Associate Professor in Sociology, University of Auckland; and Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, Indigenous Centre of Research Excellence, New Zealand

Māori (indigenous people of New Zealand) whānau are diverse and dynamic and are the central unit of Māori life. While 'whānau' is usually translated simply as 'family' or 'extended family', it is important to recognize that the term has multiple dimensions. Within both traditional and contemporary contexts it is seen as being based on whakapapa (foundations based on descent and kinship). Whakapapa identifies, acknowledges and reinforces relationships and informs the way that Māori engage and respond to each other. Whānau sits within the structures of hapū (clan, sub-tribe) and iwi (tribe), and each has the potential to support individuals and the collective with a reach that can span generations.

It has been noted that a narrow appreciation of family composition renders invisible the diversity of whānau structure and the richness and depth of family practices and strategies to cope with contemporary challenges. A recent New Zealand Families Commission report indicates that, like other New Zealand families, Māori whānau are changing in response to

shifts in demographic, social and economic patterns. Whānau composition includes two-parent families, single-parent families, adult-only families and multigenerational families. Increasingly, Māori live in urban centres outside of their traditional tribal area and some Māori whānau live overseas, particularly in Australia. Statistics New Zealand data shows that 85 per cent of Māori live in statistically defined urban areas, though many of these areas have relatively small populations. This means that the Māori urban experience can be diverse with more Māori likely to live in minor urban areas (rather than large cities) than the national distribution. They are less likely to live in main urban areas where essential services and jobs are concentrated. The diasporic nature of contemporary Māori experience shapes the way that whānau is lived in contemporary New Zealand.

The 2012 Children's Commissioner's Expert Advisory Group on Solutions to Child Poverty report clearly indicates that the children and families living in poverty in New Zealand come from a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The report notes that as many as 25 per cent of New Zealand children (around 270,000) are currently living in poverty. However, it also notes that the child poverty rates of Māori (and children of Pacific Island descent) are approximately double that of white New Zealand children, and that Māori are much more likely to experience the effects of severe poverty and have a greater risk of this poverty enduring across their life course. While child and family poverty is not simply a Māori issue in New Zealand, if it is to be reduced the solutions will need to work for Māori.

In thinking about the contemporary experience of Māori whānau, and particularly the interface with poverty, it is important to recognize the impact of colonization. There is a tendency to think that the alienation of land has largely been experienced as a spiritual loss by Māori because indigenous peoples are often represented as having a heightened attachment to the land. While land and place play an integral part in Māori histories, cultural narratives and identity, they have also had a vital economic role. Thus, the alienation of land and resources is not only the loss of a cultural and spiritual base, but also the loss of an economic base. While there is an extensive body of scholarly literature in this area, this is reinforced in a recent research report published by the Families Commission documenting the experiences of Māori whānau living in financial hardship. It notes that any analysis of the financial and material deprivation of whānau

New Zealand children in poverty

75%

270,000 children
25% of population
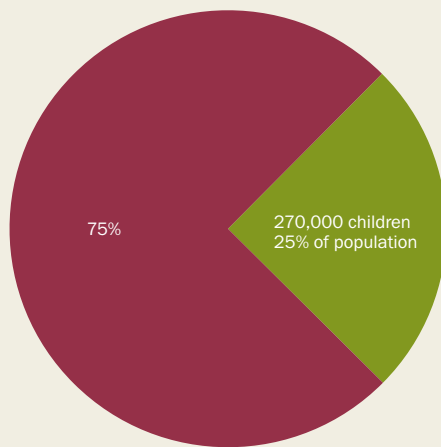
■ Children not living in poverty

■ Children living in a household which receives less than 60 per cent of the median disposable household income (after housing costs)

Source: Daniel Patrick, Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga

Māori children develop within whānau and community settings and it is important that any policy aimed at helping Māori recognizes this dynamic

today is incomplete without understanding the role played by the colonial government in relation to the early growth of Māori economic development and the impact of its loss through confiscation and war. It is critical to recognize that the influence of colonization is not just a historical one. Its impact has been far-reaching and it continues to shape and inform attitudes towards Māori. The effects of ongoing racism and discrimination have been demonstrated and the negative effects of colonialism have produced the unequal distribution of social, political, environmental and economic resources in New Zealand.

The Children's Commissioner's report recognizes that the Māori child develops within whānau and community settings and that it is important to situate the child in these larger contexts. The report also states that it remains useful to consider the experience of poverty from the perspective of the Māori child, to ensure that all policy formations are attentive to the impact that any policy may have on children. Policy that intends to produce positive outcomes for Māori must be mindful of whānau dynamics and the strengths and vulnerabilities that may be found there.

The way that Māori children experience poverty is multifaceted and the outcomes of growing up in conditions of deprivation are varied. However, for too many children their health, education and life-path outcomes are likely to be poorer than for other children. Early engagement with the criminal justice system, for example, maps onto poverty statistics. Many Māori children, growing up in considerable material hardship, are able to draw on significant support from whānau, hapū, iwi and others that mitigate the effects of poverty and they are well supported to go on to lead posi-

tive, contributing lives. For others, however, child poverty translates into poor educational performance, high offending rates, severe and ongoing health problems, low income and high state dependency rates. Moreover, the intergenerational transfer of social inequalities needs to be recognized. Poor children largely grow up to be poor adults and so poverty has significant intergenerational aspects. Māori children are disproportionally more likely to be exposed to the impacts and effects of poverty than the average New Zealand child. They are more likely to grow up in households in receipt of state benefits or with low incomes than the average New Zealand child; they are less likely to achieve well in the compulsory education sector and are less likely to go on to university study than other children in New Zealand. It is clear that poverty severely limits the opportunities and aspirations of children. For Māori children the effects of poverty lead to their marginalization from mainstream New Zealand society, but may also limit their opportunities to fully participate in their whānau, hapū and iwi.

In a land of abundance good health should be the birthright of every child in New Zealand. Children growing up in poverty, particularly in the early years of childhood, increase the risk of ongoing health problems throughout their lives. A Māori child growing up in poverty in New Zealand has two to three times poorer health than non-Māori, non-Pacific Island children. Access to warm, stable, healthy homes is an important determinant of good health. The impact of poor housing has been well documented in New Zealand and it is clear that it causes significant social, health and economic costs that damage life opportunities. A National Health Committee report shows that children growing up in low-income fami-

Incorporating Māori dimensions in the curriculum has led to modest achievement gains for Māori children, but more must be done to move beyond incremental change towards positive transformation

lies and beneficiary families as well as children of prisoners have worse health outcomes than other children. The 2013 Child Poverty Monitor notes that Māori children are also proportionally more exposed to the impacts of poverty, as evidenced by rates of admissions to hospital for infectious and non-infectious diseases often associated with poverty. Data on admissions for infectious diseases show significantly higher rates for Māori than non-Māori for pertussis, meningococcal disease, acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease, and serious skin infections.

To improve well-being and health outcomes for Māori, whānau-centred initiatives have been introduced. These whānau ora (well and healthy) approaches champion an integrated delivery of services and resources that focus on collective well-being outcomes rather than solely focusing on the individual. This whole-of-family approach aligns well with Māori values and will hopefully deliver positive outcomes for Māori whānau and achieve a significant reduction of whānau poverty. It is also significant that many of these initiatives are designed, implemented and delivered by Māori for Māori.

It is well known that education is integral to the development of human potential. New Zealand produces high educational outcomes for some while at the same time delivering low educational achievement for others. Māori educational achievement needs to be understood within the context of this high quality, low equity education system. Māori educationalists have noted the contribution that Māori communities have made to education in New Zealand. The development of Māori-language immersion preschool, primary, secondary and tertiary institutions has led to increased Māori participation at all educational levels. However, most Māori children attend mainstream English-medium schools and, while the last 40 years have seen a significant shift in attitudes towards incorporating Māori dimensions into the curriculum, the achievement gains for Māori children have been modest. Current research and policy initiatives indicate that increased levels of achievement for Māori children include attending to school and community leadership, teacher quality, whānau engagement, a responsive and accessible curriculum, the guidance of Māori children onto academic pathways that encourage higher education, and prioritizing student retention. Leadership needs to go beyond the school gates and demonstrate a commitment to Māori communities to fully address inequities in Māori student achievement. A recognition that change has occurred gives reason for optimism in the future, but there is much that needs to be done to move beyond incremental change towards positive transformative change. Quality early childhood education through to tertiary-level participation is key to wealth creation in the broadest sense by creating the conditions for Māori to lead rich productive individual and collective lives.

Paid employment is clearly identified as one of the most important pathways out of poverty. While paid employment generates income, it also allows higher levels of social engagement and life satisfaction. For Māori, work that is secure, sustainable and available greatly contributes to individual and collective well-being. Māori make up a relatively young and fast-growing share of the New Zealand working-age population. Department of Labour data shows that Māori have weaker labour market outcomes, on average, than the broader population. In an ageing population the younger age profile of Māori should be seen as an asset, yet they have been

Positive social change will help to combat poverty and enable Māori whānau to flourish

particularly affected by the global financial crisis. Some of the reasons that account for this are that Māori on the whole have lower educational attainment, are over-represented in lower-skilled industries and occupations, and are more vulnerable in economic downturn.

Early labour market participation (as youth) is seen as key to alleviating poverty and reducing state dependency. The significance of the demographic importance of Māori needs to be underscored. Attention needs to be paid to supporting young Māori as they transition from school to further education, training or work. Ensuring that there is good training in place (and jobs to go into) is important. Training allowances and incentives for employers to take on youth is important. There has been some investment in trade training through modern apprenticeship schemes and these could be much further developed. Again, recognition of the gains that can be made by investing in young Māori is critical. Sustainable solutions will benefit the nation.

The majority of Māori contribute strongly to their whānau and communities even under considerable constraints. A small but over-represented sector of Māori has an early and ongoing interface with the criminal justice system. While the majority of people living in poverty live law-abiding lives, poverty does create the conditions that are conducive to becoming involved with criminality. As already noted, poverty statistics too often map onto crime statistics. The alleviation of poverty would go some way in reducing criminal offending and reducing high incarceration rates in New Zealand. The impact of incarceration is not purely limited to the individual that is imprisoned. There is a negative impact of imprisonment on families and communities,

and especially on children. The Social Sector Trials (SST) in New Zealand are a form of justice reinvestment where communities, the ministries of Education, Health, Justice and Social Development and the New Zealand Police work together to change the way that social services are delivered and resourced, and to allow communities to lead decision-making. The SSTs are in communities with elevated levels of deprivation and the early indications are that these initiatives have empowered communities and produced positive outcomes in youth crime reduction, among other things.

One of the key characteristics of New Zealand demography is the relatively youthful Māori profile. There is considerable opportunity here. An investment in young Māori children means that whānau, communities and the nation as a whole will reap the demographic dividends. Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith, in a recent discussion on inequality in New Zealand, asserts that the rising generations of Māori (and Pacific) youth provide an opportunity to change the future positively if their access to that future is implemented now. She argues that this rising generation will form a significant part of the decision-making population. Their aspirations, values and decisions will influence the future. She calls this the gift of hospitality: that these young people will serve. She cautions, however, that how well they serve depends on how well prepared and supported they are now.

Confronting whānau poverty is a serious challenge, but it is not beyond our capabilities. Poverty is not a natural condition, it is a social condition. With consciousness, appropriate resourcing and will — including political will — we can make positive social change that will enable Māori whānau and other families to flourish in New Zealand.

Family-focused social protection in Indonesia: a journey to address children's vulnerability

Santi Kusumaningrum, Co-Director, Center on Child Protection, University of Indonesia

Indonesia is the fourth largest country in the world by population, with vast cultural diversity, and the sixteenth largest by landmass. It is also the home of approximately 250 million people, a third of whom are children. According to the 2010 census, that amounts to more than 82.5 million individuals. Administratively, Indonesia is an archipelago structured in 34 provinces, close to 500 districts and municipalities, and around 70,000 villages. Needless to say, the country faces significant geographical challenges.

After reaching its independence in 1945, Indonesia transitioned into democracy in 1998 and has been institutionalizing stronger and more open government ever since, including implementing decentralization. Identified as one of the emerging Asian giants, Indonesia had been successful in maintaining its stable economic growth rate at an average of 6 per cent per year, and has been categorized as a lower-middle income country. It has survived some global and regional financial crises as well as having to manage frequent medium to large-scale natural disasters. Indonesia is also leading some of the most notable global agenda and human rights platforms. The most recent one is co-chairing the high-level panel that is shaping the post-Millennium Development Goal global agenda. In less than 20 years, for those who believe in the prediction, Indonesia will also enjoy what demographers call a 'demographic window'. This is a 30-40 year period in which the dependency ratio is at its lowest, th e fertility rate declines, and the productive-age population dominates. Such a window can reportedly give countries the benefit of increased savings and human capital investment.

Despite all those important accomplishments and leads, poverty is lurking as one of Indonesia's most critical challenges. The impact of poverty might steer the whole country away from achieving the desired development goals. It also potentially prevents Indonesia from reaping the fruit of the said demographic bonus. Around 12 per cent of the population still live on or below the national poverty rate, while nearly half the population live on less than US$2 a day — a group considered by the World Bank to be at high risk of falling into poverty. The 2011 Social Protection Program Data identifies more than 96 million individuals, almost 25 million of whom are children,

Indonesia's social assistance programmes target families and individuals, and are often conditional on child well-being

Poverty rates based on the national poverty level in Indonesia (per cent)

- Poverty rate children rural area
- Poverty rate all children
- Poverty rate overall population
- Poverty rate children urban area
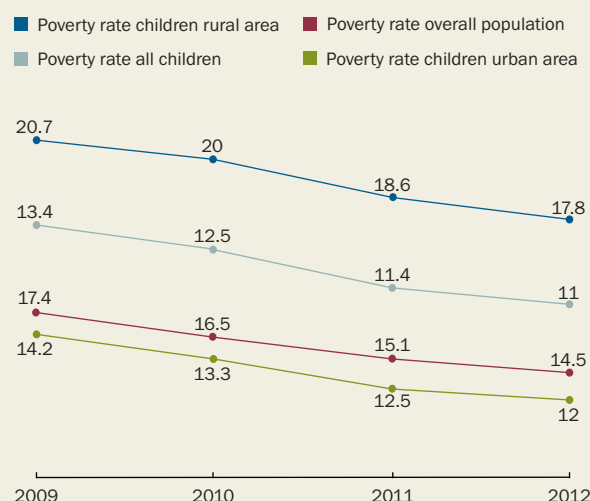
Source: SMERU-UNICEF, 2013

living in the bottom 30 per cent of households in Indonesia. Based on analysis by SMERU and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 2013, children's poverty rate in Indonesia is higher than that of the overall population. The gap is even wider when children's poverty rate in rural areas is compared with that in urban areas.

Traditionally, it is not common to count child poverty, based on the assumption that children do not have any income. However, work around poverty analysis has acknowledged that children are not immune to poverty. Living in poverty or coming from a poor family puts children at greater risk. It impedes families' and children's ability to meet basic necessities of food, nutrition and shelter, and it hinders them from accessing basic health, education and social services. Children affected by poverty also tend to live in overcrowded arrangements. The 2012 Indonesia Socioeconomic Survey shows that stunting, wasting and underweight cases are predominantly experienced by children from households in the lowest quintile. Birth certificate ownership is lowest among children in the poorest families and the likelihood of children working is higher in poor households. Without a birth certificate, it is reportedly more difficult for children to access schools in some areas, as well as making it more likely that children will be married. Early marriage is also more prevalent in the lowest quintile, consequently generating poor child-headed households.

In addition to poverty, children experience other forms of vulnerability. Publications produced in and/or about Indonesia tell us that poverty also increases the risk of children experiencing abuse, violence and exploitation. Problems such as these are not straightforward because, although intuitively recognizable, statistically identifying such a situation is much more complex and relevant big data is therefore scarce. At the same time, the aforementioned situation of lack of access to protection, basic needs and services might deter

children's ability to reach their optimum development and, in the end, to escape poverty in the future as adults.

Is Indonesia taking actions to address the problem? Yes. It is important to highlight that the Government has been successful in tackling poverty. This has resulted in the decline of the overall poverty trend, but the reduction continues to slow down. As pointed out in the SMERU report, the reduction of child poverty also declined by 1.06 percentage points between 2009 and 2012. A paper produced by the Center on Child Protection (Pusat Kajian Perlindungan Anak or PUSKAPA) and Save the Children in 2012 states that the same trend is also happening in health indicators, where the reduction of the infant and under-five mortality rate has been declining since 1997. Indonesia is also facing widening inequality (an increasing Gini ratio), disparity between provinces and areas, and a growing number of people living slightly above the poverty line. The overall situation is that Indonesia is facing what are called the three dimensions of poverty: a large number of poor people as well as those who are vulnerable of becoming poor, including children; regional disparities; and non-monetary vulnerability that is often influenced by the weaker capabilities of poor families.

For over a decade, Indonesia has initiated different social assistance programmes and approaches to alleviate poverty for different categories of target groups. These programmes target families and individuals, and some have specific child well-being eligibility and conditionality.

Considering the large number of people living in poverty in Indonesia, even when all of those programmes are combined, there is still a huge gap in terms of the number of people being reached. The total spending for social assistance in 2011 was approximately US$2.75 billion, and more as well as better-targeted investment is still needed. In addition, being initiated by different sectors has caused fragmentation and poor coordination in the implementation.

Existing social assistance programmes in Indonesia

Programme	Target group	Benefit
Unconditional Cash Transfers (BLT)	Poor and near poor households	IDR100,000/month
Rice for the Poor (RASKIN)	Poor and near poor households	15 kg rice/month (approx IDR1.1 million per year)
Health Assistance (JAMKESMAS)	Poor and near poor households	Unlimited subject to conditions
Scholarships for the Poor (BSM)	Students living in poverty	IDR360,000-1.2 million (based on level of school)
Conditional Cash Transfer (PKH)	Very poor households	IDR1.3 million per year
Social Assistance for Vulnerable Children (PKSA)	Neglected under-fives, neglected children, street children, children in contact with the law, children with disability, children in need of special protection	IDR1.3-1.5 million per year
Social Assistance for People with Disabilities (JSPACA)	Severely disabled adults	IDR3.6 million per year
Social Assistance for Vulnerable Elderly (JSLU)	Vulnerable elderly	IDR3.6 million per year

Source: Indonesia's Ministry of National Development Planning, 2012

State budget expenditure on social assistance programmes in 2011

Categories	2011 Annual Expenditure (IDR)	Per cent
Rice for the Poor (RASKIN)	15,267,000,000,000	56.43
Health Assistance (JAMKESMAS)	5,100,000,000,000	18.85
Scholarship for the Poor (BSM)	3,900,000,000,000	14.42
Conditional Cash Transfer (PKH)	1,610,000,000,000	5.95
Disaster Assistance & Relief	429,040,000,000	1.59
Other Social Assistance (for disability JSPACA, for vulnerable elderly JSPLU)	358,890,800,000	1.33
Social Assistance for Vulnerable Children (PKSA)	287,127,300,000	1.06
Assistance for Elderly	101,114,400,000	0.37
TOTAL Social Assistance	**27,053,172,500,000**	**100**
Share to State Budget	**1,320,751,300,000,000**	**2.05**
Share to GDP	**7,226,900,000,000,000**	**0.37**

Source: Indonesia's Ministry of National Development Planning, 2012

Impact is varied, but the World Bank 2012 report shows family-based programmes conditional on the family's participation in education and health-care services such as Conditional Cash Transfer (PKH) to have more positive impacts on children's well-being outcomes. Learning from different programme evaluations, Indonesia is now moving towards an integrated social protection system to address this very situation. The system aims to work comprehensively to assist families living in poverty in meeting their basic survival needs, to help them overcome and get out of poverty, and to protect the vulnerable ones from falling into poverty. Social insurance and safety nets will also be provided to help people manage different shocks throughout their life cycle.

The integration starts with a massive effort to create a unified database, which will be utilized by more than one programme to ensure comprehensive targeting of families in need. Recently, the Government launched Social Protection Cards for families living in the bottom 25 per cent, with a plan to roll this out further to the bottom 40 per cent in the next phase. The card guarantees all members of the household who have it to be able to access health insurance, scholarships for students and a rice subsidy. Soon it will cover even more programmes and interventions.

Indonesia is on the right track and is moving in the right direction. Greater attention is currently given to assistance conditional on the family's involvement in child well-being outlets. Programmes like PKH have proven to increase prenatal and postnatal health outcomes as well as children's chances of staying in school. PKH intervention is currently being strengthened by adding a specific component to address stunting more seriously. It looks at models to improve the linkage between the nutrition supply side with the demand side who are PKH participants in select areas. Family development sessions are also being included in the programme modules. If and when they are confirmed to have a positive impact, such models will be scaled up to wider ranges.

Is Indonesia doing enough? There is room for improvement. Addressing child poverty and vulnerability is not only imperative for human rights compliance, but also economically sensible. Investing in children's well-being will result in the better quality of human resources and therefore a stronger and bigger economy. The complexity and urgency of the persisting problems call for the following assertions to be considered by everyone involved, be it the Government, private sector, civil society or development partners.

Firstly, building people's capabilities to prevent and manage shocks in every stage of life (birth, school, work, family care, old age) must continue to be situated in a family-based approach, including preventing children from being separated from their families due to poverty. Children belong in families and are entitled to live and thrive in an environment that can protect them from harm and provide them with access to reach their full potential. The preamble of the Convention on the Rights of the Child ratified by Indonesia in 1996 puts an emphasis on this. It stipulates that every child should grow up in a family environment. Family, as the natural environment for the growth and well-being of children, should therefore be afforded the necessary assistance so it can fully assume those responsibilities.

Family is the best care and protection every child should enjoy. However, certain situations separate children from their families. It can be poverty, a family abuse situation, or crisis and emergencies. The 2007 study conducted by Save the Children estimated that more than half a million children spend most of their childhood in childcare institutions. Only

A family-based approach is essential in building people's capabilities to support well-being in every stage of life, from birth to old age

10 per cent of them are orphans who have lost both parents. Parental death is not the main factor for the placement of children in the institutions; rather, it is so that the child can access education — or to put it differently, poverty. On the other hand, a growing number of scientific studies produce evidence that children who stay in a family environment have better survival and development outcomes than those who are deprived of one. As cited from a 2012 article in the Lancet, "a caring and protective family, immediate and extended, is central to effective child protection."

Strategies are needed, whenever appropriate, to prevent children from bearing that burden of poverty. Initiatives towards an integrated social protection system should aim to provide assistance to families and communities that will enable them to keep children in their families and enable families to assume their responsibilities for the protection and well-being of children. This requires increased resources and financial incentives to prevent children from being sent to institutions, through economic strengthening and livelihood support for parents and families. Moreover, the strategy also needs to anticipate that some children are living in or facing exceptionally difficult conditions within their own families, and therefore are entitled to special protection.

Secondly, poverty exposes children to risks of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, and experiencing those reduces their capacity to overcome and escape poverty in the future. People would agree that children's vulnerability goes beyond monetary poverty. It includes the dynamic interplay between that and other risk factors in every stage of life. However, this concern, although understood, is still largely missing from poverty alleviation approaches. Not to put the blame on others, we have to admit that child protection and community well-being often works outside of this develop-

ment arena. Existing social protection strategies have yet to include child protection concerns as issues to be addressed, including the need to recognize other dimensions of poverty which lead to family separation and/or the institutionalization of children. At the same time, very few child protection programmes are intentionally designed to address poverty.

Social protection systems need to comprehensively aim to help the most vulnerable children and their families to counter these non-monetary risks. Programmes should cover a short-term safety net for basic needs in times of crisis; children's survival, which includes food, nutrition, shelter and health care; children's developmental needs, which include education and psychosocial support; and children's protection, which includes access to birth registration and a legal identity in the form of a birth certificate, and protection from as well as a reporting mechanism for abuse and violence.

Thirdly, an integrated approach is needed. However, an integrated approach requires integrated targeting which might leave specific groups of children in need of specific interventions un-captured. From the same Lancet article, it is recognized that there are children in the most dire straits who live outside of family care or settings. These children may be found living on the streets or in institutions, trafficked, or exploited for their labour. Due to the nature of their environment and existence, they are missing from the national poverty data and therefore absent from any programme-targeting. It is also important to note that even for children living in 'normal' family situations, national poverty data tend to be limited in informing programmes and policies about more specific children's vulnerabilities such as care situations, experience of abuse and disability.

Social protection systems need to adopt new and improved ways to better identify and target vulnerable children and families. Development and usage of non-traditional household-based enumeration, such as the sentinel surveillance traditionally used in HIV/AIDS interventions, should be considered to be adapted further for the needs of enumerating out-of-family-care children.

Last but not least, invest where it counts. Alleviation of poverty and inequality requires significant resources. The previously mentioned PUSKAPA and Save the Children paper highlights that Indonesia's current budget allocation and government spending for social assistance programmes is much lower compared to other countries with similar characteristics like the Philippines, Viet Nam, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and India. It shows that when the Government allocated 2.05 per cent of the state budget for social assistance programmes in 2011, the allocation for fuel subsidy was almost 13 per cent — a subsidy regime believed by many to be regressive. Moreover, raising demand from the family side should go hand-in-hand with the improvement of the supply side, namely infrastructure. Social assistance programmes' budget needs should not conflict with infrastructure programmes, and Indonesia simply needs to invest more to be able to see bigger and faster impact. All of these are also happening within a context of decentralized service delivery. There cannot be a better time to make sufficient investment to ensure that adequate services are available locally.

Ethical Family Income: ongoing support for the most vulnerable families

Ms Luz Granier Bulnes, Vice Minister of Social Services, Ministry of Social Development, Chile

O**f all the social phenomena affecting the quality of life and the well-being of the population, poverty is one of the most important. It is a complex phenomenon which means that all families living in poverty face many shortages and find it extremely difficult to meet basic needs for items such as food, clothing, housing, education and health care. In addition, being poor is associated with the existence of other negative phenomena also affecting quality of life, such as inequality and lack of opportunity.**

One of the main goals of the Government of President Sebastián Piñera is to combat poverty, eliminate extreme poverty and create more social mobility in Chile. For this, it is essential to create a society in which everyone can enjoy minimum conditions for meeting basic needs and have an opportunity to overcome social and economic dependency.

The creation two years ago of the Ministry of Social Development, together with its main programme, the Ethical Family Income, plays a leading role in this work, focusing on the family as the central nucleus for poverty eradication and, in particular, recognizing the crucial role played by women in this regard. This social policy is built on the bedrock of people's freedom and accountability. It is the people, and not the state, who must reach their own decisions and choose how to move forward; people are the leading players confronting this great challenge.

The Ethical Family Income is therefore a partnership between families and the state to enable vulnerable people and families, by their own efforts and commitment, to overcome their situation of extreme poverty. It is an innovative policy designed to empower families to take control of their lives and to enhance the role of women and employment.

This programme promotes access to better living conditions. Through a system of comprehensive and ongoing support and personalized work with the most vulnerable families and people, the Ethical Family Income tries to promote family development, self-sufficiency and insertion in the world of work. This support includes the provision of bonuses to reward achievements and performance of duties associated with family goals, in the areas of health, education and employment. As a result, families can emerge from their situation of poverty in a dignified and sustainable manner. Today, over 30,000 families are participating in this programme.

The Ethical Family Income is a combination of monetary payments, skills building and mentoring. This dual approach relieves the most immediate effects of poverty, not only by providing monetary payments but also by addressing the underlying causes in a more structured manner. In doing so, it enables members of the household to join the labour market and thus increase the family income.

Plan of intervention

The intervention model has three levels:
- the Key Programme, which follows families while they are participating in the programme
- the Social Support Programme
- the Labour Support Programme.

The Key Programme consists of an individual plan for each family, based on the diagnosis of its initial situation and defining the work strategy, support and linkage with networks and programmes that can help in the present situation. This survey is conducted by an official from the Ministry of Social Development, who identifies the families' resources and capacities and draws up an intervention strat-

President Sebastián Piñera celebrates with family number 3,500 participating in the Ethical Family Income programme

egy or overall plan of action. The progress of the families participating in the Ethical Family Income is then studied and the final results are evaluated.

The Social Support Programme provides mentoring and professional counselling to persons participating in the Ethical Family Income. Its aim is to strengthen and develop resources and capacities that enable people to make better use of opportunities, and thus to improve the quality of life. For example, needs are identified and targets set to facilitate social integration and personal development, with the goal of enabling families to make better use of public service networks. Help is given with varied tasks such as obtaining an identity card or participating in self-esteem workshops, depending on the specific needs of each family group.

This intervention involves mentoring, in which a relationship is established between a professional or an expert and families or individuals who have limited capacities and resources to overcome their situation of extreme poverty and vulnerability. In this process, people are treated as active participants, who possess resources and skills that are used to guide change and promote personal and family development and integration in their surroundings.

The Social Support Programme has four specific goals:

- promote the enhancement and development of the resources, skills and capacities of individuals and families, so as to improve their living conditions
- promote and support the definition and fulfilment of family targets through a plan for family development (Family Plan)
- promote the use of personal and family resources, skills and capacities to meet the family targets
- establish a link between family and personal resources, skills and capacities and the family targets.

The Social Support Programme lasts for 12 or 24 months, depending on the initial diagnosis, with a maximum of 19 sessions conducted at the family's home by a professional or expert.

The Labour Support Programme is designed to enhance users' ability to improve their income generation strategy independently. This is done by means of specialized mentoring to make people more employable and able to function independently in the labour market, and to maintain their income generation strategy over time. It is based on the recognition of people as active participants who can work to develop their capacities and promote their personal development and integration in their surroundings. Specifically, it provides counselling on a work plan and training geared to people's aptitudes and interests, facilitating their access to the world of work. In other words, the focus is on areas in which adult family members already have work experience or on finding alternatives of interest to them.

The job training also assists with preparedness. This covers such varied topics as how to apply for a job, how to behave at a job interview and how to prepare a CV, and includes advice on appearance, with dental treatments when necessary.

This tailor-made plan provides guidance for people to enhance the abilities needed to achieve their family hopes and dreams, and a way to move forward under their own steam but always with strong support on which they can rely. The specific goals of the Labour Support Programme are to:

- help remove barriers that create unemployment or precarious labour insertion
- expand and guide user participation in human capital development programmes and services, technical training and entrepreneurship
- enhance and support participants' efforts to work on their own account.

Two families receiving the School Attendance Bonus, a payment that encourages actions to overcome poverty in a structured and permanent way

A recipient of the Female Employment Bonus, which rewards the efforts of women from the most vulnerable families who enter the labour market

This programme targets all those Key Programme participants who are not working or studying, although they are eligible to do so by virtue of their age. Like the Social Support Programme, it has a maximum duration of 24 months.

Monetary payments

The Ethical Family Income also includes monetary payments or bonuses linked to three basic pillars: dignity, duties and achievements.

The dignity pillar helps the most vulnerable families to have a minimum income and fills the need for immediate support. It thus provides 'respite' or 'relief' for all families living in a situation of extreme poverty. Three types of payment are involved: a family bonus, a personal bonus and other monetary subsidies provided by the state such as the Clean Water Subsidy and the Subsidy for Remaining in School. Families participating in the programme are entitled to these payments by virtue of their extreme vulnerability.

Whereas the family bonus is the same for all families participating in the programme, the amount of the personal bonus varies. Together with the monetary payments received for duties, it provides 85 per cent of the income needed by the family to overcome its situation of extreme poverty. Thus the amount of the personal bonus depends on the composition of the household and whether the family receives other subsidies from the state.

Both the family bonus and the personal bonus decrease over time and are discontinued when families leave the programme and stop receiving benefits.

The payments for duties are conditional on fulfilment of certain specific commitments, particularly in the areas of health and education, so as to encourage actions to overcome poverty situations in a structured and permanent manner. In other words, this type of conditional payment rewards family commitment and accountability and requires health check-ups in the case of children under six years of age (Well Child Check-up) and a school attendance record of 85 per cent or higher in the case of children 6-18 years of age (School Attendance Bonus).

Lastly, payments for achievements are monetary payments to the most vulnerable people for important achievements in various areas. They reward effort and attainment of targets for permanently overcoming poverty in fundamental areas such as education and employment. They include the Bonus for School Achievement, awarded for children under 18 years of age in the fourth and fifth grades of secondary school who are in the top-performing 30 per cent in their class. In addition, the Female Employment Bonus recognizes and rewards the efforts of women and female heads of household of the most vulnerable families in Chile who enter the formal labour market.

As stated above, the Ethical Family Income is a programme for families living in extreme poverty in Chile, who represent about 2.8 per cent of the population. However, the payments for achievements are being extended to reach the most vulnerable 30 per cent of the population, so that those who are covered are eligible for the Female Employment Bonus and the Bonus for School Achievement.

The extended coverage of these two benefits will include a borderline group of people at serious risk of falling into poverty, who are penalized for their social and economic advances by no longer receiving benefits because they are not considered to be poor. These bonuses give recognition to these families and motivate them to continue their efforts. They also reward their success, since good performance at school requires effort from the entire family and the incor-

Recipients of the Well Child Check-up Bonus, one of the payments that rewards commitment and accountability in Chile's most vulnerable families

The Ethical Family Income programme empowers families like this one to build their capacities and skills to permanently overcome poverty

poration of a female head of household in the world of work also requires support and coordination from all members of the family group.

One of the pillars of the Ethical Family Income aims to enhance and recognize the role of women in combating poverty within the family. For this reason, one of its essential components is the Female Employment Bonus, awarded to vulnerable female heads of household entering the world of work. In addition, their employers receive a subsidy, creating an incentive to recruit women in a situation of poverty.

In Chile, many single-parent households are families with few resources, in which women face the challenge of providing for their families. Accordingly, in addition to encouraging paid work outside the home, the Government has adopted a series of public policies to support women's work, including extended hours and extended coverage for crèches and kindergartens. The goal is to support the most vulnerable families and allow them to work without neglecting their children. Similarly, the Government is awaiting approval of draft legislation on the provision of monetary support to families with three or more children, which will boost the birth rate and provide a network of social benefits enabling these families to maintain a good quality of life.

As mentioned earlier, the Ethical Family Income also highlights the value of education and work as basic tools for overcoming poverty, always taking into account the composition and particular needs of each family. However, if we want all families to have the same opportunities, it is crucial to take into account their differences and specific requirements. In this regard, the programme is designed to improve the quality of life of families, on the understanding that they are the foundation of society and that, if they have access to

better opportunities and more benefits, they will be able to improve themselves and thus build a better country.

As a Government, we are convinced that families can achieve sustainable development over time only if they have the knowledge and skills to increase their income, together with state support and a range of opportunities helping them to overcome poverty. We know that poverty is a challenge facing not only the state, but also civil society. Above all, it is a challenge for the families themselves who are in this situation, since they are the ones who write their own story.

For this reason, our Government is also strongly committed to entrepreneurship, which is a powerful weapon against poverty, allowing people to acquire skills and supplies to develop a reliable source of income. In conjunction with the Fund for Solidarity and Social Investment, we have encouraged programmes that give people the capital to purchase the supplies needed to start up or expand a business, as well as advice and guidance on the development of business plans. Consequently, the Government has concentrated on achieving a permanent form of poverty relief through a comprehensive and high-quality programme that expands the definition of vulnerability to include people who really need support from the Government, through the Ethical Family Income.

With this programme and, importantly, with the participation and support of a sympathetic state, we hope to empower families to know their capacities and skills and to make them their best tools for permanently overcoming their situation of poverty. This is the best legacy that we can leave as a government, since the Ethical Family Income is not merely a welfare policy. Its effect will be felt over time and will enable families truly to surpass themselves, to improve their quality of life and to leave poverty behind.

Family structure and well-being across Israel's diverse population

Liora Bowers, Director of Policy, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel

Israel represents a unique blending of a very family-oriented society with a developed, modern economy. The country's dedication to the nuclear family concept is evident across a host of measures. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Israel has among the highest marriage rates in the developed world, at 6.3 marriages per 1,000 inhabitants relative to the OECD average of 5.0 in 2009.[1] Divorce rates are also relatively low[2] and Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics data from recent years shows that only 4 per cent of couples live together out of wedlock, as compared to 10 per cent in the United States and 27 per cent in Sweden.[3]

The importance of children in Israeli life is reflected in the country's birth rates, which are the highest in the developed world (3.0 children per woman of childbearing age relative to the OECD average of 1.7 in 2010).[4] While Central Bureau of Statistics data shows that the ultra-Orthodox (Haredim) and Arab-Israelis have particularly high birth rates, secular Jewish women also tend to have more children than women in other developed countries.[5] Israel's high marriage and low divorce rates mean that relatively few children are raised in single-parent homes, although this figure has been rising in recent times.[6]

A confluence of possible factors can help explain these family dynamics.[7] First, the religious values prevalent in Israeli society promote fertility. A 2010 Central Bureau of Statistics survey indicates that over half of the Jewish population considers itself 'traditional' or even more religious,[8] and a majority of Arab-Israelis, which comprise about one-fifth of the country's population, are Muslim and fairly traditional. Furthermore, many of the immigrants to Israel in the early decades following its independence came from North African and Middle Eastern societies characterized by large families and strong family ties. Finally, sociologists have also suggested that Israel's continuous conflict with Arab neighbours strengthens family ties, while mandatory military service not only means that children depend on their parents until a later age, but also that some parents have more children than they otherwise would because of the inherent dangers. Various factors such as relatively young average marriage ages, older age for beginning higher education studies and high housing costs often lead young Israeli adults to continue relying on their parents for assistance.

Alongside supportive cultural and sociological factors, specific government policies also promote high birth rates. Israel is the only country in the world to provide essentially free, unlimited coverage of in vitro fertilization (IVF) procedures for women up to age 45, for up to two children. As of 10 years ago, Israel's rate of IVF procedures was almost double that of Iceland, the country with the second-highest rate.[9] Although reduced substantially from their very high relative levels in the 1990s,[10] child allowances are received by every Israeli family with children under the age of 17.[11] A 2010 OECD analysis shows that while child benefits are common across developed countries, they are limited based on income in many other countries.[12]

Even as the nuclear family concept dominates in Israel, the country is quite progressive in terms of labour force participation by mothers with young children. Employment rates

Female labour participation rates by presence of children in the home and education

Source: Haya Stier and Efrat Herzberg, Taub Center (2013)
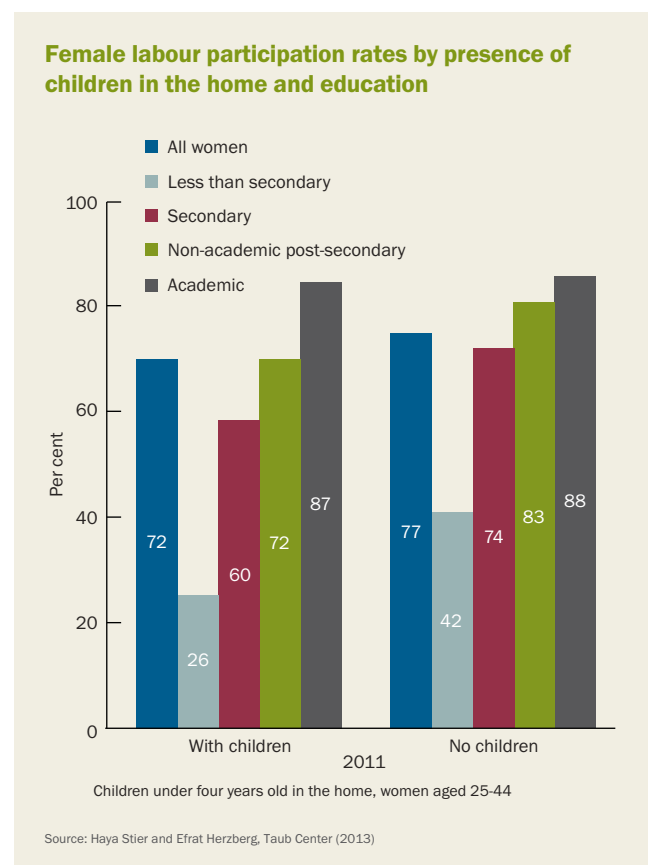
of Israeli women, which are near the OECD average,[13] are largely unaffected during motherhood. While 77 per cent of Israeli women aged 25-44 without children are in the labour force, the figure only drops to 72 per cent for women with a child under the age of four at home.[14] Among women with an academic degree, there is essentially no difference between those with and without young children.

Perhaps Israel's combination of a family-oriented society and an integrative approach to women in the workforce is best exemplified by its long history of supportive policies that encourage employment by mothers. These include parental leave arrangements (such as weeks of maternity leave, wage replacement rate during leave and legislated job protection) and particularly robust childcare policies (such as public childcare, childcare subsidy and after school programmes).[15] Job and benefits protection during maternity leave and part-time work options are also highly characteristic of the Israeli labour market. Following a nationwide social protest movement in 2011, Israel has begun to implement an existing law providing for universal preschool starting from the age of three, which will increase the share of children in public preschools in 2013 by an estimated 10-15 per cent.[16] Specific work-family policies and cultural attitudes have been credited with nearly eliminating the 'motherhood penalty' for working women in Israel, similar to Scandinavian countries and well ahead of countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, the United Kingdom and the United States.[17]

Even within an environment supportive of both family and working mothers, Israeli households face some significant challenges. A 2012 study shows that the well-being of young, working families has been negatively affected by decreased income relative to other Israelis in recent years as well as growing housing costs. These frustrations, alongside dissatisfaction in taxation, transportation and education policies, culminated in the major 2011 social protest movement and the subsequent efforts of the government-appointed Trachtenberg Commission to recommend policy changes.[18] While there is serious concern regarding the well-being of middle-class families, Israelis at the bottom end of the income distribution are facing an even more severe situation. One in five Israeli families live below the poverty line, which, together with the United States, is the highest rate among the 22 developed OECD countries in the sample.[19] Because poverty in Israel is concentrated in larger families, the young are particularly hurt. One in three Israeli children lives below the poverty line, which is a rate unparalleled in the developed world.

After an expansive period of welfare programmes in the 1990s helped taper growth in poverty rates, the last 10 years have been characterized by conservative fiscal policies which reduced such programmes.[20] Child allowances and welfare-to-work programmes have been cut, while eligibility for income support tightened and its payments decreased. The problem is particularly pronounced among Haredi and Arab households, 57 per cent and 50 per cent of which live below the poverty line, respectively. Even when these populations are excluded from the analysis, Israel still has some of the highest rates of poverty in the developed world.[21]

Employment rates of working-age men by sector and age, 2008
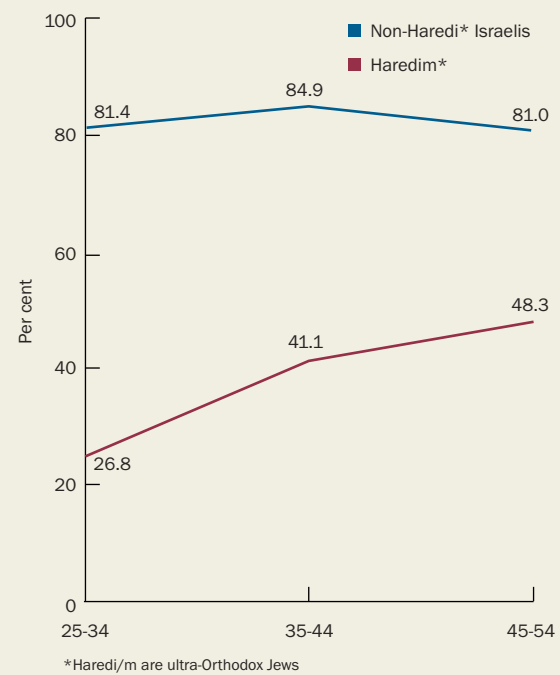
Source: Eitan Regev, Taub Center
Data: Central Bureau of Statistics, Population Census Data

In contrast to other countries, where poverty tends to afflict the elderly and single-parent families, it is young, large families which tend to be poor in Israel. The challenge for Israel is that moving entire large families out of poverty requires more resources and innovative policies. Further, there are unique structural barriers underlying poverty in Israel. Central Bureau of Statistics data for 2009 showed that Haredi women in Israel average 6.5 children,[22] while recent generations of Haredi men — defying trends across other developed societies — are progressively lower educated and less likely to participate in the labour market. Instead, Haredi boys receive only a partial education in core subjects and even this ends completely after the eighth grade. Religious and communal pressures lead most Haredi men today to engage in part-time or full-time religious studies throughout much of their life. In sharp contrast to the growing rates of higher education in Israel, the share of ultra-Orthodox men aged 35-54 with no more than a primary school education has increased by more than 50 per cent in the past decade alone.[23] Less than half of ultra-Orthodox men in the prime working age group of 25-44 are employed, compared to 80 per cent and higher among all other Israeli men.

Poverty among Arab-Israeli families is caused by a very different set of underlying factors. First, while growing steadily, employment among Arab-Israeli women remains quite low, at 30 per cent versus 81 per cent for non-Haredi Jewish women. These numbers demonstrate the importance of educa-

Employment rates for women aged 35-54 by sector and education level, 2011

Per cent

- All
- Academic degree

Arab Israelis: All 30, Academic degree 81
Non Haredi* Jews: All 81, Academic degree 89

*Haredi/m are ultra-Orthodox Jews

Source: Kyrill Shraberman, Taub Center
Data: Data: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Labor Force Survey*

Looking beyond poverty rates, it is important to understand how lower income actually affects households, and what coping mechanisms exist for families to withstand economic pressure. While material hardship often depends on income and social policies such as food and housing subsidies, it is also contingent upon communities, friends and family practices. In this regard, Israeli families differ with respect to the impact of material hardship.[27]

While many Israelis go without basic needs such as food, utilities or medical care, these problems are more severe at the bottom half of the income distribution. Nonetheless, there are noticeable differences even among the poor. Even though income levels are similar among Haredim and Arab-Israelis in the lowest income quartile, Arab-Israelis are more likely to forgo material or health-care needs across the board.

One hypothesis is that fundamental characteristics underlying the family and community structure are responsible for these differences in material hardship. Specifically, while 22 per cent of Arab-Israelis in the lowest income quartile have experienced poverty often since age 15, only 15 per cent of the lowest-income Haredim have. As such, the poorest Haredim do not suffer as much from the hardships of intergenerational poverty as Arab-Israelis do. Furthermore, the community nature of the Haredim, which entails a culture of social support, may mitigate specific financial difficulties faced by an individual family. A 2009 Central Bureau of Statistics survey asked respondents if and from whom they could receive support if they needed to quickly raise a sum of about US$1,400. Arab-Israelis expressed reliance on parents or children for such assistance, with limited other options. In contrast, Haredim showed a broader support network, with 37 per cent, 40 per cent and 53 per cent comfortable asking friends, relatives or parents for support, respectively. The combination of perpetuating poverty, poorer support networks and greater financial obligations to one's parents may lead to the greater levels of material hardship expressed by poor Arab-Israelis.

Considering Israel in the global context, important lessons can be drawn with regard to strengthening the role of families while developing a modern economy with economically empowered women. Culture and geopolitical factors are likely contributors to the strong family orientation in Israel, which is reinforced through government policy. Workplace practices as well as legislation around maternity leave and childcare have created a supportive environment for employment of Israeli women with children.

Part of developing a family-friendly society is to ensure the well-being of children and their parents. In this regard, Israel's biggest challenge is its very high poverty rates relative to other developed countries. Poverty affects a wide range of families in the country, with traditionally large Haredi and Arab-Israeli households particularly hard-hit. There is a worrying trend of declining education levels and correspondingly low employment rates among younger Haredi men, who are instead choosing a lifestyle of prolonged religious study. Among Arab-Israelis, low — but growing — rates of female employment combined with lower-skilled, less stable work among males contributes to entrenched poverty. Furthermore, Arab-Israelis

tion, as Arab women with a university degree (a relatively small share of this population) have employment rates that are much more aligned with those of educated Jewish women.[24]

The low employment shares for lower-educated Arab-Israeli women in practice means that most Arab families only have one wage earner. Such families are much more likely to be poor than the one-earner Jewish household.[25] This differential effect is partly due to family structure, wherein Arab single-earner families are younger and likely to have more children than their Jewish counterparts. More importantly, however, there are vast differences between the employment patterns of Arab-Israeli and Jewish men. Arab-Israeli employment is characterized by lower-skilled, lower-paying labour which is often physically demanding. In turn, employment benefits are more limited, steady work more difficult to find, and retirement ages much younger for male Arab-Israelis. The work pattern differences among Arab-Israelis and Jews are influenced by the educational gaps that emerge at an early age. A study by the Israeli National Authority for Measurement and Evaluation shows that Arab-Israeli youth score 17 per cent below the Israeli national average on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) exam testing reading, mathematics and science.[26] Israel already performs poorly on the PISA exam when compared to other OECD countries; as such, Arab-Israeli test results are below those of developing countries such as Jordan, Colombia and Indonesia.

Per cent forgoing basic and medical needs among the lowest income quartile, 2007

Legend:
- Electricity or phone
- Food
- Heating or cooling
- Medical care
- Drugs
- Dentist

Arab Israelis: 47, 60, 78, 37, 53, 77
Haredim*: 18, 41, 55, 26, 21, 61
Non-Haredi* Jews: 25, 35, 56, 29, 32, 63

Per cent

*Haredi/m are ultra-Orthodox Jews
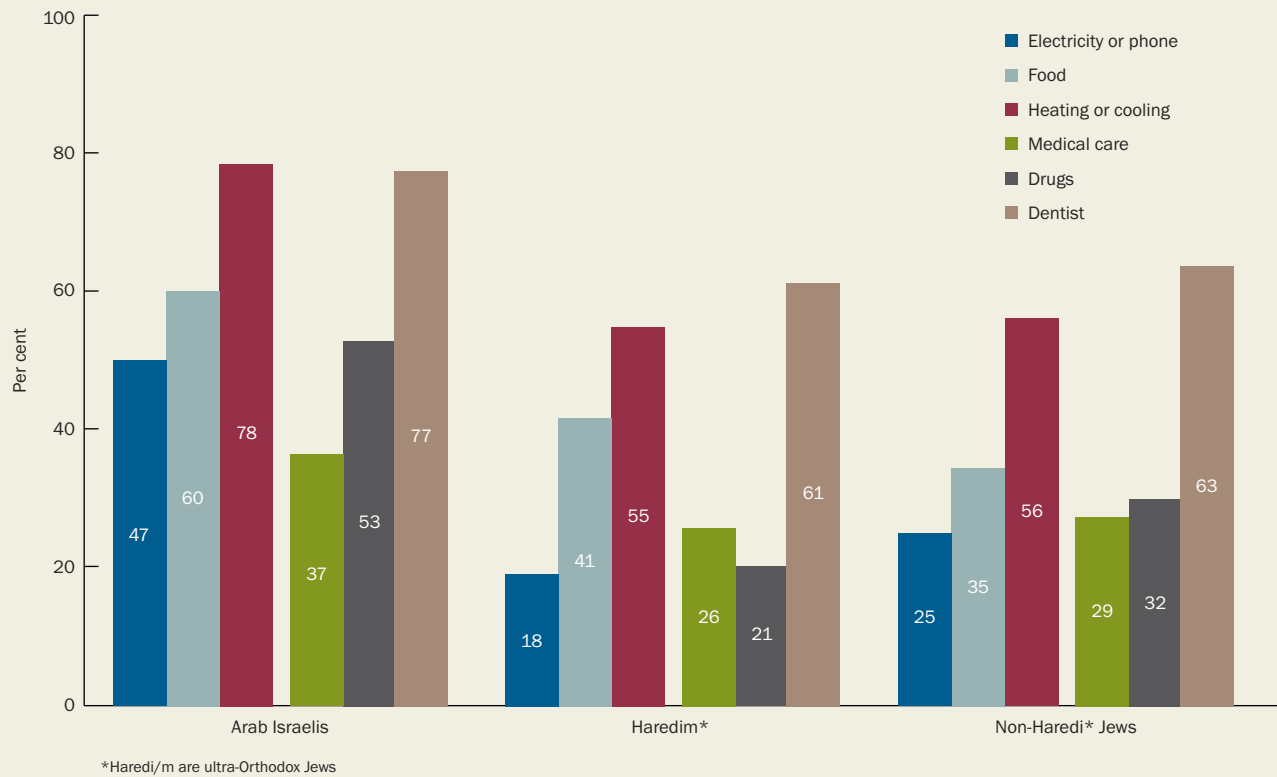
Source: Haya Stier and Alisa Lewin, Taub Center (2013)

tend to experience a deeper level of hardship as they are more likely to forgo basic material and health needs than other low-income Israelis. This may be due to the pervasive effects of intergenerational poverty, along with more limited social and community support networks, among Arab-Israelis versus the Haredim.

To complement Israel's policies to promote birth rates and support working mothers, Israel should actively undertake policies that address the root causes of poverty. One key focus area — though by no means the only one — should be an upgrading of Israel's human capital. This includes implementing a mandated core curriculum through the end of high school (not eighth grade as is common practice within state-funded Haredi schools), substantially improving the quality of the core curriculum in all schools (not just the Haredi ones), and aligning education to match the competencies required for effective workforce integration. Emphasis should also be placed on encouraging higher education, creating sufficient labour market opportunities and addressing discriminatory employment practices against Arab-Israelis. Finally, Israel's welfare system should be structured to encourage and facilitate employment, while providing a strong safety net to ensure the well-being of those unable to work. These efforts are critical to ensuring that Israel continues to be characterized as a family-oriented, yet modern and economically developed society.

Potential sources of urgent financial support for Israelis in the lowest income quartile* by population groups, 2009

Legend:
- Parents
- Children
- Relatives
- Friends

Arab Israelis: 47, 30, 12, 9
Haredim**: 53, 12, 40, 37
Non-Haredi** Jews: 41, 21, 34, 13

Per cent
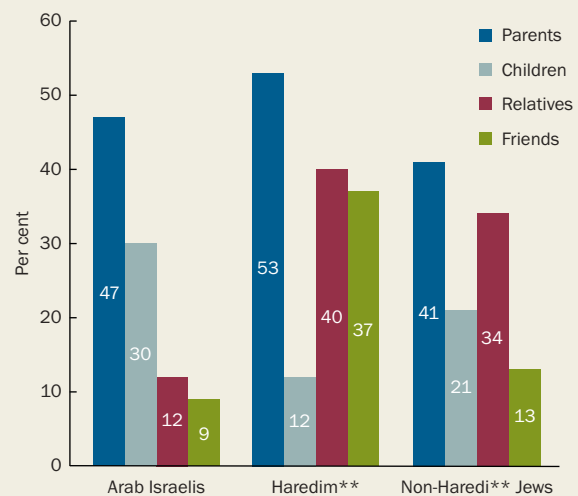
*Possible sources to immediately raise 5,000 New Israeli Shekels (approx US$1,400); self-reported
**Haredi/m are ultra-Orthodox Jews

Source: Haya Stier and Alisa Lewin, Taub Center (2013)

Evolving space for fishers' families in the western Bay of Bengal region

Yugraj Singh Yadava, Director, Rajdeep Mukherjee, Policy Analyst, Md. Sharif Uddin, Fishery Resource Officer, Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation

The western Bay of Bengal (WBOB) comprising Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives represents a socioecological kaleidoscope. India is recognized as an emerging economic power and Sri Lanka boasts a higher level of human development, while Maldives has much higher per capita income and Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in alleviating poverty, illiteracy and in other indicators of human development.[1]

Marine fisheries constitute an important pillar of economic development in all these countries. While its contribution to the national economies in monetary terms may not be significant, the importance of the fisheries sector lies in providing employment to millions of people in the coastal areas, ensuring food security and as a valuable source of foreign exchange.[2]

Living along the coastline and sourcing livelihoods from the coastal and offshore waters, WBOB fisher families are constantly exposed to the vagaries of nature and occupational hazards. Deeply mired in the traditional family occupation and with limited options for diversification, their lives and livelihoods are more vulnerable than their counterparts in agriculture or other primary-sector occupations. Traditionally, fisheries have been a male preserve, and resultantly women-headed households or households comprising mostly women stand as disadvantaged groups in the community.

Notwithstanding these inherent weaknesses in the sector, a set of ongoing initiatives by governments, civil society organizations working with fisher communities, and inter-governmental bodies like the Bay of Bengal Programme (BOBP) have been bringing the desired changes and reducing the odds for fisher families. The BOBP, a regional fisheries body comprising the above-mentioned countries, is working with governments, fisher communities and the private sector to develop solutions for fisher families towards a sustainable future.

There are about 1.7 million active fishers in the WBOB region. Conservatively, this is translated to between 1.2 million and 1.7 million fisher families and about 10 million fisher people directly dependent on fisheries. From a subsistence, artisanal level of fishing until the early 1970s, the fisheries sector is now becoming increasingly capital-intensive and fishers are adapting to technology-driven fishery.

Fisheries in the region comprise three basic activities: preparation for fishing, fishing, and marketing. WBOB families mostly act as a production unit, with men involved in fishing and women playing an important role in net mending, helping the men prepare for fishing and in marketing. However, with the advent of capital-intensive fishing practices such as mechanization, fisheries are being reformed more in line with business enterprises, with specific roles such as financiers, service providers (craft and gear), vessel operators and crew members, marketing chains and processing units. With this development, the role of fisherwomen in fisheries has in many cases been squeezed.[3] Although women are still involved in large numbers, especially in local retailing and primary processing and packaging, their declin-

Growth in the number of active fisher folk in the region

Country	Base year	Number	Latest year	Number	Growth
Bangladesh	2007	510,000	2011	516,000	0.3%
India	2005	901,815	2010	1,002,723	2.2%
Maldives	2003	14,891	2012	10,264	-3.5%
Sri Lanka	2004	132,600	2012	180,693	4.5%
Western BOB	2003	1,547,019	2012	1,697,040	1.1%

Source: BOBP

A fisher couple in their small shop selling fishing implements, Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh

ing space in the fisheries production system is a matter of concern with implications on household decision-making, food security and the social perception of women. This needs to be adequately addressed in policy measures.

Irrespective of the state of technology, fisher families are considered as vulnerable groups due to the multiple risks associated with their occupation (seasonality, market risks, occupational hazards); location (high exposure to natural hazard); asset specificity (lack of education, other employable skills, land) and lack of social safety (poverty, absence of steady income, congestion in fishery space). Therefore, ensuring the sustainability of fisher families has remained a difficult but not insurmountable challenge.

Recent initiatives in the region are trying to address this challenge by adopting multi-pronged strategies such as extension of social safety nets to fishers (India, Bangladesh), women's empowerment and marketing support (India, Sri Lanka), access to alternative sources of finance such as microfinance, hedging against market risks (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka) and the introduction of new technologies for better income (Maldives and in and around the bay).

Livelihood issues

The increasing fisher population and resultant increasing competition for fish remains the major issue for the sustainability of fisheries livelihoods and the future of fisher families

The multi-day fishers of Chakaria

Chakaria is a major fishing locality in the Cox's Bazaar district of Bangladesh. Fishers here usually work as crew in multi-day mechanized fishing vessels, which camp for about six months in and around the Sundarbans deltaic area. The fishers usually receive a lump sum as advance payment for their engagement from the vessel owner. The amount depends on their role in the fishing operation, relation with the vessel owner, expected profits and revenues from past operations. They hand this money to their families to cover the cost of food and basic needs while they are away. The fisher's food and other needs are taken care of by the vessel owner.

Families back home, mostly women, children and elderly members, often find this advance insufficient to meet the cost of food, health and other expenses. In many cases, unforeseen expenditure leads the families to borrow from local moneylenders at exorbitant interest rates (30-60 per cent). They also maintain credit accounts in local stores.

In a good year, fishers return with sufficient compensation to pay off their debts and keep good standing within the community. However, this security is extremely fragile. During a bad year, the families are unable to repay their debts unless they have had a series of good years. Therefore, they live in perpetual poverty with a high debt burden.

Families often face destitution if the earning member has an accident or dies. In such cases, the family loses its creditworthiness and is often driven out of the house by creditors. Since very few earning opportunities are available for women, they are forced to live on the mercy of the community and relatives and do odd jobs such as fish vending, fish drying or farm work. Often, they end up begging while their children leave school and work as labourers.

A traditional fisher and his wife preparing for the fishing trip, Mahabalipuram, India

Women fish vendors in Chennai

Fish retailing in Chennai, the capital of Tamil Nadu State in India, is largely dominated by the fisherwomen. Compared to their counterparts in Bangladesh or those of rural coastal areas in Tamil Nadu, the Chennai women fish vendors enjoy better living conditions. They are mostly associated with the mechanized fisheries sector and are economically well off.

However, these fisherwomen also face a host of issues. Their problems start with the transportation of fish from Chennai fishing harbour and wholesale markets to their retailing locations. Public transporters and commuters often object to carrying fish due to smell and seepage. The marketplaces do not have adequate refreshment or toilet amenities for the women. The transportation problem has been partially addressed by Government-provided dedicated rail coaches for vendors, and women catering to the same locality have formed groups to hire private transport.

Apart from logistics, another major issue is to properly preserve and display products during retailing. Since fish is highly perishable, it perishes quickly in Chennai's tropical weather if not properly insulated. The use of ice boxes, promoted by the BOBP in the early 1990s, is yet to be adopted by all fisherwomen. The Government is also promoting the use of ice boxes by providing small subsidies to offset the cost. The availability of quality ice is also a constraint at times for these fish vendors.

in the region.[4] While production seems to be increasing, qualitative aspects remain a concern, as the share of undersized fish and low-economic value fish in the total catch is increasing. In most cases there is over-employment and the fishers' share in the total revenue is negligible. Some major fisheries are overexploited and their catch is declining. This is leading to fisheries management measures, such as time and area closure, causing temporary loss of income for fisher families.

Fishing is one of the riskiest occupations in the world as thousands of people die every year while fishing at sea. While developed fishing nations have surveillance programmes to track mortality in fisheries, any such programme is yet to be implemented in WBOB. Towards this, the BOBP and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health conducted a study during 2007-2010 to understand the mortality pattern and causes of accidents at sea. The study found that mortality in the region is about three times as high as in the developed nations. Lack of use of personal safety and communication equipment, weak coordination with surveillance agencies, faulty vessel construction and frequent bad weather are the major reasons for this high mortality.

A fisher couple removing a bumper catch from gill net, Negombo, Sri Lanka

Global warming is likely to increase the sea level, threatening fisher settlements along the coastline. Already there are reports of severe coastal erosion from India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Maldives also faces a high risk from global warming as many areas of this low-lying country may be flooded in the next 50 years if the sea level continues to rise. The WBOB countries, especially Bangladesh and India, are highly prone to cyclones and storm surges. In the past decade the region has witnessed many devastating cyclones, including the December 2004 tsunami that caused unprecedented damage to lives and livelihoods in India and Sri Lanka. Fishing communities on the coast are directly affected by such extreme weather incidences, making families vulnerable to loss of livelihoods and poverty.

Apart from climate change, versatile uses of coastline and marine waters from industry to tourism to exploration are also threatening the fisheries sector. Since these activities are economically more remunerative than fisheries, they are often favoured in national developmental approaches. In addition, growing industrialization and urbanization is increasing the chances of pollution further threatening fisheries biodiversity and livelihoods.

With the setting up of the Marine Protected Areas and declaration of many coastal stretches as protected grounds for iconic marine species such as turtles, the livelihoods of fisher families have been badly affected. The collision between marine biodiversity conservation and livelihoods is becoming a matter of grave concern as these fisher families have little option outside the sector. While steps are being taken now to involve local communities in the conservation process, a thorough participatory approach will be needed before parts of the coastline are designated as protected areas.

Regional initiatives for vulnerability reduction

The Government of India, in association with provincial governments, runs a fully subsidized insurance programme for fishers, providing compensation in case of accidental death, permanent disability or loss of limb up to INR 100,000 (approximately US$1,666). Around 4 million fishers are currently covered by the scheme.[5]

Recently the Government of Bangladesh, through its nationalized insurance agency, Jiban Bima Corporation, introduced a group insurance scheme whereby fishers form a group of at least 50 people and pay the premium. The scheme has filled a void in the social security space for fishers in Bangladesh and has achieved fast penetration since it was launched in October 2012. The annual per capita premium is Tk 1,240 (approximately US$16) for an assured sum of Tk 200,000 (around US$2,500). The scheme covers natural death, accidental death and permanent disability. Partial disability is not yet covered under the scheme. The term of the plan is for three years.[6]

Self-help groups (SHGs) in the region, promoted mostly by non-governmental organizations since the late 1990s, have become a major tool of organizing fisherwomen and creating opportunities for additional or alternative livelihoods. Fisherwomen were initially apprehensive of joining such groups, but a host of institutional features such as microfinance, which preferred such groups over individuals, created space for the development of SHGs. Although

no figures are available, most major fishing centres in the region have three to four women's SHGs involved in various activities from fish vending, processing, seaweed farming or making pickles to alternative options such as animal husbandry, sewing and petty commercial activities. However, further hand-holding is required to make the fisherwomen SHGs more market-savvy and improve the market penetration of their products.

Like many other parts of the world, families in the WBOB region also play a crucial role in shaping harvesting decisions and effort level, as well as building the human capital necessary for developing alternative skills to move outside the fisheries sector. For example, the awareness levels of women on safety at sea influence the preparedness of the men when going fishing, as well as during emergencies.

An important step towards ensuring family sustainability is to recognize the role of fisherwomen in the family. Apart from the technological barriers mentioned above, fisher families share a host of sociocultural barriers with rest of society in the region. Therefore, the task is quite challenging. However, designing institutions and workplaces in a women-friendly way could be the first step towards empowerment. The role of women in decision-making can also be boosted through a better safety-at-sea regime in which women participate in trip planning and preparation.

In fisheries management, there is a steady movement towards inclusive decision-making processes with greater community participation. Although, in practice, fisheries in the region are still managed through a top-down approach, with increasing community participation and feedback, more enabling policies are now being formed.

Empowering the fisherwomen of Toothoor

Image: Vincent Jain

Handicrafts made by Toothoor fisherwomen, Kanyakumari, India

The Association of Deep Sea-going Artisanal Fishermen, based in Toothoor, Kanyakumari district, Tamil Nadu, India has 3,168 male and 2,816 female members, categorized in three types:
- boat owners
- fishing crew
- fisherwomen, either from the family of the boat owner or the crew.

The fishermen fish in offshore waters and are out at sea for months together, while the fisherwomen look after the family and do petty business to make ends meet. Some 22-25 per cent of the fisherwomen do fish vending and 5-6 per cent engage in petty businesses like running tea shops or making fish products. The rest are homemakers and engage in various social and religious activities.

For the past couple of years, the association has provided training in skills such as making cloth bags, umbrellas, school bags, assembling solar lanterns, making liquid fertilizer from fish waste and handicraft items from sea shells. The objective is to empower the fisherwomen with skills that can add to the family income when their husbands are out at sea.

The story of Badal Das

Image: S. Jayaraj

Badal Das and his family

Badal Das, aged 31, from Jelepara Village in South Dhurang, Cox's Bazaar district, Bangladesh has been fishing for 15 years. During the last four to five years he has fished in the Sundarbans area, on the extreme west coast of Bangladesh. About 25-30 fishermen from his village and neighbouring areas go fishing during September-October, staying in the Sundarbans and adjacent areas for five to six months before returning home.

"While we carry some medicines, getting proper medical attention in case of emergency is extremely difficult and on most occasions a fisherman who meets with an accident or falls ill (mainly diarrhoea) is left to die," says Das. "Engine trouble is another major problem at sea. Boats that develop engine trouble often drift and land in neighbouring countries, where the fishermen land in jail and are released after protracted interventions by the Government. Our boats do not have lifesaving appliances or proper communication equipment to talk to the boat owner or to our families. Some crew members carry radios, which become our source of information. On most occasions, we get the cyclone warnings through the radio sets, but at times these warnings are received too late to move to sheltered areas.

"The boat owners are not willing to discuss our problems. If we argue, we lose the job. There is no compensation if a fisherman meets with an accident or dies. Our families go through hardships and do odd jobs to make ends meet when we are out at sea. If we take a loan from a moneylender, the interest rates are exorbitant. We do not get loans from the bank since we cannot meet their conditions.

"I have three children. I will ensure that they get a good education and settle well in life. I will neither allow my daughters to marry fishermen nor allow my son to take up the fishing profession," says Das.

Confronting family poverty in Romania

Codrin Scutaru, Secretary of State, Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and Elderly, Romania

As a country with a specific social profile, Romania has faced the challenges of poverty for a long time. Since 2013, poverty alleviation has again become one of the most important points on the governmental public agenda, after more than nine years. The family itself became a priority for the new social-liberal Government in May 2012, after more than three years of social austerity measures.

The world crisis found Romania with an already weakened economy and with a structure which does not provide opportunities for rapid recovery. Hence, the crisis in Romania is one of the deepest in Europe. Payment of the debts incurred during the past two years will affect the future economic and social situation even more.

The crisis started in the context of an impoverished society — the poorest in Europe — and that poverty is predicted to continue this year. The fast degradation of the standard of living also affects the fragile middle class, many of whom are being pushed below the poverty line. In addition, the social state is undersized. Intervention is directed towards the continuous reduction of support from the state. In this context, the former governance of 2009-2011 has launched a programmatic attack against the social state.

Currently, the level of relative poverty in Romania (22.4 per cent) is second only to that of Latvia, while the European average is 16.3 per cent. The dynamics of subjective estima-tions of poverty show that the population feels the crisis at a high intensity, the highest in Europe. The perception of generalized poverty is higher than in 2009 (90 per cent). A 10 per cent increase was observed in the segment of the population who consider that this poverty is due to social injustice (61 per cent in 2010), a proportion which puts Romania in the top position among European Union (EU) countries.[1]

Poverty affects, in various yet significant degrees, all the social groups.[2] A large segment of the economically unoccupied population lives 'a day at a time', the unemployment system providing largely for minimal conditions of subsistence.

Most worrying is that poverty has also reached the economically active population, including employees. Having a job doesn't take one out of poverty. The risk of poverty for the working people of Romania is the highest in Europe (17.9 per cent compared to the European average of 8.4 per cent). This is far ahead of countries such as Czech Republic, Slovenia, Sweden, Hungary, Norway and Denmark, which have very low levels of risk of poverty and inequality.

The low wages don't guarantee a way out of poverty. Rather the contrary: the standard family, with two minimal wages, lies far below the minimum level for a decent standard of living, compared to the international data already mentioned. This is further evidence of the low capacity of work to ensure a decent standard of life in Romania.

There is a clear trend of polarization in poverty: besides the higher proportion of employees with low wages, there is
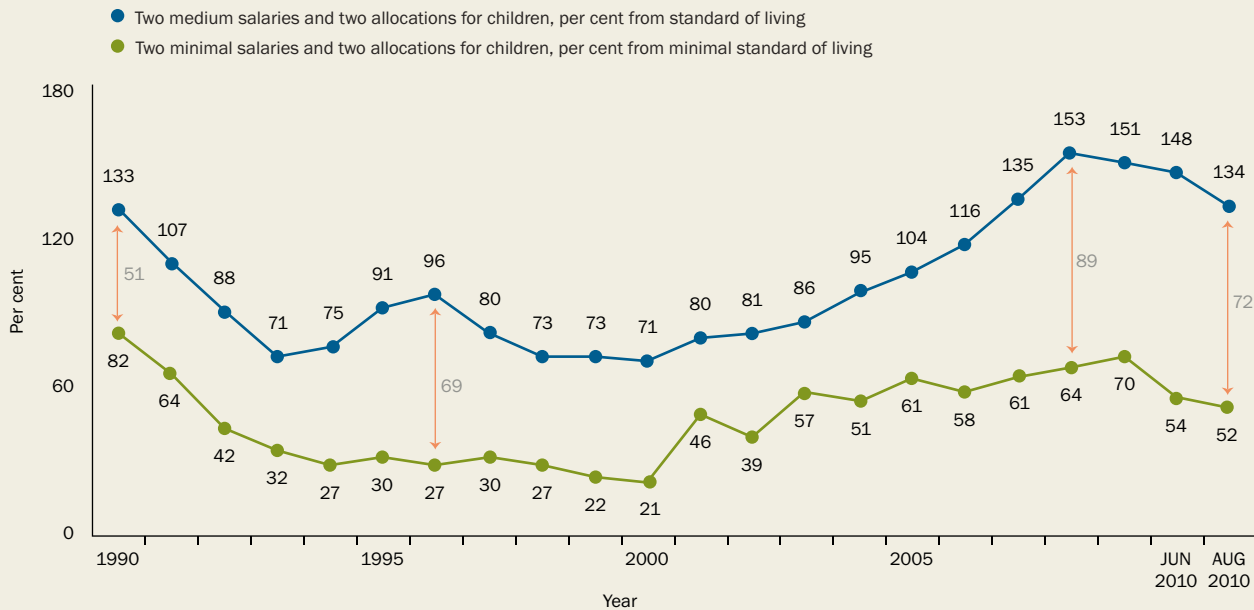

A growing proportion of employees in Romania have low wages and there is an increasing gap between families on a medium wage and those with low wages

For families on minimal wages, the standard of living is consistently and significantly below the minimal level

Standard of living for the active family with two employees with two children

● Two medium salaries and two allocations for children, per cent from standard of living
● Two minimal salaries and two allocations for children, per cent from minimal standard of living

Per cent

180

153 151 148
133 135 134
107 116
89
120 104
95 96 91 88 80 82 81 86
80 73 73 71 80 72
75
71
64 70
61 61 64
60 57 58
46 54
42 52
32 39 51
30 30 27
27 27 22
21

0

1990   1995   2000   2005   JUN   AUG
                                                    2010 2010
                              Year

51   69   89   72

Source: IQLR calculations, Romanian Academy 2012

Compared to 1989, the standard of living of the upper medium segment didn't increase much in 2009-2011, while those with low wages are even poorer

a difference between the evolution of families with medium wages and those with low wages compared to the minimal decent standard of living. The gap between them increased from 51 per cent in 1990 to 69 per cent in 1996, 89 per cent in 2008 and 72 per cent in 2010.

The dynamics of the standard of living for the active family from the upper medium segment (four people, two average wages and two allocations for children) show:
• three periods of decrease: 1991-1993, 1997-2000 and 2009 to the present day
• a long period (13 years, 1992-2004) when the standard of living was below the minimal level
• the same standard of living in 2010 as in 1990 for the average family in the upper segment.

For the active family from the lower medium segment (two minimal wages and two allocations for children), standard of living dynamics show several distinctive evolutionary traits:
• the standard of living is consistently and significantly below the minimal level
• throughout the transition years it was substantially below the level of 1990
• the highest levels were recorded at the beginning and end of the post-revolutionary period: 1990 (82 per cent), 2008 (64 per cent) and 2009 (70 per cent), while the minimal levels show a state of severe poverty with 27 per cent in 1994 and 20 per cent in 2000.

A large majority of old people are covered by the pensions system. Data for past years show a low risk of poverty for this category, even if it is above the European average. The

relative welfare of pensioners is explained by the certitude of an income; the existence of two pensions; ownership of the dwelling acquired in the past; accumulation of household appliances (which allow the full use of incomes for current consumption); and a reasonable health-care system.

The future elderly have a more challenging perspective because they will be covered less by social insurance and pensions. Some will not have a pension at all, while many will have low pensions due to few years of employment and low social contributions. Many will suffer from the lack of health care insurance.

Although there was a policy to support families with children, it proved to be completely unsatisfactory. Children represent a very high risk of poverty, the highest among EU countries. Generally, children from employed families with average wages or higher have reasonable conditions of living. However, since most incomes are low, the appearance of a child substantially affects the family's standard of living, with the children suffering the poverty of their parents.

Single parent families also run a high risk of poverty. These families, and families with more than three children, are condemned to severe poverty. The children are abandoned, often in the street; other children are abandoned in institutions, many of them underfinanced and improperly managed because of the lack of social services.

State allocations for children were supposed to play an important compensating role under the conditions of collective precariousness. The official data on the standard of living show that in 2009, more than half of the families with two adults and three or more children and more than a third of single parent families live in relative poverty (56.3 per cent and 35.3 per cent respectively).[3]

Families with no wage, with one or two unemployment benefits and excluded temporarily or chronically from the economic system, are confronted with severe poverty.[4] Dwelling in the countryside might provide some sources of food and some conditions to cope easier with the shortcomings. The existence of small agricultural plots, but the lack of necessary means to carry out agriculture, provides conditions of subsistence but in chronic poverty.

Migration to work abroad, particularly if it is illegal, provides an answer to the imperatives of the moment, but exposes the immigrants to a lack of social and health insurances. Furthermore, a segment of the immigrants is confronted with illegal and degrading activities.

Young people lack personal resources, as unemployment among the young is high. In this case, the traditional support of the family is an essential condition for everyday living. The impoverishment of the adult generation, and of the elderly in particular, decreases the support for the young. Poverty among young people has been studied less than other sectors of society.

Victims of the current crisis include employees with average or higher wages and pensioners, who benefited from the stability of the pensions system and who took out loans. These people are now confronted with poverty: decrease of incomes, wage cuts and the risk of sickness. The phenomenon reaches practically all the age categories, with real estate loans or loans for personal needs taken to meet minimal, decent dwelling conditions or consumption needs.

The numbers are supplemented by the victims of swindling activities not protected by the police/legal system, such as thefts, loans with usury (the only available loans when there is no stable income in the family) and the loss of dwellings by retrocession or deceit.

For modern societies, particularly for the EU, poverty is not a problem of the people. Rather, it is a problem of the entire community. It is an illusion to think that poverty is a state produced exclusively by the economy. For the EU, the social aspect is also an important direction of policy.

In 2010 the Nobel laureate for economy, Paul Krugman, showed that in some economic analyses, Europe was often used as negative example to support the thesis that if you try to make the economy less brutal and to protect the citizens better when they are cornered, you end by smothering economic progress.[5] This conception is totally wrong, according to Krugman, with the European experience showing exactly the opposite: that social policy and progress can coexist.

In the EU, social transfers contribute to the reduction of relative poverty, on average by 60 per cent. Therefore, more than half of the people at risk of poverty due to economic activity leave the risk area due to the social protection policies. The efficiency of social transfers to reduce poverty was highest in Hungary, France, Sweden and Austria, with reductions in excess of 70 per cent.

The efficiency of the anti-poverty policy in Romania, with the same structure, is below the European average in a year when the effect of alleviating poverty by social protection, at the national level, increased compared to previous years. During the past three years relative poverty decreased in Romania, while poverty resulting from productive activity (pre-transfer) increased. Pensions played a progressive

Poverty affects all social groups in Romania, to varying yet significant degrees

compensating role in the alleviation of poverty (two to three times higher than all the other social services together).

In 1997 the Romanian Presidency adopted an anti-poverty strategy which has been, nevertheless, ignored by the Government and was not transformed into a governmental project. A better attempt in this direction was made only in 2001 by the construction of a national system: the Commission on Anti-poverty and for the Promotion of Social Inclusion (CASPIS), the County Commissions on Anti-poverty and for the Promotion of Social Inclusion, and the Government's decision to adopt the National Plan on Anti-poverty and for the Promotion of Social Inclusion (PNA-inc). In 2004, as a condition for accession to the EU, CASPIS developed the Joint Inclusion Memorandum. This was adopted by the Government of Romania, approved in 2005 by the European Commission and signed as a commitment by the Government of Romania towards the European Commission during the pre-accession process.[6] With this, the narrower objective of reducing poverty has been included in a wider social policy to promote inclusion in all the spheres of social life. The expansion has been stimulated by the European context, which has introduced the new concept of social inclusion as a core concept of social policy.

The institutional structure, the anti-poverty programmes and the programmes for the promotion of social inclusion, which had started to function and to be applied, were abandoned in 2005 when the governance changed. The governance of 2009-2011 stressed this negative trend, launching an attack on the social functions of the state and taking practical measures to withdraw the state from social support. Paradoxically in 2010 — the year which the European Commission declared as the European Year for the Fight Against Poverty and Social Exclusion — the governing strategy ran contrary to these priorities by promoting hard measures of austerity, obsessively invoking the reduction of social expenditure as a precondition of escaping the crisis.

Romania's new strategy for combating poverty and promoting social inclusion will focus on family as the main social concept

In December 2011 a new law on social assistance was adopted in Romania, creating a unified and coordinated legal and institutional framework for the development and implementation of public policies.

Romania has focused income support measures on supporting households with children and has introduced an allowance for families which is linked to the school attendance of children from the beneficiary families. Over the last year, Romania has reformed the minimum income scheme by extending the coverage of social transfers so that a minimum income is guaranteed to every citizen. The conditionality of benefits, such as means testing and linkage with willingness to accept job offers, has been strengthened. The guaranteed minimum income, family allowance programmes, heating benefit and child-raising allowance programme, along with some programmes in the social assistance field, were modified beginning in January 2011.

Progress comes from accomplishing many small things, and we therefore pledge our continuous support for the improvement of the Romanian social assistance system. For the next period we intend to continue our improvements, being confident that all these efforts will play a key role in social assistance development. The measures will include:

• focusing on programmes devoted to low income families (social aid, family allowances, heating aid)
• harmonizing the eligibility criteria for programmes devoted to low income families
• consolidating these programmes into one single programme, whose indicative title should be 'minimum insertion income', for 2013
• raising the co-accountability of those who receive the minimum insertion income by conditioning the payment of benefits on the school results of children and on the active search for a job in the case of parents
• reducing the costs of child-raising allowance and the period in which it is paid

• consolidating payments to disabled persons into one single social security benefit and introducing income testing for all beneficiaries who are part of wealthy families
• performing checks (inspections) in all social assistance programmes that are exposed to a high risk of error or fraud (social aid, family benefits, heating aid, benefits paid to the disabled, child-raising allowances)
• increasing the effectiveness of social inspection activities by introducing client profiling (a system whereby irregularities can be reported) and an efficient sanctions policy
• developing an integrated management information system that should be used for paying social assistance benefits, for detecting suspected fraud or error cases by cross-checking the information in public databases, and for supporting a result-based management model
• interconnecting the databases that refer to social rights beneficiaries with other relevant data sources
• simplifying administrative procedures by setting up a single point of submission and establishing a single application form to claim social assistance benefits.

In 2013, the Romanian Government re-entered a firm path of combating family poverty. Its measures include increasing the minimum wage by 15 per cent and planning a continuous increase in 2014; increasing pensions with the inflation rate by applying the pensions point for the first time since 2010; introducing electrical energy heat social aid; increasing the minimum guaranteed income by 13 per cent; increasing the allowance for family sustainment by 30 per cent; and promoting and adopting a new bill for child protection to further protect the rights of children with parents working abroad.

By the end of 2014, Romania will have a new strategy for combating poverty and promoting social inclusion for 2014-2020, focused on family as the main social concept.

III
Ensuring
Work-Family Balance

Workplace policies and protections: a family matter

Jody Heymann, Dean, University of California, Los Angeles Fielding School of Public Health and Founding Director, WORLD Policy Analysis Center; and Kristen McNeill, Research and Policy Analyst, WORLD Policy Analysis Center

By the International Year of the Family in 1994, families were experiencing dramatic transformations. More and more men and women were working away from their homes in factories, agribusiness and service roles instead of working on their lands or operating home businesses, where the children they cared for were nearby. Women were increasingly entering the wage and salary labour force, with employers determining their hours of work and many of their working conditions. Children required as much care as they ever had — and parents had less access to traditional sources of support for this care, as urbanization trends around the world brought young families to cities away from their extended family members. At the same time, the world was beginning to reap the benefits of life-extending public health and medical interventions, which meant that caring for older family members would soon be as central a part of family care-giving as caring for children.

Despite these important changes affecting work and family lives, in 1994 we knew far too little as a global community about the lived realities of working families, the challenges they faced and the resources available to them. No one knew how many men and women around the world were simultaneously working for pay and caring for young children, older parents or disabled family members. No one knew how many children and youth received adequate care when parents were at work, and for how many there was no other choice but to leave them alone.

This lack of information was costly. While individual parents were painfully aware of the untenable choices they had to make between earning enough to sustain their family and providing essential care, decision makers often weren't aware of the prevalence and severity of these difficulties. They were also often unaware of the feasibility of solutions to these problems. Global efforts had begun to examine the availability of paid maternity leave, but there was no straightforward, comprehensive way for policymakers and civil society to learn what approaches to other challenges had been taken around the world, or what measures had been taken by countries with similar social and economic constraints and opportunities. How many countries provided paternity leave? For how long? Was this policy affordable in lower-income countries? How were countries regulating night work — through premiums, general

More than one in three working parents interviewed by the Project on Global Working Families had been forced to leave a young child home alone

Countries at every income level have made significant change in supporting work and family, but there is still a long way to go

restrictions, restrictions on particular groups? Questions that concerned working families were largely unanswered at a global level.

Important steps were taken by many to document the experiences of working families in individual countries. Together with an international team of researchers I (Jody)[1] joined these efforts, launching the Project on Global Working Families to carry out the first initiative to examine these realities on a global scale. Through this project, we conducted in-depth interviews with over 2,000 families on six continents. We used household surveys of more than 55,000 people to understand the frequency of families' challenges and opportunities among a larger, representative population. We visited workplaces ranging in size from 26 employees to over 100,000, from factory floors to wholesalers and service centres.

We found that many issues facing families posed serious risks. More than one in three of the working parents we interviewed had been forced to leave a young child home alone, while 27 per cent had left a child in the care of another child. Nearly 40 per cent of parents had needed to leave a child home alone while sick, or sent a sick child to day care or school. Almost one in four had taken children to work with them, frequently under unsafe conditions, for lack of other care options. Many of these parents had already lost jobs or promotions due to caring for a sick child. Poorer families were more likely to experience these conflicts.

We also found that while circumstances differed in important ways, the commonalities were enormous. Across borders, hundreds of millions of parents struggled with balancing their desire and need to work — both for its own sake and to provide for their families — with their desire and need to care for their children and ageing parents. This realization was critical — it meant that policymakers could recognize the value of learning about and from

the policy approaches taken by different countries to these common problems. This informed our next initiative: to collect information on the legal and policy approaches that nations had used to make work and family complementary, rather than competing, responsibilities.

Over several years, deeply informed by the work of different United Nations bodies and partnerships across academia and civil society, we launched the WORLD Policy Analysis Center. Among our first initiatives was the systematic analysis of the workplace policies in place in all 193 United Nations member states that would enable working families to balance paid work and care-giving — from leave to care for infants, to policies governing night work and overtime, to sick leave protections and more. This involved a dedicated, multilingual research team translating thousands of pages of legislative text and other sources of information on national policies into a comprehensive, comparative, quantitative database.

Twenty years after the first International Year of the Family, how are nations doing on support for working families? We have learned that when the global community gets behind an initiative, dramatic progress can be made — maternal leave is a flagship story of success. The global community has been committed to maternity leave for almost a century; the International Labour Organization adopted its first Maternity Protection Convention in 1919, and this commitment has been renewed in numerous United Nations conventions since then. This commitment has borne results: almost every United Nations member state has legislated paid leave for new mothers, with just seven countries failing to meet this near-universal standard.

We have also demonstrated the economic feasibility of supporting work and family. Again, countries at every income level have managed to make significant change. Countries with the most competitive economies over-

Is paid leave available for mothers of infants?

- No paid leave
- Yes, less than 14 weeks
- Yes, 14 weeks or more

Source: WORLD Policy Analysis Center, Adult Labour Database
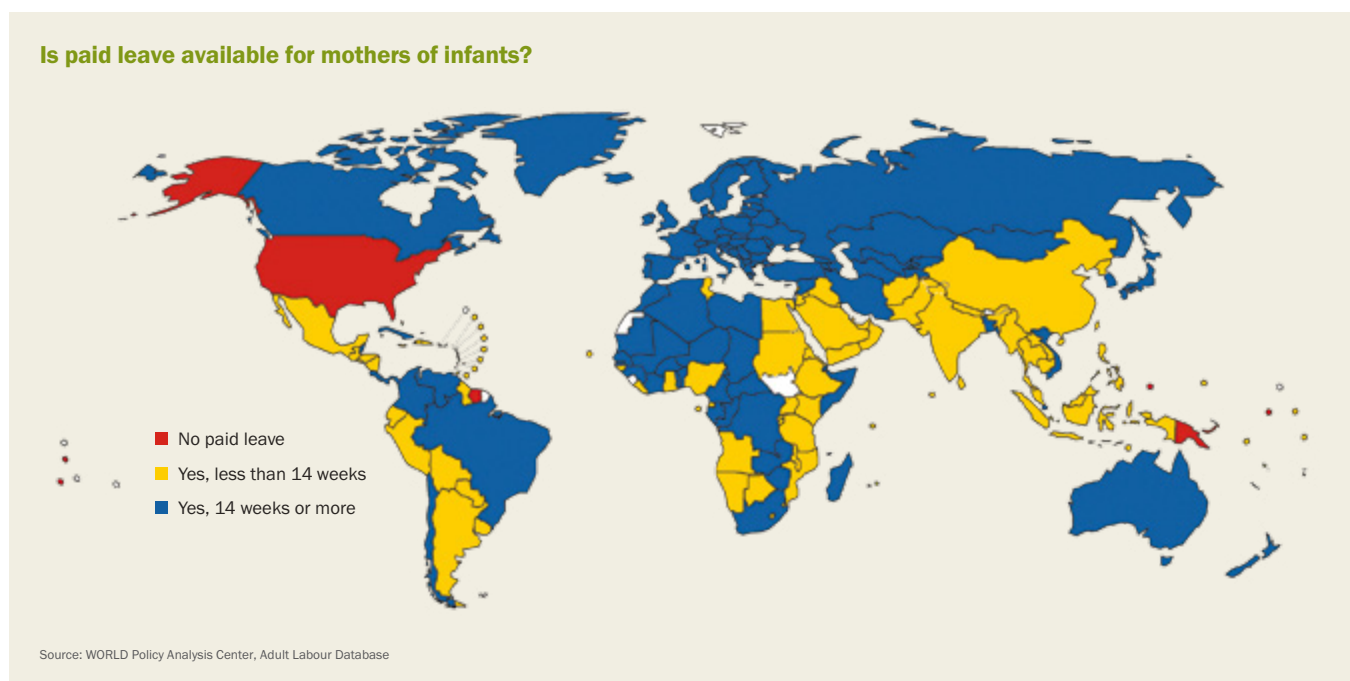
Is paid leave available for fathers of infants?

■ No paid leave
■ Yes, less than 14 weeks
■ Yes, 14 weeks or more
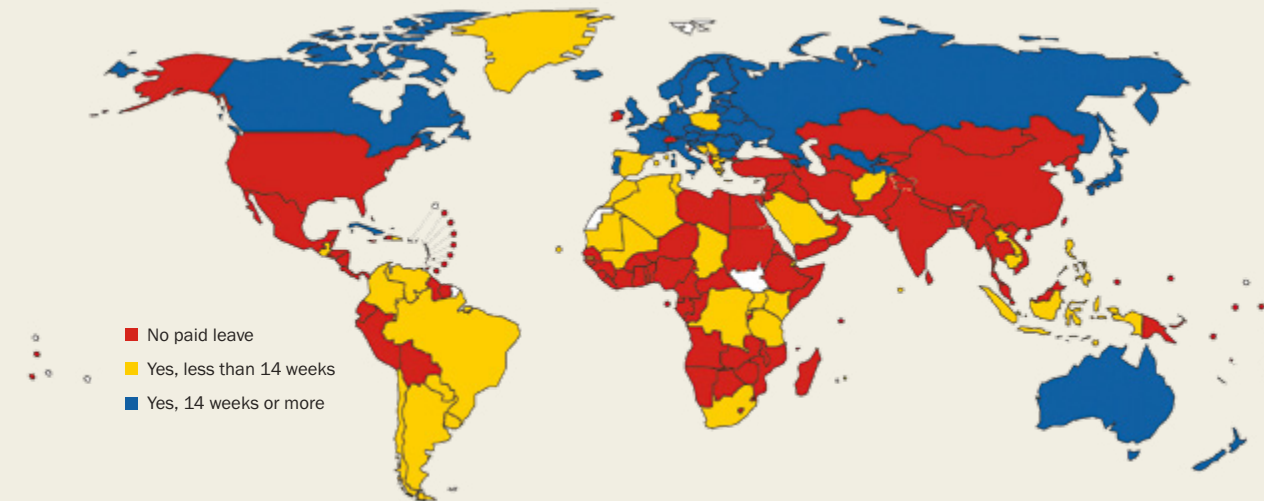
Source: WORLD Policy Analysis Center, Adult Labour Database

whelmingly guarantee paid maternal leave, paid paternal leave, and leave to care for children's health needs, for example. Countries with limited resources can also make progress — 34 low-income countries provide paid maternal leave, 11 provide paid paternal leave, and 24 guarantee breastfeeding breaks once new mothers return to work.

But there is still a long way to go. We need to ensure that men and women have an opportunity to play equal roles in care-giving and at work. Maternity leave alone is not sufficient — leave for new fathers is also key. Men need the right to spend early time with their children just as women do — this right is critical for gender equity within the home and in the workplace, as well as for the health and well-being of infants

and mothers. Leave entitlements for new fathers, however, are lagging far behind. Only 83 United Nations member states provide leave that fathers can take to care for a new child. This figure includes parental leave available to either parent, which tends to be used predominantly by women. Father-specific paid paternity leave is provided by just 65 countries, and the duration of leave is often extremely short: 56 of these countries provide three weeks or less.

Moreover, there has been far too little focus on family needs across the life course. Beyond infancy, children need care when they are sick and access to preventive and curative medical services. Nationally guaranteed access to leave from work to meet children's health needs remains rare: 55 countries provide paid leave for this purpose, and 16 countries provide unpaid leave. Parents are not the only working adults who must balance jobs and care-giving; at a time when men and women are living much longer lives, care for older adults is of increasing concern, and workplace policies must adapt to reflect this. Leave from work to care for adult family members is ensured in a minority of countries, with paid leave provided by just 37 countries and unpaid by 20 countries.

Before we began to track these policies, it was possible to stonewall change by arguing that feasible solutions were not available. Today, this is no longer the case. As a global community, we know much more about what needs to be done and what is possible. The growth of the Internet has made it possible to easily place knowledge in the hands of individual citizens and civil society. With greater transparency, we also ensure greater accountability of decision makers. Policymakers themselves can see where their country stands in comparative context and understand the feasibility of action given what similar nations have managed to accomplish. Together, we can ensure that the next generation of parents caring for young children, and adult children caring for ageing parents, find themselves facing far better odds than many families do today.

Humberto and Julia's story

Humberto and his wife Julia were thrilled when their son Humbertocito was born. They both worked in factories; Humberto had no right to paternity or parental leave, and so returned to work straight after his son was born. The law guaranteed Julia only six weeks of maternity leave, so she too returned to work quickly, and without the right to breastfeeding breaks at work, Humbertocito was weaned very young. At just six months old, Humbertocito became seriously ill with pneumonia. During his two-week long hospitalization, his parents were needed to help care for him, but neither had the right to take leave from work for a child's illness. At first, they lost income, which made meeting their basic needs and their infant son's health care expenses even more difficult. Then, Humberto was fired for taking too much time off. He did not regret prioritizing his son's health, but as he searched without success for another job, their daily struggles became greater.

Could Humberto and Julia's story have been different?
• 174 countries provide paid maternal leave for eight weeks or more
• 83 countries provide paid leave for new fathers
• 136 countries provide breastfeeding breaks
• 55 countries provide paid leave for children's health needs.

Fathers and work-family policies

Professor Margaret O'Brien, Director, Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London

Fathers' active participation in family life will likely be one of the most important social developments of the twenty-first century. Social scientists argue that today's children wish for a relationship with their daddy not only as an authority figure or 'father of duty', but also as a human 'loving father'. In many places across the world fathers are expected to be accessible and nurturing as well as economically supportive to their children. Caring father images are now part of everyday culture through advertising and depictions of sporting icons. In 1975 the preeminent fatherhood scholar Michael Lamb lamented that fathers were the "forgotten contributors to child development." Thirty-five years later in *The Role of the Father in Child Development*,[1] he declared: "How do fathers influence children's development?: let me count the ways."

Over recent decades, the issue of fathers in families has developed an increasingly global focus in research, practice and policy. In 2010 the first international conference on fatherhood in Asia took place; in 2011 the first United Nations Report on Men in Families and Family Policy in a Changing World was published; and in 2013 advocacy for active fatherhood became global with the emergence of the global fatherhood campaign, MenCare, across 25 countries on five continents.

But who are fathers and what do they typically do in the families and communities in which they live? Research has heightened our knowledge about the diversity of fathers as individuals, the variety of ways men engage in fathering (their behaviours) and the nature of fatherhood itself as a set of social and cultural norms. Even within the same kin group, fathers may behave differently to their children depending on a child's gender or a father's age and cohort position. Just as mothers' relationships with their children vary, so too do fathers' and, as the research evidence accumulates, it shows that fathers are critical to children's well-being. Children benefit and are at risk from the life histories both fathers and mothers bring to their parenting.

Engaged and caring men are important in the lives of women and children, and being engaged in family life in turn benefits men's health and well-being. Results from longitudinal research show that children who have involved fathers have fewer behavioural problems, fewer conflicts with the law, less subsequent financial vulnerability, better cognitive development and school performance, and overall feel less stress during adulthood. Conversely, evidence points to the adverse impact on children of dysfunctional or violent fathers.

An important distinction is between biological/genetic fathers and 'social fathers', who are not biologically connected to the children they live with and support. Social fathers may be step-fathers — one of the fastest growing categories of fathers in high-income countries — or kin members such as uncles or grandfathers who take on paternal responsibilities when biological fathers are absent through lone motherhood, separation or migration.

The increase in divorce and re-partnering towards the end of the last century has been a key demographic change shaping

Children are now more likely than in previous generations to experience more than one father figure throughout their life course

Fathers are increasingly expected to be accessible and nurturing to their children, as well as supporting them economically

contemporary fatherhood. Divorce rates have now stabilized and even declined in several countries, partly in connection with the decline in marriage rates. Nonetheless, divorce, separation in consensual unions and re-partnering have changed the nature of fathers' families, and they remain a significant contributing factor in the growth of the number of fathers living away from their children in different households. Children are now more likely than in previous generations to experience more than one father figure throughout their life course. Some biological fathers may cease to reside with the children of their first relationship, thereby increasing the potential for marginalization in family life.

Although non-residential fathers themselves are a mixed group, evidence shows that they tend to have poorer physical and emotional well-being (higher levels of depression and alcohol use) than divorced men without children and fathers in intact families. It is not known whether the stressful experiences of non-residential fatherhood, as well as divorce, create these problems or if non-residential fathers themselves have pre-existing and enduring difficulties.

Working conditions, in particular excessive hours, can be a barrier to active fatherhood. In rich income countries the work-family debate of the 1990s was dominated by discussion about the impact on family well-being of long weekly working hours — the 'long work hours culture'. Despite the slowdown in economic activity in many regions of the world, the working life of parents, particularly fathers and increasingly also mothers, can make sustaining a meaningful family life hard to manage.

Globally, female participation rates are highest in North America followed by Europe and Central Asia; sub-Saharan Africa; Latin America and the Caribbean; Asia and the Pacific; and the Middle East and North Africa.[2] The preva-

lence of the male breadwinner family model has diminished in those countries which experienced the expansion of female participation in the labour market. But still, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) figures show that paternal hours in paid work are much longer than for mothers. For example, while a considerable proportion (nearly a third) of fathers in couple families work more than 45 hours per week (especially in Turkey and Poland), the proportion of mothers working long hours is relatively small (around 9 per cent), except in Greece (19 per cent) and Turkey (38 per cent). South Korea, the United States and Japan make up the top three countries (in order) where the overwhelming majority of both male and female employees usually work 40 hours or more per week.

Support measures

There has also been an emergence of specific father-targeted measures to support parenting and discourage excessive working in several Asian countries. For example, despite Japan's economic downturn and cultural expectation of work devotion, company-level incentives explicitly signalling changes in fathers' behaviour have been introduced. These measures need to be situated in the regional context of rapid fertility decline since the beginning of the twenty-first century, with the total period fertility significantly below replacement level in many Asian countries: lower than 1.0 in Taiwan and between 1.2 and 1.6 in Japan, South Korea and China.

Under Japan's Act on the Advancement of Measures to Support Raising the Next Generation of Children (2003), employers are obliged to establish two-to-five-year action plans by 2015 for improving the employment environment to support balancing work and child-raising. The Government

Men's engagement in family is important to their own well-being, as well as that of their partners and children

MenCare and The Fatherhood Institute

MenCare is a global fatherhood campaigning organization. Its mission is to promote men's involvement as equitable, non-violent fathers and caregivers in order to achieve family well-being and gender equality. It works at multiple levels to engage men as caregivers and as fathers: as program participants in fathers groups, community mobilizers who push for progressive family legislation, and institutions to see engaging men as caregivers as a key dimension of gender equality. Practice areas include: corporal punishment; the rights of immigrant and incarcerated fathers. www.men-care.org

Ten themes are the backbone of the MenCare approach:
• Be involved from the start
• Share the care work
• Be proud & show it
• Provide health care
• Just play
• Educate
• Be brave: show affection
• Raise without violence
• Teach equality & respect
• Support the mother.

The Fatherhood Institute works to promote the benefits of involving fathers in children's learning, development and well-being. It wants to change society to ensure that fathers are recognised, included and supported alongside mothers in all aspects of caring for their children; and that boys and girls are educated and prepared for future roles in sharing active parenthood. It works closely with women's and family organisations who share their commitment to involve fatherhood from pregnancy onwards, because the evidence is clear just how crucial this is for children. Its mission is A GREAT DAD FOR EVERY CHILD and to:
• ensure that its activities are informed by a balanced and comprehensive body of evidence, readily accessible through open access at www.fatherhood.org
• undertake and commission research and evaluate its work, in order to compile this evidence base and achieve a good understanding of the addressed issues and the efficacy of interventions
• pay particular attention to families who are disadvantaged, lobby for changes in the law, policy and practice to enable and facilitate greater childcare involvement by fathers
• provide employers and public services with information, training and consultancy to enable them to engage better with men as fathers
• work directly with mothers and fathers to help them manage their relationship and work together as a parenting team.

grants highly esteemed certificates to employers whose action plans and achievement meet nine conditions, and allows them to use a certification mark called 'Kurumin'. The conditions include: encouraging fathers to take childcare leaves (at least one male employee must take parental leave during the period of the plan); promoting shorter working hours; and measures to reduce overtime work.

In terms of macro-level policy interventions there is growing evidence that employment-based family support measures — such as maternity and paternity leave following childbirth and parental leave to care for children in the early years — has the potential for improving child health. Tanaka (2005) has conducted large-scale secondary analyses of parental leave arrangements and child health outcomes for 16 European and 18 of 30 OECD countries respectively. Both programmes of work suggest infant mortality and morbidity gains associated with parental leave.

Statutory leave provision for fathers at the time of a child's birth (paternity leave) or later, in the early years of a child's life (parental leave) are significant policies. A focus on fathers is timely as the complexity, scope and speed of policy change since the late 1990s in this area is striking.

Designated father-targeted or reserved schemes enhance fathers' utilization rates. Blocks of time which are labelled 'daddy days' or 'father's quota' are attractive to men and their partners. At this point in time fathers (and their partners) may need more explicit labelling to legitimize paternal access to the care of infants and children. Even when conditions are favourable it takes time for utilization to become the dominant pattern.

The Iceland '3+3+3 month' model has significantly shifted male behaviour in a relatively short period of time. It was introduced early in the 2000s, and by 2006 over 90 per cent of Icelandic fathers were taking parental leave. Ingólfur Gíslason[3]

notes: "Probably, there have never been more Icelandic fathers active in caring for their children than there are today."

In the current economic context the future of men's behaviour as fathers, partners and workers is uncertain. There are countervailing value positions and the preference for the father as an economic provider-in-chief remains a strong cultural force in many countries. Nevertheless, governments and civil societal actors across the world are attempting to fit fathers into work-family polices and continuing these efforts despite global economic turbulence.

Expanding national policies and programmes to promote a stronger engagement of men in family care activities through the life course will help modernize work-family policies to catch up with the changing role of women. In the twentieth century many post-war public polices created systems and services which assumed a full-time female home carer supporting a full-time male breadwinner, a work-family model which no longer fits the circumstances of twenty-first century families.

Caring, supportive and protective families can break the intergenerational cycle of poverty, inequity and discrimination

David Anthony, Chief, Policy Advocacy and Coordination, Division of Policy and Strategy, UNICEF

On 20 November 2014, the global community celebrates the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This unique document sets out the universal standards for the care, treatment and protection of all individuals below the age of 18, and is the most widely endorsed human rights treaty in history.

Over the past 25 years, the convention has helped to transform the way children are viewed and treated throughout the world. This begins with its preamble, which cites the family as the fundamental building block of society and the natural home for the development of adults and particularly children, and recognizes that children, for their full and harmonious growth, should grow up in a happy, loving and understanding family environment. Eight of the convention's 49 articles also explicitly underscore the central role of family relations and parental guidance in realizing children's rights.

The convention is the guiding light for the work of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), whose mandate includes:

- mobilizing political will and material resources to help countries, particularly developing countries
- ensuring a 'first call for children'
- building countries' capacity to form appropriate policies and deliver services for children and their families.

Caring, supportive, protective families are critical to children's well-being and the realization of their rights. And they are never more important than in the earliest years of a child's life. Good nutrition and health care, and consistent loving care and encouragement from families and caregivers to learn in the early years of life help children to do better at school, be

Families are of fundamental importance to stable, prosperous and rights-respecting societies

More than half of the reduction in under-five child mortality during the past four decades can be attributed to the increase in women's education

healthier, have higher earnings and participate more in society. This is especially important for children in poverty. A good foundation in the early years makes a difference through adulthood and even gives the next generation a better start.

UNICEF's strong focus on community-based primary health care, adopted since the early 1980s, came in response to growing evidence that low-cost techniques such as growth monitoring, immunization, oral rehydration and breastfeeding had the potential to save millions of children's lives if the focus of service delivery was changed from institutions to families. Poor families in particular often make enormous sacrifices to ensure their children have access to and utilize quality health care, adequate nutrition, safe water and decent sanitation, and can attend school. Protective families form the first line of defence for children against violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination, and the first safety net for them against shocks and crises.

Parents are of fundamental importance to child survival, development and well-being. The facts speak for themselves, particularly on mothers' education. Globally, over half of the reduction in under-five child mortality during the past four decades can be attributed to the increase in women's education. Children of mothers with secondary education or higher are twice as likely to survive beyond the age of five as children of mothers who have no education. A child born to a mother who can read is 50 per cent more likely to survive past five years old. Each extra year of a mother's schooling reduces the probability of an infant dying by 5-10 per cent.

Educated women are less likely to marry early and more likely to have smaller and healthier families. They are also more likely to get a job and earn a higher wage. Educated women are more likely to send their children to school, and better able to protect their children from malnutrition, HIV infection, trafficking and sexual exploitation.

The opposite, however, is also true. Many children are deprived of a loving, caring family for numerous reasons — the loss of parents, separation related to displacement, domestic violence and abuse, migration and extreme poverty, among others. Children's vulnerability to poverty and inequity, exclusion and discrimination, and violence, abuse and exploitation, increases markedly without the caring support and guidance of families. When they are deprived of parental care or face violence or abuse within the home, children struggle to reach their full potential and often experience deprivations that have lifelong consequences.

Children who are often, though by no means always, lacking family support are especially vulnerable to exclusion and discrimination: orphaned children; street children; children separated from home and family by exploitation, including the worst forms of child labour; children in institutions, including juvenile detention; and children who prematurely enter into adult roles such as marriage and parenthood. Robust statistics are often unavailable for many of these children, but they do exist for the first (orphans) and last (child marriage and adolescent parenthood). Focusing on these two issues gives some insight into how loss of family protection affects children and the extent of these deprivations themselves.

Worldwide, in 2012 around 150 million children under the age of 18 had lost one or both parents due to any cause. Families and communities rally round when children lose one or both parents: there are innumerable stories and experiences of family and community care and protection for orphaned children. But the loss of one parent, or both, often also has a devastating impact on the family.

This is particularly true for school enrolment in the poorer regions of the world. One indicator of the impact of parental loss is the orphan school attendance ratio, which compares

Governments must support positive parenting and defend the rights of children against all threats

Families are pivotal to realizing children's rights

Every child should have the opportunity to grow up in a caring, supportive and protective family

the number of children attending school who have lost one or both parents against those of the same age with both parents alive. In sub-Saharan Africa, 91 orphans go to school for every 100 children of the same age with both parents alive. In South Asia, this ratio is even worse, dropping to 72 orphans for every 100 children of the same age with both parents alive.

The facts for child marriage, which often involves the marriage of adolescent girls to adult men, are equally alarming. Eleven per cent of girls worldwide are married before the age of 15, jeopardizing their rights to health, education and protection; more than one third are married by the age of 18. Child marriage often leads to pregnancy and parenthood for adolescent female spouses. This impedes these adolescent girls from fully realizing their rights as children and often serves to perpetuate the intergenerational cycle of poverty and inequity, as impoverished adolescent mothers give birth to children who face significant disadvantages from birth.

An agenda for children and families

What can be done to break this cycle, and give each and every child the opportunity to grow up in a caring, supportive and protective family? There are no easy answers or quick fixes. But there are actions that can contribute to supporting families, to enable them to better realize the rights of their children.

First, governments must examine their support to families and children, particularly the poorest and most marginalized, and maximize their actions in support of them. Chief among these efforts is to fulfil their commitments under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to recognize and support the diversity of family structures, provide economic support to impoverished families through social protection and inclusive growth strategies, and to support positive parenting at the same time as defending the rights of children against all threats, including any that may originate within the family and community.

Second, parents must become an integral part of all decision-making processes that affect children's lives, including at school, in the home and in political forums, from inception to completion.

Third, families and communities must know the rights of children, and be supported in their efforts to demand that these rights be met. Equally important is that no family or community member must ever be immune from prosecution for acts that violate children's rights to protection from violence, abuse and exploitation.

Fourth, the post-2015 agenda must underscore the fundamental importance of families to stable, prosperous and rights-respecting societies, and propose measures to strengthen and support families in the rapidly changing world of the twenty-first century.

Finally, a global conversation about the changing nature of family and its implications for children, childhood and realizing the rights of all of the world's 2.2 billion children needs to be opened as we mark the International Year of the Family and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. And that conversation must be sustained far into the future.

Across the world, the size, demography and even the concept of the family is changing. Family size is shrinking in line with diminished fertility rates everywhere. At the same time, family demographics are changing as many societies age at a rapid rate, and the family demands of children are beginning to be matched or even surpassed by those of the elderly in some contexts. Our notions of family, long seen as biological and blood tied, are also being challenged by new societal structures, questions and interlinkages. As these change, so must our understanding of family, accompanied by a debate, a resolution and conclusion of the responsibilities of families, however constructed and accepted, to the cornerstone of family: children.

A better work-life balance for both fathers and mothers

Willem Adema[1], Senior Economist, Social Policy Division, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

Families are the core of many social networks. They provide identity, love, care, nurturing and development to their members. As such, families are a crucial engine of solidarity, redistributing resources — in cash, in kind and in time — among individuals, households and generations, while providing protection against economic loss and hardship. In all, families are cornerstones of societies and economies.

Families are changing across the world with evolving norms, educational opportunities and labour markets. Often both parents work because the family has to make ends meet, but also to pursue individual aspirations and careers. Increasingly, women are better educated and female employment rates are rising. Today, many fathers and mothers want to both participate in the labour market and have an active family life, while children in couple families are more likely to have both parents in work rather than just one.

Governments recognize the importance of families in society and the avowed family policy objective in many countries is to support families by providing parents with more choice in their work and family decisions. However, family policy often has to address a range of different — but interrelated — policy objectives including promoting gender equality, combating family and child poverty, promoting child development and enhancing child well-being. The manner in which governments support 'more choice for families' varies considerably across countries, and these differences are rooted in countries' histories, economic development, societal attitudes, the role of government, current family and labour market outcomes, and the relative weight given to the different underlying family policy objectives.

Investing early in children

Supporting children and their development is a public policy concern across the world. Governments invest considerable amounts in a range of child supports and education. In many

Public spending per child by age in US$ PPP (purchasing power parities)
Public investment in children increases as they grow up
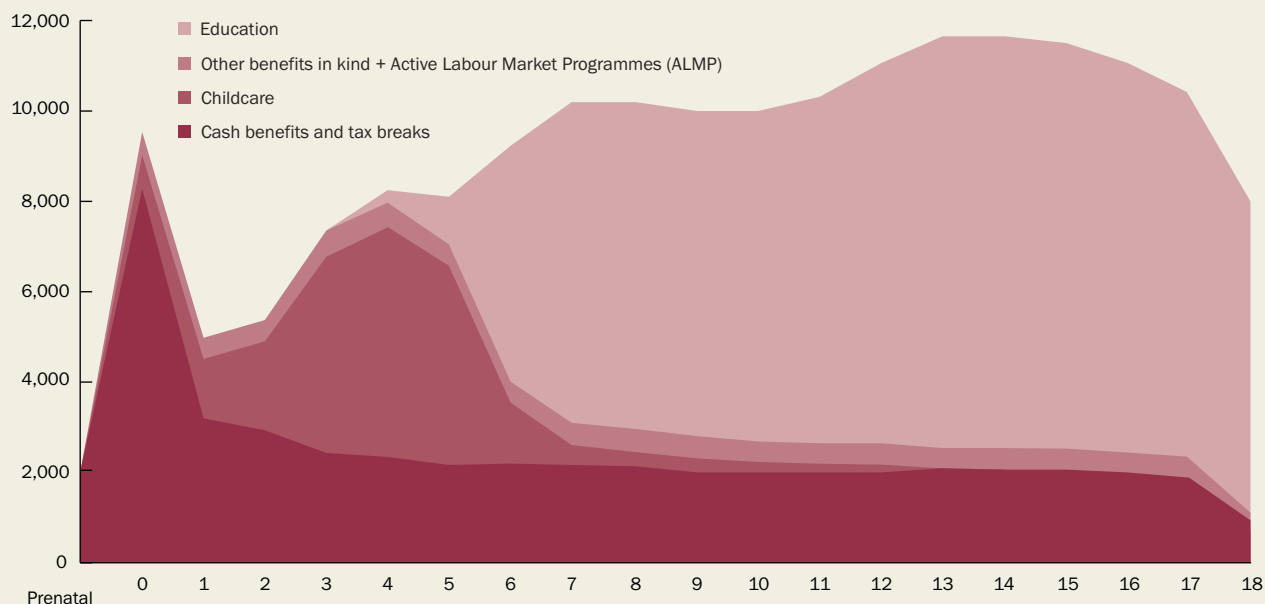
Source: OECD (2014a), OECD Family database

developed economies public spending on child supports amounts to about 2.5 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and another 6 per cent of GDP is spent on education.

Evidence suggests that the effectiveness of public investment in human capital is highest when it takes place in early childhood (before compulsory school), when it is focused on the most vulnerable population, and when it is maintained throughout childhood. However, that is not yet what happens in most countries. Available data for the countries that belong to the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) show that on average, spending per child is lowest during the early years and increases as children grow up.

Many countries provide tax support and cash allowances to families throughout childhood, but spending on cash transfers is highest during the early years with the payment of maternity benefits and income support benefits during parental leave. In some countries, such as the Czech Republic and Finland, these benefits can last until the child's third birthday.

Interventions during the early years should ensure that formal childcare services are available when parental leave runs out. However, in many countries there are gaps in support where there is a dip in investment when children are around one to four years of age. Investment in children during the 'kindergarten years' (age three to five) is below levels available in later years, when children attend compulsory primary and secondary education.

The role of childcare

Investment in a continuum of parental leave and formal childcare supports as well as family-friendly workplace practices (such as working part-time) also helps people to realize their plans to have children at the time of their choice, as these

supports are crucial to combining work and family aspirations. By contrast, if people have to choose between babies and bosses it tends to reduce either birth or female employment rates or both. For this reason in many industrialized countries birth rates have fallen to 1.2 or 1.5 children per woman. Birth rates are closest to two children per woman in countries such as the Nordic countries, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom which appear to have more effective work-family policy mixes of financial support to families, family-friendly workplace arrangements and formal childcare supports.

Childcare is particularly important for reconciling work and family life. Parents are more likely to be in work, and to be more productive and happy in work, if childcare is accessible, affordable and when they are confident that their children are being looked after properly. Since the late 1990s, the proportion of children under six years old in formal childcare has grown from around 33 per cent to over 50 per cent across the OECD.[2] However, across countries and families the use of childcare differs. In Sweden, one of the richest countries in the world with many dual-earner families, publicly provided preschool services have universal coverage for children from age one or two years onwards. Often it is the father who brings the child to preschool in the morning and they are usually picked up by their mother in the afternoon: children in Sweden generally attend preschool for six hours per day. Because of the prevailing culture of long working hours in Korea, children with working parents use childcare for more hours per day: eight hours and 23 minutes per day on average; and almost one-third of children with both parents in work attend childcare for more than nine hours per day. Elsewhere day-care programmes are targeted at low-income families,

Employment to population ratio, and the share of part-time employment, among women aged 25-54 years
Two-thirds of women (age 25-54) are in paid work often on a full-time basis

- Employment/population ratio
- Part-time employment as a share of the employment/population ratio
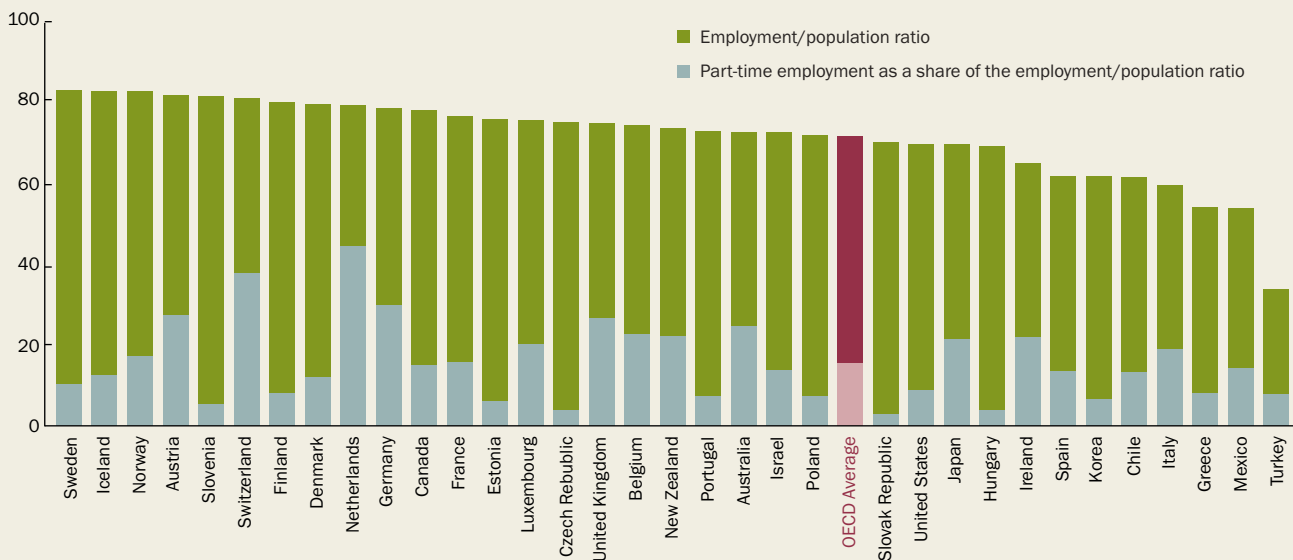
Note: For example, in The Netherlands, 79% of the women aged 25-54 are in paid work; 44% of the women aged 25-54 work part-time

Source: OECD (2014b), OECD Employment database

Time spent in unpaid, paid and total work, female minus male, in minutes per day
Women often spend more time working than men and do more unpaid work

Note: Countries are arranged from left to right in ascending order of the gender gap in unpaid work

Source: OECD (2014c), OECD Gender Data portal
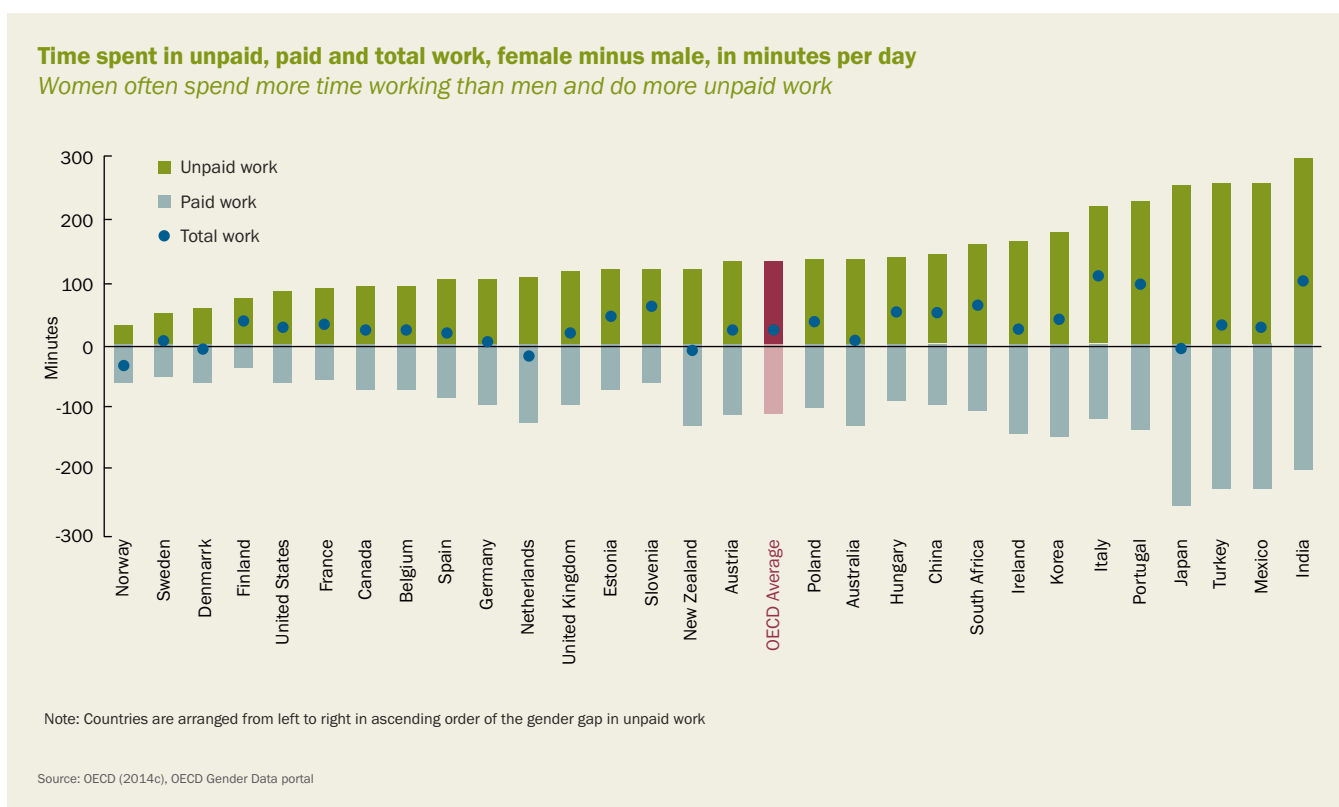
to help improve household incomes of poor families. For example, Mexico's federal day-care programme for working mothers, 'Programa de Estancias Infantiles para Apoyar a Madres Trabajadoras' (Child-Keeping Programme to Help Working Mothers), subsidizes community and home-based day-care providers as well as low-income mothers who enrol their children to facilitate the employment of these mothers.[3]

The growing enrolment of children in childcare has enhanced female employment on a full-time and part-time basis.[4] And as many industrialized countries are ageing with working-age populations that are stabilizing or diminishing (such as Japan), helping parents in work will become ever more important to many economies. For example, if we assume that male and female labour force participation rates remain as they were in 2010, then by 2030 the labour force will decline by more than 10 per cent in the Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, Poland, the Russian Federation, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia.

Good quality childcare is not only important to female employment and economic growth, it is also key to child development. Some evidence suggests that mothers returning to work before the child is six months old may have negative effects on child cognitive outcomes, particularly when employment is on a full-time basis. The effects are, however, small, not universally observed and, in certain circumstances, balanced by positive effects related to having extra family income. In addition, high-quality formal childcare is linked with cognitive and developmental gains, particularly for children from more disadvantaged home environments.[5] However, in many countries children in the lowest income groups are least likely to participate in formal childcare services, which

highlights the important challenges for childcare policies of ensuring access, affordability and quality.

The role of fathers

Gender employment gaps have been narrowing but paid work gaps are widening. Across the OECD, female employment rates are over 13 per cent below those of men, even though women make up 70 per cent of all part-time workers. Many OECD countries have introduced legislation that either grants part-time work entitlements or gives employees the right to request flexible working-time arrangements. These measures are generally commendable, but they can have an unintended side effect. As women much more than men tend to avail themselves of options to reduce working hours or use parental leave, these policy measures can inadvertently deepen gender differences in employment.

Gender gaps feed into the decisions made by women about work activities and intensities, about having children and home-care options.[6] On average, women work two hours more per day in unpaid work in and around home. Men spend more time in paid work, but overall in most countries women spend more time in paid and unpaid work than men.[7] Across countries, mothers spend more time on educating, caring, playing and cleaning for children, while fathers are more likely to limit their involvement to learning and leisure activities. When mothers enter employment, fathers could take on more of the cleaning and caring responsibilities within families. In reality, shares of housework and caring remain far from even, with mothers doing more of both even when fathers are unemployed. Overall, gender gaps in unpaid work are smallest in Scandinavian countries and rather large in Japan, Turkey, Mexico and India. This has important implications as the countries where fathers

Total weks of paid paternity/parental leave available to fathers which cannot be transferred to partners
In some countries fathers are entitled to a couple of months of paid leave to care for children
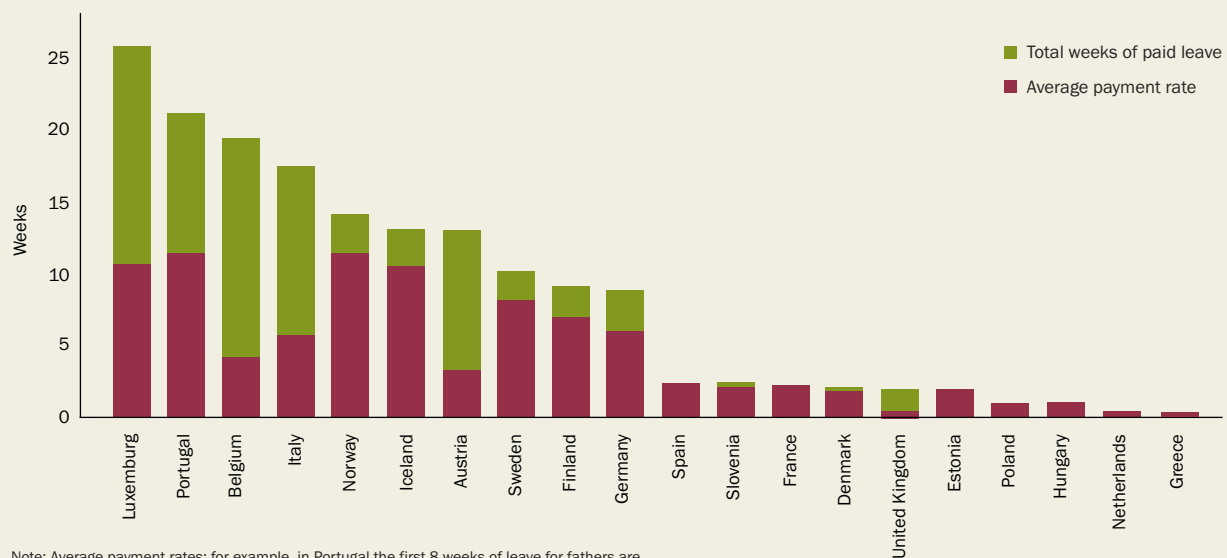
Note: Average payment rates: for example, in Portugal the first 8 weeks of leave for fathers are paid at 100% of earnings, while the supplementary leave period of 13 weeks is paid at 25%: on average almost 54% of last earnings across the whole period of leave

Source: OECD (2014a), OECD Family database

engage more in unpaid work, such as in Denmark, Sweden and Norway also have higher female employment rates.

Tax and benefit systems often provide financial incentives for one parent to stay at home when children are young. Usually, this is the mother, which makes financial sense from a household perspective as she often earns less than her partner. In many countries, fathers' leave to care for children is limited to a few days around childbirth. However, in a number of countries including the Nordic countries but also Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Luexemburg and Portugal, policy encourages fathers to take leave to care for young children by granting them the exclusive right to part of the parental leave entitlement on a 'use it or lose it' basis or provide 'bonus' months when couples share leave entitlements while to a varying degree providing income support during the leave period. For example, in Portugal the first eight weeks of leave for fathers are paid at 100 per cent of earnings, while the supplementary leave period of 13 weeks is paid at 25 per cent: on average almost 54 per cent of last earnings is paid across the whole period of leave. In Iceland, fathers are entitled to three months of paid leave at 75 per cent of earnings up to a threshold. Since the introduction of these 'daddy months' in 2001, take-up by fathers has increased tenfold. Iceland will continue with reform, as it is in the process of gradually increasing the period of fathers' leave from three months in 2013 to five months in 2016.

Employers and unions can also help reconcile work-family life balance. Having a family-friendly workplace can motivate current staff, reduce staff turnover and sickness absenteeism, help attract new staff, reduce workplace stress and generally enhance worker satisfaction and productivity. As such, there is a business case for family-friendly workplace supports, which is strongest for workers who are difficult to replace and when flexible workplace arrangements least affect the production process, but much less prevalent for small and medium-sized enterprises. Unions can play a stronger role in improving the provision of family-friendly work practices, but either they lack bargaining power or they do not prioritize demands in this area.

Parents across the globe are under pressure to combine work and family commitments, and policy aims to support families by means of financial support, parental leave, formal care arrangements and flexible workplace practices. Ideally, these policy measures should logically fit together into a continuum of support without gaps. Family policy investment will be most effective if it starts during the early years and is sustained throughout childhood: such a strategy also has the potential to ensure high social rates of return and help avoid more costly interventions later in life.

Childcare policy has an important role to play as it can simultaneously contribute to all the underlying family policy and gender equity objectives. Policy should ensure that affordable, good quality childcare — with support being conditional on quality standards — is available to assure parents that their children are being looked after properly and enhance child development.

Government should encourage all employers to offer part-time employment opportunities, flexibility in working hours and gender-equitable parental leave to all employees. Government should also promote gender-equitable use of part-time work opportunities and parental leave entitlements. This can be done through a mix of flexible use of leave, covering shorter periods but better paid, and providing leave for fathers that cannot be transferred to mothers. Getting fathers to do more unpaid work and enabling more low-income families to use formal childcare are among the important challenges facing gender equitable family policy today.

Ensuring work-family balance

Agnes Uhereczky, Director, Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union

Being able to balance work and family life is an almost daily preoccupation for many. Achieving a good balance is key for families to live the life they aspire to. Too little work will mean less income than is needed to live in dignity and comfort, and too much work may compromise the well-being and health of family members. It is especially important for children that their parents have enough time to nurture and educate them. In addition to parenting and household tasks, people also need time to pursue their interests and hobbies, learn, play, and recharge their batteries.

What we perceive as the lack of balance in managing work obligations and family responsibilities — namely a problem of not enough time — is only the tip of the iceberg in reconciling work and family life. Our quality of life and subjective well-being are greatly influenced by the hours we work, both in paid employment and in our homes. Women and men report spending different amounts of time on these tasks. According to the Eurofound European Quality of Life Survey 2011-2012, women estimate that on average they spend 30 hours a week providing childcare compared with 17 hours for men, and 14 hours on care for the elderly compared with 11 hours for men. Housework occupies 16 hours a week for women and 10 hours for men — all in addition to hours spent in the workplace.

As for the iceberg, whatever we see of it floating above sea level is tiny compared to its size below the surface. Similarly, what we perceive as a lack of work-life balance is the symptom of a greater structural problem that remains hidden. Unless society manages to collectively tackle the issues of modernizing the labour market; adjusting it to a more female workforce; adapting the care system for children, the disabled and other dependant family members; and using innovative solutions to work and family life. All we will do is scratch the surface of the iceberg, bringing little change in the quality of life for families.

Before going into detail about the different elements of work-life balance policies and practices, it is important to understand how these structural problems developed, and what are some of the reasons for this imbalance. What is globally experienced by families, women, men and children as the conflict between family and work responsibilities, is the building up of tension between the societal changes of the past 50 years and the inability of the labour market and public policies to adapt to these changes.

There has been a significant change to family life in the past years. Europe's families are working families, and increasingly dual-earner families where both parents want or need to work. Although women have entered the labour market in massive numbers, gaining financial autonomy and personal recognition, they often face different employment conditions to men. They are more likely to be in part-time work, have employee status or hold a temporary position, and we know through wage statistics that there is still a significant gender pay gap of 16 per cent in Europe. Too often, when there is a family emergency such as an accident, an elderly parent in need of care or a baby with health problems, it is the women — the mothers — who leave their jobs to take on the responsibility. An overwhelmingly large proportion of informal care is performed by family carers. This is an invisible workload that can have grave implications for the out-of-work carer in the long run, such as mental health issues, physical problems, isolation, social exclusion and risk of poverty. This is why COFACE-Disability elaborated the European Charter for Family Carers to recognize the very important work done by informal carers.

Here is the first important misunderstanding around work-family balance — it is not only an issue for those in work;

Sectors such as education, health care and childcare have a predominantly female workforce

priority must also be given to enabling jobless carers to find and keep a job.

There are also some sectors which are predominantly female: 80 per cent of health-care workers are women, and the picture is similar in the education, childcare, home-care and other social service sectors. Those sectors where the majority of workers are women tend to have lower wages and more part-time work. This partly suits the need for reconciling work and family responsibilities, but this sectoral gender pay gap also leads to a growing pensions gap, which puts older women at risk of poverty. Looking towards higher paid positions, with higher responsibilities, we see increasingly fewer women. Even though more women graduate from universities than men, many have started a family by the time they would reach a leadership position in their career, and their priorities change. Women employed in the private sector, in managerial positions, who ask for the possibility to work reduced hours, are usually considered less motivated and less career-driven, and this can lead to being sidelined and even the loss of the position. There are some budding initiatives for quotas for women in decision-making positions, which would help to break this 'glass ceiling', but it remains to be seen whether these will work.

There have also been some successful quota systems for men, notably in Norway, where quotas were introduced for fathers to take their paternity leave. As more and more men now report having difficulties in balancing their work and family life, as well as feeling a growing need to spend time with their children and families, there is a profound attitude change happening for men, and in particular for fathers, and its societal and economic impact cannot be underesti-

mated. However, progress remains slow, especially in the private sector, where the take-up of paternity and parental leave remains very low. Even in countries where the legal framework guarantees this right for new fathers, many fathers decide not to take their leave for fear of losing their job or losing out on career opportunities or the next promotion.

Demographic changes coupled with increased labour market mobility also have a profound impact on what families look like today compared to 50 years ago, and how they live their lives. We live longer, but not necessarily in good health, have children later, and fewer children on average than previous generations. This leads to a contracting workforce and a growing dependency rate. As entire families or family members move to find better jobs or opportunities they don't have in their own city, region or country of origin, the different generations no longer live in proximity, and new parents often find themselves without the help of grandparents and other relatives. But the opposite is also true; ageing parents can no longer count on regular help from their own children. Of course, new technologies such as Skype enable families to stay in touch, but this will never be a substitute for regular, personal contact, help and care.

The financial and economic situation of Europe for the past couple of years has had a rather negative effect on the quality of life for families, and even set us back in some areas where good progress had previously been made, such as gender equality, women's employment and childcare services. Austerity measures to reduce public expenditure and debt have had a devastating effect on public social services, especially across the southern European countries. Greece and Spain are among the worst affected, but Ireland

Women estimate that they spend 30 hours a week providing childcare compared with 17 hours for men

Men feel a growing need to spend time with their families, but many experience difficulties in balancing their work and family life

and the United Kingdom have also imposed cuts that affected families. The availability and affordability of quality public services play a crucial role in enabling families to live the life they want, make the choices they want, and ultimately to find a good work-life balance. At the same time, however, the private sector has its fingers on the pulse and employers are waking up to the reality of the demographic change. They realize that to attract and retain qualified workers, they must offer not only the right salary packages, but also measures to enable their employees to reconcile their work with their family obligations.

With all these profound changes going on around us and in our own homes, the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family is timely, as it will draw the much-needed attention of policymakers and decision-makers, civil society and the private sector to the most relevant issues families are facing today. Through organizing exchanges and fostering cooperation, 2014 will be an important year to take the first steps towards understanding the challenges and working out sustainable and innovative solutions. COFACE will place the issue high on the EU agenda through our 2014 Year for Reconciling Work and Family Life in Europe.

Now back to the iceberg: what are the structural changes needed to enable families to better reconcile their work and

The German initiative 'Erfolgsfaktor Familie' (Success-factor family) brings together 4,500 companies that are family friendly, and has a searchable database of best practices of these initiatives on its website www.erfolgsfaktor-familie.de

family life, and not only contribute to the better well-being of individual family members, but also, as is proven, to enhance productivity and contribute to a better functioning society and economy?

Family policy, and thus reconciliation policies, can be categorized in three distinct groups:
• time policies (working time, leave)
• resources (income, tax reduction, allowances)
• services (childcare, care of the elderly and disabled, household services).

Currently, there is great discussion around the family-friendly workplace. The number of working hours is a fundamental factor in influencing the quality of life both inside and outside work. The two keywords here are:
• flexibility — to manage both spheres of our lives (work and private) according to the situation
• boundaries — setting the divide between the two spheres.

According to a recent study by the Families and Work Institute, a large majority (87 per cent) of all employees report that having the flexibility they need to manage work and personal or family life would be 'extremely' or 'very' important if they were looking for a new job. Yet one in five employees disagree 'somewhat' or 'strongly' that they now have the schedule flexibility they need to manage the demands of their work and personal lives.

It is clear that, in general, people feel that work disturbs their home life more than their family responsibilities affect work performance; this is the case for respondents in all countries of the latest Eurofound European Quality of Life Survey. New

Empowering families to achieve a work-life balance can benefit the family, society and the economy

information and communications technology tools mean that work has become increasingly mobile, and it is increasingly difficult to draw boundaries between the work sphere and the private or family sphere. In order to address these issues, Volkswagen in Germany opted to switch off the Blackberry server at the end of the working day. There are various interesting and new private sector initiatives offered to employees, such as laundry or ironing services, caring for ill children, and help with employees' household cleaning. These are usually organized through a voucher system. The question, however, is whether it really serves the interest of the employee and their relationship to the employer, if the employer solves the employee's private sphere issues during working hours. Wouldn't it be better if the employer would give workers the flexibility and opportunities to deal with their personal challenges themselves, away from the workplace?

There are also very heated discussions and split opinions about employer-supported childcare, or company childcare. IKEA has adapted the opening hours of its nurseries to the working hours of its staff; children can attend from 6.30 a.m. to — 9.30 p.m. Mondays to Saturdays, all year round. Some companies offer baby-sitters who can be deployed within the hour to pick up children from school in case the parents are stuck in a meeting or on a delayed flight.

The economic reasoning of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in its 2007 Babies and Bosses study is that when parents cannot realize their aspirations in work and family life, it isn't only their well-being that is impaired. Economic progress is also affected through reduced labour supply and lower productivity, which ultimately undermine the long-term fiscal sustainability of

Families disperse as their members move away to find work, and many ageing parents can no longer count on regular help from their own children

universal welfare systems. It is becoming increasingly clear that in order to sustain the European welfare or social model, everybody — women and men — have to work. Women's entry to the labour market creates jobs in the areas of care for children and other dependents as well as for consumer-oriented services in general. Concerning part-time work, which seems a great opportunity to balance the two spheres of life, they would need to be good quality jobs as well, meaning improved recognition, access to social security as for full-time jobs, and enabling for career development. This way part-time jobs and other flexible and innovative work arrangements could contribute to gender equality and active security for working families.

A more flexible, but at the same time secure labour market could also better accommodate critical life course transitions. Thus, it could reduce the probability of dropping out of the workforce and losing out on income. These events can happen to any family at any time.

In addition to workplace measures, families have a right to affordable, accessible and quality care services, not only for children, but also for elderly and disabled family members. These services enable them to stay in the labour market, and thus earn an income and build up social security and pension rights. This is another aspect of the below-the-water structural issues. Following the dual developments of higher female labour market participation and the recognition of the rights of the child, early childhood care and education services are also at the top of the welfare reform agenda. There are different opinions and cultural, historical and economic contexts in different parts of Europe on this subject. But they converge in the understanding that such available quality services enable women to integrate or return to the labour market and contribute to the physical, emotional and social and cognitive development of the child. The devil, as usual, is in the detail as to how this can be achieved with the current cuts to social service spending. However, statistics show us that those countries with higher rates of female labour market participation coupled with universal and quality childcare systems have the highest fertility rates in Europe. This could serve as an inspiration to other countries when they make their choices on what services to finance, and how to better finance social services.

The discussion about early childcare provision cannot be totally decoupled from the discussion about the leave system in any given country, as the length and rate of payment for these leaves (maternity, paternity and parental) will impact on the capabilities of parents and families to make their own choices about childcare and return to the labour market. Here, again, we are faced with very different historical, cultural and organizational models. However, generous leaves that are not too short, that have a relatively high rate of financing, and that allow the family to choose which parent takes the leave, seem to do the trick.

It is also important to stress that every family is different, and every family has a different approach to work-life balance. But as numerous studies and real life examples show, both on the level of individuals (children and families) and on broader levels (workforce, macroeconomic), when families are empowered to make their own choices and are supported in achieving work-life balance, the investment really pays off for the family, and for society and the economy as a whole.

Making mothers matter

Florence von Erb, President, Make Mothers Matter

I n the 2010 Survey of Mothers in Europe, Make Mothers Matter (MMM) asked mothers to give a description of their transition into motherhood. In answer to the question, 'what does it mean to become a mother?', one respondent replied: "Before it was just ME; now I am US."

The birth of a child constitutes a major and irreversible change in focus, priorities and life-course. One never again sees life as one did before becoming a mother.[1] This transformation is experienced by all mothers in the world, rich or poor, married or single, young or old. It alters the perspectives of women for the rest of their lives as they face new realities and challenges. Globally, it is estimated that over 75 per cent of women of child-bearing age are mothers.

Believing that no one should presume to speak for them, MMM strives to listen to mothers' voices around the world and amplify their message. Its advocacy work is complemented by workshops where mothers share their best practices, difficulties and invaluable knowledge of dealing with the daily commitment of being the best 'us' they can be.

MMM has found that mothers do not feel they have the support to achieve the difficult task of reconciling work and family life, and they also continue to crave the recognition

that their work at home — their unpaid care-giving — is as valued and respected as work outside the house.

In her book, *The Price of Motherhood*,[2] Ann Crittenden states: "as the twenty-first century begins, women may be approaching equality, but mothers are still far behind. Changing the status of mothers by gaining real recognition for their work is the great unfinished business of the women's movement". The difference in achievement between mothers and childless women has prompted researchers and sociologists to talk about the 'family pay gap' or the 'mommy penalty' (the wage inequality between women with children and those without).

A study showed that by the late 1990s American women without children were earning 90 per cent of men's wages, while similar aged women with children were making the equivalent of only 70 per cent.[3] Were the analogous statistic available for other countries, it is highly probable that this gap — if not a larger one — would apply to most women in the world. How is this discrepancy explained?

The MMM 'Realities of Mothers in Europe' study[4] showed that the majority of mothers — 64 per cent — wish or need to combine paid employment with family care, while only 11 per cent express preference for a full-time career (the remaining 25 per cent wish to be full-time homemakers). Similarly, in the United States, the labour force participation rate (per cent of the population working or looking for work) for all mothers with children under the age of 18 stood at 70.5 per cent in 2012.[5] According to the 2012 International Labour Organization report on 'Global employment trends for women', women's participation in transition economies is well above 50 per cent, while in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia, the number falls below 35 per cent (in the formal economy). In summary, when allowed to, most women want or need to participate in the workforce.

MMM's research shows that this participation is not linear. There is a pattern to the seasons in the life of most mothers: seasons when family concerns call for more presence and investment in their children or elders, and seasons when they feel free to work longer hours outside the home. This pattern is often disregarded or altogether dismissed by policymakers and companies who, favouring economic growth over labour market needs and wishes, contribute to the cycle of unequal work opportunities and wealth distribution.

Most mothers want the possibility to commit service away from their children *only when they are satisfied that their children will not be diminished by the diversion of their focus.*

Much has been written about the conflicts experienced by working mothers in industrialized countries, and the debate seems only to have intensified in the last decade with the discourse of work and family all too often presented in polar-

Mothers around the world face the difficult task of reconciling work with caring for a family

MMM workshops enable mothers to share their best practices, challenges and knowledge

izing terms: whether a woman is a 'good mother' or a 'bad mother', or a 'good worker' or a 'bad worker'. Little consideration seems to be given to the fact that the vast majority of mothers focus solely on the needs of their family and the socioeconomic realities they are faced with. They strive to provide the best for the financial and emotional well-being of their family. They are neither good nor bad, but rather do the best they can with the resources and energy they can afford.

The issue of balancing the pursuit of income-generating activities and caring for dependents is even more acutely felt by mothers in the poor areas of the world. Here, the majority of women work extremely long hours either in rural communities or in the informal economy to make a bare-bones living, sometimes facing very dangerous work environments while still having to provide basic care at home. In these countries, women simply cannot afford not to work, and the question of their work/family life is posed more in terms of survival than in terms of striking the right balance.

In rural Madagascar women spend on average 32 minutes a day fetching water.[6] Thus the time-use in household overhead production to fill the infrastructure gaps (such as vital water and energy collection, sanitation and food fetching) dramatically adds to mothers' already heavy burdens.[7]

Mothers around the world face the same crucial pressure of providing financially for their families' well-being, while also needing to provide the nurturing and care-giving necessities of their household.

It is fair to say that globally, mothers have responded to this pressure by working even harder and for more hours, to the detriment of their own personal time. Yet they are still paid significantly less than their male counterparts or childless female cohorts. It has been suggested that mothers earn less than childless women because they are less productive. In fact, they are penalized for going on maternity leave, for possi-

bly not putting in as much 'face time' at work as their childless peers, for having to turn down jobs that require overtime, and for daring to ask for part-time work. They are simply victims of the perception/stereotype that women with children are not as much 'into' their jobs as others because they are distracted by the caring and nurturing requirements of their households.

The women of Madagascar

In Madagascar, the involvement of women in money-generating work is a matter of widespread necessity. In recent years, new activities have appeared in the countryside which are totally undertaken by women and children, such as producing and selling granite chippings for municipal road repairs and construction. This is very hard physical work, with long days working by hand using a sledgehammer to break up lumps of granite into chippings. Women have to carry the materials, balanced on their heads, on foot to the marketplace where they prepare it for sale and handle financial dealings with customers. It is the same for other building materials such as bricks and sand.

This work does not release country women from the traditional responsibilities of raising children and doing household tasks such as fetching firewood and water, making meals, grinding rice, doing the washing and looking after domestic animals — as well as seasonal tasks like growing rice, transplanting seedlings and all the jobs related to the harvest.

There are many contributing factors to this exploitation of women, but the main ones are the submissive attitude and prevailing general ignorance of country women. Submission to the husband — to any male — is ingrained by local traditions, ways and customs and reinforced by religious teaching. It is considered a guarantee of a harmonious family life and a sign of a successful marriage.

In Madagascar, several generations often live under the same roof, so the values, principles and traditions of the large family are transmitted unconsciously and naturally. There are no care homes for the elderly, and day care is neither widespread nor socially acceptable — particularly as it is not free.

MMM strives to listen to mothers' voices around the world
and amplify their message

Best practices in France

Maternity leave — 16 weeks for a first or second child and 26 weeks for a third child (34 weeks for twins), paid at the equivalent of the net salary (with a €3,000 monthly cap). In the public sector and most private firms, female executives receive a wage supplement to reach their net salary.

Paternity leave — 14 days to be taken within four months of the birth.

Flexible parental leave — one year, renewable to up to three years. During leave, the employee receives a benefit equal to approximately 60 per cent of the minimum wage for the one-year option down to 35 per cent for three-year leave (€388 per month). The employer pays nothing but is mandated to keep the position available to the employee.

Childcare choices — parents in France have many childcare options:
• licensed professional or 'maternal assistants' (MAs) who offer care services for 1-4 children in their own homes
• free preschooling — starting at at age 2 in certain areas
• day care — the most favoured choice of parents, with facilities highly subsidized by the Government
• nanny services — rather expensive and chosen only by 2 per cent of parents.

The French Government offers subsidies and tax breaks for parents using a live-in nanny or an MA:
• reimbursement of social security contributions for MAs
• 50 per cent social security tax subsidy for hired nannies
• tax breaks for parents for childcare expenses (day care, MAs and nannies).

The Government also helps parents return to work by facilitating access to job centres and any training needed. Validation of Acquired Experience takes into account the experience and responsibilities exercised as parents and provides access to specific professions or government positions for mothers of three or more children.

Many mothers, in stable and economically supportive relationships, end up finding the stress too taxing or the expense of childcare too high compared to their after-tax income — particularly after having a second child — and simply chose to leave the workplace, thus perpetuating the cycle of future limited opportunities and lower pay. Studies have shown that when childcare is scarce and costly, if women earn less than their partners, they are more likely to drop out of the workforce. And if they do so for two or more years, they may not be able to get back in at anything approaching their prior job level or pay, unless they are protected by progressive national social policies.

In many developing countries, reconciliation of work and family life policies competes with development priorities, with funds more readily spent on economic development and productivity than social policies. But the lack of social services (childcare in particular) perpetuates poverty and hinders development. Faced with a dearth of affordable childcare, parents all too often have no other choice but to leave preschool children alone at home — sometimes locked in for their safety — or under the supervision of very young siblings or in substandard but cheap childcare. Empirical evidence has shown that there is a very deleterious emotional and developmental impact on children who do not benefit from good early childcare and proper interaction with adults. The consequences are often lower learning and developmental abilities and literacy. Thus, children start life at a disadvantage, perpetuating an intergenerational cycle of marginalization, exclusion and poverty. A recent study on selected Latin American countries found that women aged 20-24 years stated their responsibilities at home as the main reason for not seeking a job in the labour market.[8]

Unpaid work

Many economists and policymakers are uncomfortable with the idea that work related to home management and care of dependents should be counted in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) statistics, instead favouring the notion that only market labour should be quantified. This runs counter to the notion that human capital is the most important asset in the development of a nation. It is puzzling not to value the care, education and nurturing given to human capital formation. At a time when the implementation of a Gross National Happiness Index is gathering traction, it is disconcerting that unpaid domestic service is not recognized as work and made visible in GDP indices. This lack of recognition has two glaring consequences. The first is the implication that our societies do not value contributions to human welfare and well-being or human capital formation. The second is an economic consequence: since uncounted care-giving is not measured, parents do not earn any social protection, particularly retirement benefits, when they choose to stay home to tend to dependents. This directly affects their livelihoods and increases their risk of falling into poverty, especially in old age.

In fact, the time mothers take off from the labour force to care for their children and elderly parents carries very hefty financial consequences. Not only do these mothers forfeit income, but their opportunities to re-enter the labour market are dramatically diminished, seriously denting their upward mobility and jeopardizing access to retirement benefits.

All these factors contribute to these mothers acquiring an inferior status: as long as their care work is invisible, they

remain invisible in the distribution of benefits. This seems a high price to pay for taking the decision to raise a child, a decision that contributes to the general good by adding a future educated and productive person to the nation.

The vulnerability of mothers does not stop at their commitment and involvement in nurturing children. It continues through another season of their lives, when they often become the caregivers for elderly parents.

In its 'Availability of Family Caregivers' 2012 study, the American Association of Retired Persons Policy Institute found that the average family caregiver is a 49-year-old woman who works outside the home and spends about 20 hours per week providing unpaid care to her mother for nearly five years. Nearly two-thirds (65 per cent) of family caregivers are women. This study also acknowledges that the majority of long-term care to older persons is provided by family caregivers. Currently, the family caregivers support ratio (defined as the number of potential family caregivers aged 45-65 for each person aged 80 or older) in the United States is of seven potential caregivers for every one aged 80 or older. By 2030, this number is expected to decline sharply to four, dropping to three by 2050.

Inequality between the sexes has narrowed over the last decades, and women now have more freedom to pursue paid work outside the home. But a different kind of social injustice has emerged between those with and without children. When childless people retire, they will rely on the labour of the next generation to provide for them. But the childless will not have contributed as much as those with children to the cost of raising that next generation. Mothers, by devoting time to raising and educating the next generation of workers, are helping to make everyone's retirement more comfortable. Our societies, however, make mothers pay an unwarranted penalty for that choice. To many, the opportunity cost of being a mother is too high.

Often, societal changes are predicated by economic necessity. Thus, the 'unfinished business of the women's movement' may be resolved by a stark economic reality: the sea change in demographic trends that will affect the world economy and development in the twenty-first century. The developed world needs women to have more children: the fertility rate for Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development countries is at 1.7, well below the replacement rate of 2.1, while the United States registered its lowest rate in 2012 since birth rates began being recorded in 1909. At the same time, however, the developed world needs women to participate in the workforce to contribute financially to the retirement benefits of baby boomers, while also ensuring their care-giving. In 2008 there were 4.7 working-age Americans for every retirement-age American, and by 2050 that number is projected to drop to 2.6. In Europe, the numbers are even more worrying, dropping to 2.1.[9]

By contrast, in the developing world, while some fertility rates are declining, they remain well above the replacement rate. But the challenge here is to ensure that parents, and notably mothers, are in environments where poverty, failing local infrastructure, cultural and religious beliefs do not adversely impact and burden their already fragile ability to care for the economic and emotional well-being of their children. Mothers need to be supported and helped in their quest to bring up future generations of educated and empowered adults who will bring development to their economies. If human capital is the ultimate fount of progress, as most economists and sociologists agree upon, then mothers — and other caregivers — are the most important producers in the economy, for they are the ones most responsible for nurturing and growing this capital, particularly in the early years.

Conclusion and recommendations

Our research has shown that more than 70 per cent of mothers wish to work outside the home, but privilege above all the ability to have flexible work schedules. Countries that make it easier for working parents to look after their own children — for example by extending parental leave, shortening the work week, encouraging flexible work time, implementing high-quality and affordable public childcare, offering 'homecare allowances' and allowing stay-at-home mothers to benefit from social security and retirement schemes — would reap the fruit of their investment by ensuring a current and future vibrant workforce, a stable and productive society, less stressed parents and, in the case of poorer countries, an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty.

We call upon policymakers and employers to make a concerted effort to analyse and implement ways that the workplace can truly embrace flexible time or re-entry after extended absence due to family care. It is time to listen to those of us who have innovative solutions, think outside the box and understand the issues first-hand.

MMM: role and mission

MMM is an international non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and Department for Public Information. For 65 years MMM has federated associations from widely different backgrounds working for and with mothers to ensure at least the basics of human security and improved quality of life. The input of mother and father into bringing up children is — or should be — symbiotic, equal, different but complementary. However, research has shown that it is mothers who have the most profound — and lasting — influence from a child's earliest moments. For this reason MMM seeks to address many social issues through the natural authority of mothers. To reinforce its open, inclusive character, MMM defines itself as an independent, apolitical and non-denominational movement. MMM is managed by mothers who volunteer to support the work of representation and the activities of its member associations throughout the world. MMM is run by mothers, for mothers and their children and families.

The founding document of principles of MMM states:

"A mother is the most powerful influence on the life of the family and, therefore, on the cultural, economic and social life of the nation. It is vital that public opinion and policymakers recognize and value the irreplaceable contribution of mothers throughout the world."[10]

Corporate family responsibility

Mireia Las Heras PhD, Nuria Chinchilla PhD and Esther Jimenez, Researcher,
International Center for Work and Family at IESE Business School, University of Navarra, Spain

We live in a world undergoing rapid and profound transformation. Changes have an impact on the economy and on companies, and affect the ways in which they compete, work and interact. In this context, companies frequently react with short-term strategies, focusing on efficiency and growth parameters. Work's worth is equated to financial results and regarded as a mere means to economic rewards. Thus, under these assumptions, people are treated as a commodity, a 'human resource' that is rigid and quantifiable.

The short-term and instrumental approach pushes organizations away from their responsibilities to the various stakeholders affected by their decisions. But it is impossible to generate sustainable value with such a limited view of the business and the world. Moreover, considering social responsibility and sustainable development only from an economic, social and environmental perspective leaves aside certain essential variables that affect what is most important for people: their well-being and their families, their quality of life and the future of society at large.

Sustainable development is closely linked to human ecology as it is the person who, with his or her decisions, can enhance or deplete the ecosystem in which he or she lives. Responsibility is born out of a more global and anthropological vision of the company which takes into account the interdependence of the people and the environment, and considers the benefits of other aspects that are not purely economic.

To understand and study the human ecosystem, the International Center for Work and Family (ICWF) at the Instituto de Estudios Superiores de La Empresa (IESE) Business School proposes the 'triangle of sustainability', a construct that consists of the family, company and society, putting the person in the centre.

The company is without doubt the institution with the greatest impact on the human ecosystem of people, families and society. It influences its employees' quality of life and their ability to satisfy other vital roles. Therefore, it is crucial that companies contribute so that work, family and personal life enrich each other, since they are fundamental, indispensable and complementary dimensions in the lives of men and women.

Participants at the ICWF International Academic Conference at the IESE Business School in Barcelona, Spain

A project with Compartamos Banco, the biggest microcredit institution in Latin America, to increase the CFR of its employees

A meeting at the European Parliament. From left, Renata Kaczmarska, Focal Point for the United Nations Programme on the Family; Jaime Mayor Oreja, Head of the Spanish Delegation to the European People's Party of the European Parliament in Brussels; Mireia Las Heras, IESE Professor; Ada Garriga, Researcher for ICWF at IESE; and Noor Al-Malki Al-Jehani, Member of the Board en Qatar Foundation For Social Work and the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

To make this possible, companies must respond with flexibility to the personal and family needs of their workers. Without time, energy or adequate compensation, employees are not only less productive, but also incapable of raising children, caring for their elderly and participating as active citizens to improve society. And that loss has great repercussions both for the person and for the whole of society.

Hence the necessity for a new responsibility arises: Corporate Family Responsibility (CFR) as the internal, essential and nuclear dimension of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

CFR, a term coined by the ICWF of IESE, indicates that a company counts on the leaders, culture and policies of flexibility that foster the integration of work, family and personal life. A company with CFR has managers that:
• make sure every decision made takes people into account
• create flexible and equal opportunity policies and practices
• foster worker commitment and satisfaction
• increase the competitiveness and sustainability of the company.

In 1999 ICWF created the IESE Family Responsible Employer Index (IFREI) to measure CFR and its impact on people, society and the results of the company. It is a model based on a system that puts the person at the centre of the company. IFREI diagnosis, which is used in 21 countries on five continents, contrasts information provided by the managers with that provided by its collaborators.

The CFR level is determined according to three dimensions: policies, supervisor support and the organizational culture, which affect whether or not the worker may reconcile their professional, personal and family life. These factors make up and contribute to the environment in which the employee works.

A low level of CFR hinders the systematic integration of professional-family-personal life. This situation produces what we call a 'polluted environment' that in turn creates a high degree of dissatisfaction, stress and loss of motivation in employees, leading to the desire to leave the company.

On the other hand, companies that promote CFR create 'enriching environments' that foster satisfaction with the reconciliation of work and family; this in turn creates high commitment, higher quality of life and a higher level of general health. CFR also facilitates a greater amount of time dedicated to raising small children, caring for the elderly and other dependent people, and tending to different commitments in various fields of social life.

The IFREI study analyses the environment in which people work. Our data demonstrate that, within the same organization, some employees may develop their tasks in an environment that allows them to integrate work and family life, while others find that their environment systematically makes it difficult for them to achieve this integration. What are the causes of this contrast? The data of 16,000 people from all five continents, who so far have participated in the study and represent a universe of more than 100,000 people, indicate a lack of flexibility policies available to workers, as well as the poor communication of them or difficulty in accessing them. Diverse management styles among supervisors mean that, while some may facilitate employees' ability to reconcile, others in the same company may hinder it. The data also pointed to the existence of cultures, or subcultures, which generate different microclimates within the same organization that may value and respect family to a different extent.

Less than half of the population surveyed in the study (46 per cent) find themselves in an environment that promotes the integration of work and family (15 per cent in an

IESE meets with companies to talk about CFR. From left, Nuria Chinchilla, IESE Professor; Antonio Gonzalez-Barros, founder and CEO of Intercom; Enrique Valer, CEO of Schneider Electric Spain and Latin America; Joaquin Borrás, CEO of ISS Facility Management in Spain; and Vicente Ruiz, founder and CEO of RNB Cosmetics

enriching environment, 31 per cent in a favourable environment). The remaining 54 per cent work in environments that are difficult and hostile towards family and integration (41 per cent in an unfavourable environment and 13 per cent in a polluted environment).

The results around the world confirm that people who have their supervisor's support, access to conciliatory policies and an environment culture that is favourable to CFR have:

- fewer intentions to leave the company — only 5 per cent of those in an enriching environment claim to intend leaving their current organization, compared with 50 per cent of those in a polluted environment
- higher satisfaction with work-family balance — 16 per cent of people in a polluted environment claim to be satisfied with the way they integrate work and family, while 60 per cent of those working in enriching environments are satisfied with their conciliation
- more productivity — in an enriching environment people are 19 per cent more productive than those who work in polluted environments
- higher perception of company support — 88 per cent of workers in enriching environments perceive that the company supports them, compared with 26 per cent of people in environments that are difficult for them to reconcile
- better health — 78 per cent of respondents express general good health when in an enriching environment, compared with 55 per cent of those in a polluted environment:
  – when employees have to take care of young children and their environment is enriching, their health is 40

per cent better than that of those who take care of their children and are in a polluted environments
– employees who care for dependent parents and work in environments that allow them to reconcile say they enjoy excellent health; 71 per cent more than those in the same circumstances who work in polluted environments

- more dedication to their young children — on a weekly basis, people in enriching environments dedicate 21 per cent more time to having dinner with their children, 32 per cent more time to playing with them and 37 per cent more time to reading together, than those in polluted working environments
- better quality of life — 83 per cent of people in polluted environments consider themselves to have poor quality of life, while 54 per cent of people whose environment is enriching perceive a high quality of life.

In general terms, the results by continent show the same trend as those mentioned above. It is worth highlighting that in Africa,[1] 73 per cent of the people who work in enriching environments appear to have a high level of quality of life, compared with 23 per cent of those in environments that make conciliation difficult. In Asia,[2] none of the people working in an enriching environment intend to leave the company, compared with 45 per cent of the people in polluted environments. In Europe,[3] 3 per cent of people in polluted environments perceive support from the company, compared to 87 per cent of those in an environment that allows them to reconcile. Latin America[4] provided several interesting results. In Ecuador, 16 per cent of those who work in polluted environments have a higher intention to leave

the company than in the rest of the world. In Guatemala, 90 per cent of those working in polluted environments perceive a lack of support from the organization. In El Salvador, people in enriching environments are 8 per cent more productive than in the rest of the world. Some 89 per cent of respondents in Argentina (11 points more than the rest of the world) say they are in good general health when their environment is enriching. Only 3 per cent of employees working in enriching environments in Chile want to leave the company. In Peru, 77 per cent of the people working in polluted environments say they do not have good health, compared with 55 per cent worldwide. And in Colombia, 96 per cent of those working in enriching environments perceive support from their organization, compared to 2 per cent of those who work in environments that hinder conciliation.

The data obtained in different countries indicate that 70 per cent of employees are afraid to ask for flexibility or other measures which step out of the standard.

Companies that encourage CFR are creating greater loyalty and commitment to the organization. Policies alone are not enough to create a culture that allows people to integrate their personal, family and professional life. It depends mostly on the style of leadership that is exercised. Formal systems contribute to carrying out the company's strategy, but its effectiveness depends on having leaders capable of boosting employees' commitment.

If employees perceive that their managers encourage CFR:
• their motivation grows by 58 per cent
• their intention to leave the company is reduced by 48 per cent
• enrichment for work and family increases by 18 per cent
• their level of commitment is 25 per cent higher.

In order to achieve this, managers have to support employees in several ways. They must provide emotional support, generating empathy to understand the personal and family situation of the employee in order to counter possible conflicts. Instrumental support, with work organized in a flexible way, enables employees to combine the right balance of work and family life with the required labour productivity. The manager must be a role model, showing exemplary behaviour when it comes to the management of their own conciliation. And they must manage and facilitate the use of flexibility policies and practices in a creative and effective way.

It is necessary to count on managers who exert a kind of leadership that is able to discover what suits the organization to make it effective, make the company more attractive for people who work, and maintain and strengthen unity. The manager leader is the front-runner of CFR who inspires trust and builds strong and stable ties.

All cultural change takes time and leaders who are able to see opportunities in times of crisis. Leadership, policies and values of the company that incorporates CFR provide enormous personal, business, family and social benefits. As demonstrated by the research, which has been developed in the ICWF of IESE for more than a decade, CFR allows for the reduction of working hours, increases productivity and decreases absenteeism. It also manages to bring out the diversity of talent that people possess, provides greater wealth and makes companies more flexible.

The twenty-first century will only be sustainable if it manages to combine the 'F' for flexibility, femininity and family with the 'C' of commitment, complementarity and co-responsibility. Flexibility generates commitment and trust and to humanize the company, adapting it to the changes and needs of the people and the environment. Femininity promotes complementarity in the business world, which is dominated by male values with a rigid, mechanical and short-sighted vision. The female vision expands the capability of perceiving reality and allows the business to better anticipate the consequences of actions in the medium and long term. Family builds a home thanks to the co-responsibility between husband and wife. It is the area that creates new human and social capital, enriches the person and makes our world sustainable.

CFR, as a fundamental part of internal CSR, allows us to build a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities and can help create economic, social and ethical value, thus making possible a more just, productive and sustainable society.

Implementation of CFR

The IFREI has helped to raise CFR levels in hundreds of companies around the world. The following are examples of Ibero-American companies, where the project has taken place for a longer period of time. They represent industries and organizations of various sectors and sizes.

Iberdrola
This world-leading Spanish energy group conducted IFREI in 2006 and decided to implement flexibility measures: intensive workdays and flexi-time throughout the year. Days lost due to accidents were reduced by 35 per cent and sick leave fell by 14 per cent. In 2008 the company began a pilot programme of mixed, flexible and voluntary telework.

Transactel
This El Salvador call centre conducted IFREI in 2013. It decided to implement day care for employees' children, extend the licence for paternity leave, and organize training workshops to help couples strengthen their interpersonal relations and develop their competencies as perents.

Security
A Chilean group involved in finance, investment, insurance, travel and real estate projects, Security conducted IFREI in 2011. One of its best-known policies is post-natal flexi-time, which allows mothers to leave work at 4 p.m. during the four weeks following their return to work, plus the financial aid to hire a nanny for a month; it also gives fathers five extra days of paid leave after the baby is born along with the possibility of flexible working hours during the first month of the child's life.

Wal-Mart Argentina
Wal-Mart Argentina is one of the country's major retailers and generators of employment. Having conducted IFREI in 2011, it allows employees with children to reduce their day to six hours during the first month of the baby's life without salary reduction. For two years in a row, it has also sponsored a publication of CFR Good Practices, which is distributed for free, to foster CFR in Argentina.

Agrocentro
With 300 employees in 6 Latin American countries, this Guatemalan company provides crop protection products. After conducting IFREI in 2011, it implemented a flexible schedule for offices and factory staff plus a nursery, a maternity bonus and a gym room. It also exceeds the legislation in terms of days off with pay, insurance coverage for the family and paternity leave.

Balancing family life and work: a key factor in personal happiness

Thérèse Meyer-Kaelin, President of the Federal Coordinating Commission for Family Affairs

In Switzerland, the family is very important. It is the basic cell, the entity, the crucible in which a human life is forged and fulfilled, ensuring the development of the next generation and providing support for the elderly.

The family model has changed a great deal. Nowadays, the so-called 'traditional' family, in which one of the parents cares for the children, is a minority phenomenon, since more than 70 per cent of mothers go out to work. It is true that many mothers are employed part-time, but their work represents an important commitment on the part of young parents. Single-parent and 'blended' families have also multiplied.

The changing face of the family in Switzerland has highlighted many people's need for support where facilities, organization and the financial burden of bringing up children are concerned. The country's political and territorial organization, it must be said, has put obstacles in the way of meeting these needs. Because of Switzerland's federal structure and the principle of subsidiarity, the initiative in family policy lies with the cantons and municipalities. This has led to inequalities in the framework conditions available to families, depending on where they are resident.

At the same time, the perception of what help should be given to families differs according to the partisan ideologies of politicians, even though all parties loudly proclaim their support for the family. It is not unusual, even today, to hear members of federal and cantonal parliaments maintain that family life is a private matter, not requiring state intervention.

Finally, it should be pointed out that Switzerland is a very democratic country and people vote very often. Amendments to the constitution must be voted on, and to be accepted, the amendments must be passed by a double majority — that is, by both people and cantons. People vote for laws which are put to a referendum, and this has been true of all the important projects affecting the family.

Now that this framework has been established, it is easier to understand why family policy was practically nonexistent at federal level until the early 2000s. The parliament then became aware of the importance of establishing a federal family policy to do away with the blatant inequalities in the area of maternity leave. After several setbacks in popular votes, in 2004 the Swiss people finally gave the green light to a standardized period of 14 weeks' paid maternity leave in all parts of the country. It was a very moderate proposal but, even so, the outcome of the vote was uncertain. Finally, the motion was passed by 55 per cent.

This success spurred parliament on to introduce:
- standardized family allowances throughout the country
- tax relief with deductions for the cost of childcare
- reductions on children's sickness insurance premiums
- a federal programme to encourage the creation of non-family childcare places
- standardized school hours in most of the cantons
- the right to breastfeed during working hours.

Each of these positive measures was introduced only after a struggle, despite the obvious needs.

The federal programme to promote the creation of non-family childcare places, introduced in 2003, has resulted in the creation of approximately 40,000 new places. This programme supports and encourages local communities to create new places, on a public or private basis, by providing funding for facilities and running costs during at most the first two or three years. Initially planned to run for eight years, the programme has been prolonged for a further four, until 31 January 2015. A possible extension of the programme is currently being looked at.

Playing music in a crèche: assistance in creating crèche places has been a major step in reconciling family life with the working needs of parents

Two measures, intended to reconcile family life with the working needs of both parents which have had most impact on local communities, are standardized school hours, and assistance in creating crèche and out-of-school-hours places, including the option of having lunch at school.

The standardization of school hours and programmes in most of the cantons is the result of a concordat signed on 14 June 2007 by the ministers of public education of all 26 cantons. This proposal was put to a popular vote. By April 2009, 10 cantons had agreed to the proposed measure, as a result of which it became binding on all signatory cantons.

The main provisions were as follows:

- The introduction of two years of infants' school, starting at age four, followed by six years of primary education, then three years of secondary schooling. This means that all children in Switzerland have the benefit of 11 years of compulsory education
- Continuous school hours (no blank periods during the school day)
- The provision of out-of-hours facilities, with lunch served in the middle of the school day.

The cantons have six years to implement these provisions. This is a giant step forward in the organization and care of children in Switzerland, supported by financial subsidies granted by federal government to encourage the creation of crèche and out-of-hours facilities.

The example of my own small town, a municipality of 6,000 people situated in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, speaks volumes. It is true that for many years it had offered the services of a publicly run crèche and the possibility of a year of nursery schooling before the start of compulsory school attendance. In the 1990s, when I was mayor, we conducted a survey to discover the childcare needs of families with special reference to the midday break and meal. At that time, only two families expressed a desire for a facility of this kind. The younger children started school later and finished earlier. With no facilities available outside of school hours, this was a real problem for parents.

Since then, there has been a big change. The 'HarmoS' (standardization) policy has led to the creation of two years of infants' school, out-of-school-hours facilities and a standardized timetable. All the children go to school and finish at the same time. If necessary, there are facilities for them to come to school early in the morning, from 6.30 a.m., have lunch at school, and stay on at school until 6 p.m.

In 2011, with a federal government subsidy, 60 out-of-school-hours places were created, catering for 120 different children. The 60 places for the midday meal are almost always taken.

The hourly rate of payment is calculated on the basis of the parents' income and the number of children from the same family attending:

- for children attending primary school, the highest hourly rate is SwF6 for one child, SwF4.85 for two children and SwF4.25 for three children
- the lowest rate is SwF1.30 for one child, SwF1.05 for two children and SwF0.90 for three children
- for children in nursery school, 80 per cent of these rates are applied
- the maximum price for the midday meal is SwF9.

In parallel, also with financial assistance from the federal government, the crèche has expanded its activities. It can now accommodate 50 different children aged two to four-and-a-half for full days or half-days, according to need. A nine-bed nursery, meeting the needs of 24 families, has recently been created on a

Children drawing at an out-of-school-hours facility: provisions like these are giant steps in the organization and care of children in Switzerland

Lunch at a crèche: around 40,000 new non-family childcare places have been created as a result of the federal programme

Young fathers are increasingly interested in being involved in their children's upbringing and would support occupational arrangements to make this possible

subsidized basis. The rates charged by the crèche are also geared to the number of children in a family and take family income into account. The price of the midday meal is SwF5.

To complete the services it provides, the municipality has signed an agreement with the regional association providing childcare in families during the day, paying a flat rate of SwF2 per inhabitant and the sum of SwF1.80 for each hour of care actually provided. In 2012, the 16 trained and certified childcare assistants provided more than 33,000 hours of care for a total of 94 children.

These figures demonstrate the progress made in providing care for infants and young children, thanks to federal policy and the joint decisions of all the cantons. This has greatly improved the situation for families with young children, even though there is still work to be done.

In response to the often-voiced criticism that family policy is not a federal matter, the parliament, supported by the Federal Council, has proposed a constitutional change that would enable the confederation, with the cantons, to encourage measures to improve the balance between family life and gainful employment or training. The federal authorities at the highest level have thus recognized the national importance of the problem.

In Switzerland, the desire to have children is not reflected in the actual number of births. The difficulties inherent in reconciling family life and employment, and the financial burdens involved, are still the main reasons for people not having any children at all or not having an additional child. The birth rate stands at 1.53, rising slightly but still low. It is immigration that maintains the demographic balance and helps fund the social insurance system, which is based on a distribution model.

There is recognition that both parents need to work to make ends meet as well as for the sake of the country's economy, and a growing awareness that young parents are a source of national strength. But despite this, the constitutional article on the family, though accepted by 54 per cent of the population, has been rejected by a majority of the cantons. Unless the double majority (people and cantons) is achieved, the constitution cannot be amended. Unfortunately, this vote may have negative consequences for the development of family policy at federal level.

At the same time, some companies offer opportunities for part-time or home working, or days of parental leave, without any legal obligation. The sharing of parental roles is not yet well established in Switzerland, but young fathers are increasingly interested in being involved in the upbringing of children and would be in favour of occupational arrangements to make this possible.

The ambitious idea of paid parental leave of 24 weeks has been developed by the Federal Coordinating Commission for Family Affairs and presented to parliament. But it has not been followed up, mainly because of the estimated cost of approximately SwF1.2 billion. However, the debate goes on, albeit slowly, as always in Swiss politics. To succeed, it is necessary to set priorities, make progress a step at a time, propose balanced measures and use persuasion.

We are convinced that by achieving a better balance between family life and gainful employment, we shall be better placed to combat poverty, encourage the use of people's skills and ensure that families flourish, which is the best way of preventing violence. More flexibly organized working lives for both mothers and fathers would promote greater serenity in young families.

The right ideas are not lacking, but they must of course be feasible and must gain acceptance, at least by a majority of people. The family of tomorrow, in the form it has chosen for itself or had imposed upon it, will, I hope, be a source of fulfilment and happiness.

Balancing work and family life to improve the well-being of parents and children

Johanna Lammi-Taskula, Unit Manager, and Ronald Wiman, Development Manager,
National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland

When Finland first started building a universal system of basic social security and essential services for all, it was still a 'post-conflict developing country'. In those days of the late 1930s and 1940s, its gross national income per capita corresponded to that of today's low-income or lower-middle-income countries such as Namibia, Angola or Egypt. The economy was dominated by the primary sector, with a large share of small-scale subsistence farming.

Gender equality has a long tradition in Finland's societal policies. Finland was the first country in Europe to grant women electoral rights (1906). During World War Two and afterwards, rapid industrialization called for social policy measures that would enable women to join the industrial and service sector labour force. During the decades since, the evolving family policy measures have supported both gender equality and the modernization of the economy.

The right to work is of key importance for gender equality. One essential labour market equality measure implemented in 1976 was the move away from joint income taxation for married couples to a separate income taxation. Because taxation was progressive, the previous joint taxation created a strong incentive for couples to keep the lower-earnings partner — usually the wife — from joining the labour market.

There has also been a long positive cycle in the area of women's rights at work. Legislation protecting pregnant women at the work place has existed for over a century in all Nordic countries. Maternity leave following the birth of a child has been part of Nordic legislation for over 50 years. The challenge of combining motherhood and paid work has been recognized, and solutions have been sought to protect the health and well-being of both mother and child.

In Finland, Mother and Child Health (MCH) clinics were introduced in 1922. Since 1949 they have been operating nationally. Today all pregnant mothers meet the clinic nurse 12-15 times and have two to three check-ups with a doctor at the clinic. Both mothers and fathers attend family training provided by the clinics. After delivery, home visits are made by the nurse, and during the first year the baby has nine check-ups at the clinic. During the next period before school age (seven years old), the child has a further six check-ups.

The Maternity Grant has been provided in Finland since 1938. The introduction was prompted by concerns over declining birth rates, high infant mortality and poverty. At first, the Maternity Grant was for low-income mothers only. Since 1949 the grant, in cash or in kind, has been available to all expectant mothers and adoptive parents who are residents in Finland. They can choose between a maternity pack or 'baby box' and a tax-free cash allowance, which is currently €140. Since the very beginning, the maternity pack option has been very popular among families. Its cash value has been far higher than the cash option. The maternity pack was actually a Finnish social innovation, globally the first of its kind. It contains children's clothes and other carefully chosen necessary items such as bedding, cloth nappies, towels and childcare products in a sturdy box that can be used as the baby's first bed. The Maternity Grant or baby box is a conditional benefit: it is granted only if the mother follows a prescribed schedule of visits to MCH clinics. This is an effective instrument that has brought infant mortality rapidly down since 1950.

Another early important universal instrument that improved children's health — and at the same time lightens the burden of working mothers — was introduced in 1948 and has been functioning since then. Finland was the first country in the world to provide free school meals to all pupils. All children get a nutritious warm lunch, and the family does not need to rush with (often less healthy) sandwich boxes or burden parents (typically the mother) with preparations for having lunch at home.

Universal benefits for families with children in Finland include the universal child allowance (since 1949), which is

Lunchtime at a primary school: free school meals for all pupils have been provided since 1948

aimed at covering part of the expense involved in bringing up children under the age of 17. There is some discussion today as to whether richer families should be excluded from the allowance. However, savings from such targeting would be marginal, while the exclusion of the better-off population from all social benefits would stamp these benefits as poor relief and would reduce the willingness of the better-off to pay taxes that are channelled to benefit only the poor.

Social policy must be designed in such a way that middle and upper income earners 'buy into' it, and see that they and their children are also beneficiaries from the common purse. Finland's core family policies are characterized by universal instruments, like the universal child allowance, that reduce inequalities and prevent poverty by providing universal, non-stigmatizing social security to all.

Many developing countries are using conditional social transfers for human development purposes. Likewise, Finland can demonstrate from its historical experience that such measures have worked to achieve sustainable human and social development. Such general measures, combined with additional support to the most vulnerable families, can break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and exclusion.

Finland has one of the lowest child poverty rates in the European Union (EU), while the female employment rate is among the highest. According to EU statistics, 60.6 per cent of mothers of children under six are in employment. The respective figure for fathers is 91.2 per cent. This is largely thanks to strong state support that emphasizes reconciling paid employment with family life. Family-friendly policies are also reflected in public spending. Public spending for children in 2009 was 3.3 per cent of gross domestic product, while the EU average is 2.3 per cent. Access to public day care is guaranteed to all children under school age and a generous system of family leave and home-care allowances is designed to help parents cope with their child-raising duties while securing their jobs.

The family model in all the Nordic countries is characterized by both parents' shared responsibility to provide for the family and to participate in childcare. Fathers' rights to paternity leave

began to be developed in the 1970s. At first fathers were given the right to a short paternity leave and later to share part of the parental leave. The logic behind paternity leave is to bolster the father-child relationship and to ease the workload of the mother who has just given birth. The sharable parental leave is more explicitly connected to gender equality and shared care responsibility. The most explicit gender equality measure introduced within the leave reform is the father's quota, which means that part of the leave is reserved exclusively for the father and cannot be used by the mother. It is worth mentioning that these arrangements have been agreed on a tripartite basis, involving employers' unions, employees' unions and the state.

Today, maternity leave is approximately four months in Finland, of which about one month can be used before birth. Parental leave that can be divided between the mother and the father as they wish is an additional approximate seven months. Paternity leave is nine weeks, of which three weeks can be taken simultaneously with the mother. Benefits during maternity, paternity and parental leave are earnings-related, being 70-90 per cent of previous annual earnings. Unemployed parents receive a flat-rate minimum benefit.

All children under seven years of age have a right to municipal day-care services. Municipalities have a legal responsibility to make day care available to all children as required by parents. Parents are also entitled to childcare leave with a flat rate home-care allowance available after the end of parental leave, if they decide not to use public day care. This enables parents to look after a child under the age of three at home without giving up their jobs.

The monthly fee per child depends on the family size and income. There is also a choice of private alternatives supported substantially through public finances. Pre-primary school for six-year-old children is free of charge, which is in line with Finnish education policy: all children have the right to education and it is free of charge. It is important to note that children with disabilities also have the same rights to day care and early childhood education in an integrated setting.

From the children's perspective, equal access to day care for all children — regardless of parental income — can equalize

Putting children first

Children belong at the centre of the sustainable development agenda. They have the right to development and to a sustainable future world. Therefore the current decision-making generation has the responsibility to invest in the well-being of children through appropriate family policies, education, health and other essential services and to secure a socially, ecologically and economically sustainable future.

A father bathing his newborn: four out of five Finnish fathers take up the right for paternity leave after the birth of the baby

their opportunities to be included in professionally operated early learning and in peer groups. This is important in environments where there are relatively few children because of generally small family sizes. Furthermore universal, low-cost access to day care is a vitally important channel for the increasing number of immigrant and refugee families and children to be included in their new society.

Employed parents are entitled to work shorter hours until the end of the child's second year of school, with a small flat-rate benefit that compensates partly for the loss of income. In 2014 a new 'flexible care allowance' will be introduced with a higher benefit to encourage parents of children under the age of three to combine part-time work with part-time care.

When a child under 10 falls ill, parents have a right to take a temporary care leave for a maximum four days at the time. This leave is unpaid, but many collective labour market agreements provide full pay from the employer during leave.

In terms of leave policy, adoptive parents have nearly the same rights as biological parents. An adoptive mother is not entitled to the period of maternity leave that precedes childbirth, and an adopted child must be below the age of seven for the parents to be entitled to parental leave. Same-sex parents have recently obtained the right to parental leave for both partners, even if they are not a child's biological or adoptive parents.

Practically all mothers take maternity leave and parental leave, and a majority of fathers (four out of five) take the opportunity of a couple of week's paternity leave when their child is born. About one in four fathers also take the additional paternity leave later, when the mother returns to the labour market. On average, children are cared for at home until they are about 1.5 years old.

Current challenges to parents' ability to reconcile work and family life include ensuring the continued development of family-friendly practices such as flexible hours at the workplace, as well as more effectively taking into account other family phases besides the first three years of the child's life. This is often very important for single parents and for any employees who have chosen to care for a relative at home who is ill or has a disability.

Studies have shown that many employed parents in Finland often experience a lack of time with their family because of working life duties. Mothers, and to some extent also fathers, are worried about coping. In addition to statutory leave rights, benefits and day-care services, it is clear that practices at the workplace level are crucial in balancing paid work and family needs in everyday life. Parents have a menu of realistic choices but still, if one of the parents stays at home with children, it is much more often the mother than the father.

Despite efforts to ensure gender equality, there are indications that Finnish women find it more difficult to combine career and family than, for instance, women in Sweden. Many municipalities provide additional home-care allowances to enable mothers to care for their children at home instead of in municipal day care. This is done in order to ease the pressure on municipal budgets, as the allowance costs much less than a place in the day-care centre. As a result, only 44 per cent of two-year-olds are in formal day care, while the corresponding figure in Sweden is 85 per cent. While supported home care widens the menu of real choices for mothers, long absence from the labour market is risky from a career perspective.

The social policy system promoting the balancing of work and family life has been effective in many respects. The labour force participation of mothers is high, and paternity benefits and parental leave have increased the participation of fathers in childcare.

The need to reconcile work and family responsibilities is, however, not limited to families with childcare responsibilities. The need for reconciling work and family responsibilities is, however, not limited to families with child care responsibilities. While Finnish legislation guarantees basic social security and essential services for all throughout the life cycle, the mutual customary responsibilities beyond the nuclear family as well as intergenerational solidarity and mutual help still remain strong.

The development of a system of universal social security combined with universal access to essential services in Finland did not follow from the wealth of the nation. Instead, they were introduced by a rather poor nation or at least during a time of relative economic scarcity. These investments in people through a universal system of social policy had a high rate of return. In addition to widening and deepening the human capital, they contributed to a long period of rapid economic growth — with equity, as concluded in the World Bank Development Report of 2006.

In the discussion on sustainable development, reference is usually made to the rights of distant, hypothetical future generations. However, the concrete future generation is already here: today's children. They have the right to personal development. They also have the right to socially, ecologically and economically sustainable development. For some 50 years or more, they will shoulder the consequences of the choices made by today's decision makers. Social benefits and services to families that aim at enabling mothers to participate in working life and at the same time encourage fathers to participate in childcare are investments in children, in gender equality and in the socially sustainable and economically wise development of the nation.

The crucial question is not whether we can afford equality-oriented social policy that supports the balancing of working life and family responsibilities. The right question is why governments would choose not to benefit from such an exceptionally profitable investment in social policy.

Flexibility and a holistic perspective on support for families

Göran Hägglund, Minister of Health and Social Affairs
and Maria Larsson, Minister for Children and the Elderly, Sweden

Families play a central role in the well-being of individuals as well as for society. Becoming a parent and raising a child is a great responsibility and a life-changing commitment. A secure and nurturing upbringing provides the conditions for a good start in life.

In Sweden there are about 1.1 million families with children and about 2 million children. Around 70 per cent of children live with both parents in traditional nuclear families, while approximately 19 per cent live in single parent families and 11 per cent in reconstituted families in which, for example, one or both parents have a child with a previous partner.

The concept of family goes beyond the parent-child relationship, although that is usually at the heart of family policy development. Relationships with grandparents and other extended family members also play an important support role for families, emotionally as partners in child-raising and in solving the work-family puzzle. As parents increasingly see responsibility for their children as a joint obligation and an opportunity

to form lasting bonds, more men are taking parental leave than ever before. Living arrangements are also changing after separation, with more children alternating between parents' homes instead of staying with one parent only, thus forming new family patterns and creating challenges for the design and effects of family policies. As family patterns and views about parenthood change, support for the well-being of families must constantly be developed to suit all kinds of family types and changing needs.

The Swedish Government's objective is that financial family policy should contribute to better conditions for good financial living standards for all families with children, and increase their freedom of choice and their control over their own lives. Family policy should support opportunities for both parents to take part in working life while being able to look after their children when they are young. In addition, it should improve the conditions for equality between men and women.

As Minister of Health and Social Affairs and Minister for Children and the Elderly, we would like to emphasize that the best interests of the child should be at the heart of family

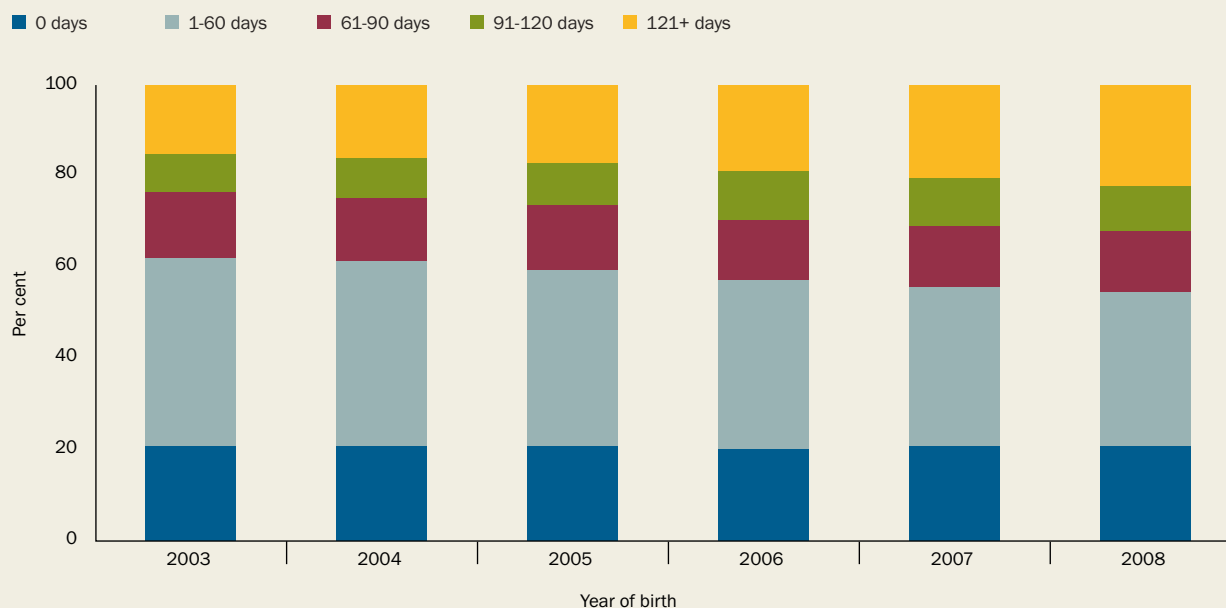Finding a work-family balance is important for child well-being

Sweden has a flexible parental leave system that encourages both parents to spend time with their children

The percentage of four-year-old children born in 2003-2008 whose fathers have taken parental leave

■ 0 days ■ 1-60 days ■ 61-90 days ■ 91-120 days ■ 121+ days

Per cent / Year of birth

Source: The National Social Insurance Agency, 2013

policy, making it possible for both parents to find support for their unique situations in life and strike a balance between a satisfying career and their choices of how to bring up their children. The importance of a child perspective when making policy choices cannot be stressed strongly enough. Sweden's child rights policy aims to ensure that children and young people are respected, that they are given the chance to develop in a secure and nurturing environment, and that they can express their views in matters affecting them.

The Swedish model is characterized as a dual earner-dual carer model with a high level of support from the public sector throughout the first years of childhood. Sweden has had an ambitious and flexible family policy for many years, starting with the introduction of child benefit in 1947, which was followed by parental insurance and childcare initiatives in the 1970s. The system has evolved considerably since then, but the basis has remained the same which makes it predictable and secure. Men and women can feel safe in the knowledge of what conditions will apply if they become parents. Generous spending on family benefits, flexible leave and working hours for parents with young children, and affordable, high-quality childcare are the main factors for success in Sweden. High female and maternal labour force participation, high fertility rates and good living standards for families are the results, indicating that balancing work and family life generally works well. The freedom for both parents to choose, not between work and having children but rather a successful combination of the two, also results in high fertility rates — 1.91 in 2012, which is high for a European country.

In 2012, the employment rate of mothers and fathers with children aged 0-17 years was 82 per cent and 92 per cent respectively. High proportions of women use flexible working arrangements and/or work part-time. Between 2000 and

2012 the proportion of children whose mothers work full-time increased by seven percentage points to 42 per cent. The proportion of children whose fathers work full-time was about 74 per cent during the same period.

Sweden has a highly developed and flexible parental leave system that encourages both parents to spend time with their children. A parent is entitled to full leave for the care of a child until it reaches 18 months, regardless of whether they receive parental benefit. A parent can also reduce normal working hours by up to one quarter when the child is younger than eight years. Parental benefit is paid for a total of 480 days. Parents with joint custody of a child are each entitled to half (240 days) of parental benefit. Parental benefit days can be transferred between parents, with the exception of 60 days that are reserved for each parent. The benefit may be granted to the expectant mother up to 60 days before the expected birth, and to either parent until the child is eight years old. The length of leave and flexibility in choosing when to take it ensures the possibility of not only an extended period of time off work with young children, but also of greater work-family balance through working part-time, shorter hours or taking time off work when caring for older children.

The compensation rate is equally important for the accessibility and success of the parental benefit system. Parental benefit consists of two different kinds of compensation: 390 days are compensated at a rate based on parental income up to a maximum ceiling, and 90 days are compensated at a flat rate of SKr180 (US$27) per day. The income-related days are compensated at around 80 per cent of the parent's previous income. If a parent does not have a previous income, parental benefit is SKr225 (US$34) per day. For people whose income is higher than the ceiling, collectively agreed supplementary insurance schemes (agreed upon by the social partners) play

an important role. The extent of the supplement differs across labour market sectors, and is an indication of employers' generally positive view of parental leave.

In addition to parental benefit, there is a possibility of taking paternity leave within the temporary parental benefit scheme. Fathers who stay home from work in connection with the birth of a child are entitled to 10 days of temporary parental benefit. About 75 per cent of all fathers use these days, with an average of 9.5 days used.

To achieve a gender-equal society and sustainable welfare, it is very important that both parents are able to participate in the labour market and take equal responsibility at home, for children and household duties. A number of parental benefit reforms have been introduced since the benefit was introduced in 1974, extending the leave period and the distribution of days between parents. In 1995, the equal distribution of parental benefit days was introduced and 30 of the days were reserved for each parent. In 2002, parental benefit was extended by 30 days and 60 days were reserved for each parent. Based on its aim of strengthening flexibility, autonomy and freedom of choice, the Government has chosen to improve the conditions for both women and men to take active and equal responsibility for parenting, without diminishing their self-determination. Incentives for men to take a larger share of parental benefit were improved by introducing a gender equality bonus in 2008. The bonus is intended to promote gender equality in the labour market and with regard to care responsibilities. It provides an incentive for parents to share parental leave more evenly, thus allowing both to spend more time with their children while recognizing the need for greater flexibility and freedom of choice for families.

In general, according to studies by the National Social Insurance Office in 2003 and 2007, parents are highly satisfied with the chosen distribution of parental leave. Fathers were more satisfied if they took a longer period of leave compared with a shorter period or no leave at all. Fathers' use of parental benefit is increasing every year. When studying four-year-olds it is possible to see a pattern of fathers taking longer periods of leave with young children.

The percentage of fathers taking more than 121 days of leave by the child's fourth birthday has increased from 16 per cent for children born in 2003 to 22 per cent for children born in 2008. Of children born in 2004, only 12 per cent had a father who had not used a single day by the time the child turned eight and the right to use days had ended.

A comprehensive model of family support should also include the possibility of taking short-term leave when, for example, a child is sick. Temporary parental benefit makes it possible for a parent to stay at home to look after a sick child under the age of 12 (or 16 in some cases). This benefit can be paid for up to 120 days per child per year. For parents with disabled children or children in need of extra care, there are more generous systems available.

Childcare and out-of-school care facilities offering easy access, good quality, high educational content and affordability are necessary for parents to be able to reconcile work and family life. The Swedish preschool system is intended for children from the age of one until they start preschool class or compulsory school, and is designed to stimulate children's development and learning in a secure and caring environment.

The best interests of the child should be at the heart of family policy

In 2012, just over 87 per cent of all Swedish children aged one to five was enrolled in the preschool system. For older children the rate of enrolment is higher, and 97 per cent of children aged three to five were cared for in preschool or other formal arrangements. Municipalities have an obligation to provide preschool activities for children whose parents work or study, or for children with a particular need for such activities. Children of parents who are unemployed or on parental leave with a younger child are entitled to a minimum of 15 hours at preschool per week. Municipalities are also obliged to offer 525 hours of preschool free of charge per year, starting in the autumn term of the year the child turns three.

All municipalities in Sweden now use the voluntary system of a maximum fee for preschool and out-of-school care, with a cap on parental fees. Parents are able to choose other childcare arrangements besides preschool, such as family day care. With the intention of increasing families' choices regarding early childhood education and care (ECEC), a voucher system for preschool was introduced in 2006, and in 2009 it was extended to include family day care. The voucher system is a municipal grant that can be paid out to different forms of ECEC arrangement under private management.

Enrolment at out-of-school centres is offered from the time children begin preschool class until the spring term of the year they turn 13. Children aged six to nine mainly attend these activities. Approximately 83 per cent of children in this age group are enrolled.

In recognition of the need for diverse forms of caring possibilities to meet different family preferences and circumstances, municipalities were given the option of introducing a child-raising allowance in 2008. The aim is to give parents the opportunity of spending more time with their children. The child perspective is fundamental in this initiative, as well as the fact that families are different and that the needs of children vary. The child-

Image: Ulf Huett Nilsson

A majority of both men and women are satisfied with how they divide time with children and time at work

raising allowance can be paid out for a child up to three years old when the child is not enrolled at public childcare services.

A majority of both men and women in Sweden are satisfied with how they divide their time between children and paid work. In an analysis by Statistics Sweden in 2011, 60 per cent of women said they were satisfied with the balance compared to 53 per cent of men. Only about one-fifth of both men and women said they weren't satisfied at all with the balance. Satisfaction was higher for both parents when they could influence their working hours. But for single-parent households, satisfaction was considerably lower — about 38 per cent among parents whose children live with them almost constantly. Reconciliation measures and support for single parents need to be developed further. Thus, the Swedish Government is planning to adapt parental insurance to take account of the need for increased flexibility for single parents, as well as other initiatives making it easier for parents to cooperate and share responsibility for their children.

The importance of parental employment to reduce risks of poverty and enhance the well-being of families cannot be stressed enough. At the same time many families know how difficult it is to combine responsible parenthood and wholehearted efforts at work. Supporting families to achieve a good balance between these two is a central part of policies for a sustainable society. Recent initiatives by the Swedish Government include the introduction of a gender equality bonus, a child-raising allowance, a strengthened pedagogical task for preschool and a number of reforms targeting low-income households. Another initiative tackling the double responsibilities of family and work is the introduction of tax deductions for household services. This tax relief can help facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life for both women and men by reducing their workloads. Available support for parents also includes the Government's parental support strategy, promoting local

support programmes for parents in handling relationships and conflicts with their children and other support measures targeting all parents with children under the age of 18.

These initiatives are part of a holistic approach to parenting and family support, recognizing the need for policy refinement and revision in order to meet the challenges of tomorrow. Effective measures to raise living standards for families and promote gender equality should be based on achieving a work-life balance for both parents. They should also recognize that political measures directed at children are an investment in society. Ambitions for the continued development of family policy and for enhancing the well-being of children remain an important government priority.

Increasing fathers' parental leave uptake

The Swedish Social Insurance Inspectorate has investigated the effects of the strategies applied to increase men's use of parental benefit days. The study investigates how the uptake of parental leave changes during the first 24 months after the introduction of each reform.

Results show that the greatest effect on both fathers' and mothers' use of parental benefit came from reserving the first month in 1995. The proportion of fathers taking any leave at all increased from 44 per cent to 77 per cent, the majority of whom took about one month of leave. Fathers who had not used parental benefit before the reform — those on low incomes, with lower secondary education qualifications, and those who were born abroad — were mainly affected. Differences in the use of parental leave between groups of fathers decreased after the reform.

The second reserved month had only a moderate effect, mainly increasing use for fathers on middle to high incomes and for those born in Sweden. The study did not find any significant effects of the gender equality bonus. Taking into account that the bonus was significantly simplified in 2012, making it easier to understand and use, long-term effects of the bonus cannot be ruled out.

Family policy in the Republic of Slovenia

Tamara Narat, Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia; Lea Javornik Novak and Ružica Boškić, Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Slovenia

Among the fields which significantly influence the quality of family life, the work-family balance is one of the greatest challenges that parents face. The problem is manifested in the use and division of time, consideration of personal needs in the employment field, and in balancing the requirements of personal and family life with professional activities. This problem is especially pressing for women. The employment of women cannot be equated with that of men, as they do not participate in the labour market in the same way (for example, women's salaries are lower than men's, unequal gender division of unpaid work is characteristic, women take leave to care for family members more often than men).

According to sociologist Maca Jogan, the participation of women in the labour market in Slovenia has a rather long history; women have been present in the employment field since World War II. In accordance with this, a long tradition of managing the policy of facilitating the connection of professional work with family life is characteristic of the country. Slovenia began speedily constructing kindergartens in the 1970s, as well as providing care and school meals for chil-dren in primary school. Maternity leave and childcare leave also have a long history in Slovenia, and have been established practices since the end of World War II.

The current fundamental document defining family policy in Slovenia is the Resolution on the Foundations for Family Policy in the Republic of Slovenia, which was adopted in 1993. On the declarative level, this document anticipates various measures for a better balance between family and work obligations. Its provisions for childcare, parental leave and measures related to the working environment are summarized below.

Organized institutional care of preschool children may have two purposes: that of education, and of the work-family balance. The latter is especially highly emphasized in family policies, as a significant part of the policies on the work-family balance in the resolution is intended precisely for this purpose.

Institutional care for preschool children is relatively well-organized in Slovenia. The majority of kindergartens are public, but a trend of increasing numbers of private kinder-gartens may be observed. These, however, are also subsidized from public funds. Municipalities grant concessions to private

Number of fathers taking paternity leave
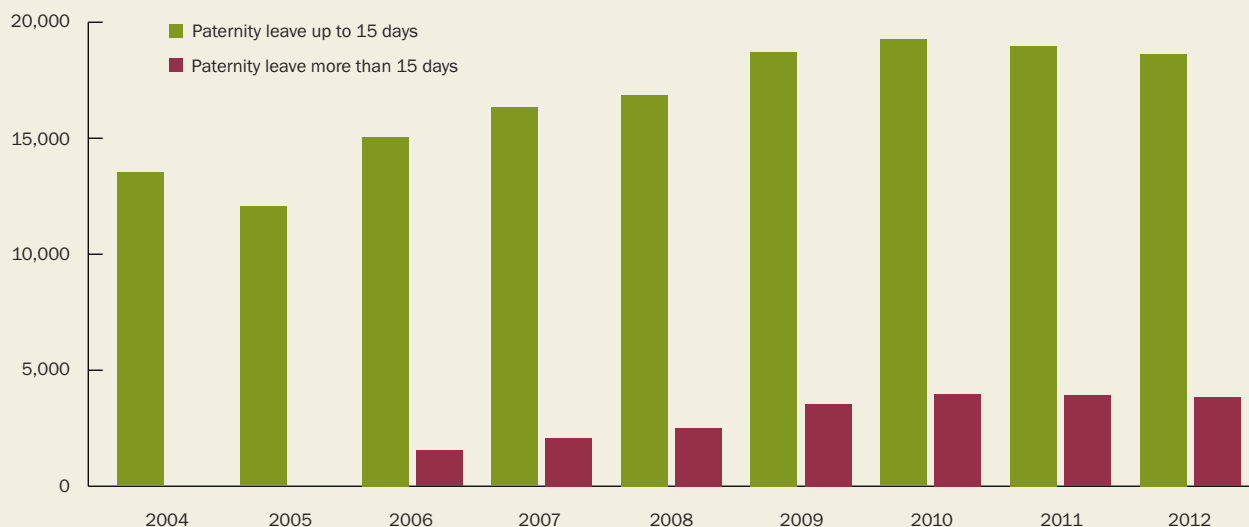
Source: Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs

kindergartens, which makes them part of the public network, and thus the same conditions apply to them as to public kindergartens. Other private kindergartens without concessions are financed by municipalities to the extent that parents do not have to pay more for the programme than they would pay for the same type of programme in a public kindergarten within the municipality.

The data show a high inclusion in kindergartens, which has been constantly rising. In 2011, 55.3 per cent of children in the first age group (up to three years of age) were included in kindergartens. This greatly exceeds the Barcelona objectives of the European Union for that age group, which anticipated 33 per cent of children by 2010. In the second age group, we have almost met the Barcelona objectives, which anticipate 90 per cent inclusion of children from three years of age to the beginning of school, with 89.3 per cent inclusion.

One of the reasons for the high inclusion of children in kindergartens is the subsidization of programmes. The amount parents have to pay is determined on the basis of classifying a family into an income class. Those with lower incomes are exempt from payment. The second advantage is that parents who have two or more children included in kindergarten pay 30 per cent of the price of care for the second child and are exempt from payment for each subsequent child.

The high inclusion of children in kindergartens is also connected with the relatively well-developed and dispersed spatial network of kindergartens, which is seen in the data from the Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia from 2010 showing that the majority of parents spend less than 15 minutes on accompanying children to kindergartens. In addition, it is characteristic of the Slovenian environment that the inclusion of children in kindergartens is understood as the norm. Childcare in kindergartens is the most desired form of childcare, as the programmes of preschool education and their positive influence on the children's development are considered to be of high quality.

A lower share of children is still not included in kindergarten, either because there was no space for them within the organized preschool education system or because their parents chose not to send them. Informal support is a very important mode of support for these parents, as private childcare at home and baby-sitters are not often made use of. In this respect, grandparents are especially important. Their support is also noticeable in the temporary and holiday childcare of preschool as well as primary school children.

Another important measure of the policy on the work-family balance refers to the arrangement of parental leave, of which four types are possible in Slovenia: maternity leave, paternity leave, childcare leave and adopter's leave.

Maternity leave is the mother's non-transferable right (under certain conditions, it may also be used by the child's father or another person). It is intended for preparation for the birth, childcare immediately after birth, and for the protection of the mother's health upon the birth and after. The period is 105 days.

Paternity leave is intended for fathers to be with a young child and cooperate with the mother in childcare and, like maternity leave, is non-transferable. The father is entitled to 90 days of paternity leave, the first 15 of which must be taken before the child is six months old, while the other 75 days may be taken before the child is three years old. This was introduced in 2003. Since then, the number of fathers who take paternity leave has grown significantly.

Most fathers take leave of up to 15 days, while significantly fewer take more than 15 days. The reason is most probably that the first 15 days of leave are fully paid (100 per cent salary compensation), while the state pays only for social security contributions based on the minimum wage for leave exceeding 15 days. Considering the conclusions of the research on the effect of the applicable measures of family policy on the decision to have children, carried out by the Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia in 2010, one of the reasons for not taking paternity leave is connected with the disapproval of employers, mainly private. In addition, fathers do not exercise this right due to fear of losing their jobs, which is especially obvious in a time of recession and great socioeconomic insecurity. Perhaps the recession is the reason for the noticeable slight decline in paternity leave in the last two years in comparison with previous periods, when the number of fathers taking paternity leave increased each year.

Childcare leave is intended for further childcare, and may be taken by the parents immediately after the maternity leave has ended. It is generally for 260 days and the parents agree on how to use the leave. Part of the leave (a maximum of 75 days) may be transferred and taken before the child is eight years old.

The majority of childcare leave is taken by mothers, as the belief that caring for small children is primarily a woman's task is still deeply rooted. It is encouraging, however, that the number of fathers taking childcare leave has been growing in recent years. According to the data of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, 921 fathers took the leave in 2006 and as many as 1,517 in 2012, which indicates a shift towards practices of more active fatherhood.

Best practice: Family-friendly Company certificate

The state wishes to stimulate employers to take a more active role in making it easier to balance the professional and personal life of parents by issuing the Family-friendly Company certificate.

The certification procedure is organized and run by the Ekvilib Institute, which awards certificates in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. With the assistance of an external counsellor or appraiser, a plan to introduce measures is devised in a company to improve the management of working processes and the quality of the working environment in order to make balancing professional and family life easier. Following a positive assessment of the plan to implement selected measures by the council of auditors, the company acquires the Family-friendly Company certificate. An assessment is carried out after three years, to ascertain whether the measures have been implemented and objectives attained. If this is the case, the company acquires the full Family-friendly Company certificate. Over 130 Slovenian companies and organizations have so far acquired the certificate, which indicates that it motivates employers.

Slovenia has a high inclusion of children in kindergartens, and the number has been constantly rising

Adopter's leave is intended for one or both adoptive parents in order for them and the child to fully bond immediately after the adoption. Adopter's leave lasts up to 120 days (if the child is from one to four years old when adopted) and up to 150 days (if the child is 4-10 years old when adopted). In 2014, the rights of adoptive parents will be equal to the rights of biological parents, which means that adoptive parents will be entitled to all the rights to which only biological parents have been entitled so far.

Absence from work due to the birth of a child is approximately 12 months; in certain cases, it may be longer (for example if the mother has twins, in the case of premature birth, or if a child needs special care). Parents are entitled to parental benefits for the period of their absence from work, which is a labour right, and amounts to 90 per cent of the base (if the base is lower than the minimum wage, the benefit is 100 per cent). This means that unemployed parents are not entitled to the benefit and receive only a minimum benefit or parental allowance.

To balance work and family, government measures related to the working environment regarding the time after parents return to work are extremely important. Legislation ensures the preservation of jobs, particularly for mothers during parental leave, and job security is provided by the right to return to the labour market following childbirth. In addition, legislation anticipates better opportunities for

flexible working hours, which is realized by enabling one of the parents who cares for the child until the age of three to work part-time. If a parent cares for two children, this right is extended until the younger child is six years old or until the age of 18 for a child who is physically handicapped or moderately or severely mentally handicapped. The number of people who take the opportunity to work part-time has been growing in Slovenia.

Another important measure for the work-family balance is the opportunity to work at home. Parents are thus quite autonomous in organizing the time available and balancing it with family obligations.

In conclusion, we can say that Slovenia has a relatively well-developed family policy in terms of the work-family balance. This is also confirmed by the fact that the employment of women, which is already above the European average, also remains high among mothers. However, it must be emphasized that while opportunities for men and women in the labour market have drawn closer, the traditional division of work within families regarding household chores, caring for family members and so on, can still be observed in Slovenia, which results in women bearing a double burden. In future, we intend to develop and encourage the principle of equal opportunities to a greater extent, which is crucial for the successful management of policies for the work-family balance.

Work-family balance: issues and considerations for the post-2014 agenda

Zitha Mokomane, Chief Research Specialist, Human and Social Development Programme, Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa

As part of its 2011 resolution on the 'Preparations for an observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family',[1] the United Nations Commission for Social Development has identified work-family balance as one of the three critical areas that member states need to pay particular attention to, and develop appropriate policies to address (the others are family poverty and social exclusion).

With no standard definition, work-family balance can be broadly construed as the equilibrium achieved when one is able to adequately reconcile the demands of paid work with those of the family. The converse is 'work-family conflict,' which has been defined as "a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible so that participation in one role (home) is made more difficult by participation in another role (work)."[2] By briefly reviewing some of the established facts related to work-family conflict and work-family balance, we can propose some noteworthy considerations for the post-2014 policy and research agenda on the subject.

Work-family conflict and work-family balance have become important policy issues in contemporary society, against a background of prevailing socioeconomic and demographic changes in both developing and developed countries. With women worldwide being the traditional household managers and caregivers for young, old and infirm family members, a key change in this regard has been the notable global increase in female labour force participation. This is consistently shown by data from regional and international organizations including the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Bank. In essence, to the extent that the domestic workload of women remains virtually unchanged, their labour market participation often leads to a 'time-money squeeze' between their family responsibilities and the demands of paid work.[3] For many women this squeeze is aggravated by another salient change: the increase in female-headed households which is largely brought about by increases in divorce, non-marriage and delayed marriage. This transformation means that, unlike the 'male breadwinner-female caregiver' family model that prevailed during industrialization, mothers in many countries are increasingly taking responsibility as the sole economic providers and caregivers for their children.

Other key changes that have implications for work-family balance include increasingly ageing populations whose care, in many societies, is customarily provided informally by family members; declining fertility or birth rates that are leading to smaller family and household sizes, meaning that families are increasingly less able to meet their traditional support and care-giving roles; and increased migration, which also leads to weakened traditional support for care and other domestic tasks as family members separate physically and households sizes are reduced.[4] In countries most affected by HIV and AIDS, the care burden for caregivers of people infected and affected by the epidemic has been greatly increased; and the majority of these caregivers are women.

Work-family balance can be achieved through a range of family-friendly policies that can be broadly split into two categories: parental leave policies and alternative work schedules. The former allow parents to take time off work to attend to family demands without jeopardizing their jobs.[5] They include:

- maternity leave — job-protected leave that grants women leave of absence before and after childbirth, and in some cases after adoption of a child
- paternity leave — job-protected leave available to fathers in the time immediately after the birth or adoption of a child, making it possible for them to spend more time with their families
- parental leave — a statutory entitlement to be absent from work after the exhaustion of earlier maternity and paternity leave[6]
- temporary leave periods — for employees to take care of children and other dependent family members.

Leave provisions can therefore be short-term or long-term and can be paid, unpaid or a combination of both.

Alternative work schedules, on the other hand, provide working parents with the flexibility to balance work and family commitments instead of working a typical 'nine-to-five' day or a five-day week.

With over three decades of academic interest in the subject, there is now an established body of evidence showing that the availability and accessibility of family-friendly policies can lead to several positive outcomes for individuals and society. For example, a number of papers in a recent special issue on work and family published by the journal *The Future of Children* showed that by making

it feasible for working parents to spend adequate time at home and provide the necessary care and supervision to their children, family-friendly policies can reduce infant and child morbidity and mortality; encourage longer breastfeeding duration; and make a difference in children's academic achievement, behaviour and general development. The ILO,[7] on the other hand, has highlighted benefits for society, including reduced poverty as parents in low-income families are able to participate in income-generating activities; improved employment and occupation equities between men and women; and improved family and marital relationships. For employers, the literature is abundant with evidence showing that family-friendly policies are linked to job engagement, satisfaction, retention and better health for employees; reduced absenteeism and lateness; higher motivation, performance, and hence productivity of employees; and enhanced capacity to attract a broader range of candidates that can create and maintain a competitive and innovative edge, contributing to improved competitiveness.

The literature on work-family conflict and work-family balance has, however, several noteworthy limitations that require the attention of scholars and policymakers in the area. These include a biased focus on western countries; very little has been done in the developing regions of the world. An often-advanced notion for this is that developed and developing countries differ in the degree of importance attached to work and family and the extent to which they perceive them to be incompatible.[8] That is, while westerners typically perceive time spent at work as time spent fulfilling personal ambition, in developing societies people value work as a means of supporting the family and improving family welfare,[9] and hence are less likely to view the demands of work as a challenge. Another assumption is that the extended family — which is the main familial system in many developing societies — has a strong traditional culture of intergenerational support where grandparents, aunts and other relatives are counted on to provide childcare support.[10] There is also a biased focus on women which might be understood against the sociocultural relations that, in many countries, relegate unpaid family responsibilities to women, as well as the social policies' historical disregard of men's contribution to family life. Children, specifically those of preschool age are another specific target group due largely to the increased proportion of single-parent households which means that children are less likely to have other adult carers from within the family.

However, given the prevailing socioeconomic and demographic changes that underlie much work-family conflict, it is imperative for the post-2014 research and policy agenda in this area to disregard outdated notions of the family and the availability of its support. Instead, it must take into account the changed nature of families and workplaces by the following means.

It is important to recognize that workers in developing countries face the same challenges as those in the west. It is noteworthy that developing countries are experiencing similar socioeconomic and demographic changes as developed countries. Thus, workers in these countries face the same challenges of reconciling work and family demands as their counterparts in the west. Despite this, developing countries have not been a visible part of the global work-family research agenda, resulting in a paucity of information regarding the work-family situation in these countries. This calls for the development and execution of a research agenda aimed at acquiring an information base for understanding the antecedents of work-family conflict and balance in these countries; their impact on individuals and societies; and plausible context-relevant strategies and policies for achieving work-family balance. In executing this agenda it will also be worthwhile for scholars and policymakers in developing countries to establish partnerships with regional and international networks for research and information exchange on current work-family balance policy options, experiences and best practices. In addition to responding to the increasing calls for more cross-cultural research on the subject, this research agenda will be imperative for documenting valuable lessons on suitable approaches to address the varying needs of employees given the globalization of the world economy, where managers around the world are increasingly confronted with real and virtual employees and teams with diverse cultural and sociodemographic backgrounds.[11]

The focus on children needs to be extended to include school-aged children, as arranging care for this group of children presents another difficult set of challenges for working parents. Although the time a child spends in school provides a supervised environment for a significant number of hours each day while parents work, many families experience gaps between parental work hours and after-school hours.[12] Several studies have documented the negative outcomes that result when children are unsupervised after school, such as involvement in high risk behaviour and criminal activities, increased risk of physical injury, emotional harm and poor

Common examples of alternative work schedules

Flexi-time — the employee is required to be at the workplace during specified hours or the 'core' hours; all other hours are flexibly scheduled to work a prescribed number of hours per pay period.

Compressed work week — employees work longer hours each day but fewer days a week.

Telecommuting — employees work out of their homes or at a satellite work site instead of in the office; they are usually connected to the office by computer and/or telephone.

Job sharing — two or more workers share the duties of one full-time job, each working part-time; or two or more workers who have unrelated part-time assignments share the same budget line

Part-time employment — can refer to portions of days, weeks, months or years worked by temporary or permanent workers.

Voluntary reduced work time — employees reduce their work time and salary by a specified amount (usually between 5 per cent and 50 per cent) for a specific period (6-12 months) or permanently while retaining benefits and seniority on a prorated basis.[17]

The post-2014 agenda should have a comprehensive view of the family that includes any dependent person, young or old, and considers the role of fathers and men in general

social and intellectual development.[13] There is therefore a need to consider a range of workplace and school-based options to help parents of school-aged children achieve work-family balance. Although a common option in this regard is after-school programmes that provide care by adults in a supervised environment after the school days ends, other options worthy of consideration and expansion are those implemented before school and during school holidays and vacations.[14]

Children with special health needs must be taken into consideration. The 2011 special issue of *The Future of Children* also highlighted the importance of considering the needs of parents whose children have special needs such as disability, or who require preventative and routine medical check-ups.

In addition to children, the care needs of the growing proportion of older people should to be taken into consideration. While the larger number of elderly people is positive in that it reflects longer and healthier lives relative to the past, this trend also suggests an increased demand for long-term, chronic, frail and end-of-life care. This may require caregivers to ask for time off from work at short notice or for extended periods of time.

The role of fathers must be taken into consideration. Although much of the focus has been on women — specifi-

cally mothers — a recent publication by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, titled *Men in Families and Family Policy in a Changing World,* clearly articulated that unlike their counterparts in the 'male breadwinner-female caregiver' family model, contemporary fathers "are no longer mere breadwinners; they are increasingly aware of, and concerned about what they do as fathers and how they do it." The publication stressed that many fathers "would like to have a better-balanced [work-family] situation, one that would enable them to be more involved in the care of their children." The urge to take the role of fathers into consideration is further underscored by research evidence showing the critical role that fathers' presence and involvement in their children's lives plays in the children's life chances, academic achievement and socioeconomic and cognitive development and functioning.

Overall the agenda should "have a comprehensive view of the 'family', extending beyond childcare responsibilities of women, to include any person dependent upon any staff member (male and female) for care and support, such as an elder parent or a disabled family member."[15] It should further take into consideration the perspectives of employers and the various options that might make the workplace more responsive to the needs of families without placing an undue burden on employers.[16]

Work, care and family policy in Australia: a work in progress

Dr Elizabeth Hill, Co-convener, Australian Work and Family Policy Roundtable

The daily lives of Australian families have fundamentally changed over the past two decades, largely on account of women's increasing participation in paid work. Since the International Year of the Family the participation rate of women aged 25-54 has risen more than 10 percentage points to 78 per cent.[1] This change has been largely driven by the participation of mothers in paid employment, reflecting changing social norms, enhanced female education outcomes, improved access to childcare and more flexible work arrangements. Currently around half of all mothers with a one-year-old child are employed and almost two thirds of mothers with a youngest child aged six are working.[2] The increase in maternal employment has seen a similar increase in the proportion of couples with dependent children where both parents are in the labour force, up from 58 per cent in 1994 to 65 per cent in 2007. Single mothers are also increasingly employed, with participation in paid work rising from 44 to 57 per cent over the past 20 years.[3]

Increasing maternal employment has, however, been overwhelmingly concentrated in part-time work. Australian women in general have a much higher incidence of part-time work than men, with three quarters of all part-time jobs performed by women.[4] Part-time work has become the most routine strategy used by Australian women with children who want to combine paid work with childcare, making households with one full-time worker and one part-time worker the most common employment arrangement for partnered parents with school-aged children. More than a third of families fit this model, up from 28 per cent in 1996. Households supported by a lone male breadwinner are slowly on the decline (from 32 to 28 per cent), while the proportion of couple-families where both parents work full-time has remained unchanged for 20 years, accounting for only one fifth of families.[5]

Children are not, of course, the only dependents that affect employment — 12 per cent of Australians have caring responsibilities for people other than children.[6] Among those who are employed, more than 4 million men and women are responsible for the care of a person with a disability, chronic illness, frailty due to old age, or a child under 15 years. This means almost 40 per cent of the Australian workforce has significant caring responsibilities they must combine with their working lives,[7] making the development of a rational and equitable work and care regime an urgent issue, essential to Australia's future wellbeing, economic productivity and social inclusion.

Since the International Year of the Family 1994, work, care and family policy has become a mainstream concern in the Australian community and an area of substantial voter interest at the past four federal elections. In the 2013 federal election paid parental leave was a major election issue. Childcare policy has also been a priority of the past three federal governments and is an area targeted for reform by the current Government. A national disability care system has also attracted bipartisan support and will be fully operational by 2016.

Following is a brief assessment of Australian developments in the three policy areas traditionally highlighted by the United Nations Secretary-General as providing essential support for working parents and carers: parental leave, childcare and flexible working arrangements.

Paid parental leave

In 1994 Australia was one of only a handful of Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries that did not have a statutory universal paid parental leave system. In January 2011 a federally funded

Working carers require job flexibility and respite service to support their workforce participation

universal system of paid parental leave was finally introduced. The scheme is designed as a workplace entitlement to 18 weeks of leave paid at the national minimum wage. Since 1979, female employees have been entitled to 52 weeks of unpaid maternity leave. In 1990 this right was extended to all parents — both men and women — with the guarantee of employment protection. It was then extended to 24 months in 2009.[8] The introduction of a paid scheme signalled a significant shift in the approach to parental leave in Australia. Public sector workers and some private sector employees had for many years enjoyed increasingly generous paid parental leave benefits, but it was only with the introduction of the new government scheme that the right to paid leave at the birth or adoption of a baby was extended to all workers.

The new scheme has been a boon to women working in small business, and as casual and contract workers who previously had no entitlements of this sort. Initial evaluation of the programme showed that half of the applications for paid parental leave were from mothers who earn less than $A43,000 per year. This suggests that the scheme is providing support for those least likely to have access to employer-paid parental leave.[9] This is a positive development that supports gender and socioeconomic equity. In January 2012 two weeks of Dad and Partner Pay (DaPP), paid at the national minimum wage, was added to the scheme. This is provided on a 'use it or lose it' basis and is not transferable. Initial research shows that uptake of the DaPP scheme has been slow.

All major political parties now support paid parental leave making it a subject of policy debate. In early 2013 the centre-right Liberal-National coalition party proposed a more generous parental leave scheme: a full replacement wage for 24 weeks, including superannuation, funded from a levy on the biggest 300 businesses. Announcement of this alternative scheme made paid parental leave a major battleground of the 2013 election. Having won the election, the new government is due to implement what will be one of the most generous schemes in the OECD in 2015.[10] Concerns about the generosity and equity of the scheme have been raised by both the political left and right, and in December 2013 the Government indicated some willingness to negotiate the details of the scheme in order to have it passed by the parliament.

Paid parental leave in Australia has developed rapidly, but there are still improvements to be made. There is a strong case for increasing the period of DaPP. This would support other efforts towards gender equity in the workplace and home and provide a formal acknowledgement that parenting is a cooperative task shared by both parents. Attention must also be paid to the strength and enforcement of the right return to work guarantee after parental leave. The failure to provide superannuation under the current scheme is a weakness with long-term negative consequences for women's retirement savings, although this is due to be addressed by the new scheme. While Australia has been slow to develop a system of universal access to paid parental leave, recent policy action has made it a fundamental feature of the national work/care infrastructure.

Childcare

High quality, affordable and accessible childcare is arguably the most important part of the work and care regime of a modern economy. In Australia, regular reports on the cost of childcare and long waiting lists in the mainstream media reflect the high profile childcare policy now has in public debate. As women have increased their participation in the labour market the use of formal childcare services has increased. In 1991 around 250,000 children used

Concern about the cost, quality, accessibility and flexibility of childcare has been high on government agendas over the past decade

Changes in Australia's workforce participation, childcare and ageing population, 1994-2014

	International Year of the Family (IYF) 1994	IYF 20th anniversary 2014
Labour force participation for women aged 25-74	67%	78%
Proportion of employed mothers with dependent children under 18 years	55% (1991)	65% (2011)
Proportion of women workers in part-time employment	42%	46%
Children under 12 years using approved childcare services	250,000 (1991)	More than 1 million
Proportion of population over 65 years	11%	14%

Source: ABS various catalogues; Baxter 2013; Productivity Commission 2013; RBA 2013

approved childcare. Today, almost all Australian children participate in some form of early childhood education and care (ECEC).[11] In 2013 the number of children under 12 using approved care services stood at more than 1 million with the highest usage for children aged 2-4 years at around 50 per cent.[12] Australian families do not, however, use long hours of childcare. Forty per cent of children who access formal care attend for less than 10 hours per week. Only 9 per cent attend for 35 or more hours per week. When informal care is included, the mean time spent in care is only 17 hours per week. This reflects the part-time work profile of many Australian women.[13]

The cost of childcare has been of significant concern to parents and governments over the past decade. The federal government provides a mixture of means-tested and flat-rate subsidies to parents with children in approved care. Nevertheless the cost has continued to rise. Official data show that the price paid for childcare by consumers increased at three times the general rate of inflation between 2009 and 2012.[14] This is despite growing government subsidies and support for the ECEC sector which is budgeted to reach around $A6 billion per year in 2017.

In recent years there have been some very positive developments in Australia's childcare sector. In 2010 the National Quality Framework was introduced with the aim to improve the quality of service provision through better child/teacher ratios and improved staff training requirements. At the same time an Early Years Learning Framework was introduced setting out the principles, practices and outcomes required to support children's learning from birth to school. In addition, a National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care was implemented, providing all children with 15 hours of preschool education in the year before they start school. These are important developments for Australian children, parents and childcare workers.

However, the payment of decent wages for early childhood educators and teachers remains a pressing issue in the childcare sector. Childcare workers are among the lowest paid people in the Australian workforce leading to problems in recruitment, lack of career development and high turnover.

Currently around 180 educators leave the sector each week with negative implications for the continuity and quality of care for children.[15] The urgent need to improve wages for early childhood educators is linked to a broader problem — the development of an equitable funding model that can deliver a high quality and sustainable ECEC system. This is currently being evaluated by a Productivity Commission inquiry into the childcare sector, which is due to report in late 2014. The inquiry has been welcomed by providers, parents and policy advocates, however there is some concern that cost and accessibility will be addressed at the expense of maintaining high quality care.

Workplace flexibility

The provision of unpaid care for children, the frail aged, the disabled and the sick is essential to the well-being of Australian society and the economy. But unpaid care demands have a significant impact on workforce participation, especially for women who are much more likely than men to be primary carers throughout their life course.[16] The importance of unpaid care work and its impact on workforce participation is only just beginning to gain recognition in Australia.[17] At the same time national productivity and participation agendas are calling for increased labour force participation by women, the mature aged and those with disabilities.[18] Workers with these profiles require flexibility in their working time arrangements in order to meet their own self-care needs and the care needs of those who depend on them.

In 2010 the new National Employment Standards (NES) provided employees with preschool-aged children or a disabled child under 18 years the right to request (RTR) a change in their working time arrangements. Under the NES employers are required to consider the request, but can refuse on business grounds. This limited right is not supported by a robust right to appeal an employer's unreasonable refusal. Initial research shows that most workers do not know about the RTR, that men are less likely than women to make a request, and that when they do they are more likely to be refused than women.[19] In 2013 the RTR was extended and it now includes all employees with

Childcare workers are amongst the lowest paid in the Australian workforce. Workers are active in the campaign for higher wages

caring responsibilities; parents with children of school age or younger; employees with a disability; employees aged 55 or over; and employees experiencing domestic violence or providing support to immediate family or household members experiencing domestic violence. The amended provisions also make it explicit that a parent returning to work after taking parental leave is entitled to request to work part-time and sets out a 'non-exhaustive list' of 'reasonable business grounds' on which an employer could refuse requests. There is still no formal appeal mechanism.

The traditional gender division of labour is proving hard to shift in Australia and the majority of women find themselves primary carers — for children, the disabled and the frail aged. It is common for Australian women to undertake part-time or casual work as a strategy to reconcile their work and care responsibilities. But part-time jobs do not have the same security and predictability as full-time employment, nor the same leave provisions. More policy attention needs to be paid to the provision of regular and predictable hours and job security as a basis from which workers can seek the flexibility they need to manage their caring responsibilities.[20]

Gaps and challenges

There have been some important work, care and family policy reforms in Australia since the International Year of the Family. The long overdue introduction of a universal paid parental leave scheme in 2011, followed only two years later by the announcement of a more generous scheme to be introduced in 2015, signals the high level of community and political interest in work, care and family policy in Australia. Recent childcare reform, and the introduction and extension of a right to request working time flexibility for workers with caring responsibilities, underscores the focus that is now given to this policy area. However, more

change is needed to support workforce participation alongside social and family relations of care.

Like most OECD countries, the Australian population is ageing.[21] While attention is given to the increased participation of women in the paid workforce, much less policy focus has been given to mature aged workers and the needs of the frail and elderly. Older workers are being encouraged to work for longer in a bid to boost productivity and sustain living standards. This requires workplaces to meet the changing health needs of a mature-aged workforce and provide support for these workers, who are often also carers of the frail aged. As workers and carers, mature-aged employees may need to alter their work hours and will require access to respite services. As most unpaid care falls to women, developing a flexible and sustainable aged care system is critical to women's labour force participation during periods of intensive care responsibility for older family members. This is a policy gap that must be addressed.

The overriding challenge for work, care and family policy in Australia is the development of a balanced and rational work/care regime that meets the needs of twenty-first century workers and their workplaces in a sustainable and gender-equitable fashion. Work and care policy has become highly politicized in recent years. This has focused the attention of politicians and policymakers, but has sometimes produced short-term populist responses that do not reflect best practice and are inequitable or financially unsustainable. The current shape and pace of the development of work, care and family policy in Australia raises important questions about public finances and the balance of priorities — especially as Australia introduces an expensive new paid parental leave scheme. Australian workers with family responsibilities require access to a range of services and institutional arrangements in order to reconcile their various work and care responsibilities over the life course. This remains a work in progress.

Work and family approaches in Australia

Alan Hayes and Jennifer Baxter, with colleagues from the Australian Government Department of Social Services and the Australian Institute of Family Studies

The intersection of family life and the world of work has been of longstanding interest to Australian governments, communities and workplaces. Over the past 20 years labour markets have become more flexible and the challenge of balancing work with their education, caring responsibilities and family relationships has become more complex for parents.

The Australian Government understands the importance of ensuring that women are able to participate as fully as they choose in the paid workforce, to continue their careers and to combine work with family life. There follows a discussion of key measures taken by the Government in the area of work and family, illustrated by the work of the Australian Institute of Families Studies (AIFS).

Employment is a vital aspect of well-being for families, particularly for mothers with young children, and policies that facilitate parental employment have been a key focus in Australia. Among mothers of children aged under 18 years, employment rates increased from 55 per cent in 1991 to 59 per cent in 2001 and 65 per cent in 2011. This is as a result of rising levels of women's educational attainment,

declines in family size, and delays in commencement of childbearing, with women being increasingly connected to the labour market before becoming mothers.

Mothers' employment participation is closely related to the age of the child. More particularly, some women withdraw from employment when they have young children and gradually return to work as their children grow older.
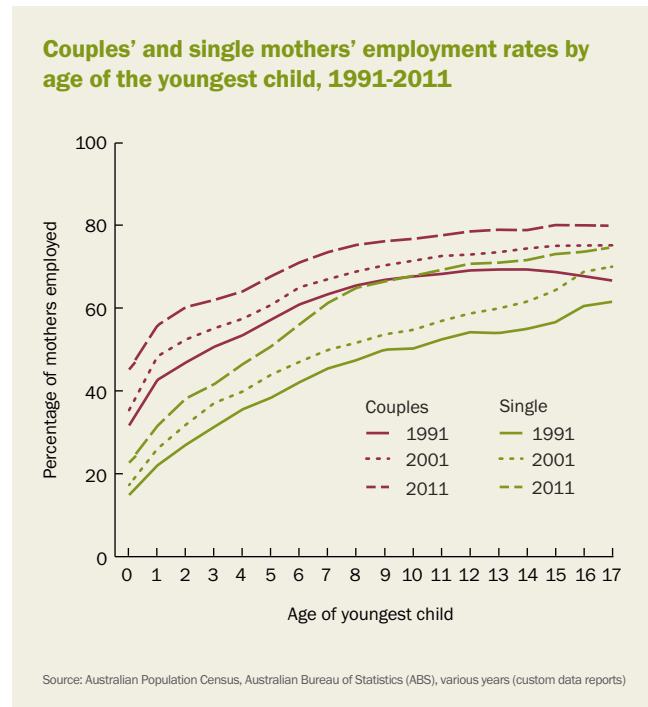
Factors influencing mothers' return to work include childcare costs, quality and availability of childcare, workplace conditions and their own preferences for raising children, as well as the incentives and effects of the tax and transfer systems on family incomes. Their decisions often involve a balance between nurturing children, maintaining family relationships and participating in paid work. A considerable proportion of Australian mothers, especially those with young children, prefer to remain at home to care for their children.

Successive Australian governments have recognized the additional costs associated with raising children and have maintained a strong system of family payments. Australia's current system of family payments comprises two key components: Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A, which

Recognition of the additional costs associated with raising children has resulted in a strong system of family payments in Australia

Couples' and single mothers' employment rates by age of the youngest child, 1991-2011

Source: Australian Population Census, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), various years (custom data reports)

assists low-income and medium-income families with the costs of raising dependent children to support better family functioning; and FTB Part B, which assists low-income and medium-income single parents and partnered parents where one income is low, to enable families to exercise choices to balance their labour force participation and childcare responsibilities.

A key work and family policy focus is to provide support for mothers and fathers at the time of a birth to assist them to manage their work and care responsibilities. Australia's first government-provided Paid Parental Leave (PPL) scheme (based on payment of the national minimum wage for 18 weeks) was introduced in January 2011. The related Dad and Partner Pay programme provides options for fathers at the birth of a child to take time away from work to be with the baby and to assist the new mother. Employed parents may also have access to paid leave as a condition of their employment, which may be taken along with PPL.

The majority of Australian mothers prefer part-time work arrangements (working less than 35 hours per week) to enable them to combine employment and care for their children. Mothers are much more likely than fathers to report using work-family arrangements to care for children, with 43 per cent of the mothers reporting that they worked part-time to care for children, compared to only 5 per cent of fathers. Flexible work is commonly used by mothers (44 per cent) and fathers (30 per cent), and the next most commonly reported working arrangement is working at home (19 per cent of mothers and 12 per cent of fathers).

Mothers who work part-time hours report being less rushed and pressed for time, and are less likely to experience negative spill-over from work to family (for example, through feeling that their family time is more pressured because of work).

'Dad and Partner Pay' provides options for fathers at the birth of a child to take time away from work to be with the baby and to assist the new mother

Children's use of formal and informal childcare or preschool, by age of child, and mothers' employment status, 2011
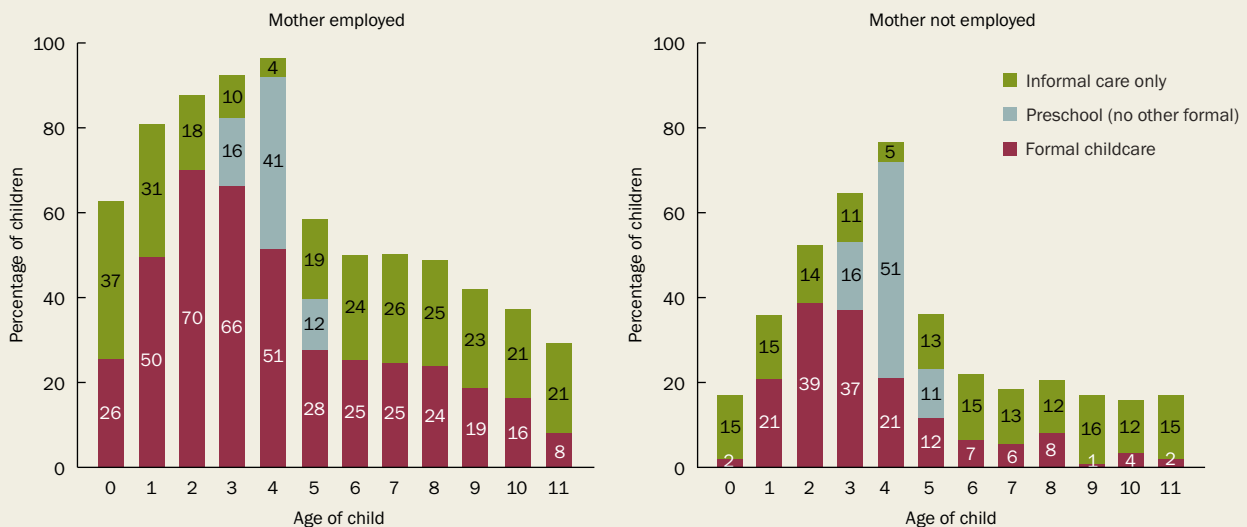
Source: ABS 2011 Childhood Education and Care Survey (confidentialized unit record file)

Fathers working long hours experience more time pressure and are more likely to report that their work interferes with their family life

Working arrangements adopted by parents to care for children aged under 12 years

Mother   Father

Legend:
- Part-time work
- Flexible hours
- Work at home
- Shift work
- Other
- None of these

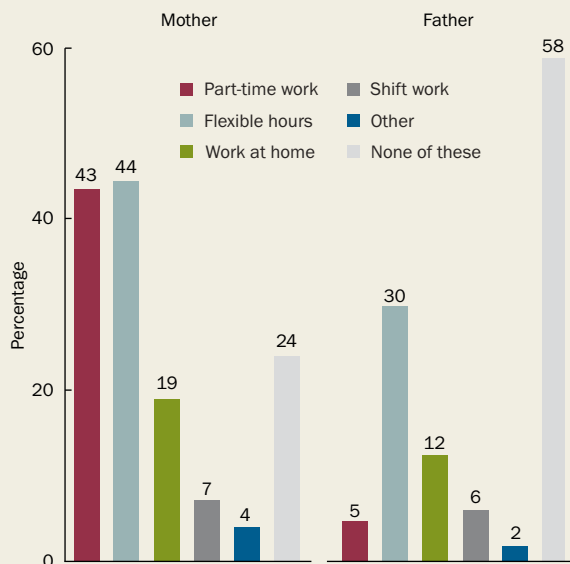Source: ABS 2011 Childhood Education and Care Survey (confidentialized unit record file)

In 2011, the vast majority (90 per cent) of Australian fathers of children aged under 18 years were employed and worked on average 45 hours per week, compared to 30 hours for mothers. Research undertaken by AIFS in the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children has shown that fathers who work longer hours experience more time pressures and are more likely to report that their work interferes with their family life. They have less time with their children — who themselves feel that their fathers work too much — and may be perceived as being of less support to mothers in raising their children. There is considerable variation among fathers, however, and negative effects on fathers' well-being are actually less likely among those who prefer working longer hours.

Among couple families, the 'male breadwinner' model (father employed full-time and mother not employed) was traditionally the predominant work-family model. However, the significant increase in maternal employment, particularly part-time, over the past 20 years has seen a major trend towards a 'modified male breadwinner' model (father employed full-time and mother employed part-time). For example, of couples with children aged under 18 years in 2011, 21 per cent had both parents working full-time; 32 per cent had the father employed full-time and the mother part-time; and 26 per cent had the father employed full-time and the mother either not employed or on leave from employment. Another 7 per cent were jobless, leaving 14 per cent

with other combinations of parental employment. These patterns vary by the age of the youngest child, with the proportion of dual full-time employment families increasing and male breadwinner families declining as children grow older. In 2011, 36 per cent of mothers of children aged under 18 years were employed part-time and 25 per cent full-time, while 29 per cent of mothers with a youngest child aged under three years were employed part-time, compared to 12 per cent full-time.

One of the ways to ensure balance between work and family is by the use of family-friendly workplace policies and practices. Fostering a culture of workplace flexibility for family responsibilities can also help to achieve a more productive work environment through reduced absenteeism and improved job satisfaction.

Flexible work is made accessible to workers with family responsibilities in Australia through the National Employment Standards (NES) of the Fair Work Act 2009. The NES are legislated minimum employment standards and entitlements, and include provisions intended to directly support work and family balance such as flexible working arrangements and family-friendly workplace arrangements.

Other standards that apply to workers more generally under the Fair Work Act include a limit on maximum working hours and access to different types of leave including entitlements to unpaid parental leave, and paid and unpaid personal/carer's leave. In addition, many employers provide their employees with more generous employment conditions than those under the NES to encourage productivity increases and employee retention.

Overall, there is considerable variability across occupations and industries with respect to conditions. Thus, some workers are likely to face more challenges reconciling their work-family commitments than others. In fact, research by the Centre of Work+Life at the University of South Australia has shown that many workers are unaware of their right to request flexible work as set out in the NES.

There is ongoing policy interest in better understanding which jobs are difficult for men and women to balance with family responsibilities and the characteristics of those who have these jobs. In particular, the ability to reconcile work and family is likely to be more difficult for the 22 per cent of Australian families with children aged under 18 years that are headed by a single parent, most typically the mother, though children in these families may also live part of the time with a father living elsewhere. Compared to couple mothers, single mothers have lower rates of employment, especially those with children under school age. Different employment rates may also be related to differences in educational attainment, wages, abilities to combine work with caring for children, and access to informal childcare networks. The role of government support is also important, especially as single mothers are more likely to be in receipt of income support payments and are thus more likely to face financial disincentives to work due to the interaction of the income support system with wages. There has been some narrowing of the gap in the employment rates of single and couple mothers over the years shown, especially for mothers of school-aged children, which may reflect that mothers can no longer remain on income support until children are aged 16 years without being required to look for work.

Successive Australian governments have taken steps to make sure the costs of childcare are affordable for families and have introduced reforms to ensure nationally consistent quality childcare standards for children in the critical early years of their development. To support childcare affordability and assist parents to participate in the workforce without the cost of childcare being a barrier, the Government also provides childcare fee assistance for families, using both approved and registered childcare, through the Childcare Benefit and Childcare Rebate payments. Jobs, Education and Training Childcare Fee Assistance provides extra help with the cost of approved childcare to parents if they are on an eligible income support payment, are studying, working, looking for work or getting the training and skills they need to enter or return to the workforce.

Participation in formal childcare (including preschool) is especially common among children under primary school age, although such care is less often used for the youngest children. Participation in formal care is lower among children of school age, reflecting that many mothers seek part-time working hours that fit within school hours, avoiding the need for formal outside-school-hours care. Informal care remains an important form of care across all ages of children in Australia. Informal childcare is most commonly provided by grandparents, though many of these grandparents could increasingly face their own work-family challenges.

Over the two decades since the inaugural International Year of the Family, Australian families have confronted major challenges in balancing work and family life, with rapid shifts in the roles and responsibilities of men and women, the increasing availability of new technological capabilities and changes in the organization and distribution of paid work. As described here, the Australian Government has continued to help families to manage these challenges through the development and implementation of a range of policies. Supporting families as they balance the challenges and opportunities of contemporary work and family life remains an enduring priority for Australia.

PPL reforms

The Australian Government's introduction of a new PPL scheme (based on full wage replacement for 26 weeks) from July 2015 will better help women to take the time out of the workforce they need to establish a family. The scheme will bring Australia into line with PPL practices the world over where payments are based on the mother's actual wages.

The new PPL will better recognize that a family's financial responsibilities increase when a new child is born, allowing women to have children at the time they choose rather than being forced to postpone having children for financial reasons. Under these arrangements fathers will be eligible to take two out of the 26 weeks as dedicated paternity leave so they can help with their new baby. Fathers will also be able to nominate to be the primary carer of the baby.

The new scheme is consistent with recommendations from the World Health Organization that the minimum period of exclusive care, bonding and breastfeeding for optimal maternal and infant health outcome is six months.

PPL not only benefits families, but also society at large, through lower long-term health costs and long-run productivity benefits. Keeping women more engaged in the workforce also helps to raise a more healthy and productive future workforce.

Supporting families with their work and family life aspirations

Stephanie Tan, Manager, Family Policy Unit; Rahayu Buang, Deputy Director, Family Policy Unit; Charlotte Beck, Senior Director, Family Development Group, Ministry of Social and Family Development, Singapore

S trong families lay a firm foundation for a strong nation. As the first line of care and support for their members and the basic building block of society, strong and stable families are crucial for the well-being of individuals and the nation. The Singapore Government gives special emphasis to promoting and supporting families.

One key challenge facing families in Singapore is how to achieve a good work-life fit. Developments like rapid globalization, technological advancements and greater connectivity have created opportunities for new jobs, economic growth and higher standards of living. However, increasing economic demands and competition have given rise to strains, particularly on the family. Family structures are also changing. More women are working and there is an increasing number of families where both spouses are working.

The labour force participation rate for women increased from 50 per cent in 2000 to 58 per cent in 2012. Among those aged 35-39, the increase was even greater, from 63 per cent in 2001 to 79 per cent in 2012. In 2010, among households headed by married couples, 47 per cent had both spouses working compared to 41 per cent in 2000.

These trends change the dynamics within the family. They also pose challenges for families, especially working parents with young children, to juggle work, marriage and caregiving responsibilities. These stresses can give rise to marital conflicts. In this new environment where both parents work, the traditional gender role of the male as the breadwinner and the female as the main caregiver is changing and has to evolve.

Over the years, the Singapore Government has worked with multiple stakeholders to introduce various measures to support families in their work and family aspirations. These include legislative provisions that support the family at work; the provision of family support services; promotion of work-life harmony through a tripartite committee, and equipping individuals and families with positive mindsets and tools to lead a fulfilling family life. Some of these measures are described below with a special emphasis on support measures for families with children.

First, there is a range of family care leave schemes to support working parents. To help mothers recover from childbirth and bond with their newborn children, eligible working mothers covered under the Child Development Co-Savings Act (CDCA) can have up to 16 weeks of paid maternity leave for all births. For the first two births, the employer pays for the first eight weeks of maternity leave and the Government funds the remaining eight weeks, subject to a cap of S$20,000. For the third and subsequent births, the Government funds the full 16 weeks of maternity leave, capped at S$40,000. The last eight weeks of leave can be taken flexibly over a 12-month period from the child's birth. A government-paid maternity benefit was also introduced on 1 January 2013 to provide working women who do not qualify for maternity leave (for example, short-term contract workers) with the government-paid share of maternity leave in the form of a cash benefit.

Recognizing that fathers play an important role in raising children, since 1 May 2013 working fathers have received one week of paid paternity leave, to be taken within 16 weeks of the child's birth or flexibly within 12 months if there is agreement between the employer and employee. To encourage shared parental responsibility and give working parents addi-

Nursing home residents and student volunteers enjoying a moment of interaction in a sing-along session

tional flexibility for care-giving arrangements, since 1 May 2013 working fathers have also become entitled to share one week of the 16 weeks of maternity leave, subject to the agreement of the mother, if the mother qualifies for paid maternity leave. The one week of paternity leave and one week of shared parental leave are funded by the Government.

Working parents are also entitled by law to childcare and infant care leave. Since 31 Oct 2008, each working parent covered under the CDCA is entitled to six days of paid childcare leave per year, if they have any Singapore citizen child under the age of seven years (including adopted and stepchildren). The employer pays for the first three days of childcare leave and the Government funds the remaining three days, capped at S$500 per day. Self-employed parents are similarly eligible for the government-paid components of childcare leave. Two days of government-paid extended childcare leave is also provided annually for parents with older children aged 7-12. In addition to paid childcare leave, six days of unpaid infant care leave per year were introduced in 2008, for working parents with any Singaporean child under the age of two. For parents who adopt, employers are required by law to provide four weeks of government-paid adoption leave for mothers who have adopted a child, to be taken within 12 months after the child is born.

While other types of leave, such as marriage and compassionate leave, are not prescribed by law, employers are encouraged to provide these and many do.

Second, with the increasing number of dual-income households and an ageing population, more families will rely on institutional care and support services to help them care for their young and elderly. There is thus a need to ensure affordable and accessible family care support services.

Today, there is a range of childcare centres, kindergartens and centres offering infant care in Singapore, all of which are licensed or registered by the Government. The Early Childhood Development Agency was formed in April 2013 to oversee the entire early childhood sector. This includes efforts to raise the affordability, accessibility and quality of early childhood care and education.

To ensure the affordability of centre-based care and education, the Government provides a universal infant care and childcare subsidy of up to S$600 and S$300 per child per month respectively. These are subsidies given to parents of Singaporean infants (aged 2-18 months) and Singaporean children (aged above 18 months to below seven years) enrolled in licensed childcare centres. The amount of subsidy varies depending on the programme type enrolled (for example, full or half-day care) and the working status of the mother (working mothers qualify for a higher subsidy). There are also additional subsidies available for low-income and disadvantaged children so that these families pay a nominal sum for childcare services. Kindergartens provide half-day education for children aged four to six years and financial assistance is similarly provided to low-income families.

To increase the provision of good quality and affordable early childhood services, funding was introduced in 2009 for eligible anchor operators to set the benchmark for quality and affordability. The funding enables anchor operators to recruit better qualified teachers, develop existing teachers through scholarship programmes, have smaller class sizes, and reach out to children from lower-income or disadvantaged backgrounds. Anchor operators are required to ensure their programmes are affordable for the majority of Singaporeans.

A teacher conducting lessons with children in a childcare centre

The Work-Life Excellence Award recognizes employers who are at the forefront of implementing work-life strategies that benefit the business and employees

The anchor operator scheme has expanded from two to five operators in January 2014, to increase provision of good quality and affordable programmes. Non-anchor operators are also supported through other schemes to help them expand in areas where early childhood services are in demand, and to improve teaching and learning outcomes of children.

The Singapore Pre-school Accreditation Framework was introduced in 2011, to raise the quality of education and care in childcare centres and kindergartens. It encourages centres to raise quality though self-monitoring and external evaluation, and allows parents to make informed choices based on centre quality.

Apart from the above efforts, the Child Development Network (CDN), a people-private-public initiative, champions quality early childhood care and development in Singapore. Since 2010, the CDN has been working through various platforms such as the CDN online portal, to share good practices and knowledge on early childhood care and education.

For families with seniors, a range of eldercare facilities located within neighbourhoods is available to enable seniors to age-in-place within the community. New Senior Care Centres (SCCs), which integrate health and social care within the same facility, have been rolled out and are being built accross the country. Families can drop their elderly parents at these SCCs during the day to receive care, and pick them up after work.

Home-based care services, where medical and care staff provide services at the seniors' homes, are also being ramped up to support seniors who prefer to age at home. The Government aims to serve up to 10,000 home care clients by 2020. There are also plans for 10 new nursing homes to be built in neighbourhoods across the island by 2016, to support seniors who cannot be cared for at home. This will make it more convenient for their families to visit them.

Various schemes are also available to help families support and enable seniors to age-in-place at home and within the community. Families with seniors can apply for the Foreign Domestic Worker (FDW) Grant which allows families employing an FDW to care for a senior with moderate disability to receive a S$120 monthly grant to offset the costs of employing the FDW. The Seniors' Mobility and Enabling Fund also provides subsidies for seniors who need assistive devices like motorized chairs, healthcare consumables and transport to and from day-care centres. Finally, the Caregivers Training Grant allows caregivers of seniors to tap into a S$200 annual subsidy to attend care-giving training courses at their own convenience so they take better care of their loved ones.

Singapore adopts a promotional approach in encouraging the adoption of good work-life practices through tripartite collaboration. This is mainly done through the Tripartite Committee (TriCom) on Work-Life Strategy, which works closely with stakeholders to encourage employers to implement flexible work arrangements.

Some of the key initiatives include the Work-Life Excellence Award and Work-Life Conference to recognize employers who are forerunners in the work-life area and bring together thought leaders in this area to share their expertise with other employers. The Work-Life Conference in November 2013 was attended by over 400 employers and human resources practitioners, union officials and government representatives, as well as international delegates from Asia. The conference, which focused on the concept of workplace flexibility to transform workplaces into future-ready workplaces, was well-received by the participants. In

At the annual Work-Life Conference thought leaders share their expertise with employers, human resources practitioners, union officials, government representatives and international delegates

2014, the biennial Work-Life Excellence Award will again be given out to recognize employers who implement work-life as a holistic and effective business strategy that benefits both the business and the employees.

In addition, the TriCom develops resources to raise and sustain awareness of work-life strategies and help employers to apply these strategies. These resources include guide books such as 'Energizing Work Culture', which guides employers in identifying relevant work-life programmes based on the profiles and life stages of their employees, as well as 'Work @ Home', which illustrates how employers can leverage information and communications technology and implement home-based work for their employees.

The Singapore Government and the TriCom also work very closely with the Employer Alliance, which is a network of corporations committed to creating enabling work environments to enhance work-life integration. In recent years, the Employer Alliance has undertaken several key initiatives such as an online toolkit on a myriad of work-life programmes; research on flexible work models; and development forums and consultancy clinics to help develop employers' capability in assessing their work-life needs and implementing flexible work arrangements.

In April 2013, the Singapore Government enhanced funding for flexible work arrangements and introduced the Work-Life Grant under the WorkPro programme to better support employers in fostering work-life friendly and more flexible workplaces. The Work-Life Grant comprises two components: a developmental grant (up to S$40,000) to help employers defray the cost of implementing flexible work arrangements; and a cash incentive (up to S$120,000 over three years) to sustain higher utilization levels of flexible work arrangements.

Lastly, the Government provides individuals and families with easy access to Family Life Education programmes and resources through 'FamilyMatters!'. This is done by working with schools, employers, businesses and community partners to bring marriage, work-life and parenting programmes to a broad spectrum of families. These programmes equip families with the skills and knowledge to enhance the quality of family life. For example, through talks and workshops on personal work-life effectiveness, participants are taught to identify what they value at their specific life-stage and proactively set aside time to fulfil these priorities. Participants also learn skills to better manage their family and work commitments and cope with work-life challenges.

While we have made significant steps to support families in their work and family aspirations, challenges remain. At the level of the family unit, the decline of the extended family structure and rise of dual-income households creates a greater need to address care-giving issues. At the organizational level, there is scope to overcome the inherent barriers to the implementation of work-life programmes. These barriers include the lack of know-how in terms of assessing the needs of the organization and the identification of relevant programmes, as well as mindset barriers such as the lack of trust among supervisors in empowering employees to work flexibly. Nationally, more could be done to align the interests of the different stakeholders to manage diverse economic and social goals.

The Singapore Government will continue to work with partners and families to foster a supportive culture and ecosystem that will help families fulfil their work and family aspirations.

Korea's work-family reconciliation policy: achievements and challenges

Hong Seung-ah, Director, Family Policy Center, Korean Women's Development Institute

Korean society has been going through radical changes in many aspects. It has witnessed changes in family structure, from large families to nuclear families. Moreover, nuclear families are again divided into smaller family structures. In addition to the traditional form of nuclear family, consisting of parents and their unmarried children, new types of nuclear families such as elderly couple households or one-person households have emerged. Overall, the percentage of nuclear families has decreased to 37.4 per cent in 2010 from 52.7 per cent in 1990, while the percentage of couples with no children rose significantly to 15.6 per cent in 2010 from 8.4 per cent in 1990. Meanwhile, the percentage of one-person households increased to 24.2 per cent in 2010 from 9.1 per cent in 1990.[1]

Since competition in the international labour market has become increasingly intensified, more people prefer a dual-earner family structure in order to maintain a certain level of income for their households. In fact, the proportion of dual-earner families was 43.6 per cent in 2011.[2] Thus, there have been growing demands for balancing work and family life, because the traditional work-oriented lifestyle cannot meet the various needs of individuals and families such as marital commitment, childcare, leisure and family time. However, these demands and changes have resulted in social problems such as a low birth rate and a tendency to postpone marriage. Hence, the work-oriented lifestyle needs to be restructured while policy support is prepared to solve such problems.

With this background, the Korean Government has been making active efforts to enact and implement policies on the reconciliation of work and family life in a broad endeavour to support women's economic activities and strike a balance between work and family. Those policies include measures such as childcare services, maternity, parental and paternity leave, and flexible working arrangements.
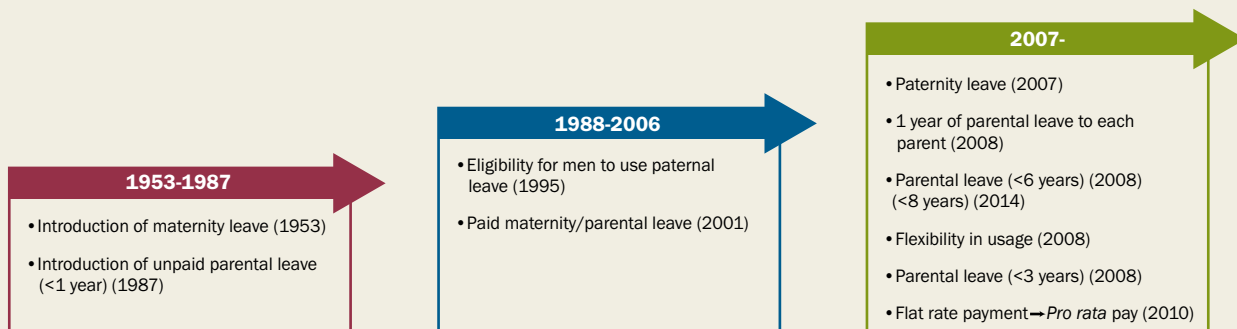
Policy development

Although Korea has a short history of policy enactment on the reconciliation of work and family, its policies have improved significantly in a short period of time. For example, in 1991 the Korean Government explicitly enacted its first childcare policy. That means policies on work-life balance have evolved within a relatively short period of 20 years.

In 2001, amendments were made to the laws relating to maternity protection, including the Labour Standards Act, the Framework Act on Women's Development and the Employment Insurance Act. The amendments resulted in a new system of maternity leave and parental leave. Later in 2007, support for work-family reconciliation was officially legalized with the amendment of the Act on Equal Employment and Support for Work-Family Balance, and plans to provide policy support were established with the enactment of the Act on the Promotion of Creation of Family-Friendly Social Environment.

The Korean Government first enacted childcare policies with the Childcare Act of 1991, and increased childcare service centres in the 1990s. Since 2002, the Government has expanded the eligi-

Development of the Korean parental leave system

1953-1987
- Introduction of maternity leave (1953)
- Introduction of unpaid parental leave (<1 year) (1987)

1988-2006
- Eligibility for men to use paternal leave (1995)
- Paid maternity/parental leave (2001)

2007-
- Paternity leave (2007)
- 1 year of parental leave to each parent (2008)
- Parental leave (<6 years) (2008) (<8 years) (2014)
- Flexibility in usage (2008)
- Parental leave (<3 years) (2008)
- Flat rate payment ➡ *Pro rata* pay (2010)

Source: Hong Seung-ah

Usage of parental leave by gender
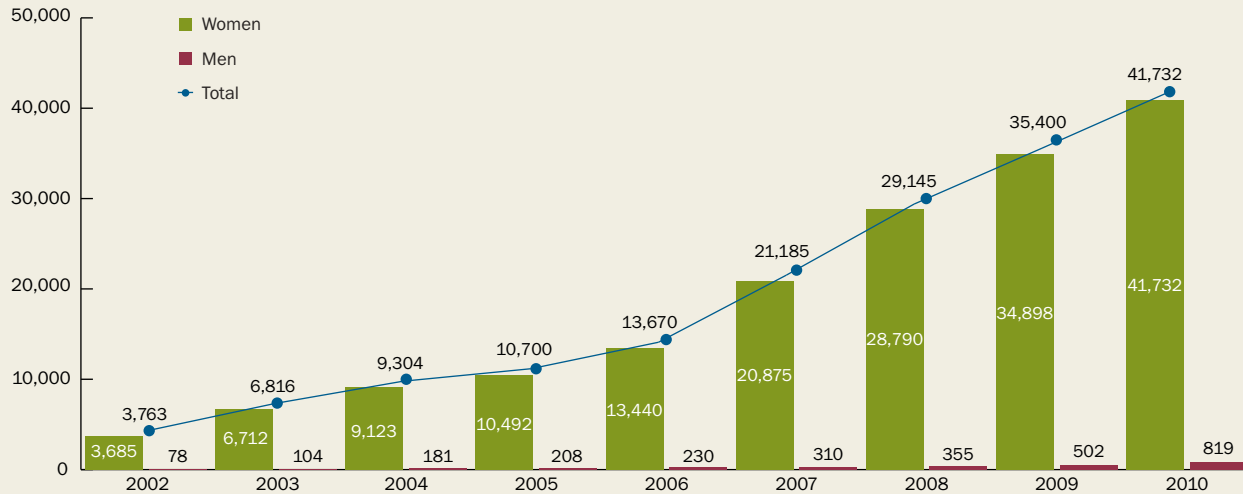
Source: Ministry of Employment and Labor

bility and coverage of the childcare subsidy system. As a result, in 2012, the bottom 70 per cent of the income group became beneficiaries of this system. At last, Korea has 'universal childcare support' that provides free childcare services for all children under school age from 2013. As a result, the number of facilities has rapidly increased, from 22,147 places in 2002 to 43,213 places in 2013. The number of children using the facilities has also increased, from 800,991 in 2007 to almost 1.4 million in 2013.

The Childcare Allowance for parents not using these facilities was introduced in 2010. The amount of Childcare Allowance is 10,000-20,000 KRW according to the children's age.

Female employees in Korea are entitled to a total of 90 consecutive days of maternity leave, before and after childbirth. The leave benefits are paid by the employer based on the worker's ordinary wage. But for the workers of small and medium-sized firms, the employment insurance scheme pays for the whole 90 days of leave with employment protection.

In 2007, with the amendment of the Act on Equal Employment and Support for Work-Family Balance, various efforts were made to improve the utilization of policy measures. This law grants flexibility of use and parental choice as a way to encourage men to take parental leave. Both men and women are granted rights to use the leave for up to one year, so that parents can choose when and who will use the leave and how long they schedule in one period.

Parental leave payment is paid on a pro rata basis at 40 per cent of the beneficiary's income (to a maximum of 1 million KRW). In addition, a recent policy amendment (2014) allows parents with children under eight years old to use parental leave. Paternity leave was introduced in 2007, providing five days of leave (three out of the five days are paid) to fathers whose partners give birth. Additionally, workers with children under six years old may request shorter working hours of 15-30 hours per week during the child-rearing period.

Owing to such improvements, the number of employees taking parental leave is steadily growing. Some 21.2 per cent

of employees took parental leave following maternity leave in 2003; 50.2 per cent did so in 2009 and in 2012, the figure had grown to 68.6 per cent. The number of leave-takers jumped from 3,793 people in 2002 to 41,732 in 2010.

Conversely, the use of parental leave among men remains very low; the gender ratio among parental leave users stands at 97 per cent women and 3 per cent men. This is due to the patriarchal values and the culture of long working hours which prevail in Korean society.

Although flexible working arrangements (FWAs) in Korea are still in their infancy, research results demonstrate that these have had positive effects on attaining work-family balance. A study by the author and other researchers,[3] which surveyed 307 working parents who are using the teleworking system, found that about 38.4 per cent of respondents said they were able to spend more time with family, while 43.6 per cent said the FWAs brought positive changes to their family life. Working parents who benefit from FWAs are found to have less trouble with reconciling work and family responsibilities. In particular, 46 per cent of female and 34 per cent of male respondents said they were able to have more family time.

Lastly, an essential part of Korea's work-family reconciliation policy is its family-friendly work culture policy, targeting businesses and local communities. The Family-Friendly Company Certification System was adopted particularly to induce participation and expansion of family-friendly management in businesses. When it was first introduced in 2008, the Family-Friendly Company Certification System selected 14 businesses, but as of 2013 this number has risen to 522 businesses, continuously expanding the family-friendly work culture among businesses.

Sharing of domestic work and childcare responsibilities is very important in supporting work-family balance. A survey was also carried out on how much these responsibilities are shared between men and women within families. The results showed that the majority of domestic and childcare tasks are

Family-friendly company certification

Source: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family
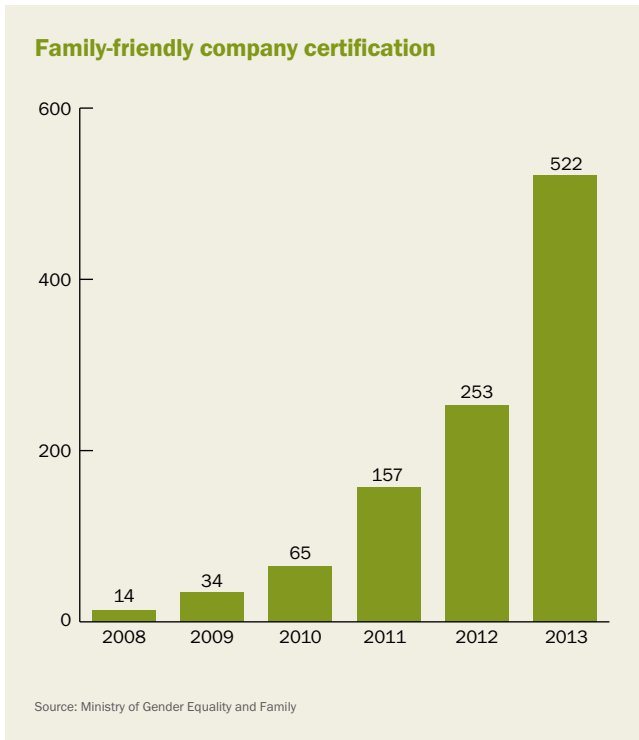
still performed by women. As for cooking and household chores, 55.4 per cent of the respondents answered "more work done by wife" while 26.6 per cent said "mostly wife." For childcare responsibilities, 64.8 per cent said "more work done by wife" while 16 per cent said "mostly wife," confirming the reality women are facing in family life.

Creating 'Career Success Korea'

As it can be inferred from the above discussion, not only has Korean society experienced a large increase in the demand for work-family reconciliation over the past 20 years, but the efforts and determination of the Korean Government to establish and implement supporting policies have also developed significantly. The Government now faces the challenges of identifying the missing links of the past and further improving its work-family reconciliation policy.

Firstly, it is necessary to remove the visible and invisible obstacles of women's labour participation so that women can work without career interruption due to childbirth and child-rearing. In accordance with this context, President Park

Geun-hye announced on 6 January 2014 that the problem of career interruption for women is regarded as the top agenda in her administration's Three-Year Economic Innovation Plan, and measures will be devised to correct the situation. Korean society will have to commit multidimensional efforts to creating a 'Career Success Korea' which enables women to work continuously without career interruption due to childcare and family responsibilities. In fact, the economic activities of women show large fluctuations by age group. In particular, women aged 30-44 (a period mainly devoted to raising children) were found to have the lowest participation rate in economic activities. More family-friendly policies are needed to encourage women to use maternity and parental leaves and to receive childcare service support, in order to enable them to work without career interruption.

Secondly, efforts are required to reduce the burden of childcare, which is noted as the largest obstacle in women's employment. Childcare support demands a comprehensive support system according to children's age from infancy to primary school. Therefore, after-school childcare services should be further expanded to support working parents, coordinating with the work-life balance policy scheme.

Thirdly, there should also be efforts within the family to share domestic work and childcare responsibilities more equally between men and women. Recently, it has become important to balance work and family time as the value of family is increasingly emphasized. Such changes have led to greater policy interest in enabling men and women to reconcile their work and family life in Korea, demonstrated in the development of the work-family reconciliation policy. Korea should lessen the risks of women experiencing difficulties in balancing work and family life and postponing childbirth in fear of career interruption. Such change is aligned with the recent emphasis on equal parenthood in Korean society. Korea should make every effort to support working parents, especially by employing more parental leaves, so that child-rearing and family responsibilities as well as work responsibilities will apply equally to men and women.

Lastly, changes are called for in the work environment and culture. In particular, there is a need to improve the culture of long working hours that is deeply rooted in Korean society. In 2010 the Economic and Social Development Commission, consisting of representatives from labour, management and the Government, announced the Tripartite Agreement to Improve the Practice of Long Working Hours. This agreement upholds a plan to gradually reduce yearly work hours and to expand job creation and diversification. As family structures and society needs constantly change, corporate work culture changes are imperative.

Gender division of labour in the family
A survey of 800 Koreans (percentage in brackets)

	Mostly husband	More work by husband	Equally share	More work by wife	Mostly wife
Cooking/domestic work	3 (0.4)	37 (4.6)	104 (13.0)	443 (55.4)	213 (26.6)
Childcare	4 (0.5)	13 (1.6)	137 (17.1)	518 (64.8)	128 (16.0)

Source: Hong, et al (2009)

Korea's family policy challenges

Yoon-Jeong Shin, Research Fellow, Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs

Korea has achieved incredible economic development in the past decades. During this period, the country's total fertility rate (TFR) has declined significantly to 1.30 in 2012, one of the lowest among all Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries.[1] This low fertility rate results in an ageing population: the proportion of people over 65 years old among the total population was 11.8 per cent in 2011, and it is expected to be 38.2 per cent in 2050.[2] It is projected that the working population will shrink from 2018 onwards.[3] The decrease of the working population and an increasingly ageing society will negatively influence Korea, placing a social burden on the younger generation and leading to a weakness in manpower. These problems threaten Korea's sustainability and further development.

The Korean Government has struggled to overcome the problem of low fertility with family policy. The coverage and level of payment of family policy have been expanded, especially for childcare subsidies and parental leave. However, despite these efforts, fertility rates have not recovered and remain among the lowest in the OECD countries. In addition to fertility rates, there have been many changes in behaviours related to childbearing, such as the age at which people get married and the age at which they have their first child. Korean families have changed and Korean women have new roles at home and in the labour market compared with previous years. These factors might affect the timing of childbearing and lead people to have a smaller number of children. Social norms and values also play an important role in marriage and childbirth.

Between 1960 and 1980, the Korean Government implemented a five-year plan for economic development. Concurrently, the Government enforced strong family planning and invested in education for children and young people.[4] As a result, per capita gross domestic product (GDP) increased from US$1,689 in 1980 to US$23,838 in 2013 and is expected to be over US$30,000 at the end of this decade.[5] TFR, which was 6.0 in 1960, decreased to 2.06 in 1983. Even after TFR decreased to below replacement level, the Government continuously pursued anti-natal policies. At that time, the Government's concern was that the population was so large as to be a negative influence on the economy. In the middle of 1990s when TFR declined to around 1.5, the Korean Government eventually abandoned the anti-natal programme. After that, Korean population policy shifted its direction towards improving the quality of the population.[6] In order to cope with the problem of low fertility, the Low Fertility and an Ageing Society Act was enacted and the Presidential Committee on Ageing Society and Population Policy was launched in 2005. In addition, three phases of the five-year national plan, 'Basic Plan on Low Fertility and Ageing Society' have been implemented since 2006.

Total fertility rates (TFR) and per capita GDP in Korea, 1960-2011
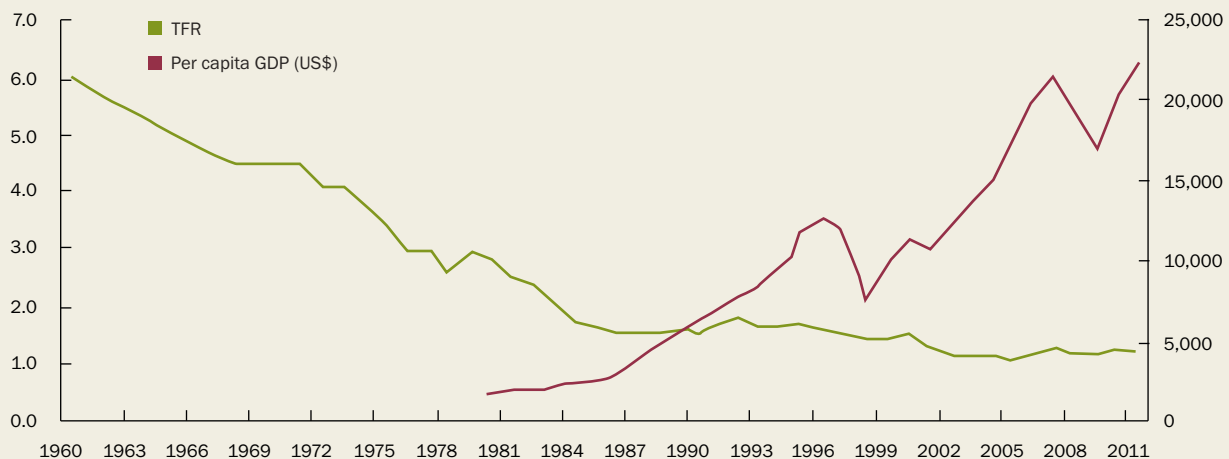
Source: TFR: OECD Family database 2013: per capita GDP: IMF World Economic Outlook Database, 2013

The average age of people at their first marriage and of the birth of their first child, two of the main demographic factors affecting fertility rates, also increased during the same period. As Korean women stay in education for longer and their career aspirations have improved, they are more likely to delay marriage. The average age of Korean women at their first marriage was 25.8 years in 1990 and it increased to 29.4 in 2012.[7] Due to delayed marriages, the average age of women at the birth of their first child increased from 28.3 years old in 2002 to 30.5 in 2012.[8] These prolonged times for marriage and childbearing follow trends for women in other OECD countries. However, the share of births out of wedlock has been around 2 per cent in Korea, which is extremely low compared with European countries. It implies that even though marital and childbearing behaviours have changed in Korea, traditional norms on marriage and legitimate children remain.

The two most distinctive changes in the Korean family are a decrease in family size and changes in the structure of the family. Korean families are more likely to have fewer numbers of children and to form a nuclear family than before. The average number of people in a household decreased from 5.2 in 1970 to 2.7 in 2010.[9] The proportion of single-person households increased from 4.2 per cent in 1975 to 23.9 per cent in 2010[10] due to the expanding number of young single households and the solitary aged.[11] Although the realized actual average number of children (TFR) was 1.3 in 2012, Koreans reported that the ideal number of children is 2.01 on average.[12] The gap between TFR and the ideal number of children suggests that most Korean families hardly realize the number of children they want to have. Many married Koreans pointed out that they do not have additional children because they are unable to afford the child-rearing and education costs. This implies that as long as relevant conditions are provided, Korean families might have the number of children they want and the fertility rate of Korea will increase.

Crude divorce rates — the number of divorces each year per 1,000 people — increased from 0.4 in 1970 to two in 1997. It increased further after the Asian financial crisis and then decreased to 2.3 in 2011. Among the divorced families, the proportion of families with children was 52.8 per cent in 2012.[13] This indicates that having children is not such a crucial factor in the decision to divorce as it was in the past.

Korean families no longer discriminate against girls in favour of boys in terms of investment for their education.[14] However, the outcomes for females in the labour market are not in good shape. Female employment rates have not increased much for the past two decades: from 50.9 per cent in 1990, the rate had increased only 7.1 percentage points by 2011.[15] The gender gap in employment rates remained at around 20 per cent during the same period.[16] A gender wage gap exists of around 40 per cent in terms of median earnings for full-time employment.[17] Labour market conditions are not favourable for female workers in Korea. In 2011 68.5 per cent of female workers worked more than 40 hours per week.[18] Female part-time employees usually do simple and low-skilled jobs in poor working conditions.[19] Mothers with young children used to withdraw from the labour market due to the long working hours and rigid working times, and graphs of female employment rates by age group still form an M-shape. This implies that Korean women leave the labour market at times of marriage and childbearing and re-enter it after their children have grown up. Most women return to work in low-paid and under-qualified jobs compared to the jobs they had before marriage and childbirth.[20] Korean women dedicate more time to care work at home compared with Korean men. In 2009, Korean women aged 25-44 years old with one child under school age spent 16 per cent of their time caring for family members compared with 3.6 per cent of corresponding Korean men. As the family had more children the disparity further increased: Korean women with two children under school age spend 19.7 per cent of their time caring for family members compared with 4.7 per cent of corresponding Korean men.[21]

Before low fertility became an issue, family policy in Korea focused mainly on poor families. Since 2005 when the Government initiated the Basic Plan on Low Fertility and Ageing Society, family

Korea's rapid economic development can be seen in the contrast between (left) a traditional house and (right) the new Sejong administrative city

Female employment profiles over life course in Korea, 1990-2010
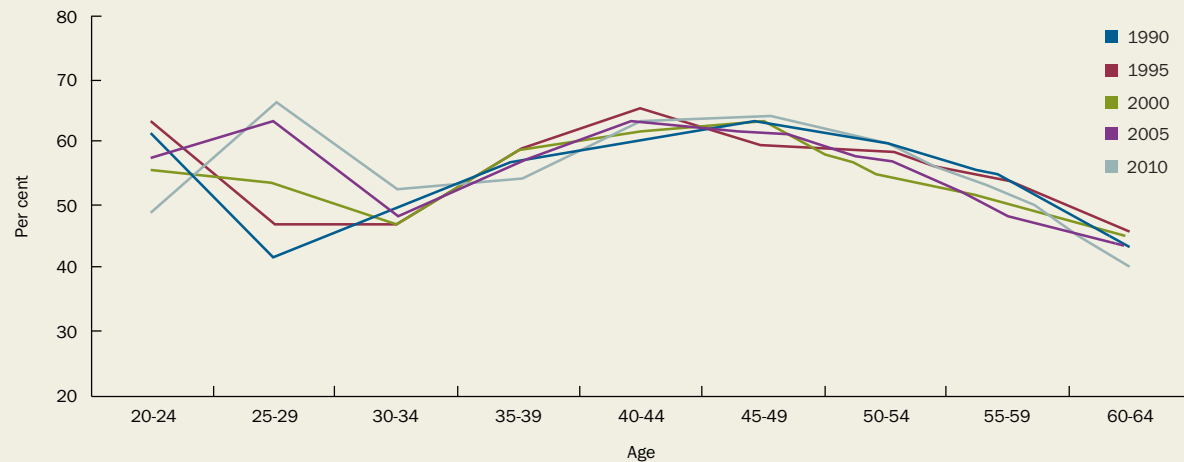
Source: OECD Labour Force Statistics, 2013

policy has changed its direction towards 'universal coverage' and 'more benefits to families with many children'. The initiative suggested setting a favourable environment for childbearing and childcare as one of it purposes. There have been many improvements in family policies, especially in terms of the coverage of childcare subsidies, the level of payment for parental leave and the introduction of a childcare allowance. The level of payment and coverage of the childcare subsidy, which had been provided mainly for poor families, was expanded to include more affluent families. In 2013 all children from birth to five years old who are cared for at childcare centres are qualified to receive full rates of childcare subsidy. Parents who do not use centre-based childcare services for children of this age are qualified to receive childcare allowances instead of a centre-based childcare subsidy. The parental leave payment system was changed in 2011 from a fixed amount to a fixed rate of 40 per cent of normal income, with minimum and maximum amounts.[22] Through these efforts the enrolments rates in childcare and pre-schools have significantly increased. In 2012 the enrolment rate was 62 per cent for children aged zero to two years old and 90 per cent for children aged three to five years old. These proportions are higher than the average rates for OECD member countries.[23] The number of people who received parental leave payments increased from 9,303 in 2004 to 64,071 in 2012.[24]

Despite these efforts, the fertility rate and female employment rate in Korea seem to have remained unchanged. Even with government subsidies for childcare, parents still spend additional money for 'special activities' in childcare centres. Due to long working hours and rigid working times, centre-based childcare services can hardly satisfy the childcare needs of dual working parents. In addition, Korean parents spend a lot of money on tutoring at private institutions to prepare their children for university entrance examinations. Parental leave payments are provided only for people who are insured by employment insurance. Therefore, part-time workers or irregular workers, who work in vulnerable conditions and are not covered by employment insurance, cannot get benefits from the parental leave

system. Even female workers who are covered by employment insurance hardly take the opportunity of parental leave due to unfavourable and conservative working environments. Parental leave take-up rates among men are extremely low, around 3 per cent in 2012.[25] Most Korean men are breadwinners and will find it difficult to take leave even when they need it, because their income replacement ratio is kept at low levels.

Korea faces many challenges in order to recover the fertility rate and deal with demographic issues. First of all, it is necessary to ameliorate high private costs for child education. The intensive working environment should be changed to be more flexible. The traditional role of women at home and work needs to be reconsidered so that women and men equally share care and domestic duties at home. Confronted with low fertility and an ageing society, Korea needs a new development plan, which should include all agendas such as childcare and education, work and life balance, gender equality, and social integration.

The Ministry of Health and Welfare's population commemoration day, where an award is presented to the most family-friendly business or public institution

Families and work in Canada

Nora Spinks, CEO, and Nathan Battams, Researcher, The Vanier Institute of the Family

Families in Canada are diverse, complex and dynamic. Social, economic, environmental and cultural forces shape the contexts in which families live and work. The population in Canada is ageing as a result of increased life expectancy and decreasing fertility rates. Communities are rich with diversity, immigration is strong, mobility is common across the country, and families are constituted in a variety of forms, including common-law families, skip-generation families, same-sex families, blended families, foster families, 'living apart together' families, 'living together apart' families, interracial families, interreligious families, and more.

What families look like continues to evolve, but time hasn't changed what families in Canada do. Families are founded on relationships, provide care to each other and support one another. While they adapt and respond to the forces that shape society, families impact those same forces, and shape society as well. According to the United Nations Human Development Index country measure of life expectancy, literacy, education, standards of living and quality of life, Canada ranks eleventh worldwide.

Families in Canada continue to find it challenging to manage their multiple responsibilities at home, at work and in the community. Public initiatives in Canada to address this include maternity, parental, paternity adoption and caregiving leaves and benefits (federal and Quebec government), with care and nurturing-related job legislation and seniority protection legislation (provincial governments). Employers have been reacting to these new employee/family realities slowly, have responded inconsistently and rarely approached them strategically.

Canada is committed to pluralism and is an ethnically diverse and multicultural nation. Between 2001 and 2006, Canada's visible minority population increased by 27 per cent, or five times faster than the growth rate of the total population. Families in Canada reflect that cultural commitment, with interracial (4 per cent) and interreligious (19 per cent) unions increasing year over year.

Canada has one of the highest per capita immigration rates in the world and accepts a large number of refugees, accounting for over 10 per cent of the annual global refugee resettlement. Currently, more than one in five Canadians were born outside the country — the highest proportion among the G8 countries.

Canada is the world's second-largest country by total area, with a population of just above 35 million. The number of people who reported an aboriginal identity (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) in 2011 reached 1.4 million, and Canada's First Nations aboriginal population is growing at twice the national rate.

Although most people in Canada live within a few hundred kilometres of the US border (the longest international border in the world), families also live in small cities and towns, rural villages and remote communities in the far north.

Overall life expectancy at birth at the International Year of the Family in 1994 was 78 years in Canada. Two decades later, that figure has risen to 81 years. And according to the Canadian Institute of Actuaries, a woman aged 60 in 2013 can expect to live an additional 29.4 years, while men of this age can expect to live another 27.3 years (culminating in a projected life expectancy of 89.4 years for women and 87.3 years for men).

In 2011, the total fertility rate in Canada was 1.61 children per woman, ranging from a high of 2.97 in Nunavut to a low of 1.42 in British Columbia. This continues a four-year decline in the total fertility rate, although it is higher than the 1996-2007 period.

Baby boomers were in their 40s during the International Year of the Family. Today they are 65, the traditional age for

Canada's families reflect its commitment to an ethnically diverse and multicultural nation

retirement. Statistics Canada reports that 12.6 per cent of the senior population was in the labour force in 2012, a figure that had almost doubled in the previous 10 years.

Today there are over 9.4 million families in Canada. Although two thirds of these families include a married couple, common-law couples are on the rise, now accounting for 17 per cent of all census families in Canada and 32 per cent in the province of Québec. Same-sex marriage was legalized across the country in 2005, contributing further to the diversity of Canadian families.

Parenting and family structure is diverse: most children are raised by their biological parent(s), but more than 30,000 children are being raised by their grandparents. Nearly 30,000 are being raised by foster families and there are more than 460,000 blended families in Canada. In addition, approximately one in five Canadians is either adopted, has an adopted sibling or family member, or is an adoptive parent, birth parent or birth relative.

The average age at first marriage for women was 29.1 in 2008 (up from 26.7 years in 1996), and the average age of mothers at the birth of their first child was 28.1 in 2008 (up from 26.5 in 1996). Although family size is shrinking and women are therefore taking fewer maternity/parental leaves, men are increasingly likely to report taking paternity/parental leave (13 per cent), especially in Québec (84 per cent), in part because two thirds of first-time grandparents are in the paid labour force and unavailable to provide extended postpartum care for new mothers and to help provide infant care. The average age of first-time mothers is increasing, many of whom have decided to establish careers before having children. The number of first-time mothers aged 40-44 increased by 155 per cent between 1994 and 2011.

The proportion of Canadian families with two earners has been rising steadily. In 1976, dual earners accounted for approximately one third of couples with dependent children — this increased to three quarters by 2008.

It is estimated that 18 per cent of dual-earner families would be living in poverty if not for the contribution of women's earnings. In 2012, employed Canadians spent an average of 36.6 hours per week at work (39.6 hours among men and 33.2 hours among women). However, managing work-family responsibilities, obligations and commitments is more challenging as the rate of working long hours rises. Researchers Duxbury and Higgins found that 68 per cent of men and 54 per cent of women in their study worked more than 45 hours per week, up from 55 per cent and 39 per cent respectively in 2001.

With such a large geographic area, staying connected is particularly important. Families stay connected primarily by phone and over the Internet. According to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, over 99 per cent of Canadian households subscribed to either a wireless or home telephone service in 2012, including 27.9 million Canadian wireless subscribers with an average of two wireless subscriptions per household. In a recent survey, 70 per cent of Canadian parents reported that they depend on technology to keep their families connected.

Families are busy and family members live full and active lives. In a recent study of more than 25,000 mostly professional employees, half of the respondents were involved in four to six different life roles, while one in three participated in seven to nine roles. Some of these roles could be considered optional, such as exercise or volunteer work; others are not,

Canada's First Nations aboriginal population reached 1.4 million in 2011 and is growing at twice the national rate

Image: The Vanier Institute of the Family

Image: The Vanier Institute of the Family

Women's labour force participation has risen, and many women now develop their careers before having children

Changing demographics

Canada's population is ageing rapidly. The 2011 Census found that 14.8 per cent of Canada's population was over the age of 65. Canadians aged 60-64 were the fastest-growing age group between 2006 and 2011 (up 29.1 per cent), and centenarians were the second fastest (up 25.7 per cent). There were approximately 5,825 centenarians in 2011, compared to 3,795 in 2001.

According to population projections, the number of centenarians could reach 20,300 in 2036 and even more in future years, up to as many as 78,300 in 2061.

such as paid work, household management, attending to a relationship, parenting and caregiving.

The labour force participation of Canadian women aged 20 to 64 who were married or living common-law was 47 per cent in 1976, but had grown to 76 per cent by 2009. As a result, like elsewhere in the world, women in Canada are delaying having children and are first concentrating on developing their careers.

Canada is a highly educated nation. In 2011, 51 per cent of its adult population held a tertiary qualification (56 per cent of women and 46 per cent of men), the highest rate among Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development countries.

More than half of participants in the Duxbury/Higgins study reported that they take work home with them, putting in an average of seven extra hours a week from home. Nearly two thirds spent more than an hour a day catching up on e-mails and one third spent more than an hour e-mailing on their days off.

Despite the long hours and multiple roles, 15 per cent of the Canadian workforce in 2011 said they put family ahead of

work — up from 5 per cent in 1991. Employers are responding to the modern realities of work and family. Sixty-nine per cent of respondents in the Duxbury/Higgins study report having high (27 per cent) and moderate (42 per cent) flexibility with respect to work hours and work location.

According to the polling firm Ipsos, 28 per cent of Canadians expect to be fully retired and not working for money at age 66, while twice as many (56 per cent) are expected to work past the traditional retirement age (27 per cent full-time/29 per cent part-time). Living and working longer adds complication to families providing care to ill, injured and palliative family members. New data from the 2012 General Social Survey showed that women represented the slight majority of caregivers at 54 per cent. The survey also found that caregiving responsibilities most often fell to those aged 45 to 64, with 44 per cent of caregivers in this age category.

In 2012, about 8.1 million individuals, or 28 per cent of Canadians aged 15 years and older, provided care to a family member or friend with a long-term health condition, disability or ageing needs. Six in ten caregivers in Canada were also balancing their care responsibilities with paid work (81 per cent of caregivers with children). Most employed caregivers were satisfied with the current balance between their work and home life, but they were less satisfied compared to those not providing care (73 per cent versus 79 per cent).

Ailing parents were the most common recipients of care, with 39 per cent of caregivers looking after the needs of their own parents and another 9 per cent doing so for their parents-in-law. The least common were spouses, at 8 per cent, and children, at 5 per cent. Caregivers of spouses and children devoted the most time to helping activities. Spousal caregivers typically spent 14 hours a week on some form of care, while caregivers of children (including adult children) spent 10 hours a week.

Despite the fact that Canada has one of the largest economies in the world and one of the most stable banking systems, families feel global economic forces at home. Approximately 2 million Canadians attend college or university, many of whom graduate with debt. With jobs being harder to find than before the 2008 recession, 42.3 per cent of young adults aged 20-29 years are living with their parent(s) — a significant increase from 30 years ago. Of those, almost one quarter had left the household at some point in the past and then returned home.

In 2012, the unemployment rate among Canadians aged 15 to 24 was 14.3 per cent, compared to 6.3 per cent for workers age 25-54 and workers 55 and older. The percentage of unemployed youth leaving the labour force to attend school full-time has increased significantly.

Families in Canada who are managing multiple work and family responsibilities benefit from having access to a publically funded healthcare system which provides preventative services such as immunization and prenatal care, as well as primary care services including labour and delivery and hospital services.

While there is still no national childcare policy and there are only regulated child care spaces for 20.5 per cent of Canada's children aged 0-12, Canada has a long history of providing maternity benefits. Outside of Québec, maternity leave is available to mothers for 17 weeks, and parental leave is available to be split between mothers and fathers

The number of fathers who claimed or intended to claim parental benefits has tripled since the Québec Parental Insurance Plan was introduced

for up to 35 weeks. Federal maternity and parental benefits are available to parents who are eligible for employment insurance. Payments are equal to 55 per cent of the parent's prior earnings up to a maximum of Can$45,900 as of 2012. Low-income families are also eligible for an additional Employment Insurance Family Supplement.

As part of its comprehensive family policy, Québec mothers are eligible for maternity benefits for 70 per cent of prior earnings up to a maximum of 18 weeks under the Basic Plan (under the Special Plan, they can receive 75 per cent of their earnings for 15 weeks). Fathers in Québec can receive paternal benefits amounting to 70 per cent of their prior earnings for five weeks under the Basic Plan or 75 per cent of their prior earnings for three weeks. Québec has also maintained a subsidized day-care programme since 1997 in which parents can spend Can$7 per day to receive licensed childcare (which can cost over Can$50 a day elsewhere in Canada).

All provinces combined, 25.4 per cent of recent fathers took parental leave in 2012, up from 3 per cent in 2000. However, since the Québec Parental Insurance Plan was introduced in 2006 the number of fathers who claimed or intended to claim parental benefits has tripled, from 27.8 per cent in 2005 to 83.9 per cent in 2011. Since 2004, families in Canada who leave work to care for a terminally ill family member also have access to a Compassionate Care Benefit, paid at the same rate as maternity and parental leave.

Employer response is slow to evolve. Most employers still respond case-by-case to this changing reality. Researchers Lero and Fast, in partnership with the Vanier Institute, found that only 51 per cent of employers in a recent study on caregiving and work consider work-family flexibility strategically.

In the 1980s, employers in Canada's financial services, health care, education and public sectors began responding to the large number of women entering the paid labour force with children under two years of age, by offering temporary 'alternative work arrangements' — an alternative to a normal or standard work week and career path. In the 1990s, employers continued to respond by offering 'flexible work arrangements', no longer assuming a typical or normal work week or career path. In the 2000s, employers committed to work-family or work-life or corporate social responsibility began offering 'customized work plans', crafting individual strategies to maximize productivity, optimize performance and minimize work-family conflict. Employers started creating unique work plans related to how, when and where work was to be done and devising individualized career paths, including advancement and development strategies that integrate leaves and breaks more consciously and proactively.

While there is still much work to be done to address the need of seasonal, low-wage, contract, late-career and low-skilled workers and those in remote, high risk and 24-7 work environments, progress is being made. With more fathers taking paternity and parental leave, becoming more involved in caregiving and household management, more women contributing half or more of the household income, more than one third of first-time grandparents in the paid labour force and more seniors in the labour force, progress will continue to be made in the years to come.

Notes and References

I

Advancing Social Integration and Intergenerational Solidarity

The role of youth in strengthening intergenerational solidarity within the family
1. Rossi, A. S., & Rossi, P. H., 1990
2. Spence and Radunovich, 2012
3. Cunningham, M., 2011
4. Butts, D.M., Thang, L. L. & Hatton-Yeo, A., 2013
5. For the World Youth Report 2005, visit: http://undesadspd.org/ Youth/WorldProgrammeofActionforYouth/IntergenerationalIssues/ IntergenerationalIssuesWPAY.aspx
6. For an executive summary of the topic, visit: http://way.org.my/youth-issues/youth-and-intergenerational-relations For the complete outcome document, visit: http://way.org.my/programoutcome/item/seoul-youth-declaration-the-22nd-international-youth-forum-2012
8. EU poll, 2009 and Generations United, 2010

Empowering families to achieve lifelong education for all
1. UNESCO. 'The Manukau Family Literacy Project'. *Effective Literacy Programmes.* N.p., n.d. Web. 5 March 2014. http://www.unesco.org/uil/ litbase/?menu=9&programme=114
2. UNESCO. 'Community Learning Centres (CLCs)'. *UNESCO Office in Bangkok.* N.p., n.d. Web. 5 March 2014. http://www.unescobkk.org/education/literacy-and-lifelong-learning/community-learning-centres-clcs
3. UNESCO. 'Community-based parenting education'. *UNESCO Office in Bangkok.* N.p., n.d. Web. 5 March 2014. http://www.unescobkk.org/education/ecce/ activities/community-based-parenting-education
4. Consejería Presidencial para Programas Especiales. (n.d.). Descripción. *De cero a siempre.* Retrieved 5 March 2014, from http://www.deceroasiempre.gov.co/ QuienesSomos

Intergenerational solidarity: The springboard for societal well-being
1. Beauchemin et al., *Cerebral Cortex,* Dec. 2010
2. Brizendine, Louann, *The Female Brain.* Morgan Road Books, 2006

Informal support in family life: A hidden gem for young people, community and society
1. Martin et al, 2012
2. Dolan and Brady, 2012
3. McGrath, 2012

Family law and Islam
1. Geertz, C. 1971. *Islam Observed: Religious Developments in Morocco and Indonesia.* Chicago: Chicago University Press
2. Charrad, M. M. 2011. 'Gender in the Middle East: Islam, States, Agency,' *Annual Review of Sociology* 37: 417-37
3. Charrad M.M. 2001. *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco.* Berkeley: University of California Press
4. Peirce L. 2003. *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab.* Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 382. See also Tucker J.E. 2008. *Women, Family, and Gender in Islamic Law.* New York: Cambridge University Press
5. Quoted in Charrad, 2001. Op. Cit. P. 37
6. Quoted in Charrad, 2001. Op. Cit. P. 5.
7. Kelly S. and Breslin J. (eds.), 2010. *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Progress Amid Resistance.* New York: Freedom House
8. Charrad, 2001. Op. Cit. Pp. 201-32.

The Arab family: Increasing vulnerability in times of transition
1. ESCWA, 'Bridging the urban divide in the ESCWA region', *Social Development Bulletin,* vol. 3, issue 4, document E/ESCWA/SDD/2011/Technical Paper 3
2. World Bank (2011) *Study on the Impact and Costs of Forced Displacement: State of the Art Literature Review.* Accessible from: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/ Resources/244362-1265299949041/6766328-1265299960363/ VolumeIIILiterature.pdf
3. Calculated from UN Habitat Urban Indicators Dataset for Indicator: Population in Slums (% of Urban Population), latest data available. Dataset accessible from: http://www.unhabitat.org/stats

4. PADCO; Community Development Group; and Iraqi Central Office of Statistics (2006) *Iraq Housing Market Study – Main Report.* Accessible from: http://www. unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/4997_65700_IHMS%20Main%20Report.pdf
5. UN-ESCWA (2012) *A review of literature on the changing role of the family in care provision in Arab countries.* E/ESCWA/SDD/2013/WP.1
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. UNFPA (2012) *Women's Need for Family Planning in Arab Countries,* Social Policy Brief, accessible from: http://www.unfpa.org/worldwide/family-planning-arab-countries-2.pdf
9. UNESCO (2010) *Early Childhood Care and Education Regional Report:* Arab States. Report submitted to the UNESCO World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education, Moscow Sept 2010
10. Centre for Studies on Ageing (2009), *Older Persons in Lebanon:* Voices of the Caregivers, Policy Brief 1, November 2009. Accessible from: http://www.csa.org. lb/cms/assets/csa%20publications/policy%20briefs%20pdfs/csa_policy_brief_ issue1_voices_of_the_care_givers.pdf
Further reading:
-   UN-ESCWA (2013) *Report on the Electronic Discussion 'Towards a New Welfare Mix for the Arab Region?'* Outline of the Social Policy Report V. E/ESCWA/SDD/2013/ WG.2/Report
-   UN-ESCWA (2013) *Arab forum: 'Towards a new welfare mix: Rethinking the roles of the state, market and civil society in the provision of basic social services'.* E/ESCWA/ SDD/2013/WG.1/Report
-   UN-ESCWA (2011) *Bridging the Urban Divide in the ESCWA Region: Towards Inclusive Cities.* E/ESCWA/SDD/2011/1

Advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity
1. *International Journal of the Jurisprudence of the Family,* William S. Hein & Co. Inc

Social connectedness and youth development
1. Jose, P.E. & Pryor, J. (2010). 'Does social connectedness lead to a greater sense of well-being in New Zealand adolescents? Findings from the Youth Connectedness Project'. *Psychology Aotearoa,* 2 (2), 94-97
2. Jose, P.E., Ryan, N. & Pryor, J. (2012). 'Does social connectedness promote a greater sense of well-being in adolescence over time?' *Journal of Research on Adolescence,* 22(2), 235–251. doi:10.1111/j.1532-7795.2012.00783.x
3. At the three time points of measurement, cohort 1 participants were aged 10-11, 11-12 and 12-13 years, cohort 2 participants were aged 12-13, 13-14 and 14-15 years, and cohort 3 participants were aged 14-15, 15-16 and 16-17 years. Where the cohorts overlapped during a time period, the grand mean was used.
4. This model controls for age, gender, ethnic group and initial levels of well-being.

Whānau development and resilience
1. Māori Economic Development Panel (2012): *He Kai Kei Aku Ringa. The Crown-Māori Economic Growth partnership.* Wellington. p. 12
2. Durie, M. (2003). Ngā Kāhui Pou Launching Māori Futures. Huia Publishers, Wellington. p. 70
3. Families Commission (2010-2012) *Te Pūmautanga o te whānau: Tūhoe and South Auckland whānau,* Families Commission, Wellington
4. Tūhoe Establishment Trust website. Retrieved 12 February 2011, from www. ngaituhoe.iwi.nz
Further reading:
-   Meredith, P. (2009). 'Urban Māori'. Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. Retrieved 5 February 2010, from http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/urban-Maori (updated 4 March 09)

Family-oriented policy
1. Van der berg, 2010
2. Streak et al, 2008

Bonding of the generations: Promoting family values and intergenerational solidarity in Singapore
1. Ministry of Community Development (1999). *Report of the Inter-ministerial Committee on the Aging Population,* Singapore, pages 177-178
2. Tan, Ern Ser (2012), *Class and Social Orientations in Singapore: Report based on 2011 Survey on Singapore Society.* (forthcoming e-publication)
3. Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (2009). *State of the Elderly in Singapore, 2008/2009.* Release 3: Social Well-being, Going Forward. Table 4.10

Notes and References

Changing family structure and development transformation in Africa

1. Lower-middle income countries: Cameroon, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Ghana Lesotho, Morocco, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, and Zambia. Upper-middle income countries: Angola, Algeria, Botswana, Gabon, Libya, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, and Tunisia.

Lessons from the community level in Ghana

1. CNN News, 22 November 2013, CNN.com
2. *Public Agenda* newspaper, 28 January 2007
3. *Public Agenda,* 12 January 2012
4. Regional News of Wednesday 20 November 2013, radioxyonline.com

Building on traditional cooperation among women for sustainable rural
Author details:

P. Ceci, Department for Innovation in Biological, Agro-food and Forest systems, University of Tuscia and Consultant, Forestry Department, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); F.B.S. Diallo, University assistant, Centre for Environmental Research, Gamal Abdel Nasser University of Conakry, Guinea; P. Wolter, Consultant, Forestry Department, FAO; L. Monforte, Consultant, Forestry Department, FAO, F. M. Pierri, Family Farming Officer, Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development, FAO and B. Rice, Family Farming Consultant, Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development, FAO, Italy

References:

1. IFAD. *Rural poverty in Guinea:* http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/country/home/tags/guinea (consulted in August 2013)
2. Ibid.
3. Detraux, M. 1991. *Approche intégrée des systèmes de production et de leur dynamisme, un outil pour une politique adaptée aux besoins des régions : application au Fouta Djallon.* Faculté des sciences agronomiques de Gembloux, Belgique (pp. 264-265)
4. Ibid.

Further reading:

- Ceci, P. 2014. *Interweaving forests into society: Towards long-term impacts and sustainability of forestry projects in Guinea.* PhD thesis, University of Tuscia, Viterbo, Italy
- FAO. 2008. *Fouta Djallon Highlands Integrated Natural Resources Management Project* (FDH-INRM). Project document, FAO, Rome, Italy
- FAO. 2013. *Draft Addendum for Tranche II to the Project Document.* FAO, Rome, Italy

From disintegrating families to family solidarity

1. Shek, Daniel T. L., 2011, *Journal of Family Studies,* Vol. 17, Issue 2
2. UNCRC Article 9(3)
3. Jansen, Luther T. 1952, *American Sociological Review,* Vol. 17, No. 6.

Cherishing the family

1. The Family Council, set up in 2007, is an advisory body to the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region on the formulation of policies and strategies for supporting and strengthening the family and on development of related programmes/activities. The Family Council is currently chaired by Professor Daniel Shek Tan-lei with four official members, three ex-officio members and 14 non-official members.
2. Annual subvention has been provided to 11 Uniformed Groups to organize family-related programmes.
3. Employees are allowed to take leave to attend 'parent days' held by the schools of their children.
4. The Commission on Youth was set up in February 1990. It is an advisory body with members appointed by the Secretary of Home Affairs, which includes non-official members from a wide spectrum of society and representatives from government B/Ds. It advises the Government on matters pertaining to youth and strives to consolidate community efforts, assist in formulating and implementing youth development programmes and activities, and nurture young people as future leaders with vision, creativity, leadership and commitment.
5. The Elderly Commission was established in 1997 with members including professionals, academics and community leaders. Its task is to advise the Government on the formulation of a comprehensive policy for the elderly, monitor the implementation of policies and programmes affecting the elderly, and coordinate the planning and development of various programmes and services for the elderly.
6. The Women's Commission was established by the Government in January 2001 and is tasked to promote the well-being and interests of women in Hong Kong by taking a strategic overview over women's issues, developing a long-term vision and strategy for the development and advancement of women, and advising the Government on policies and initiatives which are of concern to women.

7. The fieldwork survey was conducted from May to September 2013, with a sample size of 2,000 respondents.
8. Traditional family values in this survey include (a) having son to continue the family name, (b) family disgrace should be kept within the family, (c) having a son is better than having a daughter and (d) working hard to bring honour to the family.

II
Confronting Family Poverty

Can or will the family succeed? A family-centric approach to poverty alleviation

1. Dr Catherine Bernard, *Can the Millennium Development Goals, or 2015 Plus Agenda, Succeed Without a Human Based, Family Centric and Person Oriented Approach?* May 2013
2. *Families, Agents and Beneficiaries of Social Education and Development.* International Year of The Family (Occasional Papers Series No. 16) 1995

Social development programmes for family well-being in Kenya

1. COK 2010

Family structure and well-being across Israel's diverse population
Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank Dan Ben-David, Haya Stier and Ayal Kimhi for their valuable input and suggestions on this article.

References

1. OECD Family Database: http://www.oecd.org/social/soc/oecdfamilydatabase.htm
2. Ibid.
3. CBS, *Women and men in Israel* 1990-2009: www.cbs.gov.il/www/statistical/mw2011_e.pdf
4. OECD Factbook 2013: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics: www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/factbook-2013-en/01/01/02/index.html?itemId=/content/chapter/factbook-2013-2-en
5. Hleihel, Ahmad, 2011, *Fertility among Jewish and Muslim Women in Israel,* by Level of Religiosity, 1979-2009: http://cbs.gov.il/www/publications/pw60.pdf
6. Stier, Haya, *Welfare and Employment among Single Mothers: Israel from a Comparative Perspective,* Taub Center for Social Policy studies in Israel, 2011: http://taubcenter.org.il/tauborgilwp/wp-content/uploads/E2010-Single-Mothers-Chapter.pdf
7. Lewin-Epstein, Noah; Stier, Haya; Braun, Michael and Langfeldt, Bettina (2000). 'Family Policy and Public Attitudes in Germany and Israel', *European Sociological Review* 16.4, Dec 2000: http://people.socsci.tau.ac.il/mu/hayas/files/2011/01/attitudes-israel-germany.pdf
8. CBS, *Women and men in Israel* 1990-2009. Op. Cit.
   CBS, *The Social Survey Israel,* 2009-2010: www.cbs.gov.il/statistical/seker-chevrati-e124.pdf
9. Kraft, Dina, 'Where Families Are Prized, Help Is Free', New York Times, 17 July 2011: www.nytimes.com/2011/07/18/world/middleeast/18israel.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1&
   Collins, John A., *An international survey of the health economics of IVF and ICSI,* Oxford University Press, 2002. Abstract: humupd.oxfordjournals.org/content/8/3/265.abstract
10. Shalev, Michael; Gal, Johnny and Azary-Viesel, Sagit, 'The Cost of Social Welfare: Israel in Comparative Perspective', in Dan Ben-David, ed. *State of the Nation Report: Society, Economy and Policy in Israel* 2011-2012, Taub Center for Social Policy studies in Israel, 2012: http://taubcenter.org.il/tauborgilwp/wp-content/uploads/E2012.16-Shalev-Gal-Azary.pdf
11. OECD Family Database, PF1.3 *Family Cash Benefits:* http://www.oecd.org/els/family/PF1_3_Family_Cash_Benefits_Aug2013.pdf
12. Ibid.
13. 'Employment rates: women', OECD Factbook 2011: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics - ISBN 978-92-64-11150-9: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932505355
14. http://taubcenter.org.il/tauborgilwp/wp-content/uploads/E2013.08-Women-and-Work-3.pdf
15. Budig, Michelle; Misra, Joya and Böckmann, Irene, *The Motherhood Wage Penalty in Cross-National Perspective: The Importance of Work-Family Policies and Cultural Attitudes,* University of Massachusetts-Amherst, 2012: http://paa2012.princeton.edu/papers/120033
16. Blass, Nachum and Bleikh, Haim I*mplementation of the Compulsory Education Law for Ages 3-4: Challenges and Recommendations,* Policy Paper No. 2013.01, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, 2013: http://taubcenter.org.il/tauborgilwp/wp-content/uploads/E2013.01-Kindergarten.pdf

Notes and References

17. Budig, Michelle; Misra, Joya and Böckmann, Irene, *The Motherhood Wage Penalty in Cross-National Perspective.* Op. Cit.

18. Shalev, Michael, *The economic grievances behind the social protests of 2011,* Policy Paper No. 2012.08, Taub Center for Social Policy studies in Israel, 2012: http://taubcenter.org.il/tauborgilwp/wp-content/uploads/E2012.08-Shalev.pdf

19. Ben-David, Dan and Bleikh, Haim, *Poverty and Inequality Over Time: In Israel and the OECD,* Policy Paper No. 2013.03, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, 2013: http://taubcenter.org.il/tauborgilwp/wp-content/uploads/E2013.03-Poverty-3.pdf

20. Stier, Haya (2011) *Working and Poor,* Policy Paper No. 2011.06, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, 2011: http://taubcenter.org.il/tauborgilwp/wp-content/uploads/E2010-Working-and-Poor-Chapter.pdf

21. Ben-David and Bleikh, 2013. Op. Cit.

22. Hleihel, Ahmad, 2011, *Fertility among Jewish and Muslim Women in Israel, by Level of Religiosity, 1979-2009:* http://cbs.gov.il/www/publications/pw60.pdf

23. Regev, Eitan, *Education and Employment in the Haredi Sector,* Policy Paper No. 2013.06, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, 2013: http://taubcenter.org.il/tauborgilwp/wp-content/uploads/E2013.06-Haredim-3.pdf (Figure 6)

24. Kimhi, Ayal, *Labor Market Trends: Employment Rate And Wage Disparities,* Policy Paper No. 2012.07, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel,2012: http://taubcenter.org.il/tauborgilwp/wp-content/uploads/E2012.07-Kimhi.pdf

25. Stier, Haya, 2011. Op. Cit.

26. Ben-David, Dan, *Israel's Educational Achievements: Updated International Comparisons,* Policy Paper No. 2011.12, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, 2012: http://taubcenter.org.il/tauborgilwp/wp-content/uploads/E2010-Educational-Achievements-Chapter.pdf

27. Stier, Haya and Lewin, Alisa, Material Hardship in Israel, Policy Paper No. 2013.13, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, 2013: http://taubcenter.org.il/tauborgilwp/wp-content/uploads/E2013.13-Hardship.pdf

Evolving space for fishers' families in the western Bay of Bengal region

1. UNDP, 2013. *Human Development Report.* 1 UN Plaza, New York,, NY 10017, USA: United Nations Development Programme. Retrieved from http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/14/hdr2013_en_complete.pdf

2. BOBP-IGO, 2013. *Annual Report of the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation.* Chennai: Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation. pp.72

3. Ashaletha, S., Ramachandran, C., Immanuel, S., Diwan, A. D. and Sathiadhas, R., 2002. *Changing Roles of Fisherwomen of India: Issues & Perspectives.* Proceedings of International Conference on Women in Fisheries. Mumbai.

4. BOBLME, 2012. *Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis: Issues, Proximate and Root Causes.* Phuket, Thailand: Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem Project. Retrieved from http://iwlearn.net/iw-projects/1252/reports/boblme-tda-volume-1

5. FISHCOPFED, 2013. *Centrally Sponsored Group Accident Insurance Scheme for Active Fishermen.* Government of India. Retrieved February 22, 2013, from http://fishcopfed.com/Pages.aspx?ID=30

6. BOBP-IGO, 2013 Op. Cit.

Confronting family poverty in Romania

1. CE, 2010

2. BM et al, 2007

3. INS, 2010

4. Stănculescu and Berevoiescu, 2004

5. Paul Krugman, 2010

6. The document was signed on behalf of the Romanian Government by the Ministry of Labour in June 2005

III
Ensuring Work-Family Balance

Workplace policies and protections: A family matter

1. Jody Heymann founded and led the Project on Global Working Families at Harvard, and the WORLD Policy Analysis Center at McGill and UCLA. This work would not have been possible without the tremendous efforts of many colleagues, including Alison Earle and Amy Raub in leading analytics as these efforts were launched. Kristen McNeill joined the WORLD Policy Analysis Center a few years after its inception. For a full list of the many contributors to these initiatives, see *Forgotten Families* (Oxford University Press, 2006), *Raising the Global Floor* (Stanford University Press, 2010) and *Children's Chances* (Harvard University Press, 2013)

Fathers and work-family policies

1. Michael E. Lamb (Ed), *The Role of the Father in Child Development,* 5th Edition. Wiley, 2010

2. World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Report 2011*: http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2011

3. Gíslason, Ingólfur (2007) *Parental leave in Iceland. Bringing the fathers in.* Akureyri. Centre for Gender Equality

A better work-life balance for both fathers and mothers

1. The author is grateful to Nabil Ali and Monika Queisser for comments on a previous draft. The views expressed in this article cannot be attributed to the OECD or its member governments; they are the responsibility of the author alone

2. OECD (2014a), OECD Family database: www.oecd.org/social/family/database

3. OECD (2012), *Closing the Gender Gap Act Now,* OECD Publishing, Paris

4. Ibid.

5. OECD (2011), *Doing Better for Families,* OECD Publishing, Paris

6. OECD (2014b), OECD Employment database: www.oecd.org/employment/emp/

7. OECD (2014c), OECD Gender Data Portal: www.oecd.org/gender/data

Making mothers matter

1. Stevens, Bergeyck and Liedekerke, *Realities of Mothers in Europe*, 2010

2. Crittenden, Ann, *The Price of Motherhood,* 2001

3. Jane Waldfogel

4. MMM, *Realities of Mothers in Europe:* http://www.mmmeurope.org/ficdoc/WP2_MMM_Realities_of_Mothers_in_Europe.pdf

5. US Labor statistics

6. Kes and Swaminathan (2006) International Labour Organization

7. See l'Orimbaton'ny Tontolo Iainana TSARArindra (OTITSARA)

8. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2007

9. United Nations Population Fund, 2013

Corporate family responsibility

1. Data collected in partnership with Chantal Epie, Phd, Lagos Busienss School (Nigeria); Irene Kinuthia, Strathmore Business School, (Kenya); and Marie Noelle N'Guessan, MDE Business School (Ivory Coast).

2. Data collected in partnership with M. Victoria Caparas, PhD, University of Asia and the Pacific Philippines

3. Data collected in partnership with Roberto Sorrenti and Partners, ELIS Consortium, (Italy)

4. All data in Latin-America has been collected in partnership with local researchers:
   - Argentina: Patricia Debeljuh, PhD, and Angeles Destefano, IAE Business School
   - Brazil: Cesar Bullara and Erica Rohlim, ISE Business SchoolChile: Maria Jose
   - Bosch, PhD, and Maria Paz Riumallo, ESE Business School
   - Colombia: Sandra Idrovo, PhD, and Pamela Leyva, INALDE Business School
   - Costa Rica: Ana Marcela Villalobos, La Empresa y la Familia
   - Ecuador: Monica Torresano, Wilson Jácome, PhD, IDE Business School
   - El Salvador: Kalena de Velado, Emma Santos, EMPREPAS
   - Guatemala: Hugo Cruz, PhD, Istmo Business School
   - Mexico: M Carmen Bernal, PhD, Alejandra Moreno, IPADE Business School
   - Peru: Marisa Aguirre, PhD, Juan Carlos Pacheco, PhD, PAD Business School
   - Venezuela: Cristina Navarro, Monteavila Univeristy

Work-family balance: Issues and considerations for the post-2014 agenda

1. Resolution E/CN.5/2011/L.6/Rev.1

2. Greenhaus, J. H., & Beutell, N. J. (1985). 'Sources of conflict between work and family roles'. *Academy of Management Review,* 10, 76-88

3. Richter, L., Chikovore, J., Makusha, T., Bhana, A., Mokomane, Z., Swartz, S. & Makiwane, M. (2011). 'Fatherhood and Families', in *Men in Families and Changing Family Policy in a Changing World.* (pp47-84). New York: United Nations

4. Mokomane, Z. (2009). *Work Family Conflict and Gender Equality in South Africa.* Paper presented at the 26th International Population Conference, Marrakech, Morocco, 28th September-2nd October 2009

5. Baucom, A. & Smith, C.A. (1999). *Employer Option for Child Care: An Effective Strategy for Recruitment and Retention.* Kansas State University

6. O'Brien, M. (2009). 'Fathers, Parental Leave Policies, and Infant Quality of Life: International Perspectives and Policy Impact'. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.* Vol. 624: 190-213

7. *Combining your work and family responsibilities.* Available at www.ilo.org/public/english/region/eurpro/moscow/info/publ/work_and_family.pdf

Notes and References

8. Aryee, S., Lo, S. & Kang, I. (1999). 'Antecedents of early career stage mentoring among Chinese employees'. *Journal of Organizational Behavior,* Vol. 20 (5): 563–57

9. Spector, P.E., Cooper, C.L., et al., 'A cross-national comparative study of work-family stressors, working hours, and well-being: China and Latin America versus the Anglo world', *Personnel Psychology,* 57, 1 (2004), pp. 119-142

10. Mokomane, Z. (2012). 'Social Protection as a Mechanism for Family Protection in sub-Saharan Africa'. *International Journal of Social Welfare.* Doi:10.1111/j.1468-2397.2012.00893.x

11. Poelmans, S., Spector, P.E. Cooper, C.L., et al. (2003). 'A cross-national comparative study of work/family demands and resources', *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management,* 3, 3 (2003), pp. 275-288

12. Capizzano, J., Tout, K. and Adams, G. (2000). *Child care patterns of school-age children with employed mothers.* The Urban Institute, Occasional Paper No. 41

13. Capizzano, et al, ibid.; Pitt-Catsouphes, J.C. and Sandee, S. (200), *Opportunities for Policy Leadership on Afterschool Care,* Policy Leadership Series Issue No. 5, the Sloan Work and Family Research Network , Available at www.bc.edu/wfnetwork,. Accessed 15 October 2009

14. Baucom, A. & Smith, C.A., op cit.

15. ILO, op cit, pp.4

16. Waldfogel, J. & McLanahan, S. (2011). 'Work and Family: Introducing the Issue'. *The Future of Children,* Vol. 21(2):3-14

17. Adapted from Baucom, A. & Smith, C.A. (1999). *Employer Option for Child Care: An Effective Strategy for Recruitment and Retention.* Kansas State University

Work, care and family policy in Australia: A work in progress

1. Reserve Bank of Australia, *Statement on Monetary Policy, February 2013,* Box C p.40-42. http://www.rba.gov.au/publications/smp/2013/feb/pdf/0213.pdf, accessed 8 January 2014

2. Baxter, J (2013) *Parents working out work*, Australian Family Trends No.1, AIFS

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2012), *Caring in the Community Australia,* Cat. No. 4436.0, Canberra, ABS

7. Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) (2013), *Investing in care: Recognising and valuing those who care,* Volume 1 Research Report, Sydney, AHRC

8. Broomhill, R & Sharp, R. 2012. *Australia's Parental Leave Policy and Gender Equality: An International Comparison,* Adelaide: Australian Workplace Innovation and Social Research Centre, The University of Adelaide. http://www.adelaide.edu.au/wiser/docs/WISeR-parental-leave-report2012.pdf, accessed 8 January 2014

9. Baird, M. and Whitehouse, G. (2012), 'Paid Parental Leave: First Birthday Policy Review', *Australian Bulletin of Labour*, 38 (3) pp.184-199

10. Whiteford, Peter (2013) *Pregnant Pause*, 22 August https://crawford.anu.edu.au/news/2460/pregnant-pause, accessed 8 January 2014

11. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) (2010) *State of Child Care in Australia,* Canberra

12. Productivity Commission (2013) *Childcare and Early Childhood Learning, Productivity Commission Issues Paper,* December 2013

13. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2011) Cat no. 4402.0 - *Childhood Education and Care, Australia,* June 2011: http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Products/4402.0~June+2011~Main+Features~Main+features?OpenDocument, accessed 8 January 2013

14. Megalogenis, G. and Gosper, S. (2012), 'Social Revolution at work' *The Australian,* 31 October 2012 p.1

15. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) (2011), *Skills Shortages Australia,* Commonwealth of Australia, p.70

16. ABS (2012) op cit.

17. AHRC (2013) op cit.

18. Daley et al. 2012; Australian Government 2010

19. Skinner, N. Hutchison, C. and Pocock, B. (2012), *The Big Squeeze: Work, home and care in 2012: The Australian Work and Life Index 2012,* University of South Australia, Centre for Work and Life.

20. Heron, A. and Charlesworth, S. (2012), 'Working Time and Managing Work and Care: Whose Flexibility?' *Australian Bulletin of Labour,* 38(3), pp.214-233.

21. Australian Treasury Department (2007) *Intergenerational Report 2007* http://archive.treasury.gov.au/contentitem.asp?ContentID=1239, accessed 8 January 2014

Further reading:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (1994) Cat no 6203 *The Labour force Australia,* Dec 1994 http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/free.nsf/0/EF3C68C489C5B12A CA257225000736E6/$File/62030_1294.pdf, accessed 8 January 2014

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Cat no. 4125.0 *Gender Indicators, Australia,* Jan 2013

Korea's work-family reconciliation policy: Achievements and challenges

1. Statistics Korea, 2011

2. Ibid.

3. Hong, S.A., M.W. Lee, D.K. Lee (2011). *Flexible Working Arrangements and Family Life.* KWDI

Source for table, 'Gender division of labour in the family': Hong, et al (2009). *Working Parents and Work-Life Balance in Sweden, the UK and Korea.* KWDI

Korea's family policy challenges

1. OECD (2013), Family database

2. Ministry of Health and Welfare (2013), Health and Welfare White Paper

3. OECD (2012) Demography and Population Database

4. Moon-Sik, Hong (1998) 'Changes in the Korean Fertility Control Policy and its Effects', *Korean Journal of Population Studies*, Vol 21. No.2: 188-227p

5. IMF(2013), World Economic Outlook, Database

6. Sam-Sik Lee et al. (2010) *Policy Direction Responding to Low Fertility and Population Aging,* Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs

7. Statistics Korea (2013) *Annual Report on Vital Statistics*

8. Ibid.

9. Statistics Korea, Population and Housing Census, 1970-2010

10. Ibid.

11. Kyung-hee Chung et al. (2012) *Policy Implication of Changes in Family Structure: Focused on the Increase of Single,* Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs

12. Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs (2012) *National Survey on Dynamics of Marriage and Family*

13. Statistics Korea (2013), *Annual Report on Vital Statistics.* Op. Cit.

14. OECD (2012) *Closing the Gender Gap: ACT NOW*

15. OECD (2013) OECD Employment database

16. Ibid.

17. OECD (2013) OECD Earnings database

18. OECD (2013) OECD Labour Force Statistics

19. Bok-Sun Kim (2012) 'Structure of female labor market', *Labor Review*, Vol. 87

20. Ibid.

21. Statistics Korea (2012) Korea Time Use Survey

22. Yoon-Jeong Shin et al. (2012) OECD Family database on Korea, OECD Korea Policy Centre, Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs

23. OECD (2013), Family database. Op. Cit.

24. Korea Employment Information Service (2012) *Statistics on Employment Insurance on 2012*

25. Ibid.