



**FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES
AND IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE
ON FOOD SECURITY, NUTRITION AND WELL-BEING**

**VIRTUAL SIDE-EVENT DURING THE 54TH SESSION OF THE
UN COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

PRESENTATION OF THE NEW OECD REPORT ON FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

**Wednesday, April 21st, 2021
10.00-11.30 am (New York Time)**

Closing Remarks

The COVID-19 pandemic and the associated disruption of many education, health, social, and family services have emphasized the importance of family support services, including health care and mental health services, child protection, supports towards basic material needs such as food and housing, and specialized services for vulnerable families. For many families, a whole range of needs has to be addressed simultaneously. The challenge for policymakers is to develop a package that addresses the needs of different families that is delivered in an integrated manner across different public agencies and a range of service providers.

The supply and quality of family support services vary across and often within countries, but sharing evidence on good service delivery practices and efficient service organization is crucial to ensure that the services provide benefit to families who need them most. That is why we are very happy to have included the presentation of the new OECD study on family supports in today's programme, because it analyzes these aspects and will be useful for policy-makers, family professionals, and researchers from OECD countries and beyond. We are also proud of having contributed to the study previous to it.

One good example of how civil society participates together with public instances in those services is ATD Fourth World, present today in our programme. I thank them very much for being here in our event and their ongoing efforts to combat the violence of extreme poverty, ignorance, deprivation, and contempt that isolates people and locks them in silence.

You know that the United Nations Commission on Population and Development was to address the special theme “Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development” in 2020, but the pandemic made the Commission postpone a full consideration of the theme to this year. What we have lived during the past year has underlined the importance of this topic, as we can see some evidence from the impact of COVID-19, especially in the areas of incomes, supply chains, and programme delivery. COVID-19 has shifted earlier thinking on broader questions of sustainable food systems.

As the report of the UN Secretary-General for the Commission highlighted even before the pandemic, “the current global food system is environmentally unsustainable. A more sustainable future is attainable but will require transformations in food supply and demand as well as institutional reforms and strengthened efforts to preserve the natural resource base and mitigate climate change. The world’s population must be well-nourished and healthy to achieve the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals.”

We brought an example of how civil society can be part of this endeavor, with the participation of the Brazilian organization CREN. I thank them very much for their work and their valuable contribution to this event.

But the Commission also decided last year to include an agenda item on the future role and organization of the Commission in the provisional agenda for the fifty-fourth session of the Commission. In preparation for the consideration of this agenda item, the Bureau of the fifty-fourth session held a virtual informal brainstorming meeting on the future role and organization of the Commission on Population and Development. Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council participated in the meeting as observers, and we could also contribute with the suggestion that NGOs should be allowed to organize side-events without being sponsored by a Member State and that the Secretariat could include such side-events in its calendar of events.

This event is a direct consequence of the approval of both proposals. I thank all of you very much for your presence here and I hope you consider it as interesting as I certainly do. Thank you very much!