

Family Capital: UPF's program at 2017 UN Commission for Social Development

Lynn Walsh
February 3, 2017



New York, United States—"Family capital" was the theme of a program held by UPF during the 2017 UN Commission for Social Development.

The program, held on February 3 at the African Union offices, was titled "Family Capital and the SDGs: The Family as the Driver of Social Development." This event was based on the recent publication of the book *Family Capital and the SDGs: Implementing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals*. Several of the authors who had contributed to the book spoke at the program.

The editor of the book, Susan Roylance of the Howard Center for Family, Religion and Society, opened the event by explaining "family capital" as the valuable combined resources and talents of the family unit. These resources and talents nurture children and provide the necessities of life for family members and also help achieve the most important global goals.

Next to speak was her husband, Robert Roylance, an expert on agriculture, who consolidated his talk from his three chapters related to increasing productivity for family farms, especially in the poorest of areas. Mr. Roylance's presentation showed the dramatic results that families achieved when utilizing his methods. In the most practical ways, his methods reduced and eradicated hunger and poverty family by family, he said (SDG Targets 1, 2 and 15).

Lynn Walsh, the director of UPF's Office of Marriage and Family Education, described how a stable family structure, marital commitment and biological parent-child ties lower the risk of domestic violence and child abuse (SDG Target 5).

Mariah Fralick of Sustainable Families International, who also served as the program's moderator, was the next speaker. Mrs. Fralick spoke about her family's positive experience of caring for a refugee family who had settled in their community. As refugee families will more easily receive help from people whom they can trust, Mrs. Fralick found that both her family and the refugee family benefited greatly by spending time together and becoming genuine friends (Target 10.7).

The final speaker, Vincenzina Santoro of the American Family Association, spoke from an economist's point of view about the impact of family remittances sent to family members in poorer areas and the importance of each country having ownership, control and management of their development process. Ms. Santoro, conveying the crucial contribution of family businesses to the economy, gave an example of the Nutella family business, which has brought prosperity and enjoyment to communities and people around the world (Targets 12 and 17).

Besides the co-sponsorship of all the NGOs represented by the speakers, United Families International and the UN NGO Committee on the Family, NY, supported this successful, well attended event.