

New York, United Nations, 15 May 2011 – Governments should adopt policies to ensure that all types of families, particularly the most vulnerable, have access to the necessary services so they can provide a better future for their children, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said today.

In a message marking the International Day of Families, observed every year on 15 May, Mr. Ban said too many families endure “chronic, punishing hardship” or neglect that can leave them with life-long scars and an inability to escape poverty.

“Social exclusion is often at the root of the problem,” he said. “Discrimination and unequal access to social services deprive families of the opportunity to plan a better future for their children.”

The Secretary-General noted that “certain types of families are at particular risk, including large families, single-parent families, families where the main breadwinners are unemployed or suffer from illness or disability, families with members who suffer discrimination based on sexual orientation, and families living in urban slums or rural areas.

“Indigenous and migrant families, as well as those living through conflict or unrest, are also on the frontlines of marginalization and deprivation.”

He urged governments to use the International Day as a spur to expand family-focused policies, such as cash transfer programmes, child allowances, tax incentives and gender- and child-sensitive social protection measures.

“An expansion of these policies, which can improve the nutrition and educational status of children, can help end cycles of poverty that persist across generations.”

Source: [UN News](#)