



CF Item = Barcode Top - Note at Bottom =
CF_Item_One_BC5-Top-Sign

Page 1
Date 15-Sep-2003
Time 3:54:38 PM
Login uyoung



CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS/2003-00070

Full Item Register Number [auto] **CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS/2003-00070**

ExRef: Document Series/Year/Number **IYF Update 04**

Record Item Title

Padmini Memo, Coordinator, Inter-sectoral section, ANNEX 2 'Discussion Paper on policy implications and support for families resulting from World Summit for Children' -- Inter-Agency Meeting on IYF Vienna, March 1993

Date Created / on Item
15-Sep-2003

Date Registered
15-Sep-2003

Date Closed/Superceeded

Primary Contact **Upasana Young (RAM & Hist Proj. Assist. Consultant**
Owner Location **Adviser, Infant Feeding, Nutr =50049119**
Home Location **LIR, Floor 01, Room 01, Aisle 01, Shelf 447, Level 03, Position 2C**
Current Location **Record & Archive Manage Related Functions=80669443**

Fd1: Type: IN, OUT, INTERNAL?
Fd2: Lang ?Sender Ref or Cross Ref
F3: Format

Container Record
Container Record (Title)

CF/RA/BX/PD/NU/IF/1996/T049
General Corr., GCO various,JPG Trust, Global Alliance for Women Heal

N1: Numb of pages
0

N2: Doc Year
0

N3: Doc Number
0

Full GCG Code Plan Number
Record GCG File Plan

Da1:Date Published

Da2:Date Received

Date 3

Priority

Record Type **A02a Item Hist Corr - CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS**

DOS File Name

Electronic Details

No Document

Alt Bar code = RAMP-TRIM Record Number

CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS/2003-00070

Notes

Print Name of Person Submit Images

Signature of Person Submit

Number of images without cover

Upasana Young

Upasana Young

14

Black

*Third Ad Hoc Interagency Meeting on IYF
Vienna, 10-12 March 1993*

IYF/IAM.3/10

Agenda Item 5

Discussion paper on policy implications and support for families resulting from the World Summit for Children, its World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the Plan of Action for its implementation as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, prepared by UNICEF

Blank

**STRENGTHENING FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS
AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF GLOBAL CHILD GOALS**

Policy implications and support for families resulting from the World Summit for Children, its World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the Plan of Action for its implementation as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The family as the basic social institutional unit, has always been the central focus of UNICEF's policies and programmes. The strategic importance of families in fulfilling UNICEF's mandate for the survival, development and protection of all children is well recognized and need not be overstated. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) currently ratified by more than 125 countries, aims to set universal standards for the defence of children against neglect, exploitation and abuse. Defining the role of the family in the realization of the rights of children, the Convention specifies that "the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community". Further, it recognizes that "the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding".^{1/} At the first World Summit for Children in September 1990, the assembled world leaders made a commitment to "work for the role of the family in providing for children". By its mandate to assist children and women in developing countries, and to act as the global advocate for children, UNICEF is directly involved in matters of relevance to the family. It is essentially concerned with the vitality and viability of families which is an integral aspect of the overall social development needed for the support and protection of women and children in any community.

2. The Plan of Action for implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s elaborates that:

"The family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children from infancy to adolescence. Introduction of children to the culture, values and norms of their society begins in the family. For the full and harmonious development of their personality, children should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. Accordingly, all institutions of society should respect and support the efforts of parents and other care givers to nurture and care for children in a family environment.

^{1/} Convention on the Rights of the Child, Preamble reproduced in the State of the World's Children. UNICEF, 1991.

Every effort should be made to prevent the separation of children from their families. Whenever children are separated from their family owing to force majeure or in their own best interest, arrangements should be made for appropriate alternative family care or institutional placement, due regard being paid to the desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing in his or her own cultural milieu. Extended families, relatives and community institutions should be given support to help to meet the special needs of orphaned, displaced and abandoned children. Efforts must be made to ensure that no child is treated as an outcast from society"^{2/}

3. Within this overall framework, UNICEF's policies and programmes are implicitly, and often explicitly, designed to work with and through families to support and strengthen them in protecting the child and providing a normal healthy environment. Its activities are prioritized, as part of the country programme approach, for specific goals and strategies for the children, their families and development. This paper presumes the critical value of the family to child's survival, development and protection. It draws upon UNICEF's experience to discuss the major challenges and policy implications in strengthening and enhancing the capacity of families to perform their major role in providing the primary environment for the child. While it recounts the changing family structure and its implications on children, it does not attempt to imply what an ideal family should be but instead subscribes to the IYF definition of the family as "the smallest democracy at the heart of society".

II. CHANGING FAMILY STRUCTURES

4. While the family's original role and functions have changed over time, it continues to provide a natural environment for emotional, financial and material support essential to the growth and development of its members, particularly infants, children, elderly, disabled and the infirm. It remains a means of preserving and transmitting cultural values. It educates, trains, motivates and supports its individual members, thereby, investing in their future growth. Thus, it is a vital resource for the future generations of humankind.

5. The main consideration regarding the family is its changing capacity and competency, its strengths and weaknesses, its nurturing role and its role as an agent of change. Its capacity to survive as an institution and as the preserve of human values and expectations of the society has been continuously threatened in the past and the present. Changing economies and processes of modernization has resulted in poverty, destitution, occupational transformations, changing cultural identities, migration, etc., In most societies of the developing and developed countries these factors have tested the fundamental characteristics of the family and its organization.

^{2/} Plan of Action for implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s, paras 18 and 19, reproduced in State of the World's Children, UNICEF, 1991.

6. In the past, family and community interactions were based on mutual dependence shielded by the relative geographic isolation in which families or communities lived. Adult members of the household jointly assumed responsibilities for the productive as well as nurturing functions with one or more playing the key roles in management of the collective enterprise and family matters. But all this changed with the quick transfer of labour from the informal to the formal sector. The traditional family based subsistence labour has been replaced by work for wages, occupational specializations and the evolution of a work place, removed from the home. Individuals now have increased contact with new ideas and alien behavioral norms through institutions, such as formal education. Greater numbers of people, in rural and urban areas, are becoming aware of opportunities for different life-styles and are also more likely to make individual decisions without the approval of extended family members. The phenomenon of reduced family size arising in some societies from migration, displacement and urbanization influenced family structures in terms of the roles, responsibilities and autonomy of both adults and children. For example, family-based surrogate mothers were replaced by outside child-care takers or children were cared for in community-based day-care centres/creches both in urban and rural areas.

7. The shifts in the role of the family appear to be two-fold. On the one hand, individuals have had opportunities for increased control over their lives and careers but with diminished family obligations often resulting in diminished accountability of male adults. On the other hand, the ability of many families to meet their basic needs has been weakened by circumstances beyond their control resulting in a reduced ability and in some instances, lack of willingness to meet the basic needs of some of their members.

8. A family is expected to have the following broadly defined qualities: mutual respect; communication and participation between genders and among generations; a stable primary care-giver emotionally bonded with the child; and other family members in turn emotionally bonded with the primary care-giver. Social scientists have demonstrated the positive advantages of early interactive behaviour between the child and his/her parents/caregivers in stimulating the intellectual and social-psychological development processes in the child.

9. Family structures, traditions and values are rapidly changing in both industrialized and developing countries, leading to modifications in the family as an institution. The consequences are the breakdown of extended family systems; breakdown of gender roles, increase in the proportion of single-parent, female-headed families; intensified gender-based discriminatory practices and increase in the number of families with all adults working outside the home leaving young children without care and supervision. Further, single parent families living in poverty are most likely to be forced to leave children unattended or compelled to take their older children out of school who prematurely enter the work force. Parents have neither the inclination nor the time to invest in interpersonal relationships resulting in neglect of the child's emotional needs. In extreme circumstances, they are compelled to abandon their offspring thereby relinquishing their parental functions.

10. Migration due to urbanization, natural or manmade calamities results in the massive relocation of people without adequate living conditions affecting the loosening of family relationships in several countries, depleting the capacities of families to provide adequately

for their dependent members. The public concerns about the effects of all this on children and society in general has demanded the introduction of interventions, external to the family, for its protection and fulfillment of its obligations, especially those of child care.

11. On another plane, at the macro-level, structural reforms have also had a major impact on social structures, in general, and on the family, in particular. "Adjustment with a Human Face" for the protective measures to meet the needs of the poor is now universally accepted. Insights into such exercises have revealed that often the poorest segments of the population carry the heaviest burden of any economic adjustment and that they significantly alter the capacities of families to fend for their upkeep and survival. Further it is most likely that public investment to combat rising malnutrition, declining health services, increasing unemployment, falling school enrolment rates have been inadequate or inefficient. Conversely, direct policies which seek to protect the poorest families and their children by providing measures for increased productivity, well targeted food subsidies, and welfare services of housing, primary health care, education starting with primary schooling represent both a short term human imperative and a long term social and economic investment.

III. THE CHILD IN THE FAMILY

12. Today's children are tomorrow's world - in the needs of children are combined all the core issues of development. The key to the fulfillment of these needs is through the empowerment of families and parents. From the moment of conception, the environment of the child is first the mother, gradually unfolding to include the rest of the family and the society. The quality of this environment is vital to the child's normal, healthy development. The first means of creating a protective environment for the survival and years of childhood is through the enhancement of the family's (parent or care-taker) capacity to cope with threats to life and growth of the child. So, the families should be empowered with the kind of knowledge and support necessary to put into practice this ability, so as to achieve the normal healthy growth of their children. Besides, the "societyenvironment" should be conducive and willing to accept the responsibility for preservation of the family.

13. In many countries, families and societies perpetuate gender inequalities in child rearing. The profile of the girl child shows numerous deprivations. They are more frequently sick, less well-fed, more illiterate than boys and lack the opportunities to better themselves. Like their mothers, they work long hours to meet family needs - caring for their younger siblings, fetching fuel and water, cooking meals, shopping, washing clothes and cleaning homes as well as looking after the old and ill. Among single parent families, particularly female headed families, girls share the responsibilities for the sustenance of their families at an early age, often at the expense of their own development. While the burden of poverty has serious implications on the life of the girl child, other factors such as seclusion, traditional practices, customs, social sanctions for early marriage (in some cases at less than ten years of age), female circumcision further inhibit development opportunities for girls. These inequalities are evidenced in the low life expectancy, literacy, school enrollment and participation in the labour force and in social and political activities. The practical costs of this early discrimination in terms of the reduced returns on almost every other aspect of the development process has implications for social policy.

14. Children of the working poor, whether in a rural or urban society, have hardly known a childhood. Parental expectations of their children's contribution exceed helping with household chores and include work outside the home in unskilled, low-paid occupations. The implications of the "missed opportunities" for education, recreation and normal family life on the development of the children have been well documented with repercussions on the interactions with family and society. More significantly, the notion that childhood is not a time of preparation for adulthood appears to have bypassed these families, binding them further into the cycle of poverty, illiteracy and inadequate environments for child care of successive generations. The roles, commitments and expectations of the individual members in such families overlap, obscuring responsibilities and obligations inevitably at the cost of family life and security. At the same time, the economic implications of child labour are eventually experienced by the severely limited employment opportunities for adult family members.

15. Children separated from or abandoned by their families due to armed conflict, poverty, breakdown of family ties, (best described as "social orphans", or "street children") learn to fend for themselves, sometimes at very young ages of six and seven. The vulnerability of these children to exploitation, drugs, crime, prostitution, social transgressions circumscribes their adulthood leaving them few choices and options for a future and exemplifies the impact of discordant societal situations and family structures at its severest. In the case of the girl child, these conditions are accentuated through her vulnerability to sexual exploitation.

IV. CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AND FOLLOW-UP OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON CHILDREN

16. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereinafter the Convention) specifies the universally accepted minimum standards for the well-being of children. It contains prerogatives ranging from the child's most basic right to survival to those of development of his or her full potential, to protection from exploitation, neglect and abuse, and freedom to participate in cultural, moral and spiritual pursuits, individually, in his or her family and in organized communities. The fulfillment of these rights progress beyond society's obligation to the younger generation advancing as the investment for future successions of humankind. A summary of the Convention is appended as Annex 1 to this paper.

17. With emphasis on serving the best interests of the child, several articles of the Convention relate to the rights of the child to a healthy family life (Articles 5 and 6). Article 2 ensures the child's right against discrimination on the basis of his/her or that of his/her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, religion, national, ethnic or social origin, etc. Respect for the child's identity includes his/her right to preserve name and family relations (Article 8), to remain or be reunified with the family, in the case of separation as in Articles 9 and 10. Further, in the case of the child temporarily deprived of his or her family environment Articles 20 and 21 stipulate that the child is entitled special assistance and protection, recognizing the system of adoption as an alternative to family life as permitted by the competent authorities and prevailing culture. In the case of a child seeking refugee status or deemed to be in such status, the Convention urges for the co-operation of all

concerned agencies in efforts to trace the parents or other members of the family to expedite the child's reunification with his or her family (Articles 22 and 25). The child has the right to maintain contacts with his/her family in case he /she is deprived of his/her liberty (Article 37).

18. Concurrently, the Convention recognizes the rights and responsibilities of parents for the upbringing and development of the child (Article 18), and that the State is enjoined to provide appropriate assistance in the performance of this responsibility. It is important to note that the Convention states that in ensuring the best interests of the child, the rights and duties of his/her parents will be taken into consideration. Other Articles refer to the role and rights of parents in dealing with disabled children, health and health services, education, etc.

19. The Convention provides a valuable advocacy tool as it "embodies the most comprehensive list of goals for the well being of children, its full implementation is the best guarantee of achieving the goals for children and development in the 1990s".^{3/} The World Summit on Children (September 30, 1990) brought together the largest gathering of Presidents and Prime Ministers in history. The outcome was the translation of many of the rights of the Convention into time-bound measurable goals for the basic survival, development and protection of all the world's children. The goals of the Plan of Action for implementing the World Summit's "Declaration on the Survival, Development and Protection of Children in the 1990s"^{4/} are appended in Annex 2.

20. In the achievement of the global child goals the role of the family and its members is evident. These goals included the control of major childhood diseases: a halving of child malnutrition; a one-third reduction in under-five death rate; a halving of maternal mortality rates; safe water and sanitation for all communities; universally available family planning services; and basic education for all children. For instance, the actions of the family for the immunization of the child and that of the mother are mandatory. Utilization of health services in the community and being aware of the basic immunization schedule requires that the family extends its nurturing role to protect the child from vaccine-preventable diseases. Similarly, families - both parents and other members have a major responsibility in ensuring that the child gets adequate food to eat and the right kind of foods. On the other hand, to ensure the well-being of the child the family and the community have to ensure that the child is provided with safe drinking water and clean healthy environment, early childhood stimulation, recreation and basic education.

^{3/} Development Goals and Strategies for Children in the 1990s. Policy Review Paper, UNICEF, 1990.

^{4/} *ibid.*

21. The Plan of Action inspired many nations to formulate and adopt National Programmes of Action (hereinafter the NPAs) with specific goals, targets and strategies for their achievement, monitoring of progress, etc. The NPAs manifest the highest level political commitment to provide for children and render it possible within a decade to bring an end to child malnutrition, preventable disease and widespread illiteracy. They express a series of goals to be achieved by the end of the decade and reflect the potential of the new knowledge and technologies now available. In most cases, they attempt to project the resource requirements for the achievement of the goals and their sustainability and epitomize the priority areas for UNICEF co-operation. By mid-February 1993, more than 75 nations have formulated and/or implementing National Programmes of Action as Follow-up to the World Summit.

V. NATIONAL PROGRAMMES OF ACTION AND POLICY SUPPORT TO FAMILIES IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF CHILD GOALS

22. The World Summit's recognition of the "need to work closely with families for the protection and welfare of children", endorses that programmes ultimately reach and support the family unit in discharging its duties of child care. Several NPAs reiterate this emphasis and some examples are described in this section by way of illustration.

23. Following an analysis of the conditions, constraints and opportunities affecting child development, the NPA of Nepal outlines the inclusion of family and community based approaches in its strategic considerations for achieving the national goals alongside with other approaches for multi-sectoral linkages, competence in implementation and management, social stability and participation of non governmental organizations. Strategies of the Philippine Programme of Action for Children (PAC) include the total family approach in addition to enhancing community participation, mobilization of children, policy adjustment to protect the poor, integration of services, more focused targeting of disadvantaged and "under-served" families, and information on implementation and monitoring mechanisms.

24. In the Sub-Saharan Africa, the NPA of Central African Republic (CAR), recognizes that in spite of significant progress made in the social sectors, much remains to be done in the coming years. Its main strategies include the strengthening of the family and community as the foundation to the mobilization and participation of social organizations and the decentralized implementation of the NPA. Similarly, the goals and strategies of the NPA of Ecuador focus on strengthening the family and community in addition to mobilizing the participation of social organizations. In Guatemala, the NPA for Human Development, Youth and Children gives special attention to the most vulnerable segments of the population such as widows, single mothers, displaced and refugee groups. The NPA, further, gives expression to activities aimed at strengthening the "function of the family", children in especially difficult circumstances, basic education and literacy, children affected by armed conflict, women and environment. The document emphasizes war-affected populations, the role of the family and the goal to arrest further increases in the number of people living in extreme poverty, especially where peace efforts have not been particularly successful.

25. In outlining the goals and strategies, the NPAs of some industrialized countries are more explicit in addressing the changing role of the family and its implications to child development. Canada's NPA focusses on updating child and family support policies and improving laws on divorce, in addition to preventing low birth weight; discouraging tobacco use among young people, improving the ability to prevent child abuse, etc. The NPAs of Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden specify concrete measures for strengthening the family's capacities to perform the main responsibility for children and the need to harmonize parenthood and work. Men and women have the same social, economic and legal rights and obligations and both parents are of equal importance to the child. The NPAs affirm that all children have a right to live in a family or in a familylike situation.

VI. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

26. The focus on the child in the family is the starting point of a development strategy that emphasizes human development as encompassing the well-being of children. Perceptive investments in children's health, nutrition and education combined with strategies for the sustained participation of families and communities will be the basis for the implementation of the NPAs. The empowerment of families and communities with the necessary information on needs, services and facilities proved to be crucial to the success of the achievement of 80% immunization coverage in developing countries against vaccine-preventable diseases (1990). On a similar scale, information has to be made available at the doorstep of every family and child on rights, entitlements, services, provisions and appropriate mechanisms be evolved for the constant monitoring of their realization. The NPAs emphasize the collaboration of government and nongovernment, voluntary and private agencies, inclusive of media agencies and professional bodies, in the generation of commitment and interest across all levels of society in support of the Child Goals.

27. UNICEF's Executive Director, Mr. James P. Grant outlining six major policy challenges which UNICEF foresees in the field of Early Child Development, asserted the first one as being :

".... to ensure that a major effort is made to work directly with parents and communities to empower them with knowledge that will increase survival and promote development. Given economic restraints, limited resources must be used to reach the largest number with the most effective approaches. Working with parents and other care-givers must take preference over increased expansion of expensive centre-based programmes which reach relatively few of those in need. Where centre-based programmes are operating, parents and other care-givers must be involved".^{5/}

^{5/} Landers, Cassie, "Early Child Development, Innocenti Global Seminar Report, Florence, Italy: UNICEF International Child Development Centre, 1990.

This sets the tone for operational activities, designed around the axiom that the family is the first line of defense for the child and a major factor in the survival, health, education, social development and protection of children. Some programmes are directly targeted to support and strengthen families, for example family assistance is a preventive measure to destitution among children. Other programmes such as health care, primary education, nutrition, baby-friendly hospital initiative, and community based development programmes, evidently involve and strengthen families. IYF, therefore can serve to raise awareness about the role of the family, its emerging trends etc., making its preservation "everyone's concern" and investment for future generations.

28. UNICEF recognizes that the problems of unmet needs of children stem from the poverty of families, the gender inequalities, the environmental deprivations, in which they live and their lack of access to basic knowledge, skills and resources necessary for protection, survival and development. The strategies for the Child Goals will need to be adapted around the specific realities of individual families and their involvement. For instance, to reach the goal of under five child mortality (U5MR), major fatal diseases have been identified; and to reach basic education for all, formal primary education is emphasized in most countries; in some others, out-of-school, non-formal education or a special emphasis on early child stimulation at the pre-primary level as the focus which enhances the quality and efficiency of primary education. In addition, the sectoral goals, such as maternal health, safe water supply, environmental sanitation envisage the enhanced access of the family to these basic services, resulting in improved utilization and protection. Policy support to safeguard families in the provision of early childhood development and protection of children from exploitation and destitution have been afore-mentioned. However, while the child is the focus, for effective and efficient implementation, emphasis is placed on the participation of families in identifying their needs and management of services. The IYF presents further opportunities for the development of sensitive policies and workable strategies addressing the pressures and demands of the changing family situations, for example teenage pregnancies.

29. The fragile fabric of the family as an institution in contemporary times has been discussed at length above. The alarming spread of AIDS and the implications of its debilitating effects on individuals, families and societies are becoming increasingly evident both in the industrialized and developing countries. The children of families afflicted by AIDS add to the growing numbers of vulnerable families and social orphans, bereft suddenly of family care and needing special attention and protection. The fulfillment of the child's rights to family/ parental care and guidance on this scale of magnitude poses an immense challenge to governments and development agencies. Innovative policies for the provision of alternative social arrangements and preventive services for addressing the problem at local and national levels has become imperative and should become a prominent concern in the agenda of the International Year of the Family (IYF).

30. The enactment and implementation of "family and child friendly" legislation and family law equitable to all family members can be envisioned in the adoption of the Convention. The recognition of the equal responsibilities of both parents in the fulfillment of family obligations is fundamental. The translation of this into family laws will require unbiased approaches and the mobilization of related Conventions of Human Rights and legislative instruments at national level on constitutional and fundamental rights. The UN

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), states specific measures to abolish sex discrimination in political and other formal sectors, in education, employment, social security, agriculture, legislation and all pertinent areas and stresses the obligation of member nations to execute the said regulations through the mobilization of legislation, policy, any other such appropriate measures. Inter-alia, family laws will need to be amended and/or promulgated in favour of dual parental lineage for accessing civic amenities, claiming inheritance and property rights, as well as legitimizing the sharing of financial responsibilities for child care by both partners in the context of rising single-parent families. The protection of the child from abandonment and/or exploitation by his/her family and society will be critical and crucial to the achievement of the goals set forth in the NPAs of several countries. Advocacy and policy support will require the massive mobilization of agencies in the private and public sectors at all levels, beginning with the family.

31. The NPAs of several countries, such as Bangladesh, India, Pakistan specify gender-sensitive strategies for reduction of disparities between boys and girls in education, nutrition and mortality. The girl child is the key to achieving a more equitable status and role of women and the family. The solutions for correcting the social discrimination and redistribution of gender roles exist within the family and the community and have to be addressed by them. Another related area of potential concern is the possible intra-familial role conflicts between the male and female members arising out the change in family structures. The competing demands on women of child rearing, home management, economic production, and social and community services will need to be resolved through gender-sensitive policies for community based supportive services. The mobilization and empowerment of communities around real day-to-day survival issues can be an entry point for enabling family structures and offer opportunities for "building the smallest democracy at the heart of the society."

32. Regarding families in emergency situations and children in especially difficult circumstances (CEDC), both in the visible situations of armed conflict and the silent emergency of disintegration of family ties, the Convention recognizes that family structures are destroyed and the individual's coping mechanisms are dramatically diminished. Generally CEDC indicators are not routinely tracked in census or even household surveys; but measured only through special surveys. The establishment of a monitoring system to track families at risk at the country level in "tackling root causes" will call for combined efforts of multiple agencies at different levels of society. Such monitoring would enable the establishment of safety nets for safeguarding the family from breakdown and disruption. For instance, in Namibia, UNICEF supports the Family Life Empowerment Programme with the primary objective of "strengthen the capacity of families, particularly single parent households, to address the problems associated with socio-cultural degradation and economic marginalization". Public education for both sexes on parenting skills and responsibilities is expected to prevent child neglect and improve child care. In the Caribbean, similar programmes address the issues of teenage families, gender disparities and the role of men in parenting. During IYF, an assessment of such innovative programmes for their impact on prevention and protection of families against disintegration could be the starting point for the formulation of appropriate policies and more broad-based strategies.

33. Concurrently, to enable a wider understanding of family structures, their formation and dissolution, and changing functions, attention needs to be given to the clarification of concepts and terminology as they relate to the individual family members, family types and households. Indicators should be identified to relate the impact of change and development to contemporary family structures. Policy development will dictate the collection of statistical data, the establishment of data banks, data networks, the exchange of data and the identification of statistical trends related to families. IYF can provide a forum for researchers and policy makers alike for analysis of the strengths and vulnerabilities of families for evolving effective strategies for building upon intra-familial support, resource transfers as well as relationships of families to other social structures.

34. Family policies deriving from the Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and that on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women and other guiding principles do not seek to promote, implicitly or explicitly, any single, ideal image of the family. Instead they advocate for stable, enduring relationships with in-built strengths to tolerate and withstand pressures both from within and outside. The vulnerability of families living in poverty and in transition, such as migration and displacement, to provide for the well-being of their children needs no emphasis. Their vulnerability in terms of separation, isolation, and breakdown of family ties requires serious consideration in policy and programmatic terms during IYF and beyond. Strategically, public interventions will increasingly enable such communities and families to meet their needs and to perform the functions of nurturing and caring of children and adults alike. Equally important is the protection of the family for the transmission of values, culture and inter-generational knowledge.

35. In conclusion, policies to support and strengthen families will be pivotal to the attainment of the rights for a healthy and happy childhood by all children and the achievement of global child goals. Just as the world ethic demands a quick and adequate response from people and governments in emergencies, such as earthquakes, famines, floods and droughts, similarly this ethic should be extended to include enhancing the capacities of the family as an institution and safety net in the realization of "Development with a Human Face".

Blank