Interactive dialogue

Family-friendly policies to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

Thursday, 19 March 2019, 10.00 – 11.30 am, United Nations Headquarters

Concept note

Overview

In a rapidly changing world, families, and the role of women and girls within them, are also changing. Demographic, economic and social changes are contributing to declining fertility, ageing populations, increased migration flows and greater diversity of living arrangements in diverse regions of the world.

How Governments respond to these changes has an enormous bearing on women’s roles and rights within families. State action to reform discriminatory family laws and to enact laws to respond to violence against women, as well as policies on gender-responsive social protection, public services, parental leave as well as care services are all needed to ensure that women and girls can enjoy their human rights in their family lives.

The objective of the interactive dialogue on Family-friendly policies to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is to highlight how such policies can be a springboard for women and girls to enjoy their human rights while accelerating progress in the implementation of the Platform for Action, and for sustainable development more broadly.

Format and participation

The interactive dialogue will be chaired by Ms. Zahraa Nassrullah (Iraq), Vice-Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women. A moderator will support the Chair.

Drawing on experience from around the world, the interactive dialogue will bring together stakeholders including government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system. The interactive dialogue will start with presentations by a small group of panelists. The floor will then be open for comments and questions from Member States and other stakeholders in an interactive dialogue. Panelists will respond to any questions posed and make short concluding comments, time permitting. The moderator will wrap up and the Chair will close the meeting.
**Leading questions**

Participating stakeholders in the interactive dialogue are invited to address the following questions:

1. What are some of the key areas of recent legal and policy reforms to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women in families, and what was their impact? What lessons can be learned from such efforts and how can those be replicated?

2. How can social policies and public services, including to address and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work and to promote work-family balance, contribute to the accelerated realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls?

3. What are good practices in establishing synergies between family-oriented policies to support women’s rights, children’s rights and sustainable development more broadly?

4. How can partnerships and collaboration among different stakeholders enhance implementation of gender-responsive family-oriented policies, for the benefit of all?

**Outcome**

The outcome of the interactive dialogue will be in the form of a Chair’s summary, prepared in consultation with the regional groups through the members of the Bureau.