



social development

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CONCEPT PAPER ON THE CELEBRATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR FAMILIES (IDF) DURING 15-16 MAY 2018

International theme for 2018: “Families and inclusive societies”

1. INTRODUCTION

This concept paper is aimed at putting forward the process of commemorating the International Day for Families (IDF), to acknowledge and appreciate the role of families in society. The family is the basic and natural unit of society, which plays a critical role of nurturing and caring for individual family members, from children, to youth, men, women, people living with disabilities and the older generation. Celebrating the IDF also brings into focus the importance of family solidarity wherein members of the family work together to sustain the unit through challenges, trials and tribulations.

This concept paper outlines the background of the IDF, explores this year's theme for the commemoration, the objective of the celebration, the nature and content of the planned celebration and the proposed programme.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The UN World Summit on Social Development held in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1995, emphasized the importance of dealing with the challenges (social ills) facing families in the whole world and outlined these to include crime, HIV and AIDS, moral degeneration, violence against vulnerable family members, poverty and youth unemployment, to mention a few.

The International Day for Families was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), in its resolution 47/237 of 20 September 1993, to be on 15 May annually. This was a response to changing social and economic structures, which have affected and still affect the structure and stability of family units in many regions of the globe. Each year the UN provides the theme for the commemoration of IDF, considering the challenges facing families globally during the particular year.

The IDF stresses the importance of having healthy and happy relationships with one's relatives. Families are the basic cores of society-children are born into them and some of the most important developing years of their lives are spent growing up with families. The annual observance of this day reflects the importance which the international community attaches to families as basic units of society as well as its concern regarding their situation around the world. The IDF provides an opportunity to promote awareness of issues relating to families as well as to promote appropriate action. This day can become a powerful mobilizing factor on behalf of families in all countries, which avail themselves of this opportunity and demonstrate support of family issues appropriate to each society.

Each year the UN puts forward a theme for the International Day for Families. This year (2018), the theme is: **“Families and inclusive societies”**.

3. WHAT DO COUNTRIES DO?

A wide range of activities and events are organized at local, national and international levels. These include workshops, seminars and policy meetings for public officials; exhibitions and organized discussions to raise awareness of the annual theme; educational sessions for children and young people; and the launch campaigns for public policies to strengthen and support family units. In some countries, tool kits are created to help people organize celebrations aimed at a particular section of the population, such as school children or young adults.

4. INFORMATION ON THE THEME

This year's observance of the IDF will explore the role of families and family policies in advancing Sustainable Development Goal 16 in terms of Promoting Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development. Social Inclusion is a process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of their background, so that they can achieve their full potential in life. It is a process aimed at creating conditions which enable full and active participation of every member of society in all aspects of life, including civic, social, economic and political activities, as well as participation in decision making processes.

Goal 16 for 2030 therefore aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies. As such, it advocates reducing all forms of violence, ending torture and combating all forms of organized crime. Goal 16 envisages significantly reducing corruption and bribery as well as illicit financial and arms flows. To ensure that societies are peaceful and inclusive, Goal 16 also aims to promote inclusive institutions and the rule of law, and guarantee equal access to justice. It aims to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. It also aims to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative

decision-making at all levels. The other aim of goal 16 is to promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

Goal 16 aims to ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements. It is also important to strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime. Goal 16 also aims to promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

Individuals, especially the most vulnerable, need advocates and self-efficacy in order to realize their rights and access justice. The creative use of technologies can also help by bringing decision makers closer to impacted communities, increasing access to information, and making it easier for people to coordinate collective action. Goal 16 is the key to ensuring that progress and prosperity are widely shared, and that those most in need can claim and exercise their rights as global citizens.

Social inclusion is a process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of their background, so that they can achieve their full potential in life. It is a process aimed at creating conditions which enable full and active participation of every member of society in all aspects of life, including civic, social, economic and political activities, as well as participation in decision making processes. Social inclusion is understood as the process by which societies combat poverty and social exclusion. An inclusive society is a society for all. Social integration is an important determinant of, and is significantly affected by poverty and unemployment and combating poverty and unemployment is important.

No human being should be condemned to endure a miserable life as a result of his or her class, religious affiliation, ethnic background or gender. An inclusive society is a society that over-rides differences of race, gender, class, generation and geography, and ensures inclusion, equality of opportunity as well as capability of all members of the society to determine an agreed set of social institutions that govern social interaction. The World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen 1995) defines an inclusive society as a society for all in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play. Such an inclusive society must be based on respect for all human rights and freedoms, cultural and religious diversity, social justice and the special needs of the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

An inclusive society is promoted by social policies that seek to reduce inequality and create flexible and tolerant societies that embrace all people. To achieve social integration and social inclusion, voices of the people and their needs and concerns, need to be heard. Not only some but all members of society with different backgrounds must have a say in their shared society. The existence of a strong civil society is fundamental for active participation and making public policies and institutions accountable. Members of society must have confidence to engage and interact with each other, and build mutual trust while acknowledging their differences.

There is a need for a strong monitoring and evaluation tools to demonstrate whether inclusiveness was actually achieved, as well as highlight areas of improvement. Another dimension of inclusive societies is tolerance for and appreciation of cultural diversity. This includes societies that celebrate multiple and diverse expressions of identities. By celebrating diversity, there is a recognition and affirmation of the differences between and among members of society, which enables societies to move away from labelling, categorizing, and classifying people, towards more inclusive policies. Education plays a critical role

in this area, as it will provide opportunities to learn the history and culture of one's own and other societies, cultures and religions.

Multi-stakeholder processes, which foster dialogue across stakeholders to build common understanding on certain issues, and set common goals, allow people to engage with an idea in a safe and supportive environment. In terms of inclusion, often it is the excluded themselves, the greatest stakeholders in their own lives, who are left out of policy design and its resulting implementation. It is the place of their local governments to find and make heard their voices and create leaders and representatives from community groups and furthermore to facilitate relevant interaction with other stakeholders, government, the private sector, various social groups, and other members of society.

Networking between all the sectors with a view to improving coordination is important. A key factor of socially inclusive and sustainable development is that communities take ownership of program components. Communities are represented by Civil Society but also include private sector interests. The challenge that local government has is ensuring that they have an exhaustive list of all Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), which are representative of all communities, and that in working with communities, the CSOs identified are indeed their legitimate representatives.

The focus of this theme is also on the implementation of the objectives of the 2014 International Year of the Family Resolutions and its follow-up processes and the contribution of family policies to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the areas of the reduction of poverty and social exclusion, work-family balance and gender equality and the promotion of social integration and intergenerational solidarity.

5. PARTNERSHIP IN CELEBRATING THE IDF

Although the IDF will be held in Gauteng, it will be celebrated in partnership with all the nine provinces. It is imperative for the National Department of Social Development and the Provincial Departments of Social Development to celebrate the IDF in order to understand the challenges that families are faced with and to render integrated services to these families.

Other National and Provincial Directorates within DSD that are contributing to the facilitation of the commemoration, among others are:

- Sustainable Livelihoods, to emphasize the concept of poverty eradication through sustainable livelihood;
- Youth Development, to bring focus to challenges faced by the youth within families, the critical role they play within the family and the need to develop them for a better future;
- Services to Older persons, to promote inter-familial solidarity to embrace all family members, including older persons, as critical role players within families.
- HIV & AIDS, to re-enforce the message that HIV lives among us and a collective effort is needed to deal with its spread and consequences including stigma and discrimination.
- Child Protection, to strengthen the capacity of families and communities to care for and protect children.
- Services to people with disabilities, to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.
- VEP, to bring focus to the challenges faced by women when they experience gender based violence.
- Gender, to deal with gender issues towards women empowerment and gender equality.

- Substance Abuse, to bring to focus the devastating effects of substance abuse on families.
- Social Crime Prevention, to bring to focus the devastating effects of crime on families.

Other external partners include, among others:

- SASSA
- NDA
- NGOs
- FBOs
- Local Municipality
- SAPS
- Safety and Security

6. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVENT

- Celebration and recognition of the family as the basic unit in society.
- To maximize the participation and commitment of all sectors in strengthening family life.
- To ensure that families have access to services.
- To improve collaboration with other Government Departments and Civil Society Organizations that render services to families.
- To celebrate the importance of families in communities.

7. EVENT TO CELEBRATE THE IDF

The IDF will be celebrated in partnership with all the nine Provinces. The event will be held from 15-16 May 2018, in Ekurhuleni. The event will be celebrated in a form of a 2 day Summit, whereby different speakers will conduct presentations on the topics that are related to the theme.

Activities:

- A National Summit will be held whereby different speakers will conduct presentations on the topics that are related to the theme.
- Community dialogues will be conducted in all the nine provinces as part of build up towards the event. A report back from the community dialogues will be presented during the event.
- A panel of experts will be deliberating on topics based on the theme and other concerning issues in the communities.

Topics to be discussed:

1. How far is South Africa in terms of the implementation of the 2014 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family Summit Resolutions.
2. Inclusion of teenage mothers and fathers as parents in society.
3. The role of men as primary care givers in improving families and communities and the importance of stakeholders giving support to the men in terms of basic parenting skills.
4. How family relationships begin, from the point of 2 people meeting to form a relationship, their cultural background, family histories, how they are raised, educational background, their beliefs and what the families they come from expect of them. These issues tend to filter through into the future and causing different rifts in families.
5. Creating a culture of peace making through mediation, collaboration and empowerment (8 step empowerment programme).
6. Harm Reduction and Recovery Strategies for families of addicted individuals and the effect this can have in dealing with social ills such as incest and domestic violence within the family.
7. Strategies for inclusion when coming to issues of Xenophobia and LGBTQI.
8. Inclusion of people with Disabilities and Older Persons in families.

8. TARGET GROUPS FOR THE EVENT

- Minister of Social Development and MECs of Social Development.
- HODs
- Mayors and Local Authorities.
- Government officials and Civil Society Structures.
- Media.

9. NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

200 participants

10. MEDIA

- Media Coverage

11. BUDGET

National Office and the nine provinces will partner to allocate funds for celebrating the IDF.