



## Economic and Social Council

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### Commission for Social Development

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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and  
the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:  
priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to  
achieve sustainable development for all**

### **Statement submitted by International Federation for Home Economics, 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 paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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\* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



## **Statement**

### **Territorial and Family orientated Strategies are required to end Poverty**

#### Introduction:

Eradicating poverty in all its forms remains one of the greatest challenges facing humanity

#### Objective:

The different forms of poverty and hunger result from various political, economic and ecological causes and effects.

#### Purpose:

As an advocate for families and households the IFHE highlights its main suggestions to eradicate poverty.

#### Overview of the Issue as it relates to our work:

Home economics has always been dealing with quality of life for families, sustainable living and a responsible use of resources. Home economics is considered the original field of research focusing on economic, social and ecological aspects of everyday living all of which take place in the household. Households are the basic and essential building blocks of societies and economy, where members make decisions regarding their behaviour, consumption and economic actions.

The main and basic aim of households is to meet the needs of their household members. Basic needs are physiological such as air, food, water, clothing and housing. In addition, every human being endeavours to feel safe. Safeness includes physical safety, which is not destroyed by occurrences like wars, natural disasters, political instability or violence. Even financial security as well as health and well-being are the most important basic needs of all individuals. Household members combine internal household resources (time, competencies, manpower and much more) with external resources (nature, market goods, political rights etc.) and frame conditions to reach each household member's needs and subsistence goals.

Based on a home economics perspective there are two main contributing factors to the state of poverty. One of the main factors is the unstable framework conditions for accessing and combining basic resources, which is a reality in many countries in the world. Poverty often results from lack of employment opportunities, lack of economical rights, reduced social security (especially for women), unstable political conditions, wars and disasters. A household interacts with social, political, economic and ecological surrounding to meet its needs; therefore their performance is strongly dependent on this socio-economic framework.

Based on results of case studies and experiences poverty and hunger often have territorial dimensions, which cannot be eradicated by a strategy developed only on a national level. Each territory has its specific economic, social structures and conditions. These different territorial challenges require policy makers and stakeholders on all levels to develop strategies that:

- follow multi-sectoral and integrated approaches

- require multi-level governance and institutions
- require improved territorial information systems for evidence-based poverty eradication, food security and poverty policies
- and link social policies with competitiveness agendas

The second factor for household performance is dependent on the individual and specific characteristics of the household members, their attitudes, competencies and education as well as their relationship to each other. These issues influence a household's economic and social standard. In both, industrial and developing countries, many problems of households occur from poor interpersonal skills as well as improper management and application of household resources. There is often an underappreciation of the need for household's finances, health, nutrition, housing and shopping needs to be managed in a responsible way to establish and retain the family's and household's success.

The act of refocusing families and household members to overcome poverty is based on the content and context of the education of all people in the management of their everyday lives. When the conditions of the framework are present, it establishes the grounding or basis to overcome poverty and conduct sustainable lifestyles as a desirable pattern for quality everyday life and reduce the incidence of family poverty.

Only strong and educated family members with access to material and non-material resources will have the power to care for their families and to participate in society, community and economic processes. Empowerment in everyday life management leads to valuable results for development through educating and advising families and individuals in home economic issues. This can include food production, maternal and family health as well as capacity building. This education is pertinent for rural people, urban poor, unsettled immigrants, economically dispossessed victims of political and instability, the older population that may not have adequate arrangement for post-employment periods of their lives.

Policymakers who are the primary owners of development resources are key to understanding these issues and must seek to put systems in place to alleviate these deficiencies in the social development of territorial sectors.

Powerbrokers for education, fundamental survival information, community living and environmental education, health and well-being, economic, conflict free and human rights propagation are only some of the critical areas for immediate attention to tackle the urgent need to end poverty in families.

Analysis of the current situation of marginalised families that suffer from poverty strongly suggests a focus on improving framework conditions adapted to the territorial needs and focus on empowering families, households and individuals as a strategy to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG)

(1) Specific examples of accomplishments by the NGO and remaining challenges:

Home economists around the world are contributing to the reduction of poverty every day through their professional work, which is multifaceted.

All over the world home economists are working on research and education programs such as financial literacy programs to avoid over-indebtedness, to generate income and develop own businesses.

As debt counsellors and family advisers, home economic professionals show ways out of poverty and give active support to families that are in financial trouble and face social exclusion.

The IFHE promotes the contribution of home economics to eradicate poverty through several statements to the UN and national governments and through workshops, conferences etc.

A way forward: expectations, specific recommendations for policymakers from the perspective of IFHE

Based on a home economics point of view the performance of individuals living in households and communities are the fundamental units of a functioning society and economy without poverty. Women are of high importance as they are often responsible for caring for the family. Households need framework conditions for poverty prevention and for overcoming poverty.

The IFHE recommends focusing on following priority actions for poverty eradication:

- Households and communities as key for the eradication of poverty.
- Improving access to sustainable livelihoods, entrepreneurial opportunities and productive resources; especially for women.
- Addressing the disproportionate impact of poverty on women; providing universal access to basic social services and security.
- Strengthen education in everyday life management in both, developing and developed countries for persons of all ages.
- Develop social protection systems to support those who cannot support themselves such as the elderly.
- Establish stable economic, politic and social framework conditions.
- Intensifying international cooperation for poverty eradication.

It is extremely important that governments set economic, social and political frameworks which enable individuals and families to use their full potential and overcome poverty.

Conclusion:

The International Federation for Home Economics suggests that development strategies and measures focus on individuals and families as the core units of the society and the economy. We encourage empowering them to improve their quality of life and achieve well-being. In the current political, social, cultural and economic conditions home economics education (educating and advising individuals and families in management of resources and improvement of their everyday life) is key to sustainable development and overcoming poverty as drivers of development and critical to the success of the new global goals.