



## Economic and Social Council

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Geneva, 2-27 July 2007

Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda\*

### **Annual ministerial review: strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development**

### **Statement Submitted by the World Family Organization, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraph 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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\* E/2007/100 and Corr.

## Statement

### **Statement submitted by the World Family Organization, a Non-Governmental Organization in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council**

#### **The Dead Sea Declaration Investing in Development and Mobilizing for Action: Implementing the MDGs at the Local Level and in the Family**

#### **World Family Summit +2**

December 05, 06 and 07, 2006  
Dead Sea, Jordan

The 187 delegations from 84 countries, representing Governments, NGOs, Parliamentarians, Academia, Municipalities, Business Community and Families, gathered at the World Family Summit +2, held at the Dead Sea, Jordan, under the **High Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah**, approved the present declaration:

*Welcoming* the interaction, discourse and partnership among Stakeholders, Local Authorities, NGOs, Civil Society Organizations, Parliamentarians, Academia, Business Community, Media and Families;

*Emphasizing* the importance of the World Family Summit in building a partnership towards making the present and the future world with more peace, security, justice, tolerance, solidarity, prosperity and integrated by mobilizing and promoting the basic cell of society - The Family;

*Recognizing* that the family is key to social stability, community progress and national strength and should therefore be strengthened to raise living standards, ensure better education and health care, broaden individual opportunities and secure dignity in old age;

*Recognizing* that better and faster achievements will be made in reaching the MDGs, if families are directly involved and mobilized to be active participants of the process of development;

*Recognizing* the outcomes of the Doha International Conference for the Family held in 2004, and taking note of its Declaration, as well as the establishment of the Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development;

*Reaffirming* the contents of the Sanya Declaration for a Comprehensive Family Policy - "Achieving the Millennium Declaration With and For the Family", approved by the World Family Summit, held in Sanya, China, December 8, 2004;

*Reaffirming* the Aracaju Practical Plan of Action 2006-2015 - "Investing in Development: Working the Millennium Development Goals at the Local Level and in the Family" approved by the World Family Summit +1, held in Aracaju, Sergipe, Brazil, December 8, 2005;

**Unanimously concluded and recommend the following:**

**1. Family: Employment and Decent Work**

Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and the lives of their families and equality of opportunity and treatment for women and men.

Decent work should be at the heart of global, national and local strategies for economic and social progress. It is central to efforts to reduce poverty, and a means for achieving equitable, inclusive and sustainable development.

People throughout the world face deficits, gaps and exclusions in the form of unemployment and underemployment, poor quality and unproductive jobs, unsafe work and insecure income, rights which are denied, gender inequality, lack of representation and voice, and inadequate protection and solidarity in the face of disease, disability and old age.

Decent work is a development strategy. It is a goal not a standard. It does not offer a "one size fits all" solution. It is a personal goal for individuals and families and a development goal for countries. Decent work is missing when:

- there is involuntary unemployment and poverty;
- there are abuses of rights at work and forced and child labour exist, and discrimination is practiced;
- basic income security is missing and workplace anxiety, depression and exhaustion are commonplace;
- workers and employers are either not organized to make their voice heard, or face obstacles to effective dialogue;
- life at work cannot be properly balanced with the claims of the family.

*Recommendations:*

- All stakeholders work together to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all a central objective of relevant national and international policies to honor the commitment made by the World Leaders at the World Summit in 2005;
- In formulating poverty eradication policies, always integrate the following issues:
  - (1) productive employment and decent work at macro, sectoral and micro level;
  - (2) non discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin and equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value;
  - (3) youth employment (based on the fact that almost half of the unemployed people in the world are young people);
  - (4) eradication of child labour.
- Put families at the core of governments' strategies to promote employment creation and decent work, as families' living conditions are directly affected by employment and working conditions of their members;
- Address the root causes of low income and include social security and social protection schemes for the worker and the members of the family;
- Promote small and medium enterprises and cooperatives as an important mechanism for fighting poverty and a means to promote the establishment of family managed businesses;

- Develop strategies and policies, including targeted measures, to prevent all forms of violence against women at the work place. Special attention should be given to women working in the informal sector and migrant workers, that are not always covered by social protection schemes and their voice is not heard;
- Put in place a system to assess the social impact of policies based on already existing and ad-hoc created indicators of decent work.

## **2. Family and Education**

Education is a basic human right and the key to sustainable development. Accelerated progress towards education for all will be needed to reach national and internationally agreed targets for poverty reduction.

Education must draw upon the common efforts of the family, governments, the private sector, NGOs and the United Nations.

Parents are children's first educators and for the youngest children, home is the main arena of care. Parents and families should thus be at the centre of education policies and strategies and play a more active participation to ensure effective and efficient education.

Considering that most of the 100 million children around the world missing out on primary education are child labourers, efforts to achieve education for all and elimination of child labour are inextricably linked and should be tackled hand in hand. Non-formal education and vocational training can provide the skills needed for gainful employment, which in turns contributes to local and national development.

Gender is an important factor in a household's decision-making about children's work and education. Cultural norms can exclude girls from certain types of training or education. Because of limited expectations of girls securing decent, paid work as adults, returns on their education may be perceived as lower than that of boys. As a result, in most countries, girls are less likely to be in school than boys.

### *Recommendations*

- Develop strategies to reach vulnerable out-of-school children and increase their enrolment and retention in schools, e.g. elimination of school fees, provision of conditional transfers, and creation of school feeding and health programs;
- Promote the use of non-formal or transitional education as instruments to rehabilitate former child labourers. Non-formal education and skills trainings programmes include a significant component on generating-income activities for the beneficiary of children, their families and the wider community;
- Special measures are taken to raise awareness within families and address barriers to girls' education, in particular girls' work, such as household chores, domestic servitude, agricultural and home-based work;
- Governments support parents and families in fulfilling their educators' role at a very early stage through pre-primary education and parenting programmes. Parent programmes could include training and learning activities for parents on parenting skills. Parents receive support in creating parent groups at the community level. Governments establish national policy frameworks that cover parent education on children's health needs, physical development and learning potential for a comprehensive care and education for young children;
- Parents, families and communities participate more actively in the development and maintenance of primary schools, in particular in rural areas. Mechanisms for local control of education are established, in which parents and families are given an explicit role in school decision-making processes and in holding schools and teachers accountable for delivering results;
- The benefits of the educational sector are equally shared by the poor and the wealthy, by ensuring a distribution of resources across the different regions and schools;

- Governments together with other major stakeholders promote lifelong learning and adult literacy.

### **3. Family and Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women**

Many countries have made significant progress towards gender equality, especially in the area of policy and legislation, and in health and education. National development policies increasingly place gender equality at the forefront of poverty reduction efforts. But progress has been uneven, and the gap between policy and practice remains wide. This gender difference appears to be rooted in the way boys and men are socialized and the role of the family is vital to invert this discriminatory tendency and promote gender equality.

Gender division of labour in the family, preference to give more education opportunities to boys, strong attitudes towards socially constructed roles and behaviors and different access to resources are some of the factors that are to be taken into consideration when looking at the role of family in promoting gender equality.

The most common form of violence experienced by women globally is intimate partner violence. The pervasiveness of different forms of violence against women within intimate relationships, commonly referred to as domestic violence or spousal abuse, is now well established. Domestic violence includes a range of sexually, psychologically and physically coercive acts used against adult and adolescent women by a current or former intimate partner, without her consent.

Violence against women is rooted in historically unequal power relations between women and men and all forms of violence against women seriously violate and impair or nullify the enjoyment by women of all human rights and constitute a major impediment to the ability of women to make use of their capabilities.

Gender inequality is often built into labour institutions. Social security systems, for instance, frequently assume that the breadwinner of the family is male and do not take into consideration the growing ratio of female-headed families. Moreover, labour market segmentation along gender lines generates structural wage differences between men and women that are difficult to address through conventional labour market policy.

National and international laws and policies are generally very advanced in promoting gender equality and non discrimination at the workplace, but numbers show that in practice there is still a long way to go before the achievement of gender equality at work. Even if the gap between female and male labour force participation rate has decreased over the last twenty years and women now represent about 40% of the global labour force, women continue to be predominantly found in certain types of occupations, e.g. the service sector and agriculture and it is very difficult for them to reach top-level management and professional positions.

#### *Recommendations:*

- Ensure that women, boy and girls have access to education and literacy programmes and are educated on gender equality and human rights, particularly women's rights and their responsibility to respect the rights of others, inter alia, by integrating women's rights into all appropriate curricula and by developing gender-sensitive teaching materials and classroom practices, especially for early childhood education as mentioned on the General Assembly Resolution A/C.3/61/L.10/rev.1 - Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, approved in November 2006;
- Empower women, particularly poor women, through, inter alia, social and economic policies that guarantee them full and equal access to all levels of quality education and training and to affordable and adequate public and social services, as well as full and equal rights to own land and other property, and to take further appropriate measures to address the increasing rate of homelessness or inadequate housing for women in order to reduce their vulnerability to violence

as mentioned on the General Assembly Resolution A/C.3/61/L.10/rev.1 - Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, approved in November 2006;

- Support families in creating a more gender sensitive and equal opportunities environment at home through sensitizations and advocacy campaigns, involvement of community, political and religious leaders in developing activities on gender-related issues for the entire community and other means that can guarantee a wide community involvement.
- Promote a wider ratification of International Labour standards related to gender equality (Conventions 100; 111; 156; 183). Special focus should be given to Convention 156 (1981) on Workers with Family Responsibilities and Convention 183 (2000) on Maternity Protection;
- Encourage the creation of a conducive environment at the work-place. Special attention should be given to the delivery of gender-sensitive services, from health services to the development of gender-sensitive working patterns, including flexible working hours, work at home, child care facilities, and breast feeding facilities in the office;
- Improve the capacity of all social actors to apply gender analysis tools in order to include the different needs of both women and men in the development of family-friendly policies and policies to conciliate work and family life;
- Ensure equal access to full employment and decent work for women. Women must be provided with the necessary skills, training, market information and business development services with the view to ensure equal access to full employment and decent work to all.

#### **4. Family and Primary Health Care**

Primary Health Care Systems are critical to achieve the Millennium Development health related Goals. They are an effective way to address the main health problems in the family and in the community, by providing promotion, preventive, curative and rehabilitative services. Local Primary Health Care Systems in particular are useful in providing access to health services for the most disadvantaged families.

Communities have an important role to play in the planning, organization, operation and control of Primary Health Care Systems.

Employers can play a crucial role especially in those areas where these services are either non-existent or ill-functioning. If workers and their families are in good health and receive prompt cure when needed, productivity is higher and absence from work due to family responsibilities related to bad health is reduced.

#### *Recommendations:*

- Ensure that Local Health Systems provide access to emergency obstetric care, maternal and child health care, address neonatal mortality, child mortality, and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other major infectious diseases. These activities are integrated into a common service system;
- Ensure communities and families' self-reliance and participation in the planning, organization, operation and control of Local Health Systems. Effectively enable participation of communities and families by all local and national available resources;
- Deliver services through health centers and outreach "close to client" (CTC) systems to improve quality and effectiveness of local health services;
- Governments, local authorities, the business community, the community and families increase investments in Primary Health Care services everywhere. Governments as well as the families served support Primary Health Care to ensure its financial sustainability. New methods of complementary funding, such as community health funds, mutual health organizations and revolving drug funds are developed. Private enterprises, in collaboration with Governments, are given more incentives to invest in the settlement and better functioning of Primary Health Care centers;

- Primary Health Care workers are highly motivated and self-reliant, so that their commitment is guaranteed. Attention is paid to the ability of Primary Health Care Centers to attract and retain competent staff;
- The ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS in the world of work is widely distributed and implemented.

## **5. Family and Fair Globalization: Global Partnership for Development**

Successful policies to respond to globalization need to start with local communities and families. Their empowerment is a central element in any strategy for making globalization work for people. Partnerships between governments and social actors should enable all citizens to participate actively in the gains of globalization.

Dialogue between all stakeholders, starting at the local level, are essential to raise issues of concern, and help broaden understanding of the impact of globalization on families and communities.

Partnerships between governments and private actors at a local level - business, trade unions, community organizations, cooperatives and others - are an effective means to develop the skills, infrastructure, technological and managerial capabilities, and frameworks that provide an enabling environment for private investment in the most dynamic productive activities, allowing thereby all families in the communities to benefit from integration into the global economy.

The family is an important unit in the analysis of globalization's consequences, from both a local and global perspective. It is particularly at the family level that the consequences of globalization can be traced. Analyses that use a gender and generational perspective highlighted how men, women, children, youth and the elderly are affected by global processes of change. Relationships, consumption, authority patterns and forms of interaction between the sexes and between generations may shift both in the family and in the community.

One of the consequences of globalization is temporary labour migration. Most migrant workers have no intention of settling permanently and return to their country within a few years. Generally, migrants send for their families only when they are employed, earning adequate wages, and have adequate housing. Some of reasons why migrants live apart from their families include: the receiving country discourages family immigration because it does not coincide with the economic necessities of migration policy and some sending countries discourage it to ensure that the migrant worker returns to his own country. The main danger arising from family separation is that it frequently leads to the break up of the family. Moreover this phenomenon is generating a quick growth of female-headed families and policies rarely reflect this change, thereby affecting negatively the economic and social situations of these families.

### *Recommendations:*

- Legal instruments and mechanisms are established or strengthened at the local level, to build up partnerships among all stakeholders, i.e. the international community, governments, NGOs, Academia, parliamentarians, business community and families;
- Enhance the capacity of civil society, business community and families to establish effective partnerships;
- Ensure governance takes place at the lowest level at which it is effective. This calls for the creation of strong, democratic and accountable local institutions, in which families have a stronger voice;
- Strengthen existing institutions and create new mechanisms to allow workers' and enterprises' voices to be heard and their interests taken into account. Make every effort to remove obstacles to the growth of representative organizations of workers and employers, and fruitful social dialogue between them;

- Governments and social actors protect and provide assistance to families when adjustments are required to enable them to participate effectively in the gains of globalization;
- Governments and private actors establish partnerships at a local level to develop the skills, infrastructure, technological and managerial capabilities, and frameworks that provide an enabling environment for private investment in the most dynamic productive activities;
- Empower families and communities to live according to their own aspirations. The rights of indigenous, tribal and minorities peoples to their territories and resources, their cultures and identity, their traditional knowledge and their right to self-determination are recognized and defended;
- Create social security schemes that take into consideration the families' needs generated by globalization and migration;
- For sending countries, review national labor laws to reflect the growth of female headed families and meet their needs;
- For receiving countries - promote measures to ensure that all migrant workers and their families are aware and benefit from the provisions of all national and international labor standards, social protection and social security schemes and explore all possibilities to facilitate family reunification;
- Improve social "safety nets" to guarantee minimum standards of protection for vulnerable groups such as the working poor, the long-term unemployed, and the single-headed families;
- Create conducive environment for the foundation of inclusive and multicultural communities to avoid marginalization of migrant workers and their families.

## **6. Family and Environmental Sustainability**

Communities and families have an important role to play in the management of natural resources at a local level, towards reaching the broader goal of sustainable development.

It is important that all families are aware about their interaction with the global ecosystem and the fragile balance between humans and their natural environment.

Decent jobs are created and sustained in productive and viable enterprises. The enterprises' long-term business viability increasingly depends on meeting the environment and social expectations that come with their important roles as corporate citizens of the local community.



*Recommendations:*

- Enhance partnerships between all stakeholders for the achievement of sustainable development at the local level;
- Promote dialogue between enterprises and the communities in which they operate with the view to enhance corporate environmental and social responsibility;
- Involve families and communities more closely in the sustainable management of the natural resources at the local level, in particular through community-based groups and initiatives;
- Ensure the full participation of women in sustainable development decision-making at the local level;
- Develop awareness-raising programmes involving families at the community-level on the importance of sustainable production and consumption patterns;
- Promote and support youth participation in programmes and activities relating to sustainable development through, for example, supporting local youth councils or their equivalent, and by encouraging their establishment where they do not exist.

## **7. Family and ICTs**

Access to information and sharing and creation of knowledge contributes significantly to strengthening economic, social and cultural development, thus helping all countries to reach the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals. The inclusion of families in this process can play a significant role to strength development.

Everyone can benefit from the opportunities that ICTs can offer. Governments, as well as private sector, civil society and the United Nations and other international organizations, should work together to: improve access to information and communication infrastructure and technologies as well as to information and knowledge; build capacity; increase confidence and security in the use of ICTs; create an enabling environment at all levels; develop and widen ICT applications; foster and respect cultural diversity; recognize the role of the media; address the ethical dimensions of the Information Society; and encourage international and regional cooperation.

The adoption of ICTs by enterprises plays a fundamental role in economic growth. The growth and productivity enhancing effects of well-implemented investments in ICTs can lead to better employment.

*Recommendations:*

- Ensure access to ICTs to all members of the families with the view to increase their economic opportunities, productivity, education, training and information, thereby improving the quality of life of individuals and families;
- Enable equal access for women to ICT-based economic activities, such as small businesses and home-based employment, to information systems and improved technologies and to new employment opportunities in this area, and consider developing tele-centres, information centres, community access points and business incubators as agreed on the Conclusions on the Status of Women on participation in and access to the media, and ICTs and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women, 2003/44;
- Promote the use of ICT as a tool to enhance distance and online earning and training;
- Make usage of ICT as a tool for families to preserve and develop their cultural heritage.

The Participants also decided to request to the World Family Organization to make the present Declaration known to all Governments and other Organizations affiliated, as well as to introduce it to the United Nations Economic and Social Council Commission for Social Development and to the United Nations ECOSOC High Level Segment as an instrument to be discussed and implemented on different decision-making levels.

Dead Sea, December 07, 2006