Report on United Nations International Year of the Family 2014 Preparations

Professor Margaret O’Brien
Iceland, September 2011
Twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2014

- Since 1959 UN has designated International years in order to draw attention to major issues & to encourage international action to address concerns which have global importance and ramifications. International Years:
  - International Year of Cooperatives 2012
  - International Year of Youth 2010-2011
  - International Year for the Eradication of Poverty 1996
  - International Year of Family 1994
  - International Year of Youth 1985
International Year of the Family 2014: three themes

• Confronting family poverty
• Promoting intergenerational solidarity
• Ensuring work & family balance

Source: Report to Secretary General, UN General Assembly Economic and Social Council November 2010
Activities

• United Nations Programme on the Family Focal Point: Renata Kaczmarska
• Reports (e.g., ILO/UN 2009 *Work & family: towards new forms of reconciliation with social co-responsibility; UN Men in families, 2010*)

expert meetings, resolutions, seminars, lobbying etc. International & regional level

• **International Day of Families 2012** "Ensuring work & family balance” May 15th
United Nations Experts Group Meeting, New York, 1 – 3 June 2011

Recommendations for relevant stakeholders to be circulated

http://social.un.org/index/Family/MeetingsEvents/EGMonAssessingFamilyPolicies.aspx
1. Men, families, gender equality and care work
2. Fatherhood and families
3. Fathers in challenging family contexts: a need for engagement
4. Migration, families and men in families
5. Men, families and HIV/AIDS
Leave network contribution

- Building in links to United Nations Programme on the Family Focal Point – linking national activities to international timetable 8-17 February 2012
  50th Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD) priority theme this year is: "Poverty Eradication".
- Work-family activity planning underway – Country examples of innovative programmes and policies
- New Reports, books and papers
Work-family briefing paper

• Work-family pressures in families:
  Working hours of parents – mothers & fathers, in dual earner, lone parents
  Anti-social working patterns (night work, shifts, weekend)
  Working away from home (transnational, intermittent absences)

Patterns across the world: Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, China (using available data– EU 27, OECD, ILO). Over-work, over-load, spillover; “work-rich/ time poor”; impact on children, quality of family life and parents’ health & wellbeing. Life course transition points.
Work-Family policies and programmes for families

• Show-casing selection of policies and programmes
  • E.g. Family Leave – maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave, leave to care for children who are ill. Time off to care for dependants. Statutory provision.
  • Flexible working provisions (flexi-time, part-time, annualised hours etc) Time credits.
  • Cash for care transfers/ informal care (grandparents)
  • Early childhood education and care
  • Breakfast and after school provision