



OIC Strategy for the
**Empowerment of the
Marriage & Family Institution**

2020 – 2025

A Guiding Strategy

Adopted in
2019



OIC Strategy for the

Empowerment of the Marriage & Family Institution

2020-2025

A Guiding Strategy



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بُونْدُورِيسْتِي: اِنْسَانُ اِنْبَارِ اِنْجِسَا بِلْدِسِيَا

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
MaFI	Marriage & Family Institution
MaFIES	Marriage & Family Institution Empowerment Strategy
CESS	Comprehensive Empowerment Service System
SESRIC	Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries
ISESCO	Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
IIUM	International Islamic University Malaysia
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
IPHRC	Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization
AFR	Adolescent Fertility Rate
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
STI	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
UN	United Nations
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
FaCBP	Family Capacity Building Programme
FWDI	Family Well-being Development Index

FOREWORD



The marriage and family institution is facing deep and complex challenges, including intellectual, moral, cultural, socioeconomic, educational, health, and legal, which threaten to lead to its disintegration, breakdown and fragmentation amid a whirlwind of societal changes happening in the world. The situation requires the OIC Member States to address these challenges in informed and practical terms, while cooperating in a spirit of joint Islamic action. The goal is to empower the family, the founding stone of a cohesive community, and leverage its skills for greater sustainable development participation and welfare.

Building on the OIC Charter's objective that the Member States would "emphasize, protect and promote the role of the family as the natural and fundamental unit of society", the First OIC Conference on the Marriage and Family Institution, held in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 8-9 February 2017, called on the General Secretariat to develop an OIC Strategy for the Empowerment of Marriage and Family Institution, in coordination with relevant OIC organs and institutions.

The Ministerial Conference for Social Development, in its first session held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey on 7-9 December 2019, adopted the strategy in hand, a product of the considerable effort and fruitful cooperation of the General Secretariat and OIC relevant organs and institutions, most notably the International Islamic University Malaysia, SESRIC and ISESCO.

Aimed at providing informed guidance to the Member States, this strategy addresses the challenges that the marriage and family institution faces in today's world, including refugee and migrant families. The strategy also points to ways to scale up cooperation and coordination among OIC Member States and with the wider international community on issues concerning the empowerment of the marriage and family institution, preservation of its values and promoting its role towards contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. The strategy presents the Member States with a five-year plan (2020-2025), along with proposed initiatives to put into action for implementing the strategy and reach its goals.

I am fully confident and I really hope that the Member States, relevant OIC organs and institutions, international partner organizations and all family-focused stakeholders would consolidate their efforts to support an effective partnership for empowering the marriage and family institution, foster its stability and stimulate its productivity, guided by the strategy's findings and recommendations.

Yousef bin Ahmed Al-Othaimen
The Secretary General

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The draft strategy document has been prepared by a Tripartite Committee consisting of the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) with the overall initiative, support and guidance of the General Secretariat of the OIC. The strategy document is the result of extensive cooperation and collaboration between the tripartite committee, experts from the OIC Member States and many individuals and institutions.

In February 2017, the First Ministerial Conference on Marriage and Family Institution and Preservation of its Values took place in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Following the resolutions of the First Ministerial Meeting, the General Secretariat of the OIC in cooperation with the Islamic, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO) held a workshop in Rabat, Morocco on 29-30 March 2018¹. During the workshop, the initial draft of the OIC Strategy for the Empowerment of the Marriage and Family Institution, prepared by the research team from the International Islamic University Malaysia, was deliberated on. It provided an opportunity to review the current and future challenges to the marriage and family institution as well as a chance to formulate the general vision, outline and objectives of an OIC level strategic document regarding the family and marriage.

Previous versions of the OIC Strategy for the Empowerment of Marriage and Family Institution (2020-2025) was discussed in a Coordination Meeting at the Expert Level held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 12-13 June 2019 and at the Open-ended Intergovernmental Experts Group Meeting held on 1-2 October 2019 at the OIC Headquarters in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The OIC is grateful to the Member States and the numerous experts and institutions who participated and provided valuable insights into making this strategy come together

The strategy has also benefitted greatly from the symposium on specific measures and indicators to achieve SDGs from a family perspective in Member States that was organized on 10-11 December 2018 in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The delegates of 27 Member States and experts from SESRIC, the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC), ISESCO, the International Islamic Fiqh Academy, and the Center for Research in History, Arts and Culture (IRCICA), the Islamic Center for the Development of Trade (ICDT) and the Arab Family Organization attended the symposium. The respected and appreciated comments of the participants have significantly contributed to this strategy.

¹ “Workshop for the Preparation of the OIC Draft strategy to Empower Marriage and Family Institution”, Issue 39 (2018), OIC Journal, 50; “Warshah ‘Amal li I’dad Mashru’ Istratijiyyah ‘al-Ta’awun al-Islami’ li Tamkin Mu’assasah al-Ziwaj wa al-Usrah”, Issue 39 (2018), OIC Journal, 50.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is the OIC Strategy for the Empowerment of Marriage and Family Institution (MaFI) in the Islamic World. It is a guiding document that has been developed within the framework of an Islamic perspective to enhance cooperation and exchange of expertise and best practices in the area of marriage and family institution empowerment and preservation in the Islamic world. It provides a rational framework, and guideline for the OIC Member States to further enhance their efforts and achievements in the areas of Marriage and Family Institution empowerment and development. Specifically, the document provides a strategic framework for the empowerment of MaFI through the enhancement of its roles in: 1) societal development, 2) preservation of Islamic culture and way of life, 3) participation in decision making at all levels, 4) enhancing family productivity and prosperity, 5) strengthening family solidarity and cohesiveness, 6) engaging families in planning and implementation of policies and action plans, 7) creating synergy among all partners and agencies managing MaFI affairs, and 8) enhancing the well-being and quality of life standards of MaFI in OIC Member States, Muslim minority countries and supporting families in conflict zones along with migrating and refuge Families as well as those with special needs and disabilities.

The aim of this strategy is to strengthen the stability and development of the MaFI in the next five years across the OIC Member States. The period 2020-2025 will be the crucial stage for the development and empowerment of family through : 1) Increasing MaFI empowerment and development activities to ensure enhancement of family well-being and quality standards for all; 2) encouraging member countries to adopt the approach of activation of family roles approach and the implementation of relevant policies, laws, plans and programs for family empowerment; 3) accelerating empowerment and training programmes along with activities geared towards enabling the members of the family to engage and participate in sustainable development agenda in line with the Islamic values and standards.; 4) coordinating and enhancing networking, cooperation, collaboration, across OIC Member States in matters of common interest relating to family empowerment, and 5) cooperating and engaging with local, regional and international partners; including governments, private sector, civil society, NGOs, regional and international bodies to advance the cause of MaFIE in the Islamic world. Hence, this strategy stands for more engagement and partnership among stakeholders and relevant local and international players.

The draft strategy document is based on the idea that accelerating MaFI empowerment is crucial for the sustainable development of OIC Member States. As such, the success of family empowerment strategy is a key factor towards activating the role of the family in societal and economic development. The draft strategy document identifies persisting challenges encountering MaFI in OIC Member States. These challenges range from conceptual, ethical, moral and intellectual to economic, health, educational, cultural, social and legal ones. It has been noted that these challenges hamper many countries' ability to advance the cause of MaFI empowerment. The draft strategy document underscores six critical priority areas and processes for the enhancement of MaFI, namely; protection, participation, productivity, prosperity, partnership, cooperation and family sustainable development. The OIC Member States are urged to achieve the key performance indicators that address the six processes and ensure continuous improvements according to the context and conditions of each country as well as the international standards for family empowerment and development.

The OIC strategy document promotes a vision built on dynamic and stable Marriage and Family Institution nurturing and playing efficient roles in preservation, participation,

productivity, prosperity and sustainable development of society according to Islamic values and standards. It also takes as a mission to empower and enhance marriage and family institution to enable it to assume greater roles in the preservation, participation, productivity, prosperity, partnership and sustainable development of Muslim societies. To achieve this, commitment and intervention of governments, civil society, private sector, NGOs, industry, donors and funders and local, regional and international bodies becomes crucial.

The OIC draft strategy focusses on 7 specific strategic areas/objectives. These are: 1) Building stable and productive families aiming at nurturing well-balanced citizens playing efficient roles in preservation, participation, prosperity and sustainable development of the family and society, 2) Improving marriage and family institution's well-being and quality of life standards, 3) Enhancing the preservation and protection of the marriage and family institution, 4) Widening the participation of families in all aspects of societal development, 5) Strengthening the marriage and family institutions' productivity and prosperity, 6) Enhancing partnership and collaboration on the implementation of marriage and family strategy across the OIC Member States, and 7) Strengthen governance and management of the marriage and family institution affairs across the OIC through adequate legislations, policies, laws and governing mechanisms.

The draft OIC strategy document stresses the urgency of building upon the achievements and experiences of Member States to implement the proposed strategies and action plans. It commends the important efforts undertaken by the OIC and its organs to advance the cause of MaFI empowerment in the Islamic world. It also praises the commitment and efforts undertaken by OIC Member states towards the empowerment and development of MaFI. Last but not least, the success of this strategy lies on its implementation. As such, the main actors, partners and stakeholders are urged to undertake the necessary measures to set up the proper policies, eco-system and environment for its implementation. We have to leverage on strong partnership and shared responsibilities to ensure success. Hence, improvement of delivery, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of results, successes and challenges is one important step forward.

Coordinator of Joint Research Team

I. INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

1- INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A. Synopsis of the Major Activities and Initiatives at the OIC Level

The positive function of families and marital union for the survival and well-being of societies is not new, as Islam, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and various international instruments have long recognized the constructive role of the marriage and family institution for their members and the wider human community. For Islam, the family is a divinely inspired and ordained institution, which consists of the marital union between a man and a woman. The OIC, in line with the Islamic approach, identifies the family as the building block of human civilization that provides security, stability and continuity. Likewise, article 16 (3) of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and article 23 (1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights state that “the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by the society and the State.”

Other human rights instruments also reaffirm the vital importance of the family. For example, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities all reiterate the families’ salient role. These international instruments specifically highlight the role of the family in protecting the human rights of its members and providing them with an enabling environment for the enjoyment of those rights.²

Even with the realization of the significance of the family and marital union, these two institutions are facing significant challenges around the world. The macro societal and economic transformations combined with the intensification of technology and globalization have started to influence significantly the structure, pattern and values of the marriage and family institution. Consequently, the weakening of the marriage and family institution has widespread detrimental effects on economic growth, demographics, health of individuals and the public, children’s future and society as a whole. For example, Western societies have particularly been hit hard by the challenges to the marriage and family institution and some have gone as far as to name it a “family crises” (Baskerville 2009).³

The situation in OIC Member States is not as dramatic as it has been in other parts of the world. Even so, the macro global societal and economic transformations are starting to affect the marriage and family institution across the OIC. Substantial transformations are taking place regarding family values and marriage patterns in OIC countries. With the increasing rate of industrialization, urbanization, globalization and educational attainment, the marriage and family institution is starting to lose its traditional role, strength and sustainability to a varying degree in different OIC countries.

² For details, see Convention on the Rights of the Child, art. 18(2)); Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, art. 23(3); Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families art. 44 (1).

³ Baskerville, S. (2009). Freedom and the family: The family crisis and the future of western civilization. *Humanitas*, 22(1/2), 168.

Recently, marriage rates have been declining and divorce rates have been increasing in OIC countries. Consequently, the character of marriage has changed. This is due to social, economic and technological changes. High divorce rates generate non-traditional formations such as single-parent families whereas low marriage rates constitute a never married category that also tests the traditional family structure. Age at first marriage (AFM) is important for marriage and family union since older AFM affects fertility rates negatively. AFM has been increasing globally and therefore age at first birth has been increasing as well. The increase in age at first marriage does not pose a serious problem in OIC countries yet, because in 2016 it was 28 for males and 23 for females. The AFM is expected to increase eventually alongside the increased urbanization, industrialization, and educational attainment. Conversely, early marriage has negative impacts on family and marital union because it risks the health of women and their babies. The age gap between couples causes problems such as limited cohesion between pairs and reduction in happiness and well-being of families and marriages in OIC countries.

Other issues such as increasing divorce rates in some OIC countries, cultural contestations regarding the role and importance of the family institution, decrease in fertility rates, and dysfunction of families due to loss of family values along with a number of socio-cultural and economic reasons, the marriage and family institution in OIC countries call for special attention. All of these trends have negative outcomes for OIC countries and influences the marriage and family institution across the OIC, therefore, an OIC level guideline that will serve as a basis for policy to empower, strengthen and sustain the family's positive role in society, economics, and development is a timely and necessary subject matter. Many of the OIC Member States have developed their own national policies and strategies for marriage and family institutions' development and empowerment, however, this strategy document aims to provide concrete actionable strategic goals based on shared aims, vision and inspiration to empower the marriage and family institution across all of the OIC Member Countries. The next subsection elaborates on the background, objectives and the structure of the strategy document.

The OIC and its relevant organs have undertaken a number of activities and initiatives to emphasize the importance and significance of strengthening and empowering the marriage and family institution. In February 2017, the First Ministerial Conference on Marriage and Family Institution and Preservation of its Values took place in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Following the resolutions of the First Ministerial Meeting, the General Secretariat of the OIC in cooperation with the Islamic, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO) held a workshop in Rabat, Morocco on 29-30 March 2018⁴. During the workshop, the initial draft of the OIC Strategy for the Empowerment of the Marriage and Family Institution, prepared by the research team from the International Islamic University Malaysia, was deliberated on. It provided an opportunity to review the current and future challenges to the marriage and family institution as well as a chance to formulate the general vision, outline and objectives of an OIC level strategic document regarding the family and marriage.

In line with the growing prominence of the marriage and family institution empowerment for the OIC, a symposium on specific measures and indicators to achieve SDGS from a family perspective in Member States was organized on 10-11 December in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The symposium was attended by the delegates of 27 Member States and experts from the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic

⁴ "Workshop for the Preparation of the OIC Draft strategy to Empower Marriage and Family Institution", Issue 39 (2018), OIC Journal, 50; "Warshah 'Amal li I'dad Mashru' Istratijiyyah 'al-Ta'awun al-Islami' li Tamkin Mu'assasah al-Ziwaj wa al-Ushrah", Issue 39 (2018), OIC Journal, 50.

Countries (SESRIC); the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC); ISESCO; the International Islamic Fiqh Academy; the Center for Research in History, Arts and Culture (IRCICA); the Islamic Center for the Development of Trade (ICDT) and the Arab Family Organization. The widespread participation of Member Countries and organs of the OIC signified the tremendous energy and relevance of the family issue. The aim of the symposium was to discuss the ways and means in which specific measures can be taken to achieve SDGs from a family perspective. It served as a platform where participants contributed to the knowledge on the links between the family institution and SDGs, and identify the challenges that the family in OIC countries face such as economic, social and cultural.

Upon a comprehensive discussion, the Family and SDGs symposium put forward several essential recommendations: 1) the need to develop special systems for social protection and skills development programs and the promotion of labor force in a manner that benefits families, especially the ones in rural and marginalized areas, 2) stressing the need to support families in rural and remote areas and particularly those relying on agriculture as their main source of income to eradicate rural family poverty and 3) taking serious efforts to address the social challenges facing the marriage and family institution and tackle the root causes that lead to the disintegration of families and marriage institution.

Aside from the above-mentioned initiatives directly related to the marriage and family institution, there have been numerous forums, workshops, symposiums and expert level meetings that are indirectly linked to marriage and family issues. These include crosscutting issues related to women, children, youth, elderly and people with disabilities.

Finally, relevant OIC institutions, particularly SESRIC, have been playing an active role in addressing issues related to the marriage and family institution. SESRIC prepared a number of reports dealing directly with the well-being of the family and its value preservation. The 2015 SESRIC report on “*State of Gender and Family Well-being in OIC Member Countries*” highlights the importance of cohesive families and the intersection of gender inequality in harming family structures in OIC countries. Subsequently, SESRIC prepared a report on “*Safeguarding Family Values and the Institution of Marriage in OIC Countries*”. This strategic document examined in detail the important functions of the marriage and family institution in the realm of economics, demographics, social and political stability along with an analysis of the current and future challenges to the marriage and family organization. The culmination of the rising trends across the OIC that are beginning to threaten the importance and strength of the marriage and family institution along with the strong will of the OIC to counter these threats that the *OIC Strategy for the Empowerment of the Marriage and Family Institution* has been born out of.

B. Overview of the Strategy Document

As it stands today, the OIC countries are not as severely impacted by the threats to the marriage and family institution, however, current and future projections and trends show that the marriage and family institutions across the OIC is starting to face challenges, and this will increase in the coming years. Therefore, the current challenges facing the marriage and family institution by Member States signals a need to enhance cooperation and provide a comprehensive guideline at the OIC level. To address the problems facing the family and marital union along with preventing the negative future forecasts, the OIC countries need to act now to empower and strengthen the marriage and family institution. The aim of this strategy report is to provide an OIC level guidance via actionable goals for Member States to enhance, empower and reinforce the role of families and marital union in all aspects of society.

The strategy document aims to present an umbrella analysis of the current situation and challenges facing the marriage and family institution in the OIC. Subsequently, to overcome these issues, the document proposes a strategic action plan based on the empowerment of the marriage and family institution. Also, the strategic plan targets to provide a roadmap for policy-makers, community leaders and other relevant actors to share knowledge, information and experiences on how to empower and strengthen the marriage and family values, bonds and principles across the OIC.

To enable the realization of the objective to empower and strengthen the marriage and family institution, the strategic document identified seven critical thematic areas of cooperation, 132 strategic goals, and 30 key performance indicators that were generated after reviewing the immediate concerns, existing policies and the future challenges.

The seven thematic/strategic areas of cooperation identified are as follows:

1. Building stable and productive families aiming at nurturing well-balanced citizens playing efficient roles in preservation, participation, prosperity & sustainable development of family and society;
2. Improving marriage and family institution's well-being and quality of life standards;
3. Enhancing the preservation and protection of the marriage and family institution;
4. Widening the participation of families in all aspects of societal development;
5. Strengthening the marriage and family institutions' productivity and prosperity;
6. Enhancing partnership and collaboration on the implementation of marriage and family strategy across the OIC countries;
7. Strengthen governance and management of the marriage and family institution affairs across the OIC through adequate legislations, policies, laws & governing mechanisms.

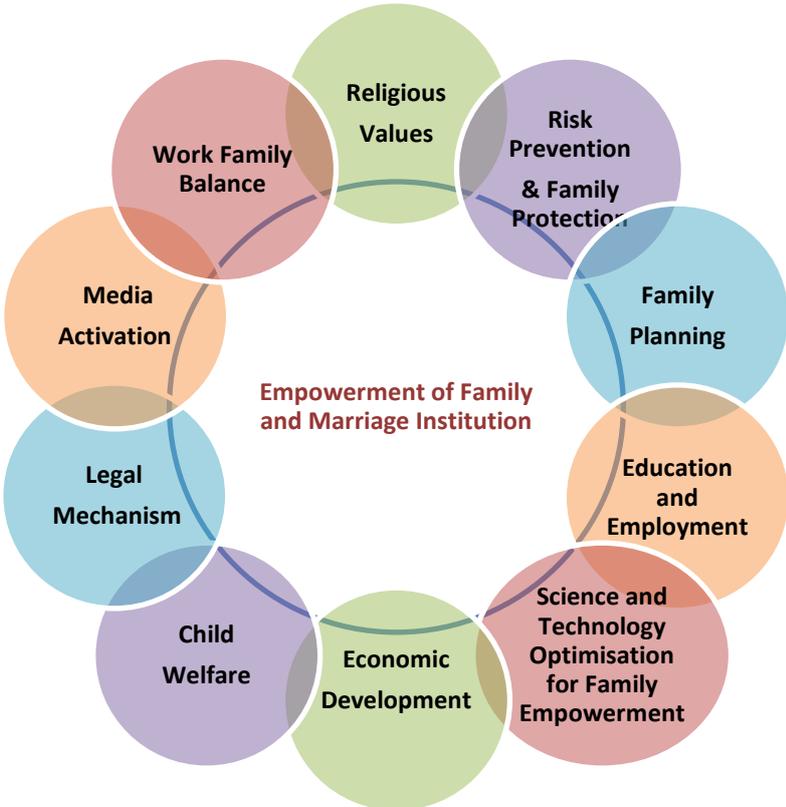
An earlier version of the strategic document was prepared by the research team of the International Islamic University Malaysia and presented during a Coordination Meeting at the Expert Level on OIC Marriage and Family Institution Empowerment Strategy in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 12-13 June 2019. The current draft version of the strategic plan is a concise and consolidated summary of the main document incorporating the suggestions and feedback from the relevant OIC institutions and experts to develop an effective and inclusive approach to the marriage and family empowerment strategy. The draft *OIC Strategy for the Empowerment of the Marriage and Family Institution* was later submitted to the Open-ended Intergovernmental Experts Group Meeting held in October 2019. Similarly, feedback from Member States and OIC organs were incorporated into the current draft strategy. It is hoped that this draft version of the strategy will be considered and adopted at the relevant OIC fora to be implemented by Member States with a view to address the current and emerging challenges facing the marriage and family institution.

Overall, this strategy document aims to stimulate cooperation among Member States in addressing the common encounters and challenges regarding the marriage and family institution in the Islamic World. There is a need for a strategy to counter the complex and multiple problems weakening the marriage and family structure and function leading to increasing the number of challenges for OIC countries. This strategic document serves as a comprehensive guideline by providing concrete policy goals to mitigate and limit the problems that have surfaced by the disintegration trends in the marriage and family values, patterns and arrangements. Ultimately, this strategic guidance calls for increased awareness and acceptance of the marriage and family problem OIC countries face, for an increase in collaboration and

cooperation amongst OIC Member States and for the implementation of the suggested policy objectives outlined in this strategic document.

C. All-encompassing Principles

Before proceeding to present the review of the major challenges and the areas of cooperation, this strategic document asserts that there are ten umbrella mechanisms that should be considered as all-encompassing principles. The below all-encompassing principles are necessary for the empowerment of the marriage and family institution and should be considered as a core objective throughout the strategic document. All of the specific policy recommendations should be employed with the aim to enhance and strengthen one or more of the principles outlined below. It is also important to note that each strategic area and the corresponding strategic goals outlined in Section III aim to empower the marriage and family institution through targeting to enhance one or more of the proceeding all-encompassing principles.



1. Family Empowerment through Work-Family Balance

Work-family balance policies are a significant factor in empowering marriage and family institutions. Particularly, in the present day where women are more increasingly partaking in the labour market, balancing family duties with work are becoming an ever-greater challenge for families. Mechanisms to ease the burden on families struggling with work-family balance should be considered as a means to strengthen and empower the marriage and family institution.

2. Family Empowerment through Religious Values

With the spread of globalisation and intensification of technological platforms, religious beliefs and values are decreasing in their importance and significance. New global values systems concerning the marriage and family are taking root across the OIC, especially amongst the youth. Islamic values, pretexts and beliefs should be promoted and reiterated amongst society.

The importance of the marriage and family institution from an Islamic approach needs to be highlighted and proper knowledge on this matter needs to be disseminated amongst society.

3. Family Empowerment through Risk Prevention

It is vital to address risk prevention in designing strategies for the empowerment of marriage and family institution. It is imperative to take into account the risks that can affect marriage and family such as abuse, violence, conflict, health and amongst others poverty. By decreasing risks to the marriage and family institution, the desire and will to form families and marital unions will increase for individuals.

4. Family Empowerment through Family Planning

Family planning is an important aspect of creating healthy and conscious families that also influences the longevity of marriages. Therefore, family planning should be promoted through raising awareness and disseminating information on the positive impact of family planning.

5. Family Empowerment through Education and Employment

Empowering families especially women through education can further strengthen the marriage and family institution. This further helps address the disparity of genders in education and employment. In addition, education on the importance and positive role of family building should be promoted to strengthen the understanding of the salience of families for individuals, society and humanity. Employment is a critical factor in deciding to form a family or get married; therefore, employment opportunities are a major factor contributing to the empowerment of families and marriage. Through targeted skill development, capacity building and education, families are given the opportunity to build healthier and more prosperous relationships.

6. Family Empowerment through Economic and Financial Security

Related to the principle above on employment is the general economic and financial situation of families. Families need to be empowered through poverty alleviation, microfinances, skills development for the labour market and other economic support networks. Through stable economies, the marriage and family institution is empowered and strengthened.

7. Family Empowerment through Child Welfare

Empowerment strategies for the marriage and family institution through child welfare are an important aspect of happy, healthy and stable families, especially those with special needs children such as ones with developmental disabilities or at-risk children. It follows that these families need special assistance or intervention to improve and strengthen their family functioning. For the marriage and family institution to prove its continuity and positive image to the upcoming generations, healthy homes where child welfare is sought and guaranteed is necessary.

8. Family Empowerment through Legal Mechanism

States should be proactive especially in playing preventive roles regarding marital challenges, and not merely in a corrective role upon marital dissolution. Law should protect the function of the marriage and family institution. Although family ties in general are a private matter concerning personal relationships, there are certain periods when family relationships call for the involvement of governmental authority. The forms of legal intervention are various, including legislation, regulation, and judicial decisions, which influence family dynamics and deal with family issues. Legal interventions defining the institution of marriage, promising joint

or substitute decision making, and aiding family caregiving may be the right means to proactively respect and empower loving families in their proper functioning.

9. Family Empowerment through Media

Media in all its forms including traditional and social media are important platforms to empower the marriage and family institution. These are arenas where individuals especially children and youth learn and adopt new values and beliefs. Media mediums need to be used to empower families and marriage bonds by providing information on the importance of healthy marriages and families. Creating family media empowerment culture and programs will contribute immensely to the development of the family.

10. Family Empowerment through Science and Technology

Similarly, science and technology platforms, mechanisms and tools are other important ways of family empowerment. The integration of technology in human life is not only theoretical and selective but it has become an inherent part of human life. Almost every aspect of human life is affected by the applications of technology. The family is no exception, as its members constitute the core of human society. Governments need to set policies and design programs for the empowerment of family through technology and the applications of science and scientific discoveries. This will lessen the burden of families and find more solutions that are effective to the various problems encountering families.

2- STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

A. Guidelines and Principles

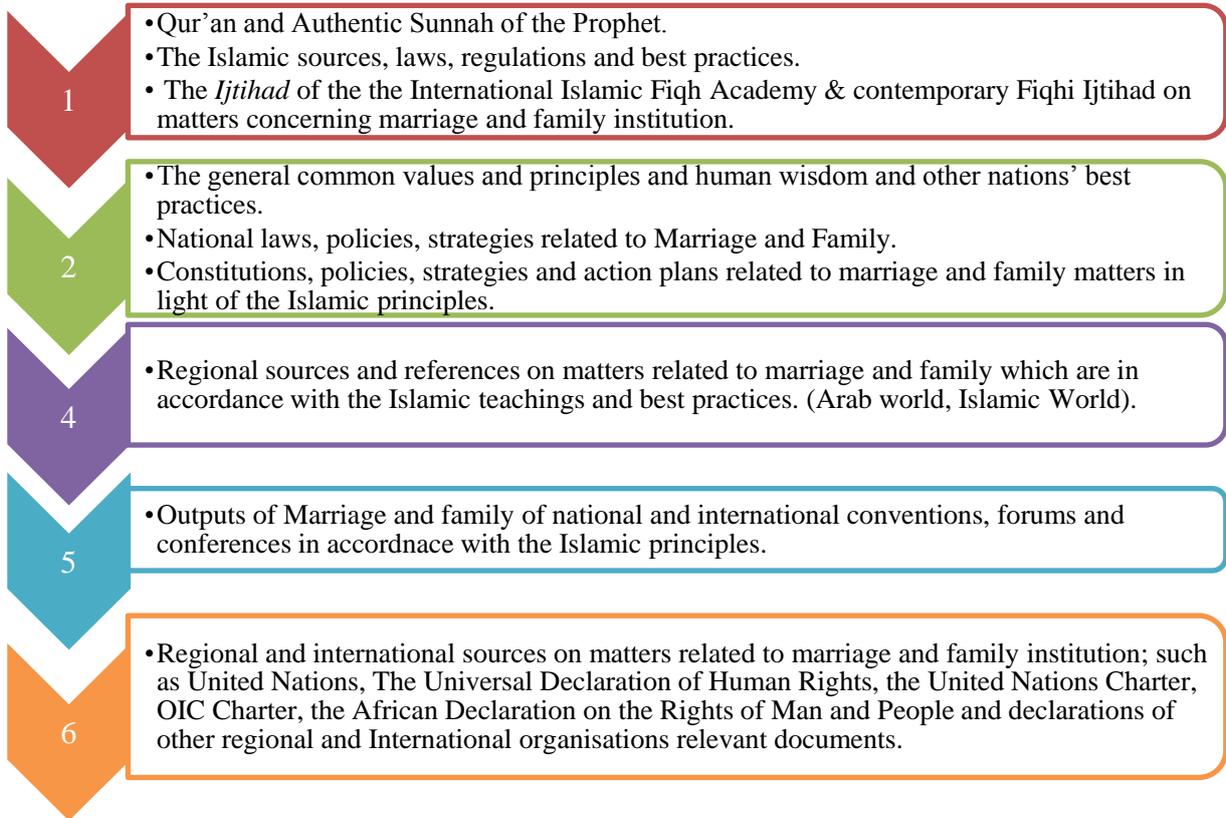
Marriage & Family Strategy: Guidelines and Principles		
1	Promote family empowerment and activation of roles in OIC member countries leading to strengthening productivity, prosperity, stability, safety and development of families living in the Islamic world (Muslim and non-Muslims) as a driving force behind societal development.	Family Role Activation Oriented
2	Advance comprehensive capacity building agenda to provide services and support for family members' progress and participation in societal development. The governments and relevant players have to allocate funds and means to enhance capabilities of families to assume their roles and responsibilities through empowerment approach.	Stressing Family Capacity Building
3	Recognize the cultural, ethnic, linguistic and socio-economic and political status of member countries, emphasizing that the OIC-MaFIE-Strategy is not meant to be a blue print for a specific country but it is a guiding and enriching document for empowerment of MaFI in the Islamic world.	Strategy document recognizing diversity and richness of Member Countries
4	Consider Marriage & Family Institution as a whole and not some of its members or elements or issues. The strategy of empowerment must be comprehensive to address all issues and challenges encountering family including, parents, children, adolescents, adults, elders, marriage, employability, well-being, quality of life, health, education, environment and ecosystem, risks and problems, potentials and opportunities, culture and religion, values	All-Encompassing Family Strategy
5	Develop comprehensive and collaborative OIC-MaFIE-Strategy that engages all stakeholders and bring together governments, civil society, private sector, NGO's and local, regional and international bodies to develop effective programs and plans for family empowerment and development.	Engaging Stakeholders and partners
6	Stress the importance of outcomes and impact rather than objectives and doing activities. The impact and transformation through empowerment	Stressing Outcomes and Impacts

	programs must be seen and measured so as to ensure success of policies, plans and programs enhancing family preservation, participation, productivity, prosperity, partnership and positive sustainable development.	
7	Urge member countries to pull together their resources and strengths to address the challenges encountered by Marriage and Family Institution in the Islamic world & in Muslim Minority countries through providing resources, expertise and collective services and support programs.	Stressing cooperation, collective efforts and sharing of resources
8	Develop and share successful mechanisms and best practices on ensuring effectiveness of the support and eco-systems and services so as to respond to the real needs and challenges facing family and marriage institution.	Sharing of Best Practices and Successful Strategies among OIC Members
9	Shoulder family empowerment responsibilities among stakeholders and social players. It should not rest solely upon the family members. Responsibility shall be shouldered by OIC member countries as well as international community including United Nations and other relevant bodies.	Implementation of Strategy is a Shared Responsibility
10	Strengthen Marriage & Family Institution in Muslim minority and conflict zone countries. Special consideration is given to families with special needs and vulnerable families and children. Relevant and appropriate plans and programs need to be designed to cater for those deserving families and communities	Addressing Family in Minority and Conflict Zone countries
11	Integrate and benefit from common human values and ethics in areas of marriage and family empowerment and development.	Benefit from Common Human Values on marriage and family matters
12	Recognize the human urge to form families through legal marriage and union which means, in this document, the union between a man and women in legal and legitimate way.	Support Creation of New Families
13	Protect MaFI by the Law. It must be defined, protected and developed in light of Islamic values and the existing Laws and regulations in OIC member countries.	Protection of Family & Marriage by the Law.
14	Enhance local, regional and international awareness about MaFI and the urgency of empowerment and development at all levels leading to more resilient family strategies and impactful programs. The use of media in all its form is crucial.	Family Empowerment must be Communicated & Promoted through all Media and other Platforms
15	Enhance national integrated family policies based on clear visions and strong strategic objectives and goals resulting in impactful regulations, legislations, strategies and plans for family protection, participation, productivity, prosperity and sustainable development.	Enhanced National Family Policies
16	Promote a duty based approach in which the citizen commit to their responsibilities towards the nation, society and the state, which protects higher national interests as well as enhance citizen participation in elections and accountability of duty bearers, especially officials in ministries and public bodies.	Committed citizens
16	Preserve the rights of family and its member according to the teachings of Islam & common human values.	Protection of Family Rights
17	Provide the necessary health care and support to its citizen that make the core of family.	Provide Necessary Services and Support for MaFI Well-being

18	Safeguard MaFI, deepen its solidarity and bond, preserve its Islamic identity and provide the necessary means to strengthen its roles and capabilities in light of Islamic values.	Enhance Family Solidarity and Islamic Identity
19	Introduce necessary measures to empower family to play its roles in the protection of religion, human life, human intellect, human wealth and progeny.	Stress the Protection of the five values
20	Ensure equality between men and women taking into consideration the nature, functions, objectives and complimenting roles of both of them in light of Islamic values.	Positive Equality in Family
21	Defend MaFI from all forms of degradation, disintegration and international and external threats including ideological threats, deviant teachings and terrorism and extremism. A special consideration should be given to families affected by terrorist attacks and dislocation through providing the necessary support and address their need.	Empower Family against Threats and Disintegration (Terrorism)
22	Collaborate with families and other stakeholders and societal players to address the issues of family-work balance in this context, there is a need for fluid and facilitative eco-system. It needs empowerment of family members through measures such as: friendly and fluid work environment approach, family-work balancing skills, family communication skills, parenting skills, family management, Family planning, family financial management skills, family counselling, and family well-being.	Enhance Fluid and Facilitative Eco-system & Work Environment
23	Coordinate MaFI developmental centered policies and strategies. It is important to address the issues of MaFI from a multi-factorial approach stressing the MaFI centered policies and strategies. It should not be solely the responsibility of those agencies handling Family matters but engaging all the relevant stakeholders and agencies.	MaFI Developmental and Coordinated Centered Policies
24	Tackle the issues of violence in families, child abuse, children negligence, women abuse, mental, psychological, physical and sexual abuse, abuse of orphans' rights...through creating support programs and mechanisms to reduce these form of family abuse and disrespect.	Prioritise Issues of Family Violence and Abuse
25	Guarantee the rights of individuals and their families especially in case of disability, chronic disease, elderly, aging and special needs ensuring a social solidarity system to care and support families financially and morally.	Guarantee protection of special needs, needy and Elderly groups
26	Enhance the new approaches to family conflict resolution such as amicable and mediation approaches to settle disputes and enhance family cohesiveness and solidarity.	comprehensive Family Conflict Resolution

B. Sources and References

The OIC strategy for the empowerment of MaFI utilizes the following sources and references:



C. Definition of Marriage

Generally, marriage is defined as a legal contract between man and woman meant to enjoy each other and form a family. This legal marriage aims at bringing tranquillity, stability, balanced growth and development in the light of affection, compassion, cooperation, solidarity and synergy to build a cohesive family, a good society and individuals who will contribute to balanced sustainable development of societies.

In specific terms, marriage is the legal act of mutual acceptance between husband and wife in an intention to build family life and raise up balanced and good progeny enabling them to become committed vicegerent of God and responsible citizens in line with Islamic teachings and values. The Holly Qur'an states clearly: {And among His signs is that He created for you wives from among yourselves, to dwell in them, and to make between you affection and mercy. There are signs for those who think.} (Al- Rum: 21).

{يَتَفَكَّرُونَ لِقَوْمٍ لآيَاتٍ ذَٰلِكَ فِي إِنَّ َّ وَرَحْمَةً مَّوَدَّةَ بَيْنِكُمْ وَجَعَلَ لِيُتَسَكَّنُوا أَزْوَاجًا أَنْفُسِكُمْ مِنْ لَكُمْ خَلَقَ أَنْ آيَاتِهِ وَمِنْ} .
(21: الآية: الروم سورة).

D. Definition of Family

As family plays a vital role in societal development especially from an Islamic perspective, Member countries affirm the importance of marriage and family institution from both the Shari'ah and general human perspectives and ensure their commitment and support for building balanced and productive families. They should, among others, facilitate marriage, ensure well-being and quality of life standards, protect and empower family & marriage institution (MaFI) with the necessary services and support. Therefore, the main aim shall be to build balanced, stable, safe, productive and prosperous families aware of their national and international roles and responsibilities participating in nation building & sustainable societal development in line with Islamic values and standards.

In article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights it is clearly stated that: “(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution, (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses and, (3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State and (4) States Parties to the present Covenant shall take appropriate steps to ensure equality of rights and responsibilities of spouses as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution. In the case of dissolution, provision shall be made for the necessary protection of any children” (<https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>).

In a 2005 interpretative document in regard to the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, the United Nations under Parental Responsibilities and Assistance from States Parties: No. 15, states that "The preamble to the Convention refers to the family as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children. The Committee recognises that family here refers to a variety of arrangements that can provide for young children's care, nurturance and development, including the nuclear family, the extended family, and other traditional and modern community-based arrangements, provided these are consistent with children's rights and best interests. (https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/CRCGC6_EN.pdf).

On the other hand, *Hendriks v Netherlands*, UN Human Rights Committee, No. 201/1985, No. 10.3 clearly mentioned, “the idea of the family must necessarily embrace the relations between parents and child. Although divorce legally ends a marriage, it cannot dissolve the bond uniting father - or mother - and child. This bond does not depend on the continuation of the parents' marriage.” (<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/SDecisionsVol3en.pdf>). The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights in its article 18 states that: “1) the family shall be the natural unit and basis of society. It shall be protected by the state which shall take care of its physical health and moral and 2) The State shall have the duty to assist the family which is the custodian of morals and traditional values recognized by the community.”

(<http://www.achpr.org/instruments/achpr/>). Based on the above, it is evident that family is the foundational and developmental unit of society. It is founded upon legal sacred bond of marriage between qualified and competent man and woman in line with Islamic values and standards.

Family should be the cradle of love, respect, mawadah (kindness) and rahmah (mercy) and the sacred place where progeny is originated and raised up. The family includes husband, wife, children and extended relatives and branches. In the Islamic world and due to modern economic, social, technological, cultural and industrial changes in society, still both extended and nuclear families face many challenges. Usually extended family may include parents, children, grandparents, uncles and aunts. If managed well it helps keep respect, unity, solidarity and shared responsibility among the members.

II. REVIEW OF ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF THE MARRIAGE AND FAMILY INSTITUTION IN THE OIC MEMBER STATES

An analysis of the literature and numerous studies on the issue reveal the existence of multi-factorial and interconnected web of challenges that the marriage and family institution in OIC Member States face. These challenges range from social, economic and legal to conceptual, medical and cultural ones. To accurately develop and implement policies that will effectively empower and strengthen the marriage and family institution across the OIC, it is imperative that these concerns be examined. This section of the strategy document provides a review of the major challenges facing the marriage and family institution across the OIC.

A. Intellectual and Conceptual Challenges

Intellectual and conceptual challenges refer to attitudes and mixed perceptions of individuals, communities, societies and other actors toward the concept of marriage and family and its essence, objectives and values. In the 21st century, concepts of marriage and family are experiencing serious alterations. The value and importance attached to marital union between a man and a woman and forming families are being tested by new trends and patterns. Late age at first marriages, dysfunctional families, rising divorce rates and misconceptions about the positive function of the marriage and family institution has at its roots challenges arising from lack of intellectual and conceptual knowledge.

With the impact of globalisation and postmodernist trends influencing the meaning of family and marriage, its nature, essence, roles and function is starting to be replaced with new and multiple definitions. New patterns of same-sex marriage, single-headed households, no marriage or other patterns outside of the man-woman marriages and familial types are starting to be normalized and even to an extent popularized.

The OIC is not immune to the intellectual and conceptual challenges taking place around the world. Recent trends show that age at first marriage is in a slow increase across the OIC, fertility rate is declining, and the number of individuals not married is in an upward trend. These trends imply that in the OIC, the conceptualization and intellectual understanding and

adherence to the Islamic familial type is slowly eroding to be replaced by globalized norms and values. This poses a significant challenge to the strength, continuity and health of OIC societies.

B. Religious and Ethical Challenges

The religious and ethical challenges concern the weakening of the importance and role of religion and ethics in family life and marriage decisions. Trends to belittle religious ethics, values and beliefs regarding marriage and family are starting to find ground in Islamic societies. These trends are having negative impacts on the marriage and family institution in various OIC countries. The weakening and debasing of religious meaning and value attached to the marriage and family institution combined with the intellectual and conceptual challenges results in the loss of the essence, value and traditional patterns of marriage and family life.

C. Cultural Challenges

Similar to the above two challenges, cultural changes concerning the marriage and family institution are increasingly becoming an issue for OIC countries. Cultural norms and values to an extent shape societies decisions and behaviours concerning forming a family or getting married. With the impact of new globalized cultures on family and marriage, new patterns are being born that is negatively influencing the strength, role and significance of the marriage and family institution. The normalization of late or never marriages, forming families without the sacred bond of marriage between a man and a woman, increasing rates of divorce and new forms of identities attached to the marriage and family institution are having harmful effects. As the spread of globalisation intensifies and expansion of technological platforms deepen across the OIC countries, they will become more vulnerable to the negative external cultural influences. OIC needs to take action now to prevent the harmful cultural norms from spreading into its society concerning the marriage and family institution.

Globalization promotes Western lifestyle marked by individualism, consumerism, and materialism. This individual-oriented lifestyle generates an understanding in which individual concerns and family values are antipodes and family formation is regarded as the sacrifice of the self. In this context, the tendencies of starting a family and childbearing in OIC countries are likely to go down. Communication technologies and advanced travel options foster the spread of the globalizing values and Western lifestyle in OIC countries. Television series, social media, and internet impose the idea that family poses an obstacle for individuals. Therefore, actualization of the self requires elimination of family-oriented and local values. Many traditions and customs contribute to the strength of the family in OIC countries. However, some harmful traditional practices prevail in OIC countries despite having recorded economic development and enacted regulations. These harmful traditional and cultural practices impede families and the institution of marriage by violating women's rights and negatively affecting family wellbeing. For example, child marriage in OIC countries is a major challenge as it negatively affects the health of women and infants, and wellbeing of the family. According to UNICEF Global Database (2018), the OIC group had the highest rate of child marriage when compared with developed countries and non-OIC developing countries. Over the period 2010-2017, 7% of all marriages took place before 15 years old and 25.5% of all marriages were performed before 18 years old. Early marriage may result in mental and physical health problems of couples, such as depression, and damage the family wellbeing. The mixture of

outside cultural influences combined with the negative cultural practices within some OIC countries, the marriage and family institution becomes challenged.

D. Economic Challenges

Transformations in economic environments in a society lead to the evolution of family values, structures and the role couples play within the family. In addition, economic factors influence the marriage decisions of men and women. Therefore, economic stability and progress is an important element in conserving, promoting and empowering the marriage and family institution. OIC countries have been facing a number of different economic problems that has a direct impact on the marriage and family institution.

Unemployment is a sombre concern that affects individuals and families as well. Since the 2000s, the total unemployment rates in the OIC countries have been fluctuating between 7.4% and 9.1%. Unemployment negatively influences families' economic status, wellbeing, happiness and ultimately effective functioning. The economic strains caused by unemployment damages the social relations of family members leading to frequent disputes and unhealthy homes. This results in increasing divorce rates, unhappy children who have bad experiences with family life and health problems for the entire members of the family. Economic difficulties do not only presently weaken the family, but it also has implications for future generations. Children with bad experiences will become more hesitant to form their own families in the future and will lead to a decrease in marital unions in the end.

The labour force participation in the OIC countries has been rising over the last decade. Particularly, industrialization led to the increase in labour demand in urban areas and families in masses migrated to cities. However, urban life requires more family members to be active and generate income to survive and meet the basic needs. This trend increased the female labour force across the OIC Member States, which reached 39.6% in 2016-2017 period. The increased labour force of women challenges the traditional roles within the family. Balancing work and family is high on the policy agendas of many countries and viewed as a central issue for society to adapt to the new opportunities for women and the new family model of mothers participating in the labor market. Therefore, the new labor markets' trends pose a challenge for the family and require special attention.

Poverty and hunger are an important challenge for families in OIC countries. According to most recent Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) dataset, 36% of the OIC population experienced multidimensional poverty in 2014. Both poverty and hunger have severe implications for families' wellbeing and healthy functioning. Not being able to meet the necessities for survival results in the deterioration of the overall wellbeing of individuals and adversely affects the strength and will of the family to stay together and uphold family values. Therefore, for families to be empowered, close attention to the economic situation of families is important.

E. Social Challenges

Similar to other challenges above, the changes in economic structure, globalisation, urbanization and the dissemination of technology has created a number of social challenges to the marriage and family institution. Changes in social norms and behaviours combined with demographics are posing a challenge to the marriage and family institution in OIC countries.

Demographic trends play a significant role in changing societal values in OIC countries, consequently affecting families and marital union as well.

Since the 1990s, OIC countries have been experiencing a decline in fertility rates due to women's increasing participation in the workforce, modern contraceptive methods, and changes in personal values that emphasise self-realisation and freedom from traditional value systems. In the future, this will put many OIC Member Countries below the population replacement level of 2.1, which is the minimum required rate to maintain a stable population. Increasing life expectancy has resulted in an ageing population in OIC countries. Between 1990 and 2015, the share of the population aged 60 or over was stable in OIC countries, only increasing slightly from 5.7% in 1990 to 6.7% in 2015. However, the share of population aged 60 or over in OIC countries is projected to reach 9.3% in 2030. With rapid ageing, families will face challenges in the absence of greater public spending on pensions and support for retired people, and expanded social insurance systems and supplemental funds for supporting home care in OIC countries will become a necessity.

OIC countries have a relatively young population compared to developed countries. In 2015, 26.7% of the world's youth lived in OIC countries and this share is projected to reach 30.9% by 2030. However, youth in OIC countries face high levels of unemployment, which stagnated at around 16% between 2000 and 2017. Youth unemployment remains as a major challenge of marriage and family union as it impedes getting married and starting a family, therefore, increases the age at first marriage and the age at first childbirth. Recently, marriage rates have been declining and divorce rates have been increasing in OIC countries. Consequently, the character of marriage has changed. This is due to social, economic, and technological changes. High divorce rates generate non-traditional formations such as single-parent families whereas low marriage rates constitute a never married category that challenges the traditional family structure.

Social issues regarding youth-family relations and paternal participation pose as a challenge for the marriage and family institution. OIC member countries have some of the highest shares of youth (ages 15-24) in the world. In the 21st century, changing lifestyles and technological advancements have had remarkable effect on the cultural and behavioural attitudes of Muslim youth, which has a significant impact on families. Youth in Muslim societies is becoming increasingly individualistic and consumerist. It is common for them to adopt multiple overlapping identities – even when such identities disrespect socially instituted norms, values and hierarchies. Family life is not the first priority of today's youth and studies show that youth are more willing to sacrifice familial life for professional success. If family policies fail to address concerns related to young people, OIC Member Countries will fail to seize effectively the opportunity offered by the youth bulge to empower marriage and family institutions.

Finally, paternal participation in families is important for their wellbeing. However, in OIC Member Countries, some invisible barriers keep fathers from participating in family lives. Gender roles and social norms routinely obstruct men's participation in family life by limiting their role as breadwinners. Being the financial contributor adds to the difficulty because work pressures also affect men's involvement in the family – especially in low-income families across the OIC. The relations between husband and wife are also critical for men's participation because of certain stereotypes, such as men not being able to assume parenting responsibilities with the children.

F. Educational and Learning Challenges

The starting point of education is within the family and this type of education proves to be more effective at the young age than formal education. For this reason, to have benevolent generations that realize and uphold family values, proper education in the family should be ensured. An important factor in the education at home lies in the education level of parents. The more educated parents are the more likely that they will provide appropriate and effective education to their children. Literacy plays an important role in improving family welfare and national development, therefore, measures to improve youth and adult literacy rates, especially for women, should be elaborated and enhanced at all levels of the society. In the last decade, OIC countries have continuously improved their basic education indicators such as enrolment rates, year of schooling and completion numbers. The rising trends in education attainment is a positive sign for the OIC, however, certain challenges this poses to the marriage and family institution do need attention.

With the increased education participation, particularly tertiary education enrolment, the average age at first marriage starts to rise. Moreover, the expectations of males and females from life show divergences in terms of comfort, income and joy. The increasing educational attainment influences individuals' decision, outlook and desire for marriage. More years spent on education also has a correlation with women's age at first childbirth – increase in educational years also increases women's age at first birth. Family size is also impacted by educational attainment. Better-educated women tend to have smaller families than those less educated. The intersection of education and resultant rising age at first marriage, poses as an important risk for family values and union, and therefore needs to be addressed by OIC countries.

Despite the increase in educational indicators across the OIC, education remains as a challenge for low-income families. Just as increasing educational attainment have certain negative outcomes for the marriage and family institution, low educational rates poses as an obstacle for the health and wellbeing of families and marriages as well. When parents do not have the appropriate education or the skills to acquire a decent living employment, inter-family relations and the healthy and happy development of children are negatively impacted. Hence, there rises a need across the OIC to balance educational attainment and preservation of marriage and family values along with continuing to increase education and skills development of family members.

G. Health Challenges

Various types of health challenges affect the wellbeing of families. Mothers are the primary care-givers for their infants. In this regard, maternal health and wellbeing directly influences the entire sociological and physiological wellbeing of the family. Across the OIC countries, access to reproductive healthcare and general awareness on various maternal and reproductive health interventions is present. Over the years, maternal mortality has witnessed a declining trend across the OIC Members. Nevertheless, maternal mortality rate in OIC Member Countries was 326 deaths per 100,000 births, which is significantly higher than global average. The OIC Programme of Action 2025 also points to the importance of this issue by acknowledging that maternal health is a key factor in empowering women and families. In addition, maternal, newborn and child health and nutrition is one of the six thematic areas of cooperation identified under the OIC Strategic Health Programme of Action (OIC-SHPA) 2014-2023.

High maternal mortality rate in OIC countries is attributed to causes such as poor healthcare services, early marriages, adolescent childbearing and lack of education or awareness. There is a varying degree of stigmatization associated with mental health in OIC Member Countries. Cultural, social, and traditional practices prevalent in OIC countries often run counter to medical interventions focusing on mental illnesses. Stigmas associated with mental illness are visible in people's attitudes, stereotypes, and discriminatory practices. Cultural perceptions of concepts such as honor, shame, morality, spirituality, and approach to mental health interventions often drives families into caring for mentally ill family members within their homes or abandoning them to preserve social reputation. Furthermore, throughout OIC countries, mental healthcare resources are unequally distributed. Access to mental healthcare for individuals and families is also affected by factors such as costs of service, location of service, social status and level of discrimination associated with it.

Families, in the 21st century are affected by macro-societal changes that influence psychological and mental health of family members. Within a family setting, parents or guardians suffering from mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, dementia, or substance abuse severely affects children's development, their performance in school and their psychosocial confidence. While, it is common for childhood traumas to result in adult mental disorders – family policies in OIC countries often do not stress on the need for children's mental healthcare. Similarly, mental disorders amongst youth are inadequately addressed in policies and programs in many OIC countries.

In Islam, special privilege is accorded to family members that care for their elderly. Families in OIC countries tend to be multi-generational (where grandparents live with grandchildren), and the elderly members in families are often the disseminators of cultural traditions and values, and elderly people have significant importance in extended/joint households. These characteristics place elderly population in a position to have significant impacts on a family's well-being. Research shows that caring for an elderly parent or grandparent takes priority as a family obligation in many OIC societies. Therefore, families are more likely to live with their elderly rather than admitting them to dedicated facilities. In such situations, the elderly often assumes the socialization and care of younger members – having influence over their character development. In cases where elderly family members live separately, it is common for their adult children to help them with housework, financial transfers, healthcare visits, etc. For low-income or middle-income families caring for the elderly often becomes a burden because of the economic costs associated with their health, specific requirements such as diet and living conditions. In some cases, the elder family members are provided for economically but are socially neglected due to intergenerational disconnects. In other cases, children might not be able to care for their elder family members due to work pressures. In the worst-case scenario, the elderly family members can experience neglect, abuse, and lack of adequate resources vital to their well-being (such as medicines) at the hands of their families.

Finally, violence in the family serves as a major obstacle to the wellbeing and empowerment of the marriage and family institution. Almost all OIC countries (50 OIC countries) indicated that violence against women is a major concern in their policy agenda. In order to design effective family policies that target reducing familial violence, OIC Member Countries need to assess critically the existing policies on violence against women and children. Overall, health challenges weaken the family by taking away their “normal” functioning and replacing it with various types of strains. Consequently, this leads to unhealthy and dysfunctional families. To empower families, health issues need to be addressed in a manner that protects and guarantees the health of family members.

H. Legal Challenges

An important aspect of empowering the marriage and family institution is to support the religious, cultural and social elements with well-functioning legal instruments. Many families across the OIC face problems due to either the lack of laws or the implementation of existent laws related to the rights of the family as an institution or the rights of individual family members. For example, lack of laws to protect the rights of women, children and people with disabilities place the family in a vulnerable position.

Without the proper protection and support laws, the family institution and desire for marriage weakens. Some of the existing laws and legislations are not adequate or against the spirit of Islamic standards or are not fully implemented to ensure justice and fairness in handling family interests. Not only are legal frameworks important to protect rights of families and their members but legal structures that actively support the continuation, preservation and development of the marriage and family institution is needed. Therefore, across the OIC there is a need to institute laws and legislations that facilitate marriage, protect the rights of husband, wife, and children and preserve the entire family.

I. Challenges Facing Migrant and Refugee Families

International migration is the cross-border movement of people from one country to another because of factors that include conflict, war, natural disasters, economic or academic opportunities, and family unions. Migration can have positive impacts on families in various forms such as reunion, remittances and education and skills development. However, migration also results in negative outcomes for families and OIC countries. These include brain drain, loss of labour force and the breakdown of social cohesion.

Migration poses a risk for family union by affecting their location of residency. Migrant families are often split up across two or more countries because some members of the family need to stay either temporarily or permanently in the country of origin for economic, health, education or other reasons. This translates into family members spending less or no time together, which affects their relations and happiness. Migration due to economic reasons often results in significant number of children living without one or both parents.

For children, unplanned or unwanted changes in time spent with parents reduce the quality and scope of parental education of kids, which is critical for their self-development. While many immigration policies deal with economic costs and legal protection of migrants, issues such as the psychosocial impacts of migration on families are often overlooked. In addition, for individuals (who are not married) migrating to another country often results in delayed marriages because of changes in the living environment and/or financial reasons. In turn, this results in marriages at later age, delayed childbirth and family formation.

Regarding refugee families that are displaced (internally or externally), social exclusion on the basis of their religion, race, gender, ethnicity and language plays a detrimental role in depriving families of their access to social services, representation, access to employment and income, health, education, and basic human rights. Refugee families do not only face problems in host countries but are also victims of conflict, which may result in death of family members, psychological trauma, health risks, lack of education, loss of value system, instability and amongst others severe depression. All these factors ruthlessly influence refugee families, stability, continuity, health and normal functioning.

Addressing migrant families within the framework of family policies is often complicated due to interlinked policy frameworks. In 2015 alone, OIC countries accounted for more than 25 million displaced persons, 24 million internally, and more than 10 million refugees around the world. Given the number of migrants from OIC countries that are currently displaced – inclusion of social protection for migrant families is an urgent policy issue. In the case of OIC Member Countries, policies and programs for social protection can ensure affirmative action by introducing monetary and non-monetary services such as cash transfers, psychological counselling, skills development workshops and marriage and family preservation awareness.

III. AREAS OF STRATEGIC COOPERATION AND ACTIONS

Based on the major issues and challenges discussed above, this section of the strategic document presents 7 critical strategic areas of cooperation and 132 specific strategic action suggestions to strengthen and empower the marriage and family institution across the OIC Member States. The strategic areas of action have been identified after a comprehensive analysis and examination of the current and future challenges, international datasets and a review of the national, regional and international documents of relevance to the marriage and family institution. Under each general strategic area, specific strategic goals are proposed to provide a concrete actionable roadmap for the successful implementation of the strategic objectives. It is important to highlight that each of the 7 strategic areas and 132 strategic initiatives and suggestions beneath them serve to empower the marriage and family institution by contributing to the enhancement of one or more of the all-encompassing principles laid out at the beginning of this document (see Section I) and by addressing the one or more of the challenges discussed in Section II.

Strategic Area 1: Building stable and productive families aiming at nurturing well-balanced citizens playing efficient roles in preservation, participation, prosperity & sustainable development of family and society

The first important strategic objectives of marriage and family institution empowerment is to ensure building stable and productive families without which family will not be able to play its role in sustainable development. As there are many changes facing the marriage and family institution in the Islamic world it becomes obligatory for member countries to facilitate the establishment of new stable and balanced families and enhance the existing ones through providing the necessary support and services. An important aspect of empowering the marriage and family institution is to do it through sustainable development, and at the same time to implement sustainable development through the family. In this respect, it is a two-way relationship where sustainable development should incorporate the marriage and family while marriage and family institution should reinforce sustainable development. This Strategic Area should be considered as an overarching goal for all strategic goals mentioned in this document. OIC countries are aiming to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which many of them either directly or indirectly intersects with the marriage and family institution. Therefore, to achieve the UN SDGs and to incorporate the culture of sustainable development across the OIC, the below strategic goals are presented.

Action/ Initiatives

SG 1.1: Set policies, laws and mechanisms to facilitate legal marriage between man and woman and provide the necessary financial and moral support to encourage the establishment of stable, sustainable and productive families. This includes, among others, encouraging youth to marry and build stable families.

SG1.2: Develop policies, legislations and incentives that enhance and strengthen families' will and desire to become part of sustainable development through linking the goals of family empowerment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, enhancing awareness programmes and educative campaigns about the need for the culture of sustainability and provide funds and support to increase social equity among family members.

SG 1.3: Facilitate marriage through preparing the prospect couples and provide them with pre-marriage knowledge and training on: need for health check-ups before and after marriage, marriage responsibilities and duties, management of the family, parenting, motherhood and fatherhood skills, communication in family, rights and obligations, family planning, family development in line with Islamic values and common norms...etc.

SG 1.4: Urge Member countries to adopt the age of puberty (proposed age between 15-16 years) and the age of marriage (proposed 18) with reference to International Convention on the Rights of the Child, Declaration of the Islamic Organisation for Islamic Cooperation on Human Rights and the Decisions of International Islamic *Fiqh* Academy. (Respective countries to identify as deemed reasonable and in the interest of couples).

SG1.5: Set up specialised family courts and family legal counselling services to respond effectively to the needs of families and solve their problems.

SG 1.6: Encourage the culture and practice of shared family responsibilities and partnership between man and woman in shouldering the duty of building up family and raising up good and well-balanced citizen through awareness, training and media programmes.

SG 1.7: Activate the role of all media to create awareness about the importance of marriage and family institution and the challenges encountered by families, especially needy and poor, divorced, single mother, widow, special needs families.

SG 1.8: Activate the use of culture, arts, communication, films, festivals, and cultural exhibitions to advance the cause of marriage and family institution's development and disseminate the proper understanding about the importance and role of family in societal development through developing partnerships with cultural and social institutions and influencers.

SG 1.9: Introduce and implement relevant Government laws and policies in order to ensure quality development, peace, justice and stability of families in the Islamic world.

SG 1.10: Create awareness about fathers' participation in their children's lives and education through community wide programmes and activities that bring children and fathers together to keep the familial relations alive and healthy. This may include launching platforms to enhance dialogues and interactions between youth and their families over the challenges and issues faced by the family in today's situation and context.

SG 1.11: Introduce joint government and non-government programmes to create awareness and educate families on their roles and responsibilities of raising up children and build healthy and happy family environment by intensify campaigns, awareness training and media programmes in order to address issues of happiness and contentment in family. This might include both the tangible and non-tangible elements affecting happiness in the family.

SG 1.12: Enhance Government commitment and support to NGO's, civil society and private sector influencers in order to contribute to Marriage and Family Institutions building and development.

SG 1.13: Introduce policies and support programmes to assist Marriage and Family Institution in minority countries and migrant families and families facing difficulties in areas of wars and conflicts.

SG 1.14 Introduce preventative measures and strategies to counter elements causing the breakdown of families and marriage bond such as divorce, violence, genetically triggered disease, HIV...etc.

SG1.15: Strengthen the culture of collective decision-making, mutual mitigation of problems in family, dialogue and communication and collective problem solving of family problems through awareness, training and media programmes.

SG1.16: Strengthen the roles of religious leaders and Imams and other relevant civil society players to assume their responsibilities in the dissemination of Islamic and common human values as the basis for the development of stable family and nurturing balanced citizens.

SG 1.17: Come up with integrated comprehensive Guidebooks and other relevant publications on marriage and family issues, family values, women rights, women roles, principles and rulings based on Islamic and human common values.

Strategic Area 2: Improve marriage and family institution's well-being and quality of life standards

An intercutting issue that challenges the strength and preservation of the marriage and family institution is the wellbeing and quality standards of families and couples in the OIC. Improving the quality and wellbeing of families and marital unions in the OIC involves enhancing their economic, social, legal and health related concerns. Strategic Area 1 aims to improve marriage and family institutions wellbeing, healthy life style and promote quality marriage and family lives through urging Member States to enhance further the already existent eco-systems and services offered to family members. By providing and promoting the quality and wellbeing of the marriage and family institution, the strength and empowerment of these important institutions will be feasible and sustained.

Actions/ Initiatives

OIC Member States are specifically advised to consider the following Strategic Goals (SGs) to improve the wellbeing and quality of the marriage and family institution.

SG 2.1: Provide the necessary support for families' especially economic, social, health and educational services based on well-planned schemes and programmes.

SG 2.2: Introduce joint national and provincial level programmes to combat poverty and eradicate hunger in respective countries and address the financial conditions of families with a specific focus on families living in rural and remote areas and those that rely on agriculture as a main source of income, to contribute to the treatment of difficult conditions and the eradication of poverty in society.

SG 2.3: Strengthen justice and equality between men and women in line with Islamic and common human values through clear policies and laws.

SG 2.4: Collect and direct certain percentage of zakat (Almas), donation and endowments to assist disadvantaged and needy deserving families in relevant member countries.

SG 2.5: Increase awareness campaigns and workshops on medical and health issues of families to improve family health options in terms of diet, reproductive and sexual education, physical well-being, good hygiene habits and practices with emphasis on children and youth health and mental health. Special attention to be given to new couples or potential couples via traditional and digital media.

SG 2.6: Create policies to support the elderly within the framework of the traditional and new family structures and functions.

SG 2.7: Make early education of family members compulsory in all Muslim countries and ensure lifelong learning culture is encouraged and institutionalised through enhancing the policies and Laws and work out strategies to encourage free or partially subsidised education or other forms to facilitate education as deemed suitable in respective member countries.

SG2.8: Develop relevant capacity building programmes for family empowerment and training especially newly established families.

SG 2.9: Facilitate childcare arrangements, such as the public provision of childcare, and evaluate them in terms of their extensiveness, quality, social inclusiveness and affordability.

SG 2.10: Develop training programmes and incentives that support and reinforce the role of families in sustainable development activities and train those involved in the implementation of the strategy on marriage and family institution empowerment.

SG 2.11: Promote programmes and policies to prevent early and forced marriages as well as child marriage through clear policies, awareness programmes and media campaigns.

SG 2.12: Develop policies, regulations and incentives to support women to balance between work and their roles as mothers through providing balanced fluid- family-work environment for parents in order to promote childbearing in relevant Muslim Countries. This might also include the regulation and provision of incentives to the private sector to promote family-friendly working environment and schedules.

SG 2.13: Ensure access of the poor families to health care, education, food security, and social services with a view to provide financial support to families and marriages based on conditional basis. For example, families that vaccinate their children can be provided with financial support.

SG 2.14: Improve data collection practices concerning the prevalence of healthcare issues that affect family's well-being and prosperity.

SG 2. 15: Train families on the best approaches and skills of raising up well-balanced children taking into account the different age stages of development and the type of education and taring required in each stage.

SG 2.16: Provide financial support to families caring for children or for a disabled or elderly family member.

Strategic Area 3: Enhancing the preservation and protection of the marriage and family institution

In the 21st century where globalisation and technology has shrunk the space between communities; ideas, concepts and values have also started to interconnect with each other. OIC countries face threats to the marriage and family institution's value system because of the growing dominance of different family patterns, norms and behaviours. At the same time, late marriages or no marriages are also starting to rise across the OIC, which is directly influenced by the new global trends and norms taking hold in OIC Member States. To prevent and counter the intellectual, conceptual, cultural, social and religious challenges, there is a need to implement policies and programmes that preserve and protect the core essence of the marriage and family institution. It is important to preserve the values and ethics of the marriage and family to guarantee the stability, unity and continuity of societies.

Actions/ Initiatives

OIC Member States are specifically advised to consider the following Strategic Goals (SGs) to preserve and protect the value system of the marriage and family institution.

SG 3.1: Promote the role of educational and religious institutions in the preparation and protection of families through designing proper and relevant curricula and programmes catering for families and ensuring balanced development starting from early education and parenting.

SG 3.2: Enforce efficient and preventive measures to criminalize domestic violence and stop all forms of violence in the family especially against women and children such as; physical and sexual abuse, child marriages, sexual harassment, physical and psychological abuse and other forms of violence. This might include: develop specific legislations that prevent harmful practices and raise awareness about the prohibition of domestic violence by Islam, legal provisions and social norms. Ensure enforcement of legal provisions and policy measures adopted against domestic violence

SG 3.3: Establish units/ centres to help with combating violence in family through raising awareness on all forms of violence and develop training programmes for judicial and security personnel on how to recognize and effectively treat victims of domestic violence.

SG 3.4: Develop national strategies and identify priority areas on inter-generational social cohesion and inter-dependence in order to preserve family stability and continuity through activities and programs that can bring youth and elderly people together.

SG 3.5: Develop efficient marriage and family institution's social protection policies and initiatives. This may include, providing monetary benefits, tax exemptions, social services, employment, social rights, housing, childcare, elderly care, medical support, vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families with special needs, and child-headed household.

SG 3.6: Establish family counselling and guidance services and provide legal services for individuals negatively affected in family and marriages matters and improve data collection and monitoring mechanisms at the intra-OIC level on the various forms of violence and their impact on families.

SG 3.7: Enhance the religious, cultural, social and moral values of family development to enable the family to face internal and external challenges through designing special programmes for women, children and youth in order to impart values and ethics in family environment and strengthen the practice of Islamic family code and ethical principles on marriage and family institution.

SG 3.8: Conduct researches and studies on the cause and consequences of drug abuse, crimes, underage marriages, unethical activities of family members, unlawful sexual activities, violence...prescribing the necessary remedies and solutions.

SG 3.9: Urge Member Countries to integrated the topic of marriage and family institution empowerment in the curriculum and university programmes as well as activate the role of schools, universities and related educational institutions in protecting and preserving the essence, core values and functions of the marriage and family institution.

SG 3.10: Address the root causes of divorce, physical abuse, violence, drug abuse, human trafficking and prostitution; stressing on factors such as; unemployment, ignorance, lack of education, poverty, lack of dialogue and communication in family...etc.

SG 3.11: Address the outputs of global conferences and conventions on marriage and family and respond to their negative contents and injunctions from Islamic and cultural perspectives of the Islamic World.

SG 3.12: Provide support and necessary needs to migrant and families in areas of conflicts encountering social, cultural, economic, health and religious challenges in order to safeguard the marriage and family institution and values. This can happen through awareness and advancing families religious, cultural, social and economic rights outside of the OIC at regional and international forums and organisations.

SG 3.13: Support the refugee families and provide them with the necessary needs and services; such as: 1- financial, health care, education, social care, family counselling and guidance, 2- education and training programmes at national and intra-OIC levels, 3- develop data collection,

reporting and monitoring mechanisms on the issues faced by refugee families, 4- defend their case at national and in international forums, 5- design plans to prevent such negative refuge and displacement of families causing them tremendous cultural, religious, social, legal and cultural problems, 6- effectively utilise the funds coming from zakat (alms), donation and endowment to support projects and programs for refugee families and 7- ensure social cohesion of refugee families with local families.

SG 3.14: Provide necessary support to Marriage and Family Institution in minority countries through enabling them to face economic, cultural, social and religious challenges in line with existing laws and norms of relevant countries.

SG 3.15: Form a specialised body or think tank at the level of OIC to cater for the rights of minorities, refugees, and migrants through voicing their rights and supporting the marriage and family institution stability, development and prosperity in line with the Islamic values and teachings.

SG 3.16: Encourage the establishment of legal Muslim Family Associations and civil society bodies to cater for marriage and family preservation and development services.

SG 3.17: Ensure the Laws on family matters include the proper rules to protect family and set the proper measures to ensure the law is adequate and facilitates the establishment of rights and their implementation.

SG 3.18: Provide financial and technical support, as deemed necessary, to local and regional organisations and bodies dealing with issues of violence against women and children.

SG 3.19: Coordinate between government and civil society to address the negative impacts of social media, new technologies and new electronic mediums on youth, children and the solidity and stability of family and society as well. Policies and awareness programmes via all media need to be escalated according to the current situation and context of member countries.

SG3. 20: Support matriarchal families and enhance the role of female leaders in such type of communities in the Islamic world so as the strengthen women participation and family stability and progress through relevant programmes and services.

Strategic Area 4: Widening the participation of families' in all aspects of societal development

When families are negated from participating in different aspects of society their resilience and role as the driver of development are hindered. Many of the challenges discussed in the previous section are the consequence of the lack of participation of families in the economy, social life, and political decision-making process or in the cultural and legal development of societies. In the instance that families are left out of the societal development activities, they are weakened, and their importance is refuted. Therefore, to strengthen and empower the marriage and family institution across the OIC, their productive, efficient and inclusive participation in all aspects of society need to be ensured. For this to happen, governments and societies need to create strong platforms, strategies, legislations, laws, policies, systems and mechanism related to the marriage and family empowerment and participation. It is through successful integration of the family institution into the participation processes that they will fully feel empowered and strengthened. The strategic goals below aim to provide actionable suggestions on how families can be integrated into the participatory processes in all spheres of society.

Actions/Initiatives

OIC Member States are specifically advised to consider the following Strategic Goals (SGs) to integrate the marriage and family institution as a core element of society with full participation.

SG 4.1: Expand the establishment of kindergarten, schools and other educational facilities in urban, commercial, rural and remote areas to facilitate the work of families with children.

SG 4.2: Ensure gender equality through providing equal opportunities for women and girls to access education, health care, decent work and participation in political and economic decision-making.

SG 4.3: Adopt media policies aimed at changing the negative practices and perceptions prevailing in society that hinder the effective participation of the family in the social, economic and political life in relevant countries as well as raise awareness to cope with social stigmas attached to individuals' marital status.

SG4.4: Provide financial and moral support to disadvantaged families and through various programmes and initiatives support their roles in societal development.

SG 4.5: Promote policies that encourage the participation of all family members in the development process, including private sector participation, incentives and microfinance for disadvantaged families and strengthen the role of governmental and non-governmental organizations in supporting civil society networks working on family strengthening platforms.

SG 4.6: Provide vocational training programmes for family members to increase their participation into labour force.

SG 4.7: Improve unemployment benefit schemes based on needs of families with a view to enhancing participation of family in sustainable development activities.

SG 4.8: Establish policies to promote and improve working conditions and create decent, orderly, safe, and fluid working environments for women and promote effective parental leaves including maternity leave, parental childcare leave, paternity leave, and leave for urgent family matter in order to encourage efficient work environments.

SG 4. 9: Create policy frameworks at the national, regional and OIC levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies with a view to support family societal participation.

SG 4.10: Increase number of media programmes and contents that promote and advance the cause and objectives of Marriage and Family Institution; including participation of women and all relevant government actors and players. Issues of stereotypical role of women in family development needs to be highlighted and the negative image to be changed through awareness programmes and best models of successful women participating at all levels

SG 3. 10: Implement flagship women visibility programmes that portrays a positive role of women in sustainable development through using all media especially new networks of communication to advance the urgency of women empowerment and participation in decision making at all levels.

SG 5.11: Raise awareness to cope with social stigmas attached to individuals' marital status.

SG 5.12: Improve the scope and delivery of social security services to include special provisions for families and couples.

SG 4.13: Establish public community centres and recruitment platforms that promote and facilitate communal participation of families.

Strategic Area 5: Strengthening the marriage and family institutions productivity and prosperity

Parallel to the integration of the marriage and family institution into all aspects of society is the concern with the productivity and prosperity of the family. Families and their members is the foundational block of societies and without their economic productivity, it is impossible to talk about the development of communities, countries or regions. Across the OIC, families are facing significant economic challenges in terms of poverty, employment, work conditions,

financial support systems, skills development and youth unemployment. These challenges seriously hinder the health functioning and well-being of families, and consequently, leads to the dysfunction, weakening and breakup of families. Economic conditions also influence marriage and fertility rates. To empower and strengthen families the issues of productivity and prosperity need to be enhanced and strengthened. As families feel economically more secure, their perception of family formation, their health and their contribution to society increases.

Enabling and empowering the marriage and family institution to activate its roles at the level of preservation, participation and productivity paves the way for efficient roles at the level of prosperity and progress for the entire society. Family prosperity does not only refer to the material welfare of families but it also designates the non-material aspects measured by the protection of life, religion, intellect, progeny, moral and ethical preservation along with affluence and happiness. OIC countries attach great importance to the prosperity of families; however, families are having trouble when it comes to their level of prosperity. Some OIC countries with higher per capita GDPs are able to provide economic prosperity for families but are seldom considering the non-material prosperity of the marriage and family institution. Other OIC countries engage more in trying to make families prosper in non-material terms but are having trouble doing so due to economic restraints. Therefore, strengthening the marriage and family institutions prosperity requires implementing the above-mentioned strategic goals for productivity and enhancing the productivity to reach prosperity by also providing non-material guidance, support and empowerment. The strategic goals to be outlined below aim to provide a set of tangible goals to strengthen and empower the marriage and family institution to become more prosperous in all aspects of the term.

Actions/ Initiatives

OIC Member States are specifically urged to consider the following Strategic Goals (SGs) to improve, strengthen and empower the marriage and family institution's productivity and prosperity.

SG 5.1: Ensure decent work and economic growth for families through introducing the necessary laws, policies and relevant specialised programmes by governments in the Islamic World to enhance the employability and productivity of family members especially increasing the employment of youth and provide competencies training related to the need of the labour market.

SG 5.2: Revise economic regulations and policies to increase economic productivity of families and introduce family friendly small and medium businesses and projects to encourage productivity and self-sufficiency.

SG 5.3: Support and facilitate the development of families handled by women or single mothers or widows and orphans through providing social and economic support and services.

SG5.4: Encourage the private sector and wealthy individuals and businesspersons to create family economic empowerment funds in order to support families in occupied territories, refugee and migrant families.

SG5.5: Develop incentive schemes for family-oriented economic activities through government facilitative interventions and provide bank loans, lower or free interest rates, reductions, tax incentives and technical support.

SG 5.6: Introduce particular programmes and policies for rural and remote areas families. For example, specific employment opportunities in rural and remote areas designed to facilitate women's employment and skills development.

SG5.7: Address the various dimensions of poverty, risks and vulnerabilities of families through designing productivity-based approaches to family development.

SG5.8: Make effective labour market reforms based on family needs and flexibility; such as by adopting alternative working systems to encourage more participation of family members and part-time work especially targeting youth and women.

SG5.9: Empower families economically through financial and non-financial support, social services and job creation that is specifically targeted to strengthen families. For example, government quotas on hiring mothers part-time, financial incentives and allowances.

SG 5.10: Develop joint private-public programmes and initiatives to support economic productivity of families.

SG 5.11: Undertake comprehensive research on non-material factors that influences the happiness and prosperity of families and marriages.

SG 5.12: Provide social support systems for divorced families, especially women with children and increase the number of family public services; such as family consultation and mediation.

SG 5.13 Address issues related to family economic and financial strength by providing government and private sector support, financial assistance, bank funding of family based projects, training, and services to engage in productive small and medium enterprise projects.

SG 5.14: Build and provide family friendly cities where the facilities, infrastructure and services are easily accessible and family responsive in order to enhance the smooth and balanced development of family life.

SG 5.15: Raise awareness on the advantages of active ageing and its implications on families' productivity and prosperity.

Strategic Area 6: Enhancing partnership and collaboration on the implementation of marriage and family strategy across the OIC countries

OIC countries differ in their national policies dealing with the marriage and family institution. Some have successfully implemented policies while others are lacking comprehensive approaches to counter the challenges the marriage and family institution face. Nonetheless, OIC countries need to expand, deepen and systemize their cooperation and collaboration on marriage and family policies. Building bridges and enhancing collaboration among OIC Member Countries and stakeholders in matters related to Marriage and family institution is crucial for the family and society. There needs to be platforms and dialogue channels that allow OIC countries to share mutual challenges, knowledge and best practices. The challenges to the marriage and family institution are multi-layered and complex, thus requiring a collaborative approach not only at the national level between OIC countries but also at the level of non-governmental organisations, private sector, civil society actors and communities. All these actors across the OIC need to build channels of communication and standardized approaches to mutually strengthen and empower the marriage and family institution in the Islamic world.

Actions / Initiatives

OIC Member States are specifically advised to consider the following Strategic Goals (SGs) to build platforms, linkages and various forms of mediums to increase cooperation and collaboration amongst OIC Member States regarding marriage and family policies.

SG 6.1: Create networks and linkages with local, regional and international bodies and organizations relevant to the preservation, empowerment and strengthening of the Marriage and Family institution and eco-system.

SG 6.2: Engage local partners such as; community leaders, civil society actors, artists, sportsman and women, scholars and local NGOs across the OIC member countries in the empowerment and development programs and projects related to Family and Marriage.

SG 6.3: Creating effective measures and mechanisms of cooperation and coordination among government and non- government departments and agencies on the effective and efficient implementation of family empowerment & development services and programs.

SG 6.4: Create effective partnerships between governmental and non-governmental institutions to join efforts in supporting the family to play its role in achieving the goals of sustainable development.

SG6.5: Utilise new technologies and means of communication to cost effectively build mediums of communication and provide voice to an increased number of actors on issues related to the family and marriage. However, governments and societies should heed the possible negative impacts and challenges of technology on the fabric of family and societal cohesion and stability.

SG 6.6: Establish OIC level Islamic Network for families with the participation of Member States and relevant organizations in order to provide programmes, space and forums for families and couples' interaction to discuss mutual solutions on family matters.

SG 6.7: Construct an OIC regional platform for marriage and family institution. The regional platform should be composed of a wide range of actors from local influencers to private sector.

SG 6.8: Introduce OIC level cultural and social festivals and special days dedicated particularly to the celebration of families from different countries and cultures.

SG 6.9: Establish consultative joint media groups on how to promote and implement media and promotional activities and programs to encourage effective implementation of Marriage and Family Institution Strategy and report the results and impacts.

SG 6.10: Promote and advertise OIC Marriage and Family strategy at the local, subnational, national and international levels through efficient new advertisement and new media channels, introducing and implementing specific policies and initiatives, facilitating the inter-governmental and intra-governmental and intra-societal sectors partnership and joint projects and promoting participation of women and youth the advertisement activities.

SG 6.11: Use all Media to improve delivery of MaFIES contents and strategies focusing on issues such as; Women, family stability, peace and security, women rights and responsibilities, women empowerment and participation, women work fluid eco-system, women displacement and migration, violence against women and girls/female genital mutilation, Economic and political empowerment, discrimination against women and girls, Gender and climate change, women justice, women educational empowerment...etc.

Strategic Area 7: Strengthen governance and management of the marriage and family institution affairs across the OIC through adequate legislations, policies, laws & governing mechanisms

In addition to the sociological, economic and cultural elements to empower the family and marital union, there is a need to create comprehensive legal frameworks that preserve, promote and support the marriage and family institution. Some OIC countries have national legislations in place regarding the marriage and family institution while others are lacking any form of legislative framework. However, there is a need to develop an OIC level guidance to bring about a standardized and efficient structure to deal with the legal issues facing the family and marriage. Legislations, policies and laws that aim to preserve the marriage and family institution should be developed to support the social, economic and cultural elements. Without the proper legal framework to enhance and strengthen the role of the marriage and family in society, efforts to empower the marriage and family will be limited and ineffective. Therefore,

an OIC level guidance on legislations, policies and laws will enable Member States to better develop, enhance and empower the marriage and family institution in their countries.

Actions/ Initiatives

OIC Member States are specifically advised to consider the following Strategic Goals (SGs) to improve, create or develop legislations, policies and laws to enhance and strengthen the marriage and family institution.

SG 7.1: Set up relevant guidelines and mechanisms to ensure effective coordination, communication and flow of information among relevant players and agencies involved in the implementation of MaFIES at the government and non-government levels.

SG 7.2: Engage the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) and enhance its involvement in the implementation of the OIC strategy for Marriage and Family Institution Empowerment through seeking their experiences especially on human rights matters.

SG 7.3: Create steady and sustainable channels of communication between relevant ministries, agencies and actors regarding marriage and family issues at the OIC and member countries levels.

SG 7.4: Track and monitor the implementation of the OIC MaFIES for the Empowerment of family through provide expert support to OIC countries that need it for the easier and smooth implementation of the strategy.

SG 7.5: Develop relevant and suitable member country key performance indicators and performance indicators on the management and measurement of MaFIES implementation and impact.

SG 7.6: Develop mechanism to track the legal cases involving families and marriages to understand better the issues and challenges and to develop proper solutions.

SG 7.7: Engage family members in the process of coming up with family laws and legislations.

SG 7.8: Embark on research and studies related to family legislations to ensure the existence of proper assessment and factual analysis of family status and context before establishing new laws.

SG 7.9: Use new technologies and effective management approaches and solutions to manage matters related to the marriage and family institution.

SG 7.10: Improve government's Family services and efficient delivery and monitoring.

SG7.11: Improve coordination between government and non-government agencies on coming up with specific policies related to the marriage and family institution and ensure that the legislations, policies and laws are in harmony with the social, communal and cultural norms and practices in Muslim countries.

General Actions/ Initiatives at OIC Level

Aside from the specific Strategic Areas proposed bellow, this item presents general strategic initiatives for OIC Member States to implement for the empowerment of the marriage and family institution. It is meant to encourage OIC member States to come up with focussed breakthrough initiatives that may stimulate and encourage quick change and empowerment of marriage and family institution. The general suggestions outlined are meant to serve as overarching strategic initiatives that are critical to preserve, promote and empower the OIC marriage and family institution. These initiatives are not aimed at specific OIC Member States but are general that should be taken into consideration by all Member States.

OIC Member States are specifically urged to consider the following Strategic Goals (SGs) as general suggestions to empower the marriage and family institution:

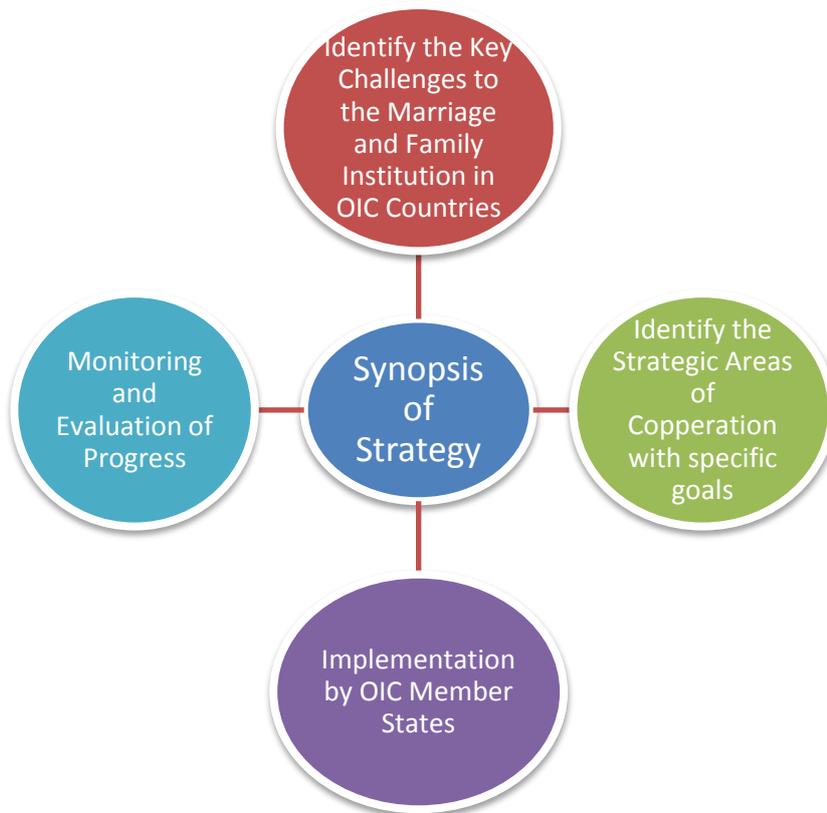
1. Establish specialised committees and mechanisms at the ministerial level to tack and monitor the implementation of the strategy as well as assess the results and impacts. As such, governments need to reinforce regulations and rules related to the empowerment of the family and marriage institution.
2. Establish Steering Committee at OIC level to support Member States and track and monitor progress of the implementation of the family empowerment strategy.
3. Adopt a family perspective in development goals, focusing on development programmes and projects that make the family and household economy at the heart of economic plans, and make family empowerment and stability a priority in national policies in member states.
4. Commit and link the goals of Marriage and Family Institution development and empowerment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through encouraging social equity, environment and resources protection, maximisation of social development, women rights and participation, eradication of poverty and hunger and implementation of relevant SDGs to family development.
5. Urge Member States of the OIC to make vigorous efforts to adopt an integrated approach to national policies on the marriage and family institution, including the strengthening of the role of family in nurturing Muslim personality and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms such as; the rights of women, children, youth and the elderly and those with special needs, and to preserve the educational and moral values that guarantee the support and empowerment of the family.
6. Enhance mechanisms of national, regional and international cooperation and coordination to address family issues and engage with other international agencies and bodies.
7. Urge OIC Member States to transform the moral responsibility of parents towards children into specific and enforceable commitments, while seeking to include those commitments in national programs and plans that address marriage and family issues in Muslim societies.
8. Engage and channel the government financial support for marriage and family institution empowerment through recognised NGOs and civil society players, organisations and actors as an effective mechanism to support deserving families in urban, rural, and remote areas.
9. Form honorary councils/ Boards of Businessmen and women and wealthy individuals and companies willing to support marriage and family institution empowerment projects through raising funds and securing grants.
10. Activate the role of partnership between government agencies, local and regional authorities and civil society in educating individuals and groups through strengthening the local media for its important role in spreading awareness, achieving complementarity and cooperation among them, and holding periodic meetings between parents and educational institutions to discuss the best ways to raise children and give them virtuous moral values, and to discourage them from any immoral behaviour.
11. Carry out awareness campaigns for youth, families and society on the importance of the family and its role in the education of children. These campaigns include schools, institutes, cultural and social centres, factories, the media, social media, and activating the role of civil society in family development and empowerment activities. Also, instil culture and values, which build good morals in children and family members.
12. Utilise all forms of media and social media, publications and other awareness materials, along with the engagement of educational, social, religious and cultural institutions to safeguard the stability of marriage and family institution from cultural threats, value free community concepts and destructive internal and external elements and challenges.
13. Strengthen the capacity and roles of educational institutions and social centres working on family empowerment programmes and trainings.

14. Build marriage and family empowerment national policies and initiatives upon a sound analysis of the root causes and impacts of divorce, poverty, violence, abuse, terrorism, and the challenges facing the substance of marriage and family institution in the Islamic world.
15. Embark on marriage and family institution comprehensive capacity building programmes in order to empower relevant families in Member States, Muslim Minority Countries and in conflict and war Countries. Bodies such as; IDB, ISF, private sectors, business communities and societal players are urged to support these initiatives and efforts.
16. Strengthen the role of culture and cultural institutions in the empowerment and preservation of Marriage and family institution in the Islamic world.
17. Come up with an OIC level media and promotion strategy specifically for marriage and family institution empowerment in the Islamic world.
18. Establish an OIC level committee and mechanism to oversee and propose solutions to challenges facing migrant, refuge and displaced families. The mechanism shall engage the main players including; officials, representatives of ministries, private sector, business community and civil society representatives.
19. Create mechanisms to implement the international and regional agreements, treatise and conventions on Marriage and Family Institution taking into consideration the national policies, Laws and sovereignty.
20. Establish databases to provide statistics and data mining on economic, health, legal, social...aspects of the status of Marriage and Family Institution in the Islamic World. As such, a concentration on acquiring greater data on the family and marriage should be aimed for across the OIC Member States.
21. Provide necessary financial and moral support to marriage and family institution encountering occupation especially (Palestine) and other countries in situations of conflicts and wars to lessen their burden and to promote their case in all possible platforms and forums. Special measures need to be taken to support the Palestinian family in its struggle against the occupier.
22. Provide necessary support to migrant families and protect their rights, and connect them with their countries of origin through establishing related policies, conducting relevant researches, encouraging the civil society and private sector to support migrating families' wellbeing, strengthening families' religious and cultural identity and unity, benefiting from family members' expertise in the country of origin, supporting the local and international agencies working in areas of family empowerment, facilitating the return of families to their countries, assisting with issues of mix marriages, divorce and needy families and protecting families from all forms of violence, ethnic cleansing, rape, harassment, islamophobia, ... etc.
23. Provide necessary support to marriage and family institution in Muslim minority countries through protecting their rights, conducting relevant researches on their situations, encouraging the civil society and private sector to support minorities' well-being, strengthening families' religious, educational and cultural identity and unity and supporting families in areas of conflicts.
24. Support displaced families due to wars, conflicts, breakdown and other forms of displacement through providing them with their needs, rights and related requirements of life. Design plans and undertake the necessary measures to prevent such negative migration and displacement of families causing them tremendous cultural, religious, social, legal and cultural problems.
25. Intensify relations and cooperation among member countries in areas of mutual benefit and interest pertaining to marriage and family institution empowerment through: sharing best practices, conducting join researches and studies, implementing joint programmes and facing family challenges in the spirit of cooperation and mutual benefit.

- 26.** Support the efforts of the OIC General Secretariat in finding and proposing efficient ways and means of encouraging marriage and building stable and precocious families benefiting from the best models and practices of some member countries.
- 27.** Establish national level committees and network of civil society agents and organisations working in the field of marriage and family empowerment in order to exchange expertise and collectively address the challenges facing the family in the Islamic world.
- 28.** Urge Member Countries to unite their stands at the international level towards the decisions of Human Right Council especially those contradicting the views of the OIC in order to protect marriage and family institution interests and values in the Islamic World.
- 29.** Allocate reasonable budget specifically for the empowerment of the marriage and family institution in national budgets. It is left to the member countries to decide on the most appropriate allocations for this purpose.

IV. THE WAY FORWARD

The situation regarding the marriage and family institution in the Muslim world is not as negative as it is in the developed countries. However, the trends across the OIC Member States that they are increasingly starting to experience negative influences from the global trends and will continue to experience a rise in these trends. Therefore, it is critical that the OIC Member States take action now to reverse the already negative influences on the marriage and family institution and more importantly to prevent the growing challenges to the marriage and family in OIC countries. The most efficient and productive way to counter these challenges is to realize the importance of the marriage and family institution for the development and prosperity of society and within this framework empower the marriage and family organisation in all aspects as the building block of communities, societies and humanity.



Within this framework, this strategic document has outlined nine major areas posing a challenge to the marriage and family institution across the OIC. To overcome these challenges and empower the marriage and family institution in OIC Member States, the document proposed seven Strategic Areas with 132 specific Strategic Goals (SGs). It also proposed 30 KPIs for at the OIC level for the purpose of measuring the performance and achieving the strategic objectives.

All of the Strategic Areas and Strategic Goals aim to empower the marriage and family institution by countering the immediate and the foreseeable challenges that OIC Member States face. This requires OIC countries to take a strong commitment and significant steps in marriage and family policy-making and implementation. Such a commitment should involve the utilization of constructive cooperation amongst OIC Member States in terms of experience and knowledge sharing as well as resource management.

Improving the situation of the marriage and family institution across the OIC also necessitates the establishment of effective coordination mechanisms that stretch from national, regional to international levels.

It is through empowerment that families and marital unions become a dynamic and productive agent of social development. In this regard, this strategy promotes the preservation, participation, productivity, prosperity and positive sustainable development of families and marital unions for OIC Member States. To achieve such a goal, a holistic and collective approach of empowerment is necessary to ensure the strength, stability, continuity, safety and well-being of the marriage and family institution in the OIC. In line with this view, the strategic document calls for the effective, timely and coordinated implementation of the proposed strategic goals. The implementation and coordination mechanism should be coupled with a systematic reporting system to collect up-to-date information about planned, implemented and completed policies and activities undertaken by OIC Member States and OIC institutions to track the progress, strengths and weaknesses.

The Next Step

This strategy document has consolidated the strategic objectives, strategic initiatives and the key performance indicators showing the bigger picture of what needs to be done as far as the OIC Strategy for the empowerment of MaFI is concerned. It provided a platform and framework for shared efforts towards empowering MaFI in the Islamic world. The important next step is form OIC and Member States level implementation laboratories and specialized groups to come up with time line and specific prioritized plans and programs to kick off the implementation of the OIC strategy for the empowerment of MaFI.

There must be champion for the implementation and reporting of achievements and results. Constant communication with relevant stakeholders and their engagement in the implementation of strategies and action plans is crucial.

The buy-in for the implementation of this strategy needs to be geared up and promoted to relevant authorities and stakeholders. Media and communication shall play important roles towards making this strategy acceptable and implementable to different stakeholders and implementable at OIC, Members States, society, institutional, family and individual Levels.

In order to ensure the implementation and monitoring of this strategy the following guidelines are in place:

- 1- Identify and set up the proper KPIs and indicators suitable and relevant to the context and conditions of each member country.
- 2- The OIC to form a specialized team to align and cascade down the KPIs at OIC level and put the necessary measures for their implementation.
- 3- Specify the expected outcomes and results that contribute the achievements of the goals and targets.
- 4- Identify and allocate the necessary recourses, people, processes and measures needed for the efficient implementation of this strategy.
- 5- Engaging in ongoing communication and conversation with stakeholders and implementers to ensure synergy and coordination of impactful actions and efforts.
- 6- Set up OIC level monitoring and reporting and performance assessment on the basis of the KPIs and indicators.
- 7- Ensuring continuous feedback to improve performance at all levels.
- 8- Ensuring that the delivery of strategy is up to the standards and follows the norms of efficient and effective delivery to save cost, time and resources. Coordination and liaison among the actors and implementers is crucial. As such, good governance, effective management, exchange of information sharing of best practices, dynamic

benchmarking, synergy and performance based action will pay off and assist in achieving the desired goals and results.

- 9- Monitoring and reporting at OIC and member States levels are crucial for on-going review of actions and programs ensuring desired impact. The monitoring and reporting might be quarterly or biannual or yearly or by period and project depending on the type of programs and projects being implemented.
- 10- Evaluation and assessment of strategies, actions, results and outcomes is crucial for analyzing the success and failure as well as making the necessary changes and articulations needed in the course of implementation. This will help improve goals, strategies, policies, plans, programmes and projects.
- 11- Consolidated the data and information from all OIC member countries on KPIs of MaFIE and provided the necessary reports and results to allow members to analysis and make the necessary changes and actions towards achieving the desired result and outcomes.
- 12- Disseminate and promote the success and best achievement and practices to member states as a way of sharing and benchmarking for mutual benefit.
- 13- OIC to aggregate the information from different member States on the implementation of KPIs of MaFIE and develop the OIC level report on the progress and achievements of results and goals. This will help in developing an OIC level referral mechanisms for effective delivery and monitoring of the strategy for the empowerment of MaFI in the Islamic world.
- 14- Promote engagement of civil society, NGOs, religious groups, the private sector and all other partners locally and internationally to create
- 15- Create sensitization and awareness about the importance of MaFIE strategy and its future impact on member States' Family policies and societal development.
- 16- Ensure that all levels of implementation and intervention are synergized and coordinated for the achievement of desired goals and results. These are the main levels that need to be synergized:



ANNEX A: SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC AREAS AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Area of Cooperation (Strategic Areas)	Proposed Actions/ Initiatives	Bodies Responsible	Time Fra me	Focus
Strategic Area 1 Establish stable and productive families aiming at nurturing well-balanced citizens playing efficient roles in preservation, participation, prosperity & sustainable development of family and society (17 initiatives)	SG 1.1: Set policies, Laws and mechanisms to facilitate legal marriage between man and woman and provide the necessary financial and moral support to encourage the establishment of stable and productive families. This includes, among others, encouraging youth to marry and build stable families.	Government, relevant Ministries and agencies	1-3 year	Facilitating marriage
	SG1.2: Develop policies, legislations and incentives that enhance and strengthen families' will and desire to become part of sustainable development through linking the goals of family empowerment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, enhancing awareness programmes and educative campaigns about the need for the culture of sustainability and provide funds and support to increase social equity among family members.	Government, relevant Ministries and agencies/ NGOs/ Civil Society		Sustainable Development Based Marriage and Family Institution
	SG 1.3: Facilitate marriage through preparing the prospect couples and provide them with pre-marriage knowledge and training on: need for health check-ups before and after marriage, marriage responsibilities and duties, management of the family, parenting, motherhood and fatherhood skills, communication in family, rights and obligations, family planning, family development in line with Islamic values and common norms...etc.	Government, relevant Ministries and agencies/ NGOs/ Civil Society		Pre- marriage Knowledge, courses and training about marriage for Prospect couples
	SG 1.4: Urge Member countries to adopt the age of puberty (proposed age between 15-16 years) and the age of marriage (proposed 18) with reference to International Convention on the Rights of the Child, Declaration of the Islamic Organisation for Islamic Cooperation on Human Rights and the Decisions of International Islamic <i>Fiqh</i> Academy. (respective countries to identify as deemed reasonable and in the interest of couples)	Government, relevant Ministries and agencies/ Islamic legal and Shari'ah authorities		Age of Puberty and Age of Marriage
	SG1.5: Set up specialised family courts and family legal counselling services to respond effectively to the needs of families and solve their problems.	Government, relevant Ministries and agencies		Family Courts and Counselling Services
	SG 1.6: Encourage the culture and practice of shared family responsibilities and partnership between man and woman in shouldering the duty of building up family and raising up good and well-balanced citizen through awareness, training and media programmes.	Ministries of family affairs/ Families/ NGOs		Family Shared Responsibility

	SG1.7: Activate the role of all media to create awareness about the importance of marriage and family institution and the challenges encountered by families, especially needy and poor, divorced, single, special needs families...	Government, Media agencies	Role of Media
	SG 1.8: Activate the use of culture, arts, communication, films, festivals, and cultural exhibitions to advance the cause of marriage and family institution's development and disseminate the proper understanding about the importance and role of family in societal development through developing partnerships with cultural and social institutions and influencers.	Government, relevant ministries of culture, youth and sports agencies, NGOs, Civil Society	Role of culture and Arts
	SG 1.9: Introduce and implement relevant Government laws and policies in order to ensure quality development, peace, justice and stability of families in the Islamic world.	Government and relevant ministries and agencies	Government Policies and Family Development
	SG 1.10: Create awareness about fathers' participation in their children's lives and education through community wide programmes and activities that brings children and fathers together to keep the familial relations alive and healthy. This may include launching platforms to enhance dialogues and interactions between youth and their families over the challenges and issues faced by the family in today's situation and context.	Relevant ministries (education, media, social and family affairs, agencies, NGOs and civil society, Families)	Parents Engagement in Children raising up
	SG 1.11: Introduce joint government and non-government programmes to create awareness and educate families on their roles and responsibilities of raising up children and build healthy and happy family environment by intensify campaigns, awareness training and media programmes in order to address issues of happiness and contentment in family. This might include both the tangible and non-tangible elements affecting happiness in the family.	Government, relevant ministries NGOs, civil society,	Family Happiness
	SG 1.12: Reiterate Government commitment and support to NGO's, civil society and private sector influencers in order to contribute to Marriage and Family Institution building and development.	Government/NGOs, Private Sector	Government support to NGOs and Civil Society
	SG 1.13: Introduce policies and support programmes to assist Marriage and Family Institution in minority countries and migrant families and families facing difficulties in areas of wars and conflicts.	Government, Private Sectors, International Organisations, Civil Society,	Family in Minority and migrant families

	SG 1.14: Introduce preventative measures and strategies to counter elements causing the breakdown of families and marriage bond such as divorce, violence, genetically triggered disease, HIV...etc.	Government, relevant ministries (Justice, health, family and social affairs, agencies.		Preventive Measure to stop the breakdown of Families
	SG1.15: Strengthen the culture of collective decision-making, mutual mitigation of problems in family, dialogue and communication and collective problem solving of family problems through awareness, training and media programmes.	Relevant ministries, bodies and agencies, NGOs, families		Collective decision making and problem solving
	SG1.16: Strengthen the roles of religious leaders and Imams and other relevant civil society players to assume their responsibilities in the dissemination of Islamic and common human values as the basis for the development of stable family and nurturing balanced citizens.	Ministries of Religious affairs, religious institutions, Civil society		Role of Religious Leaders
	SG1.17: Come up with integrated comprehensive Guidebooks and other relevant publications on marriage and family issues, family values, women rights, women roles, principles and rulings based on Islamic and human common values.	Government agencies, NGOs, universities....		Family Guidebooks
Strategic Area 2: Improve Family & Marriage Institution Well-being & Quality of Life Standards (16 initiatives)	SG 2.1: Provide the necessary support for families' especially economic, social, health and educational services based on well-planned schemes and programmes.	Relevant Authorities and ministries, Civil Society, Private Sector	5 years	Comprehensive Services
	SG 2.2: Introduce joint national and provincial levels programmes to combat poverty and eradicate hunger in respective countries and address the financial conditions of families with a specific focus on families living in rural and remote areas and those that rely on agriculture as a main source of income, to contribute to the treatment of difficult conditions and the eradication of poverty in society.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs.		Combat Poverty and Hunger in rural and remote areas
	SG 2.3: Strengthen justice and equality between men and women in line with Islamic and common human values through clear policies and laws.	Relevant Authorities and ministries/ relevant agencies		Justice and Equality
	SG 2.4: Collect and direct certain percentage of zakat (Almas), donation and endowments to assist disadvantaged and needy deserving families in relevant member countries.	Relevant Authorities and ministries, Civil Society,		Effective Use of Zakat & endowment

SG 2.5: Increase awareness campaigns and workshops on medical and health issues of families to improve family health options in terms of diet, reproductive and sexual education, physical well-being, good hygiene habits and practices with emphasis on children and youth health and mental health. Special attention to be given to new couples or potential couples via traditional and digital media.	Relevant Authorities and ministries, Civil Society,		Health Support
SG 2.6: Create policies to support the elderly within the framework of the traditional and new family structures and functions.	Government, relevant Ministries and agencies		Elderly Support
SG 2.7: Make early education of family members compulsory in all Muslim countries and ensure lifelong learning culture is encouraged and institutionalised through enhancing the policies and Laws and work out strategies to encourage free or partially subsidised education or other forms to facilitate education as deemed suitable in respective member countries.	Government, relevant Ministries and agencies		Educational Support
SG2.8: Develop relevant capacity building programmes for family empowerment and training especially newly established families.	Relevant Authorities and ministries, Civil Society,		Capacity Building Programmes
SG 2.9: Facilitate childcare arrangements, such as the public provision of childcare, and evaluate them in terms of their extensiveness, quality, social inclusiveness and affordability.	Relevant Authorities and ministries, Civil Society,		Childcare
SG 2.10: Develop training programmes and incentives that support and reinforce the role of families in sustainable development activities and train those involved in the implementation of marriage and family institution empowerment strategy.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs.		Training workers Senegal
SG 2.11: Promote programmes and policies to prevent early and forced marriages as well as child marriage through clear policies, awareness programmes and media campaigns.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs.		Early and forced marriage
SG 2.12: Develop policies, regulations and incentives to support women to balance between work and their roles as mothers through providing balanced fluid- family-work environment for parents in order to promote childbearing in relevant Muslim Countries. This might also include the regulation and provision of incentives to the private sector to promote family-friendly working environment and schedules.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs.		Fluid Family work ecosystem

	SG 2.13: Ensure access of the poor families to health care, education, food security, and social services with a view to provide financial support to families and marriages based on conditional basis. For example, families that vaccinate their children can be provided with financial support.	Government, relevant ministries,		Poor Families services
	SG 2.14 Improve data collection practices concerning the prevalence of healthcare issues that affect family's well-being and prosperity.	Government, relevant ministries and agencies		Data on MaFIES
	SG 2.15: Train families on the best approaches and skills of raising up well-balanced children taking into account the different age stages of development and the type of education and training required in each stage.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, universities, training centers		Raising up children based on requirement of each Age stage
	SG 2.16: Provide financial support to families caring for children or for a disabled or elderly family member.			Support Special Needs Families and elderly
Strategic Area 3: Enhancing the preservation and protection of the Marriage and Family Institution (20 initiatives)	SG 3.1: Promote the role of educational and religious institutions in the preparation and protection of families through designing proper and relevant curricula and programmes catering for families and ensuring balanced development starting from early education and parenting.	Educational institutions, Religious institutions, media institutions, ISESCO, AARU, ALECSO, universities	5 years	Role of Religious Institutions
	SG 3.2: Enforce efficient and preventive measures to criminalize domestic violence and stop all forms of violence in the family especially against women and children such as; physical and sexual abuse, child marriages, sexual harassment, physical and psychological abuse and other forms of violence. This might include develop specific legislations that prevent harmful practices and raise awareness about the prohibition of domestic violence by Islam, legal provisions and social norms. Ensure enforcement of legal provisions and policy measures adopted against domestic violence	Government, relevant ministries and authorities		Criminalise Violence

	<p>SG 3.3: Establish units/ centres to help with combating violence in family through raising awareness on all forms of violence and develop training programmes for judicial and security personnel on how to recognize and effectively treat victims of domestic violence.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs.</p>	<p>Training on handling Violence in Family</p>
	<p>SG 3.4: Develop national strategies and identify priority areas on inter-generational social cohesion and inter-dependence in order to preserve family stability and continuity through activities and programmes that can bring youth and elderly people together</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs.</p>	<p>Family Inter-generation Continuity</p>
	<p>SG 3.5: Develop efficient marriage and family institution’s social protection policies and initiatives. This may include, providing monetary benefits, tax exemptions, social services, employment, social rights, housing, childcare, elderly care, medical support, vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families with special needs, child headed household.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries and agencies</p>	<p>Family Social Protection</p>
	<p>SG 3.6: Establish family counselling and guidance services and provide legal services for individuals negatively affected in family and marriages matters and improve data collection and monitoring mechanisms at the intra-OIC level on the various forms of violence and their impact on families.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs.</p>	<p>Family Counselling Services</p>
	<p>SG 3.7: Enhance the religious, cultural, social and moral values of family development to enable the family to face internal and external challenges through designing special programmes for women, children and youth in order to impart values and ethics in family environment and strengthen the practice of Islamic family code and ethical principles on marriage and family institution.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs.</p>	<p>Family Value System Educating Families on Islamic Family Code</p>
	<p>SG 3.8: Conduct researches and studies on the causes and consequences of drug abuse, crimes, underage marriages, unethical activities of family members, unlawful sexual activities, violence and prescribe the necessary remedies and solutions.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, SESRIC, Universities, specialized centres</p>	<p>Research on Family challenges and problems</p>

	<p>SG 3.9: Urge Member Countries to integrated the topic of marriage and family institution empowerment in the curriculum and university programmes as well as activate the role of schools, universities and related educational institutions in protecting and preserving the essence, core values and functions of the marriage and family institution.</p>	<p>relevant ministries (education, higher education), Private Sector, NGOs, SESRIC, Universities, specialized centres</p>	<p>Role of educational institutions</p> <p>OIC</p>
	<p>SG 3.10: Address the root causes of divorce, physical abuse, violence, drug abuse, human trafficking and prostitution; stressing on factors such as; unemployment, ignorance, lack of education, poverty, lack of dialogue and communication in family...etc.</p>	<p>relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, SESRIC, Universities, specialized centres</p>	<p>Root cause of Diverse, poverty, extremism</p>
	<p>SG 3.11: Address the outputs of global conferences and conventions on marriage and family and respond to their negative contents and injunctions from Islamic and cultural perspectives of the Islamic World.</p>	<p>relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, SESRIC, Universities, specialized centres, OIC, ISESCO, ALESCO...</p>	<p>Negative Elements against MaFI</p>
	<p>SG 3.12: Provide support and necessary needs to migrant and families in areas of conflicts encountering social, cultural, economic, health and religious challenges in order to safeguard the marriage and family institution and values. This can happen through awareness and advancing families religious, cultural, social and economic rights outside of the OIC at regional and international forums and organisations.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, OIC</p>	<p>Support Migrant and families in areas of conflicts and wars.</p>
	<p>SG 3.13: Support the refugee families and provide them with the necessary needs and services; such as: 1- financial, health care, education, social care, family counselling and guidance, 2- education and training programmes at national and intra-OIC levels, 3- develop data collection, reporting and monitoring mechanisms on the issues faced by refugee families, 4- defend their case at national and in international forums, 5- design plans to prevent such negative refuge and displacement of families causing them tremendous cultural, religious, social, legal and cultural problems, 6- effectively utilise the funds coming from zakat (alams), donation and endowment to support projects and programs for refuge families and 7- ensure social cohesion of refugee families with local families.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, OIC, educational, religious and cultural institutions...</p>	<p>Support for refuge families</p>

	<p>SG 3.14: Provide necessary support to Marriage and Family Institution in minority countries through enabling them to face economic, cultural, social and religious challenges in line with existing laws and norms of relevant countries.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, OIC, educational, religious and cultural institutions...</p>	<p>Support Family in Minorities</p>
	<p>SG 3.15: Form a specialised body or think tank at the level of OIC to cater for the rights of minorities, refugees, and migrants through voicing their rights and supporting the marriage and family institution stability, development and prosperity in line with the Islamic values and teachings.</p>	<p>OIC, IPHRC, member countries, relevant international organisations</p>	<p>Think tank to cater for minorities, refugees and migrants</p>
	<p>SG 3.16: Encourage the Establish of legal Muslim Family Associations and civil society bodies to cater for marriage and family preservation and development services.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, OIC,</p>	<p>Civil Society Agents and associations for MaFIE</p>
	<p>SG 3.17: Ensure the Laws on family matters include the proper rules to protect family and set the proper measures to ensure the law is adequate and facilitates the establishment of rights and their implementation.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, OIC</p>	<p>Rules and Laws to protect Family</p>
	<p>SG 3.18: Provide financial and technical support, as deemed necessary, to local and regional organisations and bodies dealing with issues of violence against women and children.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, OIC, Banks...donors</p>	<p>Support for local and International Organisations working of preventing Violence</p>
	<p>SG 3.19: Coordinate between government and civil society to address the negative impacts of social media, new technologies and new electronic mediums on youth, children and the solidity and stability of family and society as well. Policies and awareness programmes via all media need to be escalated according to the current situation and context of member countries.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, OIC, educational, religious and cultural institutions, media...</p>	<p>Negative impact of social media and new technology on family</p>

	SG3. 20: Support matriarchal families and enhance the role of female leaders in such type of communities in the Islamic world so as the strengthen women participation and family stability and progress through relevant programmes and services.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs,		Support Matriarchal Family
Strategic Area 4: Widen Family Members’ Participation in all Aspects of Societal Sustainable Development (13 initiatives)	SG 4.1: Expand the establishment of kindergarten, schools and other educational facilities in urban, commercial, rural and remote areas to facilitate the work of families with children.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, Donor and funders	5 years	Create facilities for family development
	SG 4.2: Ensure gender equality through providing equal opportunities for women and girls to access education, health care, decent work and participation in political and economic decision-making	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector,		Gender Equality and participation
	SG 4.3: Adopt media policies aimed at changing the negative practices and perceptions prevailing in society that hinder the effective participation of the family in the social, economic and political life in relevant countries as well as raise awareness to cope with social stigmas attached to individuals’ marital status.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, civil society		Media & Change of Negative Perception about Family participation
	SG4.4: Provide financial and moral support to disadvantaged families and through various programmes and initiatives support their roles in societal development.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, civil society		Disadvantaged Families
	SG 4.5: Promote policies that encourage the participation of all family members in the development process, including private sector participation, incentives and microfinance for disadvantaged families and strengthen the role of governmental and non-governmental organizations in supporting civil society networks working on family strengthening platforms.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, civil society		Family participation in Development processes
	SG 4.6: Provide vocational training programmes for family members to increase their participation into labour force.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, civil society		Vocational Training
	SG 4.7: Improve unemployment benefit schemes based on needs of families with a view to enhancing participation of family in sustainable development activities.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector,		Unemployment Benefits

	SG 4.8: Establish policies to promote and improve working conditions and create decent, orderly, safe, and fluid working environments for women and promote effective parental leaves including maternity leave, parental childcare leave, paternity leave, and leave for urgent family matter in order to encourage efficient work environments.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, civil society		Parental Leaves Facilities
	SG 4.9: Create policy frameworks at the national, regional and OIC levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies with a view to support family societal participation.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGO, OIC		Policies on Poor and Gender Strategies
	SG 4.10: Increase number of media programmes and contents that promote and advance the cause and objectives of Marriage and Family Institution; including participation of women and all relevant government actors and players. Issues of stereotypical role of women in family development needs to be highlighted and the negative image to be changed through awareness programmes and best models of successful women participating at all levels.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, civil society Media agencies, OIC		Media Programs addressing the negative Stereotypical role of women
	SG 4.11: Implement flagship women visibility programmes that portrays a positive role of women in sustainable development through using all media especially new networks of communication to advance the urgency of women empowerment and participation in decision making at all levels.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, civil society		Flagship women Visibility Programs
	SG 4.12: Improve the scope and delivery of social security services to include special provisions for families and couples.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, civil society		Social Security Delivery
	SG 4.13: Establish public community centres and recruitment platforms that promote and facilitate communal participation of families.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, civil society		Platforms for Family Members Recruitment
Strategic Area 5 Strengthen the Marriage and Family Institutions' Productivity & Prosperity	SG 5.1: Ensure decent work and economic growth for families through introducing the necessary laws, policies and relevant specialised programmes by governments in the Islamic World to enhance the employability and productivity of family members especially increasing the employment of youth and provide competencies training related to the need of the labor market.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, civil society	5 years	Job seeking and employability

(15 initiatives)	SG 5.2: Revise economic regulations and policies to increase economic productivity of families and introduce family friendly small and medium businesses and projects to encourage productivity and self-sufficiency.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector,	Productivity and Family Small and Medium Businesses
	SG 5.3: Support and facilitate the development of families handled by women or single mothers or widows and orphans through providing social and economic support and services.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, civil society	Support Family handled by women and widows
	SG5.4: Encourage the private sector and wealthy individuals and businesspersons to create family economic empowerment funds in order to support families in occupied territories and refugee and migrant families.	Private Sector, banks, funders, donors, wealthy individuals, IDB, other Islamic banks	Family economic empowerment
	SG5.5: Develop incentive schemes for family-oriented economic activities through government facilitative interventions and provide bank loans, lower or free interest rates, reductions, tax incentives and technical support.	Government, relevant ministries (economics, finance), Private Sector, banks	Family Loans
	SG 5.6: Introduce particular programmes and policies for rural and remote areas families. For example, specific employment opportunities in rural and remote areas designed to facilitate women's employment and skills development.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, civil society	Support for rural and remote areas families
	SG 5.7: Address the various dimensions of poverty, risks and vulnerabilities of families through designing productivity-based approaches to family development.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector,	Vulnerable families
	SG 5.8: Make effective labour market reforms based on family needs and flexibility; such as by adopting alternative working systems to encourage more participation of family members and part-time work especially targeting youth and women.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector,	Family Friendly Labour Market
	SG 5.9: Empower families economically through financial and non-financial support, social services and job creation that is specifically targeted to strengthen families. For example, government quotas on hiring mothers part-time, financial incentives and allowances.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector,	Economic empowerment

	SG 5.10: Develop joint private-public programmes and initiatives to support economic productivity of families.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, banks		Joint Public-private initiatives
	SG 5.11: Undertake comprehensive research on non-material factors that influence the happiness and prosperity of families and marriages.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, SESRIC, universities, research centres...		Research on prosperity of Family
	SG 5.12: Provide social support systems for divorced families, especially women with children and increase the number of family public services; such as family consultation and mediation.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, civil society players		Mediation and reconciliation
	SG 5.13: Address issues related to family economic and financial strength by providing government and private sector support, financial assistance, bank funding of family based projects, training, and services to engage in productive small and medium enterprise projects.	Government, relevant ministries (economics, finance, human resources, planning), Private Sector, banks		Family Economic Empowerment
	SG 5.14: Build and provide family friendly cities where the facilities, infrastructure and services are easily accessible and family responsive in order to enhance the smooth and balanced development of family life.	Government, relevant ministries Private Sector, banks		Family Friendly Cities
	SG 5.15: Raise awareness on the advantages of active ageing and its implications on families' productivity and prosperity.	Government, relevant agencies, NGOs, civil society, p Private Sector,		Active Aging
Strategic Area 6: Enhance Partnership and Collaboration among Government, Non-Government, Private Sectors	SG 6.1: Create networks and linkages with local, regional and international bodies and organizations relevant to the preservation, empowerment and strengthening of the Marriage and Family institution and eco-system.	Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, International agencies, civil society, OIC	1-3 years	Networks and Linkages

<p>and Related Influencers on the Implementation of Marriage and Family Policies and Strategies in the Islamic World</p> <p>(11 initiatives)</p>	<p>SG 6.2: Engage of local partners such as; community leaders, civil society actors, artists, sportsman and women, scholars and local NGOs across the OIC member countries in the empowerment and development programs and projects related to Family and Marriage.</p>	<p>relevant ministries, Private Sector, NGOs, civil society, OIC</p>	<p>Engagement of Influencers and NGOs</p>
	<p>SG 6.3: Creating effective measures and mechanisms of cooperation and coordination among government and non- government departments and agencies on the effective and efficient implementation of family empowerment & development services and programs.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, civil society,</p>	<p>Cooperation and coordination</p>
	<p>SG 6.4: Create effective partnerships between governmental and non-governmental institutions to join efforts in supporting the family to play its role in achieving the goals of sustainable development.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, International agencies, civil society, OIC</p>	<p>Partnership</p>
	<p>SG 6.5: Utilise new technologies and means of communication to cost effectively build mediums of communication and provide voice to an increased number of actors on issues related to the family and marriage. However, governments and societies should heed the possible negative impacts and challenges of technology on the fabric of family and societal cohesion and stability.</p>	<p>Government, relevant ministries, Private Sector, , civil society, NGOs, religious and cultural institution, educational institutions</p>	<p>Use of Technology to provide voice for family</p>
	<p>SG 6.6: Establish OIC level Islamic Network for families with the participation of Member States and relevant organizations in order to provide programmes, space and forums for families and couples’ interaction to discuss mutual solutions on family matters.</p>	<p>OIC, member countries, NGOs, media agencies</p>	<p>Family Exchange and Dialogue programmes</p>
	<p>SG 6.7: Construct an OIC regional platform for marriage and family institution. The regional platform should be composed of a wide range of actors from local influencers to private sector.</p>	<p>OIC, member countries, civil society players</p>	<p>OIC Regional Platform</p>
	<p>SG6.8: Introduce OIC level cultural and social festivals and special days dedicated particularly to the celebration of families from different countries and cultures.</p>	<p>OIC, IRSICA, ISESCO, member countries, civil society players, NGOs</p>	<p>Cultural Festivals for Family</p>

	SG 6.9: Establish consultative joint media groups on how to promote and implement media and promotional activities and programs to encourage effective implementation of Marriage and Family Institution Strategy and report the results and impacts.	OIC, media agencies, member countries,		Media and implementation of MaFIES
	SG 6.10: Promote and advertise OIC Marriage and Family strategy at the local, subnational, national and international levels through efficient new advertisement and new media channels, introducing and implementing specific policies and initiatives, facilitating the inter- governmental and intra-governmental and intra-societal sectors partnership and joint projects and promoting participation of women and youth the advertisement activities.	OIC, member countries media agencies, civil society		Promotion and Advertisement of OIC MaFIES
	SG 6.11: Use all Media to improve delivery of MaFIES contents and strategies focusing on issues such as; Women, family stability, peace and security, women rights and responsibilities, women empowerment and participation, women work fluid eco-system, women displacement and migration, violence against women and girls/female genital mutilation, Economic and political empowerment, discrimination against women and girls, Gender and climate change, women justice, women educational empowerment...etc.	Media agencies, NGOs, Private sector...		Delivery of MaFIES
Strategic Area 7: Strengthen Governance and Management of Marriage and Family Institution Affairs Across the OIC Member Countries through Adequate Legislations, Policies and Laws. (11 initiatives)	SG 7.1: Set up relevant guidelines and mechanisms to ensure effective coordination, communication and flow of information among relevant players and agencies involved in the implementation of MaFIES at the government and non-government levels.	OIC, member countries, relevant ministries and agencies.	1-2 Years	Guidelines and mechanisms of implementation
	SG 7.2: Engage the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) and enhance its involvement in the implementation of the OIC strategy for Marriage and Family Institution Empowerment through seeking their experiences especially on human rights matters.	OIC, IPHRC		Engage IPHRC and valorise Expertise
	SG 7.3: Create steady and sustainable channels of communication between relevant ministries, agencies and actors regarding marriage and family issues at the OIC and member countries levels.	Government, relevant ministries, OIC		Channels of communication among Stakeholders
	SG 7.4: Track and monitor the implementation of the OIC MaFIES for the Empowerment of family through provide expert support to OIC countries that need it for the easier and smooth implementation of the strategy.	Government, relevant ministries and agencies, OIC		Providing Expertise on Implementation of MaFIES

	SG 7.5: Develop relevant and suitable member country key performance indicators and performance indicators on the management and measurement of MaFIES implementation and impact.	Government, relevant ministries and agencies, private sector, OIC	KPIs for family development
	SG 7.6: Develop mechanisms to track the legal cases involving families and marriages to understand better the issues and challenges and to develop proper solutions.	Government, relevant ministries and agencies, private sector, OIC	Tracking cases
	SG 7.7: Engage family members in the process of coming up with family laws and legislations.	Government, relevant ministries and agencies, private sector,	Engaging family in setting Laws
	SG 7.8: Embark on research and studies related to family legislations to ensure the existence of proper assessment and factual analysis of family status and context before establishing new laws.	Government, relevant ministries and agencies, private sector, OIC, SESRIC	Research and studies on MaFI
	SG 7.9: Use new technologies and effective management approaches and solutions to manage matters related to the marriage and family institution.	Government, relevant ministries and agencies, private sector,	New technologies For empowerment
	SG 7.10: Improve government's Family services and efficient delivery and monitoring.	Government, relevant ministries and agencies, private sector,	Service delivery
	SG7.11: Improve coordination between government and non-government agencies on coming up with specific policies related to the marriage and family institution and ensure that the legislations, policies and laws are in harmony with the social, communal and cultural norms and practices in Muslim countries.	Government, relevant ministries and agencies, private sector, civil society players	Coordination among agencies

General Initiatives at OIC Level

General Initiatives	Proposed actions/ Initiatives	Bodies Responsible	Time frame	Focus
General Suggestions	1. Establish specialised committees and mechanisms at the ministerial level to tack and monitor the implementation of the strategy as well as assess the results and impacts. As such, governments need to reinforce regulations and rules related to the empowerment of the family and marriage institution.	Government, relevant Ministries and agencies , NGOs, civil society players	Immediate action	Committees and Mechanism at Ministerial Level
	2. Establish Steering Committee at OIC level to support Member States and track and monitor progress of the implementation of the family empowerment strategy.	OIC, Member States	1 year	Steering Committee on Family Matters
	3. Adopt a family perspective in development goals, focusing on development programmes and projects that make the family and household economy at the heart of economic plans, and make family empowerment and stability a priority in national policies in member states.	All member states and relevant agencies	On going	Family Developmental Approach
	4. Commit and link the goals of Marriage and Family Institution development and empowerment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through encouraging social equity, environment and resources protection, maximisation of social development, women rights and participation, eradication of poverty and hunger and implementation of relevant SDGs to family development.	All member states and relevant agencies	5 years	Implement SDGs on Family
	5. Urge Member States of the OIC to make vigorous efforts to adopt an integrated approach to national policies on the marriage and family institution, including the strengthening of the role of family in nurturing Muslim personality and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms such as; the rights of women, children, youth and the elderly and those with special needs, and to preserve the educational and moral values that guarantee the support and empowerment of the family.	All member states and relevant agencies	5 years	Family National Policies
	6. Enhance mechanisms of national, regional and international cooperation and coordination to address family issues and engage with other international agencies and bodies.	All member states and relevant agencies, relevant International agencies and organisations	On going	Joint Cooperation

	<p>7. Urge OIC Member States to transform the moral responsibility of parents towards children into specific and enforceable commitments, while seeking to include those commitments in national programs and plans that address marriage and family issues in Muslim societies.</p>	<p>All member states and relevant agencies, NGOs and civil society</p>	<p>On going</p>	<p>Parents Responsibilities</p>
	<p>8. Engage and channel the government financial support for marriage and family institution empowerment through recognised NGOs and civil society players, organisations and actors as an effective mechanism to support deserving families in urban, rural, and remote areas.</p>	<p>All member states and relevant agencies, relevant International agencies and organisations</p>	<p>1-2 years</p>	<p>Joint cooperation</p>
	<p>9. Form honorary councils/ Boards of Businessmen and women and wealthy individuals and companies willing to support marriage and family institution empowerment projects through raising funds and securing grants.</p>	<p>Private Sector, Civil Society, donors and funders, banks</p>	<p>On going</p>	<p>Honorary Council of Business people</p>
	<p>10. Activate the role of partnership between government agencies, local and regional authorities and civil society in educating family members through strengthening the local media for its important role in spreading awareness, achieving complementarity and cooperation among them, and holding periodic meetings between parents and educational institutions to discuss the best ways to raise children and give them virtuous moral values, and to discourage them from any immoral behaviour.</p>	<p>All member states and relevant agencies, relevant International agencies and organisations, media, civil society</p>	<p>On going</p>	<p>Partnership (Government, Civil Society, Private Sectors, International Agencies, Media players)</p>
	<p>11. Carry out awareness campaigns for youth, families and society on the importance of the family and its role in the education of children. These campaigns include schools, institutes, cultural and social centres, factories, the media, social media, and activating the role of civil society in family development and empowerment activities. Also, instil the culture and values, which build good morals in children and family members.</p>	<p>All member states and relevant agencies, media, civil society, NGOs, cultural and religious institutions</p>	<p>1-3 years</p>	<p>Awareness Campaigns</p>

	<p>12. Utilise all forms of media and social media, publications and other awareness materials, along with the engagement of educational, social, religious and cultural institutions to safeguard the marriage and family institution from cultural threats, value free community concepts and destructive internal and external elements and challenges.</p>	<p>All member states and relevant agencies, media, civil society, NGOs, cultural, educational and religious institutions, all media, OIC, ISESCO...</p>	<p>On going</p>	<p>Engagement of Media, educational, social, religious and cultural institutions.</p>
	<p>13. Strengthen the capacity and roles of educational institutions and social centres working on family empowerment programmes and trainings.</p>	<p>All member states and relevant ministries and agencies, universities, SESRIC...</p>	<p>On going</p>	<p>Support the role of educational institutions</p>
	<p>14. Build marriage and family empowerment national policies and initiatives upon a sound analysis of the root causes and impacts of divorce, poverty, violence, abuse, terrorism, and the challenges facing the substance of marriage and family institution in the Islamic world.</p>	<p>All member states and relevant ministries and agencies, universities, and specialized institutions</p>	<p>1-3 years</p>	<p>Scientific analysis on family conditions</p>
	<p>15. Embark on marriage and family institution comprehensive capacity building programmes in order to empower relevant families in Member States, Muslim Minority Countries and in conflict and war Countries. Bodies such as; IDB, ISF, private sectors, business communities and societal players are urged to support these initiatives and efforts.</p>	<p>Governments and relevant ministries and agencies, civil society, private sector, NGOs and international organizations</p>	<p>1-5 years</p>	<p>MaFIES Capacity Building Projects</p>

	16. Strengthen the role of culture and cultural institutions in the empowerment and preservation of Marriage and family institution in the Islamic world.	Governments and relevant ministries and agencies, OIC, NGOs, cultural institutions, IRCICA and ISESCO	5 years	Cultural development of family
	17. Come up with an OIC level media and promotion strategy specifically for marriage and family institution empowerment in the Islamic world.	OIC, member countries, Media agencies, media strategy experts	1 year	Family Empowerment Media Strategy
	18. Establish an OIC level committee and mechanism to oversee and propose solutions to challenges facing migrant, refuge and displaced families. The mechanism shall engage the main players including; officials, representatives of ministries, private sector, business community and civil society representatives.	OIC, member countries, private sector, civil society	1 year	Mechanism at OIC Level to oversee issue of migrant, refugee and displaced families
	19. Create mechanisms to implement the international and regional agreements, treatise and conventions on Marriage and Family Institution taking into consideration the national policies, Laws and sovereignty.	Government, relevant ministries and agencies, international bodies, OIC...	On going	Mechanisms for implementation of Agreements and conventions on Family Empowerment
	20. Establish databases to provide statistics and data mining on economic, health, legal, social... aspects of the status of Marriage and Family Institution in the Islamic World. As such, a concentration on acquiring greater data on the family and marriage should be aimed for across the OIC Member States.	OIC, SESRIC, relevant government agencies and ministries	1-5 years	Family Databases and Statistics
	21. Provide necessary financial and moral support to marriage and family institution encountering occupation especially (Palestine) and other countries in situations of conflicts and wars to lessen their burden and promote their case in all possible platforms and forums. Special measures need to be taken to support the Palestinian family in its struggle against the occupier.	All member states, Governments, relevant ministries and agencies, OIC international bodies, Private sector, NGOs...	1-5 years	Support Families under Occupation and in situations of Conflicts

	22. Provide necessary support to families migrating from the Islamic world to other parts of the world and protect their rights and link them with their countries of origin through establishing related policies, conducting relevant researches, encouraging the civil society and private sector to support migrating families' wellbeing, strengthening families' religious and cultural identity and unity, benefiting from family members' expertise in the country of origin, supporting the local and international agencies working in areas of family empowerment, facilitating the return of families to their countries, assisting with issues of mix marriages, divorce and needy families and protecting families from all forms of violence, ethnic cleansing, rape, harassment and Islamophobia.	All member states, Governments, relevant ministries and agencies, OIC international bodies, Private sector, NGOs...	1-5 years	Support Migrating Families
	23. Provide necessary support to marriage and family institution in Muslim minority countries across through protecting their rights, conducting relevant researches on their situations, encouraging the civil society and private sector to support minorities well-being, strengthening families' religious, educational and cultural identity and unity and supporting families in areas of conflicts.	All member states, Governments, relevant ministries and agencies, OIC international bodies, Private sector, NGOs...	1-5 years	Support Families in Minority Countries
	24. Support displaced families due to wars, conflicts, breakdown and other forms of displacement through providing them with their needs, rights and related requirements of life. Design plans and undertake the necessary measures to prevent such negative migration and displacement of families causing them tremendous cultural, religious, social, legal and cultural problems.	All member states, Governments, relevant ministries and agencies, OIC international bodies, Private sector, NGOs...	Immediate	Support Displaced Families
	25. Intensify relations and cooperation among member countries in areas of mutual benefit and interest pertaining to marriage and family institution empowerment through: sharing best practices, conducting joint researches and studies, implementing joint programmes and facing family challenges in the spirit of cooperation and mutual benefit.	All member states, Governments, relevant ministries and agencies, OIC international bodies, Private sector, NGOs...	Immediate	Cooperation among member Countries in Mutual Benefit Spirit

	26. Support the efforts of the OIC General Secretariat in finding and proposing efficient ways and means of encouraging marriage and building stable and precocious families benefiting from the best models and practices of some member countries.	OIC Secretariat	2 year	Support OIC Secretariat's efforts for empowering marriage institution
	27. Establish national level committees and network of civil society agents and organisations working in the field of marriage and family empowerment in order to exchange expertise and collectively address the challenges facing the family in the Islamic world.	All member states, Governments, relevant ministries and agencies, OIC, Private sector, NGOs...	1 year	National level committees and civil society organisations network
	28. Urge Member Countries to unite their stands at the international level towards the decisions of Human Right Council especially those contradicting the views of the OIC in order to protect marriage and family institution interests and values in the Islamic World.	All member states, Governments, relevant ministries and agencies, OIC, Private sector, NGOs...	Immediate	Collective Stand on the OIC Views at the International Level
	29. Allocate reasonable budget specifically for the empowerment of the marriage and family institution in national budgets. It is left to the member countries to decide on the most appropriate allocations for this purpose.	All member states, Governments, OIC	On going	Budget for Family empowerment

ANNEX B: KEY RESULT AREAS

KEY RESULT AREAS

1	Existence and implementation of comprehensive national Marriage and Family Policy, strategy and action plan for MaFI empowerment	National Policy
2	Strong governance and management of Marriage and Family institution affairs	Governance
3	Robust Marriage and Family comprehensive eco-system	Eco-system
4	Sustainable Family Capacity building Funds and programs	Funds
5	Robust Marriage and Family empowerment value system	Value system
6	Family participation and productivity through job opportunities and decision making roles	Participation
7	Government quality delivery of family support programs and services enhancing family well-being and quality standards of life.	Delivery
8	Provide an effective environment for involving beneficiaries stakeholders of all groups in the development and implementation of policies and plans to empower the MaFI	Stakeholders
9	Strong partnership, coordination and collaboration among societal players such as society, government, private sector, NGOs...	Partnership
10	Existence of robust information and database system at OIC and for member countries level for MaFIE	Robust data system

ANNEX C: PROPOSED SET OF KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

Selected KPIs for MaFIE at the OIC Level		
1.	% of budget allocated per year for MaFIE activities and programs by member countries for marriage and family empowerment.	Budget allocation (Note: It is up to the member states and we may also include Private Sector, donors and funders in respective members States and relevant international bodies and organizations).
2.	% of reduced poverty and hunger cases in MaFI in the Islamic world especially in rural, remote and affected areas.	Poverty and hunger
3.	% of reduced divorces cases and other forms of violence against women and children in member countries	Divorce & violence
4.	Rating in OIC Family well-being and Quality Standards of Life Index	Well-being (Note: need to introduce OIC Rating)
5.	# of OIC member countries created specific MaFI Annual Capacity Building Fund and Programs.	Capacity building
6.	Existence of National programmes to address the financial and related services focusing on MaFI in rural and remote areas	National Program (Rural and remote areas)
7.	Existence of policies and & financial assistant programmes catering for Elderly groups in OIC member countries	Elderly Group
8.	Existence of structured Media strategies and mechanisms to promote MaFI empowerment in OIC member countries	Media strategies
9.	Increase government–civil society & private sector partnerships to enhance the well-being and quality standard for families and couples (funding-services- programs)	Partnership
10.	# of yearly Intra-OIC cooperation and collaborations on common services and challenges facing the marriage and family institution	Cooperation (Intra-OIC)
11.	% of reduced illiteracy among families in OIC members countries	Illiteracy
12.	% of increase in household income in OIC member countries	Income & productivity
13.	% of reduced mortality rate and critical health problems especially in rural and remote areas in OIC member countries.	Reduction of Mortality Rate
14.	% of women participation in decision-making (at all levels) in OIC member countries.	Women Participation & engagement
15.	Increase in gender equality through providing equal opportunities for women and girls to access education, health care, decent work and participation in political and economic decision-making	Gender equality
16.	% of decrease in crimes, violence and abuse against girls, women and children in OIC member countries.	Legal redress & Justice

17.	Existence of policies and practical measures to support women fluid work environment and provide relevant support and incentives	Fluid Work Balance
18.	Existence and implementation of policy frameworks at the national, regional and OIC levels based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies with a view to support family values.	Family development based on values
19.	% of jobs created for MaFI aimed at increasing the employment of youth and women and provide skills training related to the need of the labor market	Employability
20.	% of Increase of incentives provided for family-oriented economic activities; such as family tax deductions and incentives in OIC member countries	Incentives
21.	Efficiency of specific MaFI robust data collection, mining and reporting system at OIC level	Data & and reporting System
22.	Reports of efficient utilization of new technologies to cost effectively build mediums of communication and to provide voice to an increased number of actors on issues related to the family and marriage institution.	Use of technology and innovation
23.	# of yearly OIC level programmes and trainings especially budgeted for MaFI empowerment	Training programmes
24.	# of yearly MaFI empowerment programmes collaborated with relevant international bodies in OIC member countries	International Collaboration
25.	# of programmes and activities geared towards supporting and protecting the Muslim minorities, migrant and refugee families' religious, cultural, social and economic rights outside of the OIC at regional and international forums and bodies.	Muslim minorities, Migrant and Refugee families
26.	# of programmes and activities conducted by educational, cultural, religious, social institutions and bodies to support marriage and family empowerment in member countries. (# of programs, funds allocated, opportunities provided, # seats for education and leaning...)	Education, culture, social and religious actors
27.	Level of implementation of SDGs relevant to Marriage and Family Institution empowerment in member countries.	SDGs
28.	Rating in the MaFI Quality Service Index in the OIC Member States	Governance & management (this shall include governance, management service delivery, results and impacts...etc.
29.	Existence of Robust Marriage and Family comprehensive eco-system in Member States	Eco-system
30.	Rating in OIC MaFI prosperity Index (Introduce OIC Index)	Prosperity index. (Note: to develop OIC Index)

ANNEX D: STATEMENT OF DIRECTIONS

1	Strengthened MaFI well-being & Quality standard of life through providing necessary support & services including health care, education, food, clean water, housing, safety & other needs of life in line with Islamic values & standards.	Well-being & Quality Standards of Life
2	Protected MaFI from all types of internal & external threats and negative elements. (Cultural, social, ethical, intellectual, religious, behavioural & negative impacts of globalization & post-modernism & threats of terrorism, extremism & islamophobia ...).	Protection & preservation
3	Enjoying robust and integrated environment and eco-system imbued with Islamic values	Values
4	Enhanced MaFI matters' Governance and Management	Governance
5	Increased family prosperity & sustainable development through inculcating the culture of social equity, economic productivity, environmental conservation & preservation of wealth in all its forms in line with Islamic values and standards	Sustainable development
6	Strengthened MaFI access to justice and legal redress	Justice
7	Increased MaFI participation in societal development	Participation
8	Robust MaFI Capacity Building programmes	Capacity building
9	Strengthened MaFI- Stakeholders- partnership & collaboration at all levels	Partnership
10	Increased productivity and income for qualified family household.	Productivity
11	Reduced Illiteracy among members of Muslim families in the Islamic World.	Illiteracy
12	Reduced poverty & hunger among needy families in the Islamic World.	Poverty & hunger
13	Reduced cases of divorce, abuse and violence against family members.	Divorce & violence
14	Increased access to employability and job opportunities for members of Families in the Islamic World.	Employability & work
15	Achieved high Family engagement & participation in decision making and societal developmental activities at all levels such as; political, educational, administrative, economic, legal, social, cultural, scientific & technological.	Engagement & Decision Making