

Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)
Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD)

Note

This report has been issued without formal editing.

The views expressed in the present publication are those of the author and do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations, particularly concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The assignment of countries or areas to specific groupings is for analytical convenience and does not imply any assumption regarding political or other affiliation of countries or territories by the United Nations. The designations “developed” and “developing” are intended for statistical and analytical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgment about the stage reached by a country or area in the development process.

Migration, Urbanization, and the Family Dimension

*Bahira Sherif Trask, Ph.D.
Professor & Chair
Human Development &
Family Sciences
University of Delaware
bstrask@udel.edu*

May 2022

Background paper prepared for the UNITED NATIONS Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) Division for Inclusive Social Development, Focal Point on the Family

The Author

Dr. Bahira Trask is Professor and Chair of Human Development and Family Sciences at the University of Delaware. She holds a B.A. in Political Science with a concentration in International Relations from Yale University and a Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania. Her research focuses on globalization, women's employment and family change in Western and non-Western countries, and she presents regularly on these topics at international forums. Dr. Trask has authored and edited a number of books including *Women, Work, and Globalization: Challenges and Opportunities* (Routledge, 2014), *Globalization and Families: Accelerated Systemic Social Change*, (Springer, 2010) and *Cultural Diversity and Families* (Sage, 2007). Over the last ten years, Dr. Trask has also worked closely with the Focal Point on the Family at the United Nations. She has been invited to present at a number of U. N. Expert Group meetings around the world, and her recommendations been incorporated into global policies that support and strengthen families around work-family reconciliation and promoting intergenerational solidarity. Specifically, her work on the relationship between globalizing processes and family life have been recognized as foundational to the field.

Much of Dr. Trask's scholarship has been informed through participation with a number of international, national and community-based research projects that focus on diversity, gender and work, and strengthening low-income families. Her work has been funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Marguirite Casey Foundation, Blueprints Delaware, Erasmus, and various local community initiatives. Dr. Trask is a fellow of NCFR, the National Council on Family Relations an honor awarded to three percent of the membership. In 2019 she was awarded the Jan Trost award for excellence in international scholarship and in 2017 she won the University of Delaware Excellence in Teaching Award. Her Tedx talks on global family change and women and work are popular teaching and advocacy tools internationally.

Executive Summary

The migration of persons represents one of the most important social phenomena of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Closely linked with migration is the rapid urbanization that is occurring in so many parts of the world. As migrants leave rural lifestyles seeking opportunities in cities, urban areas are growing at an exponential pace. Both trends have profound effects on family life, family relationships, and family practices. Policies and programs that support migration and well-planned and well-managed sustainable urbanization are closely related to the successful realization of the United Nations Agenda 2030 and the embedded Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Migration

Migration is almost always associated with the desire to access better occupational, educational, and social opportunities more easily. Most of this mobility is, thus, associated with the rapid expansion of urbanization as individuals leave rural areas for cities which are perceived as providing increased economic and educational chances. Migration is highlighting the economic disparities within regions as well as the increasing inequalities between societies and is closely linked with the deepening processes of globalization (IOM, 2020). Those who are left behind in rural areas often have diminishing access to social services and educational programs as higher-quality opportunities are increasingly only found in urban areas. Migration and urbanization also have very significant, often overlooked family dimensions: family members may have varied experiences depending on if they are the ones migrating or staying behind - which can lead to fragmented relationships. Families, however, can also benefit from the new opportunities that may accompany migration and urbanization.

Contemporary migration and urbanization trends need to be re-evaluated against the backdrop of a global pandemic that has quite literally triggered the worst public health crisis in over a century. In a globally interconnected world, the COVID-19 virus spread almost overnight to every part of the world leading to world-wide lockdowns and remote work and schooling for *billions* of individuals. Faced with unemployment and no way to finance themselves, many migrants, especially in low-income countries, returned from urban areas back to their rural homes. In fact, the United Nations estimated that due to this unexpected occurrence of COVID-19, about 71 million individuals will be pushed into abject poverty, about 1.6 billion informal workers had their wages affected, and about 90 percent of global students could not attend school for some part of 2020 (UN World Cities Report, 2020).

Mobility between locations is often described as an individual decision and individual act. In reality, intra-country and between country mobility is deeply embedded in family decision-making and practices. Historically, migration primarily resulted in a permanent separation between family members. There was little opportunity for communication and travel was expensive and difficult. However, in part due to globalization and advances in transportation and communication technologies, it is now much easier to maintain contact over distances. While migration has profound consequences for those leaving as well as those that remain behind, today's multi-local families now have options for maintaining family relationships that were not

available in the past. For individuals and families, migration in the twenty-first century looks quite different than it did in the past.

As multi-local families increasingly become more common, states have responded with strict policy and legal frameworks. Many countries have tightened their borders and laws to deter specific groups of migrants from entering and from attaining permanent residencies in their societies. Laws that prevent migrants from having family members visit or reside with them have also become common in many places around the world. From a family perspective, these policies have served to fragment households and to highlight inequalities and interdependencies between individuals and families, and communities and entire regions (Kilkey & Palenga-Moellenbeck, 2016).

Contemporary discussions and analyses of migration paint a complex picture about who migrates and why. However, it is important to note that we have more information today about migrants than ever before (IOM, 2020). New technologies allow for better data gathering and analyses and thus, we are able to track individuals and their movements with greater ease than previously. That said, the global migrant population is highly heterogeneous and not everyone has access to the same technologies including cell phones, computers, and other means of communication. In particular, children, refugees, older persons, and individuals with disabilities have very specific experiences and needs that do not easily lend themselves to generalizations about migration.

Migration is not limited to economic benefits. As individual are exposed to new environments and cultures, they transmit to their home countries new ideas and practices including re-conceptualizations about gender relations, the role of individuals in civil society, and the value of education and skills development (Kilkey, & Palenga-Moellenbeck, 2016). It is important to note that one cannot make a blanket observation or judgement about the positive and negative effects of migration. A wide range of variables affect the individuals who are migrating, and the sending and receiving societies. Educational levels, occupation and skills, economics, religion and socio-historical moment all are part of a complex mix that plays out differently depending on location and current ideologies.

On a macro-level, receiving societies as well as sending societies are impacted by migrants. Depending on socio-historical moment and region, migrants may be welcomed positively (if they bring a desired resource) or they may be regarded with hostility by native born citizens. This can lead to political tensions and restrictive policy responses (Mather et al. 2018). Globalization and the proliferation of communication technologies has also transformed the relationship of migrants and those they leave behind. Historically, migration was perceived as a male phenomenon and associated with the loss of familial, community and societal ties. However, contemporary migrants are also often sole females due to the proliferation of jobs in manufacturing and service sectors, brought on through globalization. Rapid advances in technologies provide contemporary migrants with many more options for maintaining relationships to their home societies, in contrast to even just several years ago (IOM, 2020).

Ease of travel, combined with the Internet, social media, and video conferencing, allow individuals who leave their homes to stay in touch with loved ones and to retain stronger cultural ties. These rapid communications also allow for the rapid spread of ideas, values, and practices as migrants share new impressions and experiences while staying abreast of developments in their home communities.

General Recommendations:

Definitions. Migration is not a uniform experience and analyses of migrants, and their needs are hampered by the lack of globally agreed on definition of who a migrant is. The term “migrant” has various meanings in different contexts. In some countries migrants are defined by where they were born and in other countries by their nationality. This makes gathering data and comparing the experiences of migrants extremely difficult. Academics need to collaborate with policy makers at a transnational level to come up with a workable definition that all countries can then employ.

Collaboration and implementation. All UN Member States need to implement the Global Compact on Migration that was adopted by a vote among Member States of 152 to 5 (and 12 abstentions) in 2018 and that “ emphasizes that all migrants are entitled to universal human rights and aspires to eliminate all forms of discrimination, including racism, xenophobia and intolerance against migrants and their families. The compact "reaffirms the sovereign right of states to determine their national migration policy". The same goes for the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in which all 193 United Nations member states agreed to uphold the rights of refugees and migrants. The almost unanimous consensus on supporting these instruments indicates that there is the will to recognize and implement policies that support migrants and refugees, but this now needs to be put into practice.

Data. Every report from high level transnational organizations such as the UN, OECD, and World Bank, highlights the fact that the global data on migration is fragmented and incomplete. Academics and policy makers need to cooperate in order to assist and facilitate better data collection and data collection methods. While data gathering on migrants is improving, many countries still do not have adequate tools to track when migrants enter and what happens to them once they resettle. The international community needs to come together and set basic standards using technology to understand the differences between various types of migrants. Multiple types of data are needed, including statistical descriptors and qualitative evidence. Data is key for evidence-based policymaking, but it needs to be supplemented by case studies at the local level. This is particularly the case for those areas/groups where data is unavailable or limited. Narratives are key aspects of influencing policy choices and decisions.

There is a lack of data on migration disaggregated by age, sex, and disability as on internal migration. This makes it difficult to create policies and programming to better support migrants who are children, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities.

A family lens. It is critical to incorporate the family dimension into all policy analyses on migrants with the understanding that individuals do not operate in a vacuum. This is particularly the case for all policies that affect migrant children including refugee children. Nation-state policies rely on families to socialize and provide for the next generation as well as maintaining civic life and order; migration however is treated as an individual phenomenon; the two concepts need to be joined with family influences and relationships highlighted – academia can help by highlighting best practices and creating databases of policies that have successfully assisted in strengthening and supporting families.

Holistic approaches. Policies and programming need to approach migrant issues with a holistic lens. Migrants need access to educational, health, mental health and other such services. Many have suffered through traumatic experiences and multiple relocations – they thus, need to be supported physically and psychologically in their new settings.

Understanding migration status and family membership. It is critical to delineate migrant status (legal, illegal, papers missing) and family dynamics. Different members of families may have varying legal statuses, and this will affect how they relate to one another. Having a more nuanced approach to migrant family dynamics will support family cohesion through more appropriate programming.

Promote progress towards the institution of universal protection systems. Make sure the most vulnerable are targeted. Families and communities that live in conflict zones or areas susceptible to natural disasters often have needs that are not accounted for by traditional measures. Safety nets need to be in place specifically for these populations. Also, in many regions, individuals with disabilities and / or families that have members with disabilities are ignored or discriminated against. Creating awareness of their rights and contributions is key. For those families living in poverty, cash and in-kind transfers and subsidies have proven to be a successful mechanism.

A gender lens. Gender inequality needs to be addressed at every societal level but with a specific focus on family and community environments. The SDGs highlight gender inequality, however, there is much progress still to be made in this arena. A gender lens needs to be incorporated into data gathering and analysis, educational initiatives, policy formation and programming. Creating repositories of policies and initiatives from different parts of the world could be useful as a resource base from which culturally specific programmes can then be formulated. Targeted scholarships and stipends to encourage girls' and women's education are a key feature of successful programmes.

Urbanization

Linked closely with migration is the rapid urbanization of much of the world. Somewhat more than half of the global population, 4.2 billion people, today live in urban areas. In 2007, for the first time in human history, the urban population outnumbered the rural one – and this trend is expected to keep growing. Many social scientists consider the urbanization of the global

population as the single most important contemporary demographic trend as it represents a crucial shift in how humans use the environment (Galea & Vlahov, 2002).

Urbanization is a complex phenomenon as it looks quite different in various parts of the world and affects individuals and families in a myriad of ways. Moreover, rapid urbanization is associated with a wide variety of opportunities and challenges. There are vast differences in the size, types and geographical distribution of cities within and between societies and this is a critical factor in understanding and planning for sustainable urbanization. Urbanization allows for the centralization of services with increased access to employment, education, and leisure activities. These types of opportunities in part, explain why moving to cities is so attractive for many individuals and their families. However, rapid urbanization is also accompanied by formidable challenges. For instance, many urban areas, especially in lower-income countries are faced with decreasing access to fresh water supplies, growing sewage and sanitation issues, lack of access to green spaces, and a decrease in public health.

Globally, cities in various locations deal with a wide variety of issues and challenges when it comes to issues such as infrastructure, provision of services, and access to adequate housing. In high-income countries, cities tend to have high levels of infrastructure, and construction is occurring faster than population growth in at least half of metropolitan areas. The same cannot be said of urban areas that are located in low- and middle-income countries. In most of those places there is insufficient infrastructure and social services (including educational and health facilities) to serve their rapidly growing populations. Severe housing shortages combined with high levels of overcrowding and congestion are exacerbating the problems that come with rapid urbanization (OECD, 2020). Thus, a global one size fits all solution to planning and policies is untenable and would create more harm than good. Instead, a better alternative is an approach like the new Urban Agenda that was adopted by most countries in 2016 that emphasizes collaboration and supportive partnerships between smaller and larger urban areas in regional areas (UNDESA, 2019). These types of partnerships support equitable development and incorporate cultural and regional differences to ensure that rural areas are not left behind. It is exceedingly important to note that the rapid global urbanization that we are witnessing is a new phenomenon in human history – and how the world copes with it going forward is going to determine how much of humanity lives for the twenty-first century and beyond.

When urbanization is deliberate with the appropriate stakeholders on local, national, and transnational levels involved in the process, it can be the most efficient and successful mechanism for improving the lives of individuals and families. This necessitates a focus on understanding the complexity of family life in urban contexts: family needs and family supports for new migrants as well as for those who are already in urban areas. Families, in all their multiplicity of shapes and sizes, need to be supported through affordable housing, reliable, safe transportation, and access to education, social services, and green spaces. While, as was pointed out above, SDG 11 highlights each of these factors neither the goal nor the targets specifically focus on families.

Fundamentally, urbanization is a process that alters landscapes and shifts populations from rural areas to urban ones. Urbanization is accompanied by changes in how individuals and families

live, by increased economic activities, and through access to new types of lifestyles and cultures. Cities serve as centers for the concentration of transportation, trade, and public services – many of which are not easily accessed in rural areas. Due to the centralization of activities, urban areas serve as hubs for innovation. Individuals are attracted to these places because of the wealth of opportunities that are potentially accessed there. The dynamism that is created through an influx of people, economic opportunities, and services, explains the growth of urbanization over the last several decades in particular. Migration fuels urbanization but as was discussed above, it is not a homogenous phenomenon. Urbanization, thus, needs to be understood as a multi-faceted occurrence that needs to be viewed holistically. This means looking at how regionality (area in the world where an urban settlement is located), economics, policies, and individual and family life intersect. This is key for sustainable urban planning as we proceed further into the twenty-first century.

General Recommendations

The Challenge of Standard Definitions. There is currently no accepted definition of what is urban or a city – and what is considered urban can even differ over time in the same society. This creates challenges for making comparisons between places and regions and for planning and executing sustainable urbanization. Efforts such as those encouraged by the OECD (2020) which define urban areas through people-based definitions that measure the concentration of individuals instead of purely land use are a first step in creating a working definition that can be used by policy makers around the world when formulating plans for sustainable urbanization.

The Challenge of Data. A key finding from studies that focus on cities and urbanization is that we are missing good quality, relevant, accessible, and timely data. This problem is influencing not just the monitoring and reporting of policies but is affecting the policies that are needed to effectively respond to rapid urbanization. Accurate data would assist policy makers in tracking changes and documenting which policies make the most impact in cities. Data would help states create appropriate policies and also assist with implementation (UN Habitat, 2016). Reliable, accurate data would also allow for private and public investment in infrastructure, housing, and economic opportunities. By creating monitoring structures, continuous data would also work to allow us to better understand what is working and what is not in a more time sensitive manner. Accurate and correct data and metrics assist cities in making appropriate decisions on the best policies and means to track changes and systematically document performances at the city level (local2030.org, 2021).

There are a wide variety of issues for which currently no data is available. That clearly impacts decision-making. Data needs to be disaggregated in order to account for gender, age, disability status, social groups, income levels, migration status, and other significant factors. This would allow decision makers to reach the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of their populations. Gathering and disaggregating data requires capacity and collaboration between local and national governments.

New technologies are allowing for innovative types of data gathering, storing, analysis and sharing. For instance, advancements in mobile phones now can use geospatial technology such as GPS (Global Positioning Systems) and RS (Remote Sensing). This type of data gathering

allows policy makers to decide on the local allocation of resources to ensure more equitable outcomes amongst their populations.

Stemming inequality in urban areas is critical. The World Cities Report (2020) highlights that the growing inequality in urban areas is leading to social unrest in many areas in the world. Especially in high-income countries inequality has risen leading to frustration, protests, and demonstrations. Specifically, the slow growth of wages for paid work, increased poverty amongst migrants and minorities, and reduced health and social welfare programs are leading to this unrest. In order to create social cohesion and thus, peaceful societies and to implement Agenda 2030, states need to address and stem this global phenomenon. For instance, the World Cities Report (2020) highlights the fact that states need to move from an equality-based model to an equity-based one. In order to assist the most vulnerable members of society to access resources, economic, physical and social barriers need to be removed. A primary example is housing. Individuals and families need affordable, safe housing and the many issues that come with sprawling slums and informal urban settlements need to be addressed. This can be accomplished by states partnering with private housing contractors in order to create safe, affordable housing at a rapid enough pace. This is specifically the case in developing countries that have enormous housing shortfalls. For instance, in South Asia, there is a deficit of 38 million housing units (World Cities Report, 2020).

Expand and nurture transnational and national capacities. In order to create and implement national and culturally appropriate social protection plans it is critical for various stakeholders to be involved in every phase of planning and implementing policies and programmes. This necessitates increasing the awareness and collaboration between policy makers, transnational NGOs, and academics that address the linkages between the appropriate SDG's and their targets specifically around migration, urbanization, gender equality, and vulnerable populations. The New Urban Agenda emphasizes these linkages and complements SDG 11 by outlining strategic initiatives in order to support and facilitate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Acknowledge and support the link between urbanization, physical and mental health and access to nature / green spaces. The way cities and neighborhoods are designed affects whether or not it is easy for people to walk, cycle, participate in active recreation, use public transport, and interact with neighbors and their community. It is increasingly understood that urban planning decisions have a key role to play in combatting growing levels of obesity and helping prevent lifestyle-related diseases through facilitating physical activity and positive mental health (Van den Bosch & Ode Sang, 2017). This requires interdisciplinary teams and community-academic collaborations. A focus on research on intercity comparisons within countries and between research on urban environments between countries could be very useful for this purpose. What features of cities are associated with poor health and which support good health. By comparing urban areas we can learn about the dynamism of urban areas and propose frameworks and interventions for creating healthier cities in the future (Vlahov & Galea, 2002; Galea, Ettman, & Vlahov, 2019).

Providing safe and easily accessible public spaces that are accessible to all residents of urban areas including vulnerable populations. Public space is understood as land that is publicly owned and can be used by all. Public spaces include streets, sidewalks, gardens, parks and conservation areas. They may be publicly or privately managed, and they allow cities and communities to function efficiently, equitably, and lead to greater social cohesion (Global Goals, 2017). Having adequate, well-designed public spaces allows a wide variety of users to access services and opportunities. This is particularly true for marginalized residents and at-risk or vulnerable populations. Including socially excluded and vulnerable populations such as individuals with disabilities, women, and the elderly is key in planning, creating and monitoring the usage of public and greens spaces.

Having enough public spaces is also closely tied to unregulated urban planning. Urban sprawl needs to be checked as cities portend to grow in the next several decades. Key is instituting processes that consolidate efficiencies and mindfully integrate outdoor accessible spaces. Using data from child development and positive youth development can assist in supporting efforts to divert public and private money towards the creation of outdoor nature spaces that support well-being of all vulnerable populations in particular.

Urbanization and financial partnerships need to be promoted. Urbanization needs to be planned and managed with sustained financing. This requires coordination between local and state governments. A well-planned effort also requires a focus on rural areas so that they do not fall behind leading to exponential out-migration.

There is a need for long-term private-public partnerships. The private sector needs to invest in affordable housing, infrastructure and clean technologies (UN World Cities Report, 2020). Specially, affordable housing is one of the key components of promoting healthy family life in urban areas. In spite of knowledge about this fact, housing that is safe and affordable is shrinking in all the global cities of the world. This is happening at a rapid pace and affecting specifically low-income *and* middle-income families.

Urbanization needs to be inclusive of urban margins and underserved groups. In order to meet the needs of all individuals, urban planning councils need to incorporate recent migrants in order to better understand their particular circumstances. New migrants often live far away from the centers of power in cities and thus, do not participate in the civic lives of their locales. Thus, their voices and needs are not represented in planning processes. By highlighting the needs of recent migrants vs. long-established migrants, programs and policies can better respond to poverty eradication and housing and other needs.

Prioritize family issues, rights, and concerns through formal and informal efforts by states
The creation of family focused ministries and explicit national family policies are a key feature of states that have successful initiatives and programs that support families. Currently many

countries only focus on the most vulnerable populations in their societies with respect to providing government supports. However, this approach is insufficient for supporting families across the socio-economic spectrum and also often excludes socially marginalized groups. For instance, however, creating a family ministry has both symbolic and practical implications: it highlights the significance of families, and it allows for greater integration of planning and services for families across the socio-economic spectrum as well as families that may be migrants, refugees and / or recently re-settled. In addition, media campaigns through social media and other communication technologies are a relatively simple mechanism for distributing information that can support and strengthen families. One mechanism is through promoting information about educational opportunities, housing and employment assistance in multiple relevant languages would assist recent migrants to urban areas.

An overview of migration and urbanization trends and their relationship to family issues, indicates that the challenge for our world is to develop programs and policies that support individuals and their loved ones who live under highly diverse conditions, and yet are faced with rapid changes in every aspect of their lives. We are only now beginning to explore and understand how individuals are more interconnected to the economic and political processes encouraged and supported by globalization, and how this in turn, affects social life, values, and practices. Empirical research on these trends, and appropriate programs and policies that support individuals and families, however, are lagging behind. Thus, we do not always understand how families interact with the varying shifts in their environments (Fingerman & Birditt, 2020). As Pesando et. al. suggest in a comprehensive, comparative analysis of global family change,

The emerging picture of persistent diversity with development has important implications for understanding the social and economic consequences of global development and globalization and should be considered in the policy for sustainable development and for increasing individual and family well-being (2019, p. 159).

Globalization, competition for jobs and housing, as well as increasing inequality are an inherent aspect of our world. Due to demographic changes, family members have to work longer and care for each other longer than 100 years ago. While families are central to social life, they are often invisible in political and work contexts. As is discussed in this report, we see this in the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets. None of the goals mention family life nor do the targets acknowledge the critical economic role families play in all societies around the globe. And yet, families are the key to realizing the SDG's as it is within families (however they may be defined) that individuals are initially socialized and find economic and psychological security. Especially in non-Western parts of the world, families still provide individuals with a sense of identity and belonging – whatever their social class or migration status may be, or any other ascriptive factors. Thus, families still matter on a very personal level. However, families also matter on an institutional plane. Families socialize the next generation, they provide economic and social supports to their members across the life course, and they react to and enact policy decisions. Thus, without centering families and their vital functions at the forefront of every

nation-state's agenda the SDGs will not be implemented in the holistic, integrated manner with which they were conceived.

The omission of family centered analyses and programing at transnational and state levels also leaves us with an incomplete understanding about the needs of societies and what is needed for sustainable urbanization and migration. It is important to note that in most places, family policies and programs were developed at a time when families looked less complex than they do today. Thus, there is a critical need for appropriate programs and policies that are responsive to key social and family conditions under various dynamic conditions. What we can currently say, however, is that as families have changed, they have not declined in importance. For instance, research from northern Europe indicates that family life may be gaining in significance instead of lessening in value (Esping-Andersen & Billari, 2015). Moreover, weaker state support for social services in many parts of the world is creating an environment in which families are more, not less important to the health and well-being of individuals, especially children, the terminally ill, individuals with disabilities, and older persons (Trask, 2010; Trask, 2014). We have certainly witnessed this during the global COVID-19 pandemic. In the recently published World Cities Report (2020), Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations stated,

We cannot go back to business as usual. Cities and communities are demanding that those in authority take the opportunity to build back better. To emerge stronger, we need a sustainable, inclusive and green recovery for people and the planet. That means dealing with the existing challenges of how cities are planned, managed and financed, and ensuring their development is compatible with the goal of net zero emissions by 2050.

With appropriate policies and supportive frameworks, resilient cities with improved housing and infrastructure can bounce back from the devastating impacts of disasters, including pandemics. The Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda provide the blueprint to implement these measures (p.iii)

Responsive programs and policies that strengthen and support families reduce the risks that are brought about by crises such as the recent pandemic. They also allow individuals and families to flourish as they simultaneously contribute and respond to demographic shifts, migration, and urbanization.

Migration, Urbanization and the Family Dimension

The migration of persons represents one of the most important social phenomena of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines migration as the voluntary movement (for instance, laborers) and the involuntary movement (for instance, refugees) of individuals within a country, or across borders internationally, with the goal of creating a better life (UNDP, 2016). Closely linked with migration is the rapid urbanization that is occurring in so many parts of the world. As migrants leave rural lifestyles seeking opportunities in cities, urban areas are growing at an exponential pace. Both trends have profound effects on family life, family relationships, and family practices. Policies and programs that support migration and well-planned and well-managed sustainable urbanization are closely related to the successful realization of the United Nations Agenda 2030 and the embedded Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The 2030 Development Agenda emphasizes that all individuals have a right to life's necessities. The 2030 Agenda underscores the importance of ensuring and enhancing the wellbeing of all persons. This is to be accomplished by establishing, adapting, and supporting policies that are appropriate within specific national and cultural contexts. While the seventeen SDG's do not specifically focus on either migration or urbanization, an important part of Agenda 2030 points to the significance of empowering individuals who are in vulnerable situations including refugees, persons who are displaced within their own societies, and persons with disabilities. Sustainable Development Goal 8, includes target 8.8 that states the importance of protecting labour rights and promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment. Sustainable Development Goal 10 focuses on reducing inequalities and includes Target 10.7 that is meant to ensure the safe and orderly migration and mobility of individuals. Sustainable Development Goal 11 seeks to "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" (UN DESA, 2021). Most of the targets under this goal are closely related to urban processes including ensuring safe and affordable housing, supporting positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas, and emphasizing policies and plans that integrate urban citizens into planning and programming.

Migration is almost always associated with the desire to access better occupational, educational, and social opportunities more easily. Most of this mobility is associated with the rapid expansion of urbanization as individuals leave rural areas for cities which are perceived as providing increased economic and educational chances. Increased migration is highlighting the economic disparities within regions as well as the increasing inequalities between societies and is closely linked with the deepening processes of globalization (IOM, 2020). Those who are left behind in rural areas often have diminishing access to social services and educational programs as higher-quality opportunities are increasingly only found in urban areas. Migration and urbanization also have very significant, often overlooked family dimensions: family members may have varied experiences depending on if they are the ones migrating or staying behind - which can lead to fragmented relationships. Families, however, can also benefit from the new opportunities that may accompany migration and urbanization.

Contemporary migration and urbanization trends need to be re-evaluated against the backdrop of a global pandemic that has quite literally triggered the worst public health crisis in over a century. In a globally interconnected world, the COVID-19 virus spread almost overnight to every part of the world leading to world-wide lockdowns and remote work and schooling for *billions* of individuals. Faced with unemployment and no way to finance themselves, many migrants, especially in low-income countries, returned from urban areas back to their rural homes. In fact, the United Nations estimated that due to this unexpected occurrence of COVID-19, about 71 million individuals will be pushed into abject poverty, about 1.6 billion informal workers had their wages affected, and about 90 percent of global students could not attend school for some part of 2020 (UN World Cities Report, 2020).

COVID-19 has had other social ramifications as well. It has drawn attention to the fact that humans need intimate others for physical and emotional support and that for many individuals, families, however they are defined, are still that source of security and comfort. Unfortunately, the crisis has also highlighted that in some cases, family membership and relationships can be extremely stressful and even be associated with violence. This phenomenon was exacerbated in times of isolation such as during the global shelter in place policies that occurred during this period. It is thus imperative that we utilize the knowledge that we are gaining from the COVID-19 pandemic in conjunction with empirically based information about migration and sustainable urbanization, to inform our future programs and policies that support and strengthen families (Anant & Gassman-Pines, 2020). It is only through this type of an evidence-based approach that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals can be realized in totality. In this report we will explore the benefits and challenges that accompany the global processes of migration and urbanization, and the family dimensions of both.

Part 1: Migration

Migration can be understood primarily as the result of individual and families' desires to improve their economic and social situations (Suhardiman et al, 2021). Most scholarship on migration views, especially contemporary international migration, as a response to the growth of global corporations and the creation of new free trade zones (IOM, 2020; Urry, 2007). However, within country and between country migration occurs for a variety of other factors as well including conflict, wars, climate change, challenging social conditions and / or perceived economic opportunities. These factors incentivize and / or push individuals out of their home regions and lead them to work and at times settle in other usually urban areas, in their own societies or abroad. The phenomenon of large flows of individuals especially between high-middle- and low-income countries has led, in many places to growing hostilities between native born individuals and migrants, creating political tensions and restrictive policy responses (IOM, 2020).

Mobility between locations is often described as an individual decision and individual act. In reality, intra-country and between country mobility is deeply embedded in family decision-making and practices.

While some migrants unilaterally decide to migrate, seeking individual economic benefit or escape from their family home, most will still harbour a sense of family obligation steering them towards contributions to their family's welfare further downstream. (Bryceson, 2019, p. 3045)

Historically, migration primarily resulted in a permanent separation between family members. There was little opportunity for communication and travel was expensive and difficult. However, in part due to globalization and advances in transportation and communication technologies, it is now much easier to maintain contact over distances. While migration has profound consequences for those leaving as well as those that remain behind, today's multi-local families now have options for maintaining family relationships that were not available in the past. Migration in the twenty-first century for individuals and families, thus, looks quite different than it did in the past.

As multi-local families increasingly become more common, states have responded with strict policy and legal frameworks. Many countries have tightened their borders and laws to deter migrants from entering and from attaining permanent residencies in their societies. Laws that prevent migrants from having family members visit or reside with them have also become common in many places around the world. From a family perspective, these policies have served to fragment households and to highlight inequalities and interdependencies between individuals and families, and communities and entire regions (Kilkey & Palenga-Moellenbeck, 2016).

Contemporary discussions and analyses of migration paint a complex picture about who migrates and why. However, it is important to note that we have more information today about migrants than ever before (IOM, 2020). New technologies allow for better data gathering and analyses and thus, we are able to track individuals and their movements with greater ease than previously. That said, the global migrant population is highly heterogeneous and not everyone has access to the same technologies including cell phones, computers, and other means of communication. In particular, children, refugees, older persons, and individuals with disabilities have very specific experiences and needs that do not easily lend themselves to generalizations about migration. Furthermore, we do not always know that much about their movements and the effects of mobility on them across the life course. A complicating factor is that not all migrants necessarily stay in one location once they leave their home societies. Depending on circumstances, an initial move may result in a series of displacements from one area to another (this is especially true in the case of refugees) and may involve learning new languages and adapting to varied cultural settings.

Migration is a key feature of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, however, it is only featured as a stand-alone target in SDG 10, Reducing Inequality. Target 10.7 states: to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies. Many of the other targets embedded in the other SDG's also mention migration including, labour migration (8.7 and 8.8), international student mobility (4.b), human trafficking (5.2, 8.7 and 16.2), remittances

(10.c), and migration data (17.18). The visibility and interweaving of migration throughout the Sustainable Development Goals highlights the significance and complexity of tracking migration and ensuring that states support migrants with sustainable, appropriate policies and programing.

It is important to note that domestic and international migration has profound impacts on family life: individuals leave behind social networks as well as cultural and social capital and attempt to rebuild their lives in new and often culturally and socially very different settings (Bryceson, 2019). This leads to both challenges and opportunities for the migrants and their families, as well as the receiving communities. This family dimension, and especially the impacts on intergenerational relationships between parents and children, as well as spouses, however, is commonly ignored in large-scale analyses of the ramifications of migration - and urbanization.

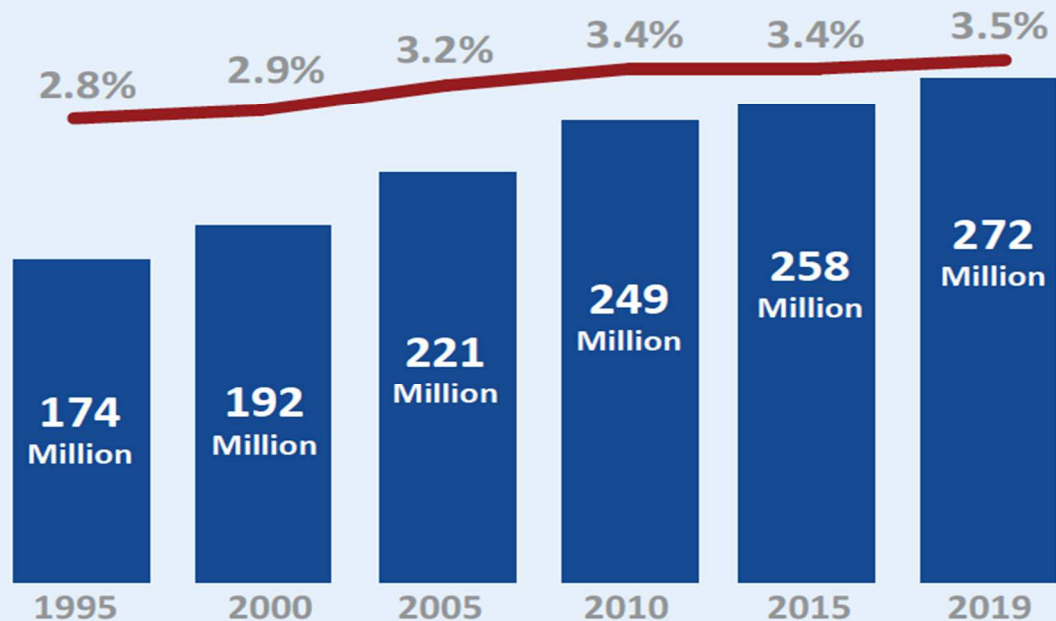
Who Migrates and to Where?

While human migration is not a new phenomenon, the increasing complexity of migration is characteristic of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (Castels & Miller, 2009; IOM, 2020). According to United Nations estimates, approximately 763 million individuals migrated internally within their own societies (<https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/>), and 281 million individuals, or 3.6 percent of the world population were living outside of their native countries as of 2020 (IOM, 2022). Relative to the global population this is a very small number as 96.5 percent of people are living in their own societies and proportionally to the global population, migration has stayed relatively constant. However, actual migration numbers have grown exponentially over the last twenty years as the number of individuals migrating surged by 62 percent (IOM, 2022). De Hass et al (2018) have argued that migration has not accelerated in the manner that is often described in scholarship and the press. Instead, their analysis indicates that states have improved their record keeping, especially of refugees, thus making it appear as if migration is increasing. A recent IOM report (2022) on migration further indicates that data on migration flows are limited as many countries track who enters but not who leaves. Also problematic is that states usually do not delineate who is traveling for tourism or business and who is planning on residing in a specific country. Many countries also do not have the necessary infrastructure and technologies to track migrants.¹ Compounding these issues is the problem of irregular migration: migrants who cross borders without appropriate documentation and who are often not tracked by the legal authorities. Irregular migration is facilitated by physical geography – many countries have impassible terrains that do not have clear borders making it very complex to track who may be coming in or leaving, especially in cases of informal employment such as for agricultural labor. But irregular migration also occurs when individuals overstay tourist and work visas, or are smuggled in, as for example with human trafficking. This cursory snapshot indicates that we cannot speak of one unified migration experience nor of a homogenous migrant population.

¹ According to the IOM (2020) report we currently only have data on migration flows from 45 countries

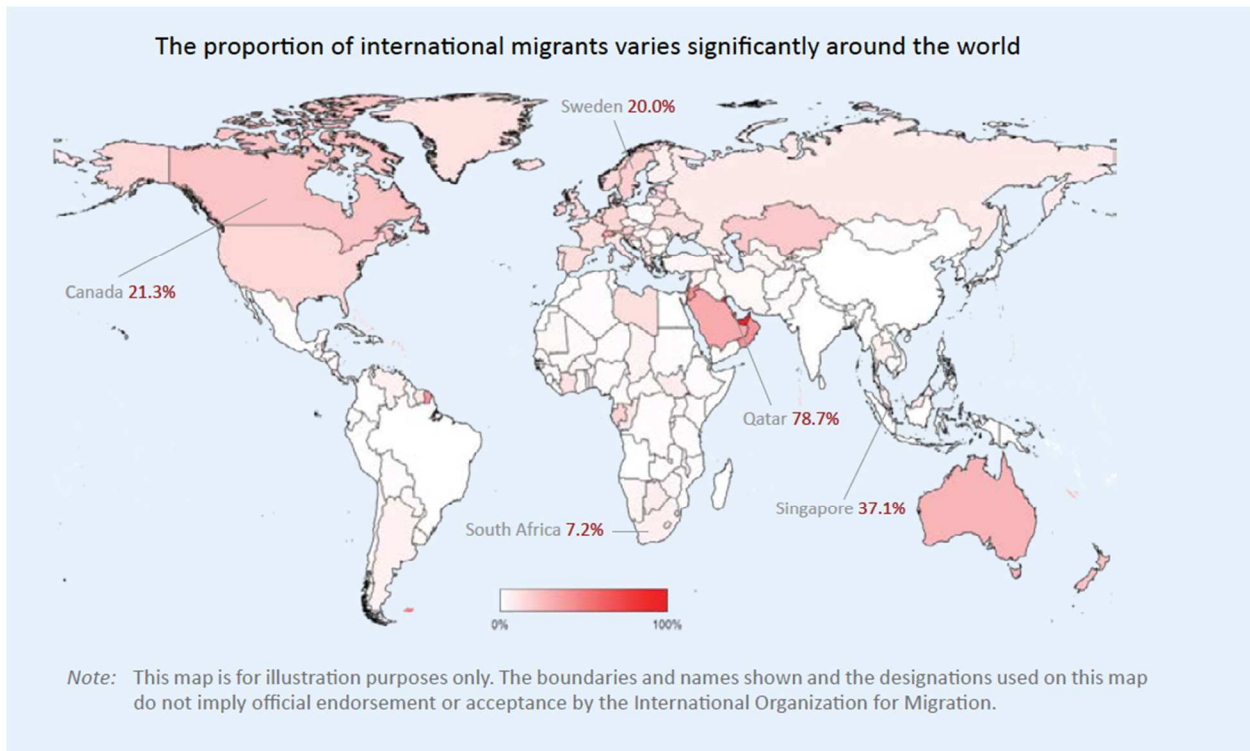
Snapshot of international migrants

The international migrant population globally has increased in size but remained relatively stable as a proportion of the world's population



(IOM World Migration Report, 2020)

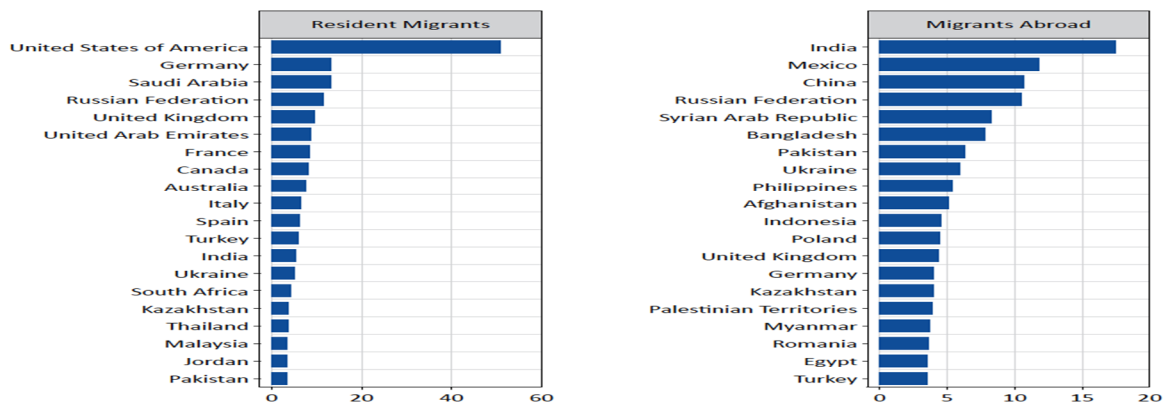
Based on what we currently know, of those migrating from one country to another, approximately two-thirds were primarily living in high-income countries in contrast, 29 percent in middle income countries and 3.4 percent in low-income countries (IOM, 2020). From a global perspective, the United States currently has the highest actual number of immigrants. There are currently 51 million foreign born individuals in the United States, constituting about 13.6 percent of the population (IOM, 2022). In terms of actual number of immigrants, the United States is followed by Germany with approximately 15.8 million migrants living there now. Saudi Arabia also has a high number of migrants estimated at about 13.5 million and is followed by Russia, whose high immigration rates, at 11.6 million individuals, are primarily attributed to the fall of the Soviet Union; this event transformed internal migration into international migration (IOM, 2022; UNICEF, 2018). Other countries including the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, France, Canada, and Australia also receive a high number of migrants ranging from 4 to 9 million individuals each (IOM, 2022). When compared to their native-born populations, proportionally Middle Eastern countries have the highest number of foreign born. For instance, in the United Arab Emirates, approximately 90 percent of individuals are foreign workers (World Economic Forum, 2017). While several countries in the regions, such as Turkey, Egypt, and Jordan, are sources of migrant labor, the Gulf Oil states are the receivers of this labor.



(IOM World Migration Report, 2020)

India currently has the largest number of migrants living abroad (17.5 million), followed by Mexico and China (11.8 million and 10.7 million respectively) (UN, 2020). The Population Division of the United Nations projects that Belarus, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Ukraine will experience a net inflow of migrants over the next decade, to help offset population losses caused by an excess of deaths over births (UN Population, 2019). In 2018, 25.9 million migrants were refugees which is the highest recorded number on record (IOM, 2020).

Figure 3. Top 20 destinations (left) and origins (right) of international migrants in 2019 (millions)



Source: UN DESA, 2019a (accessed 18 September 2019).

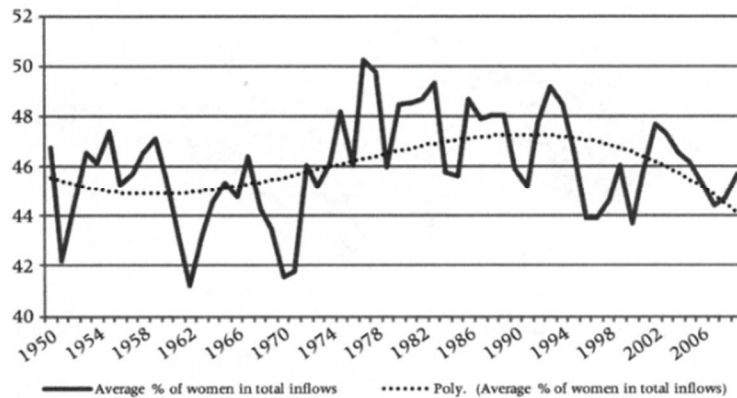
Migration is driven by a variety of factors. In high income countries such as the United States job opportunities for instance attract highly educated migrants from India and China. Concurrently, the demand for workers in the Middle East from places such as Bangladesh, Nepal and the Philippines is fueled by the need for low-wage workers. Violence, insecurity and armed conflict has forced individuals and families across the socio-economic spectrum from Syria, Venezuela and Myanmar to seek new international destinations where they are often not received positively by both governments and the citizenry (IOM, 2020).

There is much variation with respect to educational attainment and professional skills amongst international migrants. For example, 60 percent of immigrants to the U.K. are professionals (Migration Observatory, 2019), while Freeman (2006) estimated that as of 2000, 45 percent of U.S. based Ph.D. economists and 55 percent of U.S. based Ph.D. natural scientists who were younger than 45, were born in other countries. Currently about 25 percent of all doctors in the United States were born in another country (AIC, 2018). This is at times referred to as the “brain drain” – the emigration of highly skilled workers from low-and middle-income countries to high-income countries. Some estimates claim that nearly one in ten adults from developing countries with professional degrees in medicine, or who hold PhDs, now live in Europe, Australia, or the United States (Lowell, Findlay & Stewart, 2004; IOM, 2020). In contrast, many of the immigrants from Mexico to the U.S. had not attained the equivalent of a high school diploma (Pew, 2019).

Many countries, including the United States, also have large undocumented migrant populations (Pew, 2019). Undocumented workers primarily migrate from low-income countries in order to find jobs in agriculture and mining. Estimates hover around the 10.5 million mark for the United States, but credible statistics are missing for both the United States and other countries. Of the estimated 10.5 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S., about 6.2 million are Mexican, many of whom are laborers (Pew, 2019). Despite their relative low numbers in contrast to the population of the United States (around 330 million), public sentiment towards these individuals tends to be quite negative with some politicians increasingly focusing their message on the supposed burdens on the economy created by illegal migration.

Currently, approximately 51.9 percent (146 million) of global migrants are male and 48 percent (135 million) are female (IOM, 2022). While many reviews of migration describe an upswing in female migrants, the most recent analyses point out that the number of women migrating has actually stayed relatively constant over the last six decades.

FIGURE 3 Women as percentage of total immigration, average of 28 reporting countries¹¹, 1950–2009



SOURCE: DEMIG C2C Database. Trend line: third order polynomial.

(deHaas et al. 2019)

deHaas et al. (2019) point out that scholarly attention in general focuses more on women’s experiences than in the past, driving the perception that migration has “feminized.” Furthermore, historically, women migrated as part of family migration patterns while today more women migrate on their own spurred by paid labor opportunities (deHaas et al. 2019). However, the destinations of male and female migrants differ. For instance, in the Arab States one finds 19.1 million males vs. 3.6 million females who are originally from other countries. These types of differentials can be explained by the availability of jobs: most of the men working in this region of the world are employed in construction and manual labor. In contrast, women are more likely to find employment in high-income countries that have severe shortages in the domestic and care sectors (Parrenas, 2001; Parrenas, 2010).

At the present time, it is unclear if in the future, migration will level off or continue to grow as the incentive to move is driven by conditions in local regions. However, given current economic and climate patterns, it is likely that migration is going to increase as social conditions coupled with growing inequalities worsen in many places around the globe.

Migration and Remittances

International migration is closely associated with remittances. Remittances are financial transfers that migrants send home to their families and local communities. According to World Bank statistics, in 2021 remittances to low- and middle-income countries reached an all-time high of \$589 billion and were much more robust than initially predicted despite the global recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, remittance flows exceeded the sum of foreign direct investment and overseas development assistance (World Bank, 2021). There was growth in remittances in most areas of the world: flows increased by 21.6 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean, 9.7 percent in the Middle East and North Africa, 8 percent in South Asia, 6.2 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa and 5.3 percent in Europe and Central Asia. If one excludes China, remittances fell in East Asia and the Pacific by 4 percent but if China is included in the analyses, they grew by 1.4 percent (World Bank, 2021). The growth in remittances can be explained by the

combination of fiscal stimulus packages in high-income countries as well as migrants' desires to assist their families in times of crises (IOM, 2022).

Top countries receiving remittances							
2005		2010		2015		2020	
China	23.63	India	53.48	India	68.91	India	83.15
Mexico	22.74	China	52.46	China	63.94	China	59.51
India	22.13	Mexico	22.08	Philippines	29.80	Mexico	42.88
Nigeria	14.64	Philippines	21.56	Mexico	26.23	Philippines	34.91
France	14.21	France	19.90	France	24.07	Egypt	29.60
Philippines	13.73	Nigeria	19.74	Nigeria	20.63	Pakistan	26.11
Belgium	6.88	Germany	12.79	Pakistan	19.31	France	24.48
Germany	6.86	Egypt	12.45	Egypt	18.33	Bangladesh	21.75
Spain	6.66	Belgium	10.99	Germany	15.58	Germany	17.90
Poland	6.47	Bangladesh	10.85	Bangladesh	15.30	Nigeria	17.21

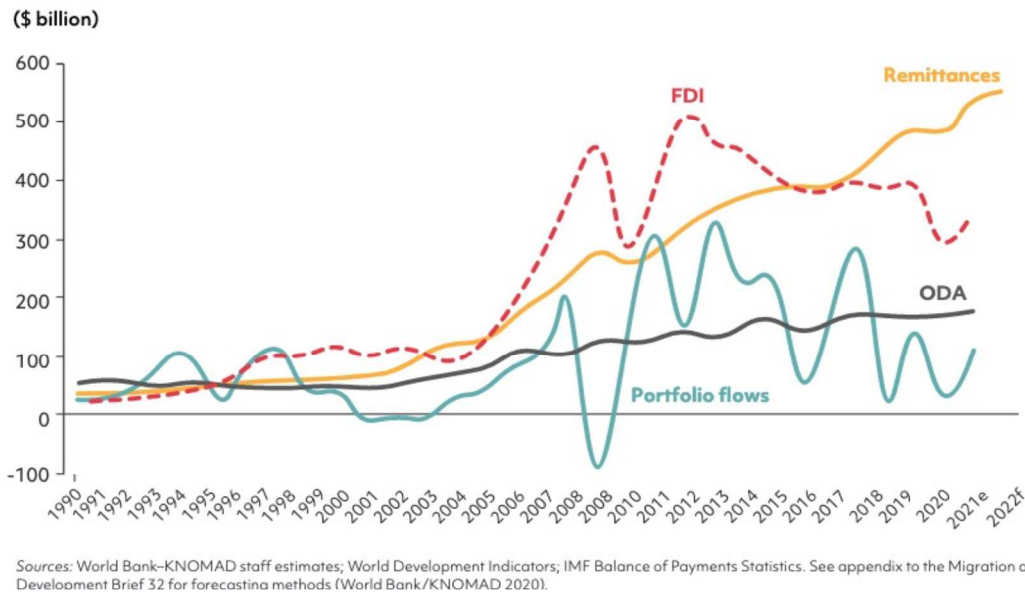
(IOM, 2022)

The source of remittances is almost without exception high-income countries. Historically, the United States has been the main provider of remittances with a total outflow of USD 68 billion in 2020 followed by the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, and Germany (IOM, 2022)

Top countries sending remittances							
2005		2010		2015		2020	
United States	47.75	United States	50.53	United States	60.72	United States	68.00
Saudi Arabia	14.30	Saudi Arabia	27.07	United Arab Emirates	40.70	United Arab Emirates	43.24
Germany	12.71	Russian Federation	21.45	Saudi Arabia	38.79	Saudi Arabia	34.60
Switzerland	10.86	Switzerland	18.51	Switzerland	26.03	Switzerland	27.96
United Kingdom	9.64	Germany	14.68	Russian Federation	19.69	Germany	22.02
France	9.47	Italy	12.88	Germany	18.25	China	18.12
Republic of Korea	6.90	France	12.03	Kuwait	15.20	Russian Federation	16.89
Russian Federation	6.83	Kuwait	11.86	France	12.79	France	15.04
Luxembourg	6.74	Luxembourg	10.66	Qatar	12.19	Luxembourg	14.20
Malaysia	5.68	United Arab Emirates	10.57	Luxembourg	11.19	Netherlands	13.92

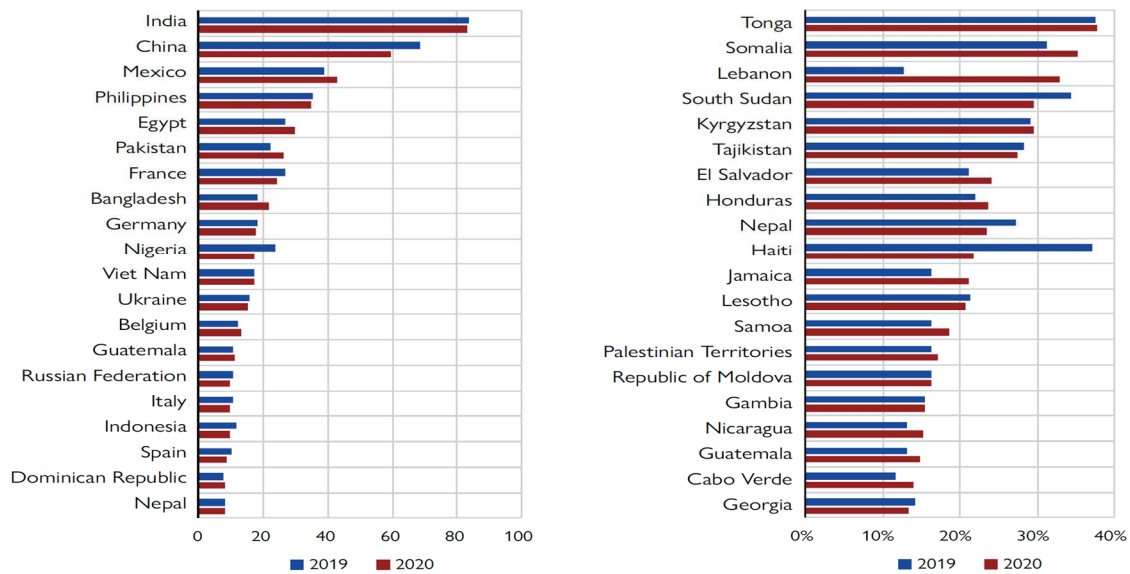
(IOM, 2022)

Figure 1.1b Remittances, Foreign Direct Investment, and Official Development Assistance Flows to Low-and Middle-Income Countries, Excluding China, 1990–2022



Remittances do not just benefit individuals and families on a local level. For many low and middle-income countries, remittances make up more than 10 percent of the gross domestic product (MPI, 2019). For instance, in 2020 remittances made up more than a third of the GDP in Tonga (37.7%), Somalia (35.3%), Lebanon (32.9%), South Sudan (29.5%) and Kyrgyzstan (29.4%) (IMO, 2022).

Figure 13. Top 20 recipient countries/territories of international remittances by total in USD billion (left) and share of GDP (right), 2019–2020



(IOM, 2022)

The data presented above highlights the fact that remittances are critical for states, families, and individuals: in fact, for many households they are a primary form of income and provide financial safety nets for members. These financial transfers allow families in receiving societies to survive and at times prosper, they may lead to changes in roles within families, and they can allow household members to engage in new productive activities. Research indicates that remittances are associated with greater human development outcomes across a number of areas such as health, education, and gender equality (Huay et al. 2019). The unexpected growth of remittances despite the economic hardships caused by the global pandemic clearly highlights the role of family relationships in supporting members during times of crises.

Migration is not limited to economic benefits for sending and receiving societies. As individuals are exposed to new environments and cultures, they transmit to home countries new ideas and practices including re-conceptualizations about gender relations, the role of individuals in civil society, and the value of education and skills development (Kilkey, & Palenga-Moellenbeck, 2016). It is important to note that one cannot make a blanket observation or judgement about the positive and negative effects of migration. A wide range of variables affect the individuals who are migrating, and the sending and receiving societies. Educational levels, occupation and skills, economics, religion and socio-historical moment all are part of a complex mix that plays out differently depending on location and current ideologies.

From an ideological perspective, migration should be a fundamental human right. The 2009 UNDP Human Development Report, *Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development* (2009) stated,

For many people in developing countries moving away from their hometown or village can be the best – sometimes the only – option open to improve their life chances. Human mobility can be hugely effective in raising a person’s income, health and education prospects. But its value is more than that: being able to decide where to live is a key element of human freedom. (UNDP 2009, p. 1)

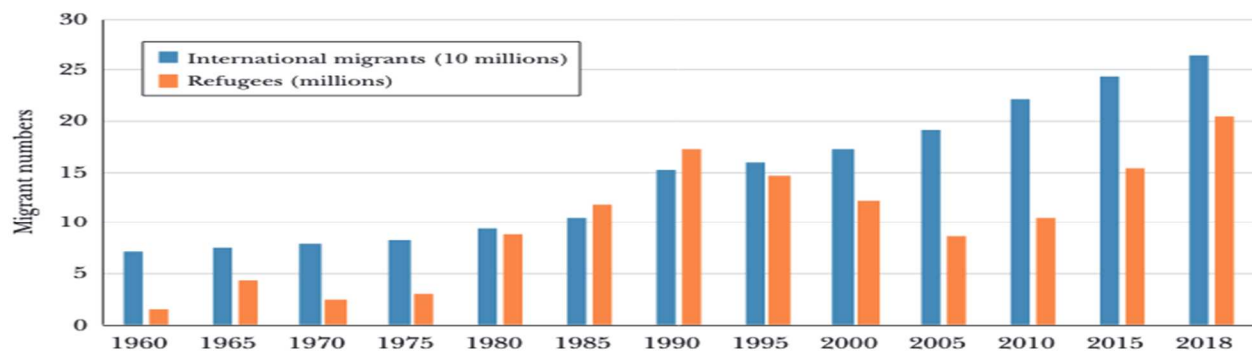
Migration allows individuals and families to improve their lives – however, at the cost of leaving behind long-term networks and at times, relationships, and cultural beliefs and practices that span generations. A family lens on contemporary migration highlights our shared humanity where we are all interconnected across various economic, political, geographic, and social differences. We live in a world where we depend on one another and where migration allows for a flow of ideas, skills, and resources (Bryceson, 2019). This sharing of information and talents has characterized humanity throughout history and is highlighted when migrants resettle in new communities and cultures.

Migration and the Refugee Population

While migration predates the modern age (Castells & Miller, 2009), of great concern over the last several decades has been the flow of refugees within and between societies. Article 1a of the 1951 Geneva Convention defines refugees as people who ‘owing to a well- founded fear of persecution, on the grounds of race, religion, nationality or membership of a social group, find

themselves outside their country of origin, and are unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country.’ There are currently more refugees on record than ever before. At the end of 2020 there were approximately 26.4 million refugees world-wide and according to UNHCR (2020) estimates, a little under half of all refugees are under 18 years of age. Almost 70% of refugees came from just five countries: the Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Myanmar and they have settled primarily in neighboring countries such as Turkey and Colombia. The exception is Germany which has accepted over 1 million refugees since 2015, accounting for the approximately 1.2 million refugees located there today. Over 60% of global refugees have settled in urban areas (IOM, 2020).

Worldwide Migrants and Refugees since 1960



Source: Migrants: World Bank, International Migrant Stock. Refugees: 1960 to 1995 from UNHCR, State of the World's Refugees (2000) Annex 3; 2000 to 2010 from UNHCR Statistical Yearbook for 2007, Annex Table 20, and 2014, Annex Table 25; 2015 and 2018 from UNHCR Global Trends for 2015 and 2018, Annex Table 1.

Note: End year totals of international migrants (in 10 millions) and refugees (in millions).

(Hatton, 2020)

The large global refugee population can be explained primarily due to conflicts and wars in their respective countries. Instability and violence force individuals and families to flee their homes and seek out safety in neighboring areas. It is important to note that many refugees want to return back to their native societies: in 2018, over 590,000 individuals returned to their countries of origin (IOM, 2020). This back-and-forth movement adds complexity to resettlement programs and policies as states are reluctant to invest in individuals that may not remain longer-term in their societies. For instance, the United States which was historically one of the primary resettlement countries for refugees, has in recent years dramatically lowered its refugee admission ceiling, citing security and economic concerns (Blizzard & Batalova, 2019).

In addition to refugees, many conflict-ridden regions also have high numbers of internally displaced individuals. As of 2020 there were 55 million internally displaced individuals with approximately 48 million fleeing conflict and violence and 7 million moving due to natural disasters (IDMC, 2020). Recent climate events have forced people out of their homes and communities, a situation that is predicted to worsen in the coming years (IOM, 2020). More specific accurate statistics are difficult to come by as the IDMC did not gather information specifically on displacement and climate disasters before 2018.

Figure 11. Top 20 countries with the largest stock of internally displaced by conflict and violence at the end of 2018

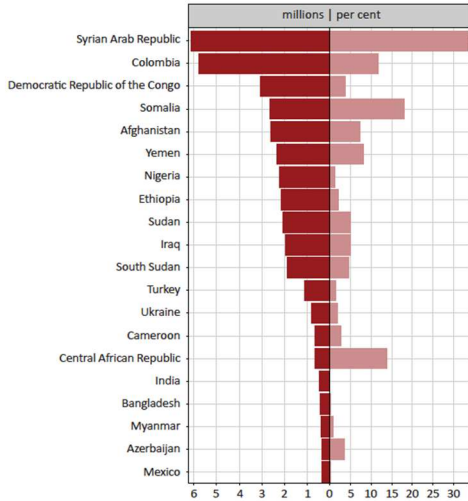
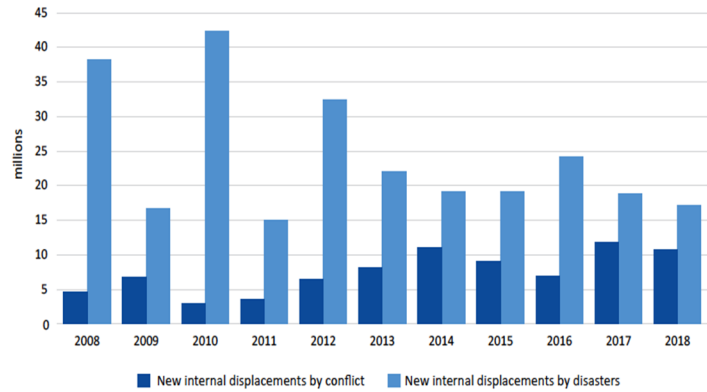


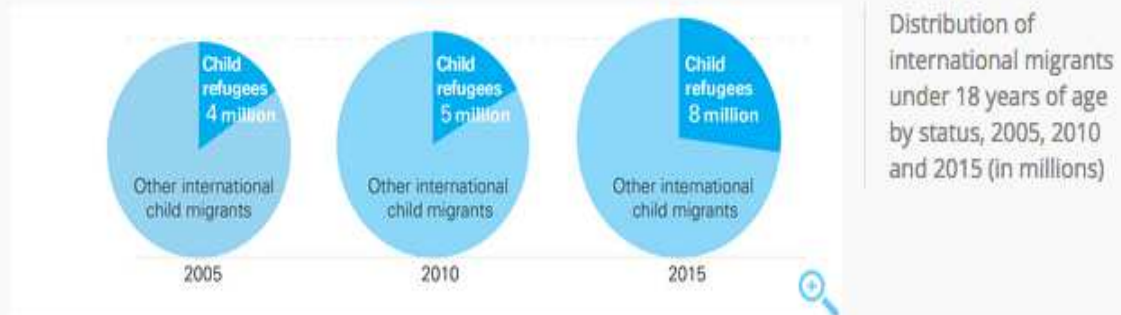
Figure 12. New internal displacements by conflict and disasters, 2008–2018 (millions)



(IOM, 2020)

Importantly for policy and programming recommendations is the fact that the refugee population is composed of over 50 percent children. For instance, UNICEF estimates that currently worldwide, nearly 28 million children have been displaced through force. This includes about 10 million child refugees, 1 million asylum-seeking children, and 17 million children who have been displaced within their own countries through violence and conflict (UNICEF, 2018). In fact, in the period between 2005 and 2015, the number of child refugees doubled from 4 million to 8 million. In 2015, children made up 51 per cent of the world’s refugees despite being less than one third of the global population.

Nearly one-third of children living outside their country of birth are refugees

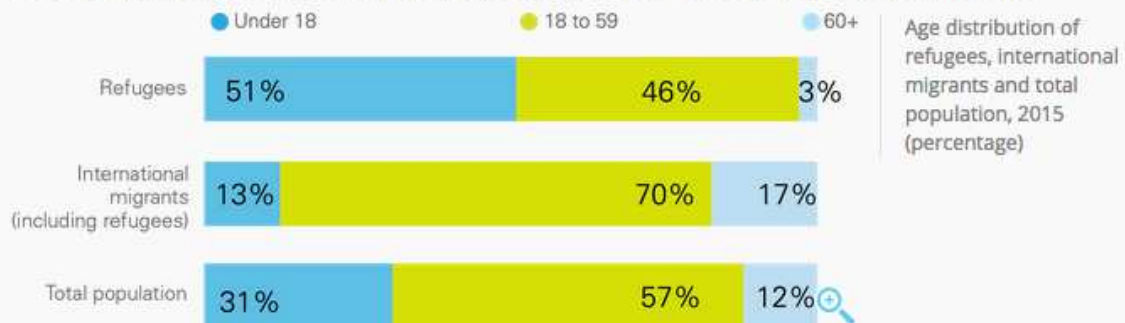


Note: This figure refers to child refugees under UNHCR's mandate. If children registered with UNWRA are included there were approximately 10 million child refugees in 2015.

Source: UNICEF analysis based on United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Age and Sex, United Nations, New York, 2015 and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2015, UNHCR, Geneva, 2016.

Source of Table: (UNICEF 2018)

The refugee population is much younger than the overall migrant population



Note: Refugees under UNHCR's mandate. An additional 5.2 million Palestinian refugees registered with the UNRWA are not included.

(UNICEF, 2018)

What the UNICEF tables illustrate is that the age distribution of refugees is strikingly younger than that of other international migrants. Most importantly, it is children who are the ones who bear the burden of decisions, violence and wars that are completely out of their control. These vulnerable children who are growing up in precarious situations are put at even greater risk through forced migrations – both internally within their countries, and through displacements to other places, cultures, and societies. These numbers suggest that families – and specifically – children are the definitive victims of wars and violence but there is little focus on their experiences and the programs and policies that could assist them in gaining an education, employment skills. Furthermore, there is an enormous need for mental health services that focus specifically on the traumas that children have endured in order to assist them in adjusting to new environments where they may or may not be with family members (UNICEF, 2018).

The information we have on refugees indicates that as the world has become more globalized, internal displacement and inter-country movements are becoming more common as transnational connectivity is expanding exponentially. However, some parts of the world are much more affected by violence, war and climate disasters than others, making it difficult to speak about global trends and responses. Catastrophic events often occur rapidly and elicit an equivalently quick response as individuals and families need to react to their local conditions. In order to best support orderly and beneficial transitions in those circumstances, states and local communities need to have plans in place for when there are emergency situations. This requires planning and resources specifically geared towards potential crises.

Migration and Climate Change

While from a programming and policy perspective, migration is primarily associated with individuals and families seeking economic opportunities or fleeing as the consequence of violence and wars, it is actually becoming increasingly common for individuals and families to move due to the conditions brought on by climate change (Singh & Basu, 2019). However, disentangling climate change migration from other factors is extremely complex. For instance, Dallman and Millock (2017) pointed out that in order to understand the relationship between migration and climate change, one also needs to take into account local social and economic conditions. The decision to migrate is not usually one that has a single factor explanation – and certainly, a changing climate is usually not the only factor that forces or encourages mobility. Under certain circumstances, migration may become an attractive option – or a forced one - while in other contexts, individuals and families will not choose to move since they are not necessarily guaranteed a better level of well-being at their potential destination. For instance, in one recent study, coffee growers indicated that Central American countries will be specifically subject to financial repercussions as land loses climatic suitability for coffee production, and that this phenomenon has begun to result in an out migration of workers (Baca et al, 2014). Yet it is important to note that many indigenous populations such as those that rely on coffee production in this region of the world are hesitant to move as they do not want to lose their community networks and livelihoods. In this situation lies the paradox: the farmers are the ones who are suffering economically from the consequences of extreme climate events but they also rely on their land for their economic sustenance. As their economic existence becomes more vulnerable,

and food insecurity more rampant, the subsequent migration of some groups is expected to increase exponentially in the next couple of decades (Dallman & Millock, 2017).

While it is becoming more common for individuals and families to migrate as a response to climate change in their local environments, migration is associated with the loss of social support networks and volatile, precarious livelihoods in urban areas (Bettini & Gioli, 2016). Migration does not necessarily lead to an improvement in family economies or livelihoods for all. As an example, a study of 14 slums in Bangalore, India indicated that the migrant slum dwellers who had left their rural areas had not managed to improve their lives from an economic or social perspective (Krishna et al., 2014). Moving had also not allowed them to create “new identities” as is sometimes suggested in Western scholarship. Instead, these migrants were relegated to the same social caste they had come from in their villages and were ostracized in their new surroundings (Singh & Basu, 2019).² These types of examples highlight that migration is not a panacea to worsening economic and social conditions. Thus, policies and programs need to not just focus on migrants but also on improving the conditions in local communities to make it more attractive for their populations to stay in place.

What we can learn specifically from the research on climate change and migration is that instead of highlighting an imagined “entrepreneurial migrant” seeking to improve their livelihood due to deteriorating regional conditions, a more effective strategy would be to re-train local populations to provide them with the skills to allow them to stay in their home environments. As climate change continues to alter local regions, it is critical for policy makers to devote resources to improving local conditions instead of encouraging individuals and families to leave everything behind for an uncertain future.

Migration Challenges

While host societies benefit from the availability of cheaper labor and high skilled workers, migration is also perceived as highly disruptive to the social fabric in most countries. In recent years, we have witnessed a serious global backlash against immigration as the dichotomy between the citizen / noncitizen has deepened in civil and political discourse. However, low birth rates in high-income countries coupled with the aging of their populations, enormous pay differentials between various parts of the world, and increasing ethnic strife guarantee that individuals from low-income countries will continue to want to migrate to middle and high-income countries, and that this phenomenon will grow.³ deHaas et al.(2018) point out however, that it is not necessarily the poorest individuals in their respective societies, who usually migrate to other parts of the world. It is those people who are middle income and who can draw together the resources to move, that tend to migrate. This finding goes against the prevailing discourses around immigration in so many countries, where it is assumed that the poorest members of society are the ones seeking opportunities in wealthier places.

² The increasing occurrence of extreme weather events such as flash floods and cyclones due to global warming are particularly affecting poor households. It is projected that “up to 325 million extremely poor people will be living in the 49 most hazard-prone countries in 2030.” The most likely areas are Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda) which are “at most risk of disaster-induced poverty” by 2030 (Shepherd et al., 2013, p. 1).

³ Migration is predicted to increase due to climate changes that may make certain regions uninhabitable.

In receiving countries, migration is almost always tied to economic opportunities. This leads many immigrants to settle in urban and industrial areas, creating enclaves of individuals from the same country, region, or even village. Migration from lower-income to higher-income countries has stoked debates on ethnicity, race and the role of multiculturalism and diversity in most societies around the globe. Migrants are often culturally distinct from the populations of their receiving societies. They may be agrarian, speak other languages, practice different religions, have varying cultural traditions, and be distinct from the host population due to their physical appearance.⁴ Their status (and depending on host country, even that of their children even if they are born in the new country) is that of ‘non-citizen’ or immigrant, and they may suffer from discriminatory practices.⁵ Moreover, in response to the negative sentiments of many of their citizenry, a growing number of governments in receiving countries have been tightening the laws around immigration and refugee status. A common public perception in the United States, Canada, Australia and Europe is that especially low-skilled immigrants, will burden the social services sectors of society while taking away jobs from natives. In the United States, this debate has been further obscured by a relatively recent mainstream media tendency to represent legal and illegal immigration as a homogeneous phenomenon. Media portrayals of ‘immigrants’ jumping over fences and ‘strong’ mayors and police who ‘crack down’ on these individuals has fueled the public sentiment that migration should be curtailed despite the fact that most immigration into the country is legal (Castles et al. 2014; deHaas et al. 2018). Most of these portrayals, sadly, do not clarify the important role that low-skilled immigrants play in the economy.⁶ Migration challenges are compounded by the fact that not all migrants bring ‘socially acceptable’ practices and beliefs with them. Tensions are exacerbated when there are major cultural gaps between migrants and host societies. For instance, issues such as FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) have incited anti-migration groups to use these practices as examples that migrants from certain areas of the world cannot be effectively integrated into their new domiciles. Conversely, migrant groups at times react negatively at what they perceive to be morally offensive and prejudicial reactions to a practice they may view as ‘culturally appropriate’ (Barrett, Bedri, & Krishnapalan, 2020).

The Effectiveness of Migration Policies

A crucial aspect of migration are the policies that either facilitate or restrict movement across international lines. Despite popular discourses and media images about the ease with which migrants move about, most countries have strict rules and laws with respect to who may or may not enter their particular country. In fact, de Hass et al. (2018) estimate that, for instance, nine out of ten migrants from Africa that enter European countries, do so legally. They point out that much of the rhetoric and media attention on illegal immigration is focused on the U.S. / Mexico

⁴ For example, in France the issue of the head scarf that many Muslim women choose to wear is highly controversial because it is perceived as making a religious statement in a secular society.

⁵ Most of these portrayals have very strong racial overtones with an emphasis on the ‘otherness’ of immigrants and their non-European roots. For a comprehensive discussion about these issues, see Castels & Miller, 2009. For example, many European countries are currently struggling with guest workers and refugee populations that refuse to return to their native countries despite financial incentives.

⁶ This is a highly complicated discussion due to a long ambivalent history in the U.S. of assimilating immigrants into the mainstream of society and the rising rate of, particularly, Hispanics. See Pew (2020) for some very interesting statistics about this phenomenon.

border and the boat route from Morocco to the EU, creating a false image of out-of-control migration. They also point out that short-term policy responses that attempt to restrict migration often have unintended consequences such as making the migration routes for migrants more circuitous and involving more countries in the process. DeHaas et al. (2018) also highlight the importance of analyzing migration policies over the long-term rather than just focusing on short-term inflows. In fact, they and many other migration scholars point out that contemporary migration policies are actually not about reducing the number of migrants but are instead about selection. In other words, some migrants are deemed as “desirable” and others not so much. Instead of regulating the numbers of migrants that can enter, many contemporary migration policies use criteria such as age, gender, skills, occupation, and money to determine who is “eligible” to enter. Thus, migration policies work as a filter to determine who has the legal right to opportunities and residency - not necessarily as a means to halt migration.

The Complexity of Family Migration

Importantly, most migration today is characterized by family migration rather than just the labor migration of a single individual. For instance, in recent years family migration accounted for 38% of migration to OECD countries while labor migration was at 11% in 2015 (OECD, 2017). Family migration refers to all family members from newborns to older persons and thus is differentiated from labor migration which usually refers to individuals within specific age groups and with particular skill sets. The category of family migration includes family formation (when a local marries a migrant), accompanying family, family reunification, and adoption from another country (OECD, 2017). The United States currently is the country with the highest influx of family migrants (72 %). The dilemma for most countries that accept migrants is how to balance the regulations and laws around family migration with remaining welcoming and attractive to specific groups of labor migrants. For example, amongst professional couples, if only one partner can attain work, this may provide a disincentive to migrate for an occupational opportunity. Data from the Netherlands indicates that when both spouses are able to attain work, the family is more likely to stay longer term in their new locale (OECD, 2016). Many countries are currently experimenting with granting varying residency and labor market rights to different groups of labor migrants. Thus, for instance, higher-skilled more educated migrants may be able to easily bring their family members to receiving societies but lower-skilled migrants may not be accorded the same privilege. This differential approach needs to be re-evaluated. Temporary less-skilled workers also benefit from the stabilizing factor of having their families with them. deHaas et al (2018) points out that in general restrictive migration policies target “undesirable” migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, certain categories of low-skilled workers). These policies are put in place to keep out these groups because once they enter, they may actually have more rights to services, shelter, and other opportunities than they would have had in the past due to liberalized policies. Thus, states are leery of certain groups and attempt to prevent them from entering their countries right from start.

Unaccompanied minors are a specific problem for migration systems and programs. Most countries are set up to only deal with a very small number of cases. However, for instance in 2015 and 2016, the United States and the European Union received 100,000 and 167,000 unaccompanied minors, respectively (OECD, 2017). Unaccompanied minors need special facilities, guardians, and create an enormous challenge for the educational system as they often

do not speak the local language. Moreover, once they turn 18 they “age out” of the systems that are in place. The large influx of unaccompanied minors are also related to family reunification policies (discussed further on), as in some cases families send children ahead to create an “anchor” in the host society creating a dilemma for host societies.

How immigrants are perceived, legally and culturally in their host countries, depends a great deal on the ideology of that society. In the classic immigration countries like the United States, Australia, and Canada, migrants have been traditionally seen as permanent residents who are to be assimilated into society (Castles & Miller, 2009). In other places, such as Europe and the Middle East, migrants were often thought of as temporary or guest labor and, as such, were not accorded the right to remain permanently in those areas. Laws were geared against family reunification and permanent residence, with some countries in those areas asserting that they were not necessarily open to permanent immigration. A multitude of complex factors has contributed to an increasingly complicated socio-political environment, as guest laborers attempt to remain in those countries.⁷ A recent report by the OECD (2017) details the complexities around migration policies with each OECD country characterized by a different set of rules and policies around residency requirements, family reunification, and permanency status. For instance, family migration policy often focuses on the issue of integration and language requirements. Much of this complexity is tied to a pervasive discourse around the rights, legality, contributions, and cultural values of migrants, with dominant images of the poor immigrant who ‘steals’ the rightful job of the native born becoming ever more prominent in both immigration and non-immigration societies. Populist political parties have stocked those fears and have helped to sway public opinion towards a growing sentiment against immigrants (Hatton, 2020). Immigrants are often blamed for the various ills of society including crime, drugs, and decaying social values. Furthermore, in societies that are not constructed around an immigrant ethic, issues of national identity have been severely tested as populations become increasingly multicultural. And around the globe, this phenomenon has spurred the rise of nationalistic and fundamentalist movements seeking an ‘authentic’ identity based on ‘traditional’ norms and values.

Reunification Policies

An exodus of individuals fleeing Eastern Europe and haunting memories of the holocaust right after World War II led to a U.N. diplomatic conference that later became known as the Refugee Convention (1951). This document gave refugees a variety of protections and stressed that “the unity of the refugee’s family is maintained” (Vara, 2018). For the next sixty years or so, keeping refugee families together and / or allowing them to reunite became foundational to human rights ideology. Fundamental to this concept was the idea that families were beneficial to the refugees themselves. However, in the twenty-first century with sudden increased refugee flows due to conflicts and wars, the rhetoric has shifted. Increasingly, politicians in particular, have framed family reunification as more “unwanted migration” for host societies and this sentiment has influenced public sentiments. For instance, a public poll in Germany in 2017 found that only 23 percent of German respondents agreed with the idea that refugee families should be allowed to reunite (Vara, 2018). These types of sentiments have led to a wide variety of countries

⁷ In the United States, children born there automatically receive US citizenship creating situations where different members of families have varying legal identities.

implementing stricter measures around family reunification for refugees and other categories of migrants as well. Empirical evidence however indicates that this is flawed approach. When families are separated, especially for longer periods of time, members suffer from higher levels of stress and a lesser sense of well-being (OECD, 2019). Instead, generally speaking, family reunification has actually been proven to support host countries rather than harm them. Family reunification leads to individuals over the long-term better integrating into host societies and becoming contributing citizens.

A recent analyses of OECD countries details that the current policies that impose conditions for family reunification often cause delays and actually work against the integration of family members into the host society. Most OECD countries have family reunification policies in place based on the principal migrants' income, the provision of adequate housing, a minimum residence period, and some also apply pre-arrival language requirements for spouses. Thus, many migrant families can only meet those conditions over an extended period of time, delaying family reunification and causing stress on all members involved. However, concurrently in several OECD countries, family reunification is much easier for high-skilled migrants as many of these types of conditions are waived. It is important to note that avoiding long delays is very important when it comes to separated children: migrant children are more easily integrated into host countries when they arrive at younger ages (OECD, 2019). The OECD (2019) analyses suggests that transparency around reunification conditions and allowing migrants to bring their children in to host societies without delay, would go a long way to improving family well-being and societal integration.

As can be seen from this discussion, family migration is increasing in complexity as countries struggle to balance separate priorities and competing policy objectives. However, regional conflicts, climate change, and the need for labor migrants, portend that these are issues that will need to be refined in the coming years as migration is set to increase – not decrease due to expanding push – pull factors.

Gender and Migration

International migration is increasingly understood to be a gendered experience. While historically, migration was primarily undertaken by men, who may or may not have been accompanied by their wives, the last several decades have witnessed a significant shift towards the sole migration of women. Currently, a little under half of all migrants are female (UNFPA, 2018). Sometimes termed as the feminization of migration, this phenomenon is intimately linked to an increased demand for female labor brought about through changes in manufacturing, the growth of export processing zones, and the growth in service sector jobs (Castels & Miller, 2009). This demand has encouraged women to seek opportunities for work in higher income regions around the world. Female sole migration is primarily understood as a response in many high-income countries to the enormous need for care labor in those regions brought about by decreases in fertility and the increase of women in the paid labor force. Furthermore, for sending countries, the export of labor and the associated remittances sent back, has become a significant source of revenue (Fresnoza-Flot, 2018).

Concurrently, other lesser-known forms of gendered migration have grown as well: specifically, the commercialized movement of domestic workers, the, often violent, trafficking of primarily girls and women in the sex industry, and the formalized export of girls and women for marriage (mail order brides) (Carling, 2005; Outschoorn, 2014).

The increased trafficking of girls and women is one of the least public and yet, most horrific aspects of contemporary migration. This phenomenon is on the rise in Asia in particular and can be attributed indirectly to policies such as the one child policy that was in place until recently in China. While the intent of this policy was to limit population growth, it also led to an unexpected national gender imbalance as culturally, parents favored male children over female children. This cultural preference led to the abortion of female fetuses and the abandonment of baby girls. Currently, gender imbalance is estimated at between 30 – 40 million fewer females than males (Barr, 2019). With fewer available females for marriage, Chinese men have turned to recruiting women from other poorer South-East Asian countries. However, most of these women have been either tricked, kidnapped, or sold into this version of the sex trade. Current border policies primarily lay the blame on the trafficked women who are perceived as having broken “immigration rules.” The exponential growth in the trafficking of girls and women is also attributed to the lack of economic opportunities for certain segments of the population in this part of the world. Extreme poverty and the lack of employment opportunities for women have led families to selling their children into the sex trade (Davy, 2014). Given the “profitability” of the sex trade for its perpetrators, the severe economic problems facing certain sectors of South-East Asian societies, and the lack of enforced laws around this issue, human rights groups predict that trafficking is actually set to increase rather than decrease over the next decade (Barr, 2019).

As can be seen from the discussion above, migration and gender is a multi-dimensional concept. Often neglected in studies and analyses of international migration is the gendered experience of this phenomenon. Girls and women face differentiated experiences and risk factors in new settings – including on the journey itself (UNFPA, 2018). It is not uncommon for girls and women to experience violence and deprivation at the hands of smugglers, other migrants, or even aid workers. Their vulnerability is often hidden under Westernized discourses that assume that girls and women are experiencing migration in the same manner as men without regard to the specific dangers they may face.

Gender, migration, and extreme weather events are also a growing area of concern. We now recognize that gender norms and behaviors are interrelated with the other social conditions under which families make decisions about their livelihoods. But what is less understood is that girls and women are at times more vulnerable than men specifically when extreme weather events occur (Ahmed, Haq & Bartiaux, 2019). For instance, impoverished families that live in disaster prone areas often face great economic challenges. One coping strategy for these families is to marry off their young daughters to mitigate further poverty and food shortages that can occur through the impact of extreme weather events and / or climate change (Ferdousi, 2013). During catastrophic times for instance, when families are forced to move to shelters or refugee camps, girls and young women may face the risk of sexual violence as they undertake daily tasks such as fetching water or taking care of personal functions. This leads some families to marry off their

daughters at an extremely young age in order (from their perspective) to ward off a potential problem before it even starts. By having fewer family members, they are responsible for, this strategy also allows the family to share their food amongst themselves (Ahmed, Haq & Bartiaux, 2019). These hidden dimensions of migration are usually not accounted for in policies and programs that focus on improving the migration experiences of individuals and families.

What can be understood from these examples is that when migrants come from cultures where patriarchal decision making is the norm, girls and women's lives do not necessarily improve through mobility. They are at risk from the actual move and may also suffer at the hands of their own families. Moving from one place to another, does not imply that persons take on new behaviors or that their values always shift. Instead, ethnographic examples indicate that gender norms tend to remain relatively steady or shift only incrementally in new environments. In those cases where girls and women take on different roles - such as supplementing the household income - their agency may increase, depending on a variety of contextual factors including but not limited to cultural norms and situational circumstances (Singh & Basu, 2019). Thus, it is critical that a gendered, nuanced perspective undergird all programming and policies that support migrants on their journeys and integration into host communities and societies.

The Transnational Family Dimensions of Migration

In recent decades, the transnational nature of migration has come into focus with increased interest in the processes by which migrants adapt to their receiving societies while maintaining strong ties with their families and communities. The emphasis in these studies has been primarily the acculturation of the migrants themselves with much less attention paid to those family members who remain behind such as spouses, children, parents, and other extended family members (Goulborne et al. 2010; OECD, 2019.) We know little about how those that remain in the home community fare with respect to their mental health, maintaining family ties, or the actual practices of their day to day lives. This omission is very problematic with respect to policy and program planning. Families remain central to all societies and ensure the social reproduction of productive citizens and caring individuals. Just because all members are not located in the same geographic space anymore, does not mean that families matter less to either sending or receiving states and communities.

The family is the ultimate unit of sharing and caring, directed at ensuring material survival, welfare and development, with intergenerational transfers of goods, services and finances flowing between family members. In the case of transnational families, these flows are geographically stretched (Bryceson, 2019, p. 3045,).

A lens on the whole migratory family unit and not just some members helps us understand how members organize their economic and social obligations and continue to care for each other. This focus leads to more strategic policy and program planning.

While historically most scholarly research on migration focused on men, today's current scholarship on transnational families concentrates specifically on women who migrate and leave

their children behind. Their economic contributions compounded with traditional gender ideologies creates an ambivalent situation that often brings unwanted focus to their lives (Fuller-Igelsias, 2015). Moreover, restrictive policies may penalize them specifically due to their gender. For instance, Mahdavi (2016) describes how young women working in domestic service in the Gulf States are very vulnerable to the policing of their behavior with stringent repercussions should they “transgress” cultural norms. For instance, if a young woman becomes pregnant, she is understood to be in breach of her labor contract and in all likelihood will lose her employment. Her sexuality becomes criminalized even in cases of rape by an employer. She is thereby punished in multiple ways: she cannot send remittances home anymore affecting her family of origin, she loses the opportunities working abroad may have provided her, and she undergoes emotional trauma.

Transnational Motherhood. Women who have children and who migrate, navigate a specific set of circumstances. For them, social and cultural challenges abound as they need to balance “traditional” conceptualizations of what constitutes a “good” mother with their breadwinner roles and physical distances. Women who journey abroad to work and subsequently send home their earnings (remittances) navigate normative gender roles that expect them to simultaneously perform care work and maintain intimate relationships (Parrenas, 2010). This highlights the contradictory experiences of women who are trying to create a better life for themselves and their children, and the social expectations that remain ingrained in societies around the world with respect to gender roles.

Mother-child separation due to migration has resulted in a new area of study and concern, also known as “transnational motherhood.” Mothering in these contexts include the practices that women engage in to maintain their relationships with their children while simultaneously providing for them economically from a distance (Fresnoza-Flot 2009). While most women who migrate internationally enter domestic service and care work legally, stricter immigration policies are leading to an increase in women taking on service sector jobs through illegal recruitment agencies. It is important to note that certain governments (such as in the Philippines), rely on the export of human labor in order to stabilize their own economies. For instance, in 1974 the Philippines adopted a labour-export programme to create a source of foreign currencies. According to recent estimates 72 percent of Filipinos working abroad were women (Fresnoza-Flot, 2018) and many of them were married with children. Exact figures are difficult to come by because many married women, in an attempt to ensure their emigration, do not report their marital and familial standing in their application papers. It is important to note that as an increasing number of women who have children, migrate, they are redefining fundamental concepts such as motherhood , breadwinning, and what constitutes “close” family relationships.

Transnational parenting has led to a focus on concepts such as the “commodification of love” and the “technological management of family relationships” (Parrenas, 2001.) As mothers juggle their new lives with their family demands, they create new mechanisms for keeping close touch. They employ various approaches in order to be “good mothers” and satisfy personal and societal demands. Most importantly, they take on the breadwinner role – and yet, they often come from societies where economic provision has traditionally been perceived to be in the male sphere.

These women are thus redefining some of their societies most foundational gender norms – however at great psychological cost to themselves (Parrenas, 2010).

Transnational mothers very much rely on kin care to take care of the family members that they have left behind in their home societies. As they are living far from home, they shift their mothering obligations to another family member (usually another woman) and rely on her for childcare. However, migrant mothers continue to be intimately involved in the workings of the family, thus, now carrying the double burden of having to conform to traditional “female” gender roles while also taking on the “male” breadwinning role (Fresnoza-Flot, 2018). In addition, this is often done in contexts where they are having to legitimize their actions both in the receiving and home societies.

Often ignored in the debates about transnational mothering is the emotional toll that these migrations take on the women themselves who may be lonely, homesick and miss their children and families (Parrenas, 2010). The children are also affected by this type of family separation (Cohen, 2000; Fresnoza-Flot, 2018). At times, children’s school performance suffers, and they may suffer psychological traumas as in some cases they feel deserted by their parent (Asis, 2006). Studies on transnational mothering highlight that migration is not a unidimensional experience. Position in the household, economic contribution, age, and sex all are contributing factors, creating a complex family dynamic that varies from one household to the next.

As has been described, the major draw for mothers specifically to migrate, are economic factors. Transnational mothers tend to emphasize that their definition of a “good mother” is one who can provide economically for her family. Physical absence is replaced by monetary support. Transnational mothers send money home (remittances) that are used by their families to meet the needs of the children. Interestingly, research indicates that women tend to send this money to other women in their families (and not necessarily to their husbands) (Fresnoza-Flot, 2009). Most often, the remittances are used to support the children’s education in order to give them a “better future” and to buy material goods that will raise the status of the family in their home society. Arlie Hochschild famously coined these arrangements as “global care chains” which link migrants and non-migrants through financial obligations and unpaid care work (2001). Yet, virtually every study on transnational motherhood highlights that despite the many sacrifices by these women and their many contributions to the family household, they struggle to justify and negotiate their actions at home and abroad (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila, 1997; Parrenas, 2010). As Fresnoza-Flot (2009) pointed out, this leads us back to Heidi Hartmann’s perspective (1981) on family as the “locus of struggle” for women and the fact that normative gender roles remain embedded in Western and non-Western societies.

In contexts of international migration, despite changes in gender roles as women add economic provision to their domestic duties, interestingly men’s roles have not changed conversely. Research indicates that most men continue to see breadwinning as their primary role and do not necessarily take on more parenting responsibilities. For instance, in an ethnographic study in Mexico, Dreby (2006) found that with respect to parenting, traditional beliefs about mothering

and fathering persevered, even if one parent was working in another country. Parrenas found similar responses to female economic provision in the Philippines (2010). When women migrated due to paid labor opportunities and sent home remittances, their husbands did not take on new roles or re-define fathering. Interestingly, according to Dreby, in the Mexican case, the relationships that fathers had with their children continued to be directly related to their ability to fulfill the economic provider role. If the men migrated and were economically successful, they were perceived as good fathers and managed to maintain regular contact with their children. Mothers were viewed very differently. The Mexican mothers' primary goal with respect to their children was to demonstrate to them that even from a distance they were able to stay emotionally intimate with them. Their economic contributions to the family were downplayed and traditional gender roles were emphasized (Dreby, 2006).

It is worth noting however, that while in contexts of transnational parenthood, traditional gender roles are maintained and at times even emphasized, when individuals migrate, they are most definitely influenced by the norms, values, and practices that they encounter in their new host societies. Recent ethnographic work indicates that temporary migrants bring home new ideas and practices with respect to gender roles. While this is especially true for women, it is also now influencing men. For instance, recent emphasis on men being more involved with their children is creating new conceptualizations of male migration with prolonged absences being perceived negatively (Fialkowska, 2019). In a study of temporary Polish migrants Fialkowska found that couples struggle when reunited after prolonged work-related separations with creating a new family culture with re-configured gender roles. Also, she correctly points out that it is important to note that when we discuss work-related migration and gender dynamics, most studies focus on rural and working-class populations. These groups may have very different ideologies when it comes to family life, than highly educated and more well-to-do couples have. In addition, it is worth noting that in cases of couple / family migration, when women take on new economic responsibilities in host societies, men often slowly alter their perceptions of family roles. For instance, in a study using data from the European Social Survey, Pessin and Arpino (2018) found that immigrants across the European Union who migrated together, were more likely to move to gender neutral conceptualizations of family roles. Thus, we can deduce that the process of migration, changes in values, and effects on gender and family dynamics are quite different when one adult stays in the home society and the other migrates, versus when the couple or the group migrate together. This discussion highlights the complexity of trying to generalize about gender relations and migration, and yet, how a gendered perspective on programming and policy decisions is critical if we are committed to strengthening the position of girls and women in their families and beyond.

Migration and the Nuclear and Extended Family. As we have seen in the discussion on gender and migration, a major driver in changes in family relationships is the move of one or more members of a household to a new context. However, women are not the only ones affected by migration. All family members be they husbands, children, grandparents and even other extended family members are touched in some manner by the migration experience. Thus, the many studies that focus specifically on individuals and migration suffer from a fundamental flaw as they ignore the *extensive impact of migration on family relationships*, a phenomenon that also affects the communities in which these families are embedded. Recent research has begun to focus on these transnational families, defined as families “that live some or most of the time

separated from each other, yet hold together and create something that can be seen as a feeling of collective welfare and unity, namely ‘familyhood’, even across national borders” (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002, p. 3). This concept highlights the fact that families are flexible, resilient, and dynamic. They respond to socio-historical conditions and are governed by internal rules of obligation, duty, and emotion even across distance. Transnational families also point to human interdependency and the need for material and emotional connection and support.

Contemporary scholarship on transnational families has directed attention to the strategies that families employ in order to maintain their family relationships and obligations over distance (Horn & Schweppe, 2017). A focus on social reproduction, the activities that families perform in order to maintain their daily and generational tasks (such as physical and emotional needs, caregiving and socialization), illustrates the complexity and the capabilities of families to persevere even in dire and / or foreign social environments (Hoang & Yeoh, 2012). In migration contexts, family members utilize a variety of strategies in order to continue to be a part of daily decision making and the maintenance of their families. Contemporary families are at times described as “imagined communities:” family members *choose* who and the degree to which they care to remain involved with their kin across distance. However, this is a complex notion as cultural and economic factors also intersect with individual agency. For instance, as was described above, mothers face particular cultural sanctions and gendered norms around their behavior. Remittances are the most tangible and easily “counted” aspect of transnational relationships. However, family relationships are maintained through a variety of other practices as well. For instance, visits by migrants to their home countries serve to maintain family ties and assist in sustaining migrants’ emotional well-being (King & Lulle, 2015). Contemporary communication technologies are also a critical tool in maintaining kin relations. However, it is important to note that often times there is unequal access to these technologies between migrants and those family members who have remained behind. “Differential access to means of communication exacerbates existing asymmetries, creating unequal power and corresponding dependency” (Mahler, 2001, p. 610). And even in those situations where individuals are able to communicate regularly, the feeling of distance may remain for both sides exacerbating a sense of loneliness and fragmentation.

What can be understood from this overview is that understanding transnational family life is a complex, multi-generational experience and needs to be approached through more holistic approaches that account for a variety of factors including

Migratory perspective (i.e. migrant versus family who are left behind), generational status (e.g. migrant parent of young child versus parent of migrant adult child) and relationship type (i.e. spouse versus parent). Additional contextual factors that were alluded include gender (i.e. mother versus father), length of migration, size of family (i.e. number of siblings), age at migration and legal status. (Fuller-Iglesias, 2015, p. 1720)

Each family will have its own set of experiences and will maintain some relationships more than others. We cannot speak of a uniform migration experience nor can we assume that blanket

policies and programming will be appropriate for all migrants. Incorporating the nuances of the migration experience into policy and programming decision making will result in more beneficial experiences both for migrants and receiving communities and societies.

Children and Migration. Most recently, the effects of migration on children has become an area of concern for policy makers and academicians. At times termed “left-behind children,” most of these studies focus on very young children as they are assumed to need their mothers “the most” (Dreby, 2010; Lam & Yeoh, 2019). Much of this literature focuses on the emotional and psychological effects on children when a parent(s) lives and works in another location (Cohen, 2000; Goulborne et al., 2010). For instance, in China, an increased number of young adults have left their villages seeking work in urban areas leaving their children to be cared for by older family members. This is a growing phenomenon, often labeled as the “left-behind children” (Chang, Dong, & MacPhail, 2011).

Scholarship, however, indicates that one cannot assume uniform effects of parental migration on children. In some families, the relationships become more fragmented while others are able to maintain close relationships and at times report becoming closer to one another (Fuller-Iglesias, 2015). A critical factor seems to be the length of the migration: when families are separated for longer periods of time (usually described as 10+ years), families become more fragmented with children having more severe emotional repercussions. Studies also indicate that children are affected differentially by the absence of mothers versus fathers, as men are often only expected to provide instrumental (financial) assistance while women are societally expected to provide emotional (caring) attention (Hoang & Yeoh, 2012). For instance, Parrenas (2005) described how the children of some migrating fathers withdrew emotionally from them, while the children of migrating mothers at times felt a lack of intimacy and a feeling of abandonment. In some cases, relationships become purely financial transactions, with children expecting money from both mothers and fathers instead of emotional intimacy. This leads to a commodification of the parent-child relationship (Hoang & Yeoh, 2012). It is important to note that many transnational families are subject to the laws and policies that keep them from easily interacting with one another. Thus, as the study by Hoang and Yeoh (2012) indicates,

Contrary to popular discourses about processes of deterritorialisation as a result of globalisation and technological advancement our study demonstrates that national borders, state policies and socioeconomic divides maintain their significance, particularly for the less privileged people in the developing world. ICTs [Information and Communication Technologies] are not powerful enough to challenge the barriers and spaces created by these structures, especially when it comes to the emotional dimension of family life. (p. 321).

A focus on the experiences of children reveals that migration has a multitude of effects on them. In order to maintain a sense of family and emotional closeness, it is critical for migrating parents to approach the relationships with their children with consistent concern and communication. Furthermore, having resident parents and kin closely involved with children keeps them from

feeling abandoned and helps preserve a feeling of “family.” As the above discussion also highlights however, it is not enough to put the onus of facilitating family relationships purely on individuals. Instead, domestic and international stakeholders need to keep the *family dimension* at the forefront of policy formation.

Taking a family systems perspective to understanding migration has significant policy implications. Restrictive laws that do not allow migrants to easily visit with their families or that only focus on the migrant and not the whole family, have ripple effects that may affect generations. These types of laws also do not allow individuals to realize their full capabilities in both the economic and social spheres. For all migrants, but especially for individuals from lower income contexts who may have less access to reliable communication technologies, being able to regularly interact with their children is critical for both child development and the emotional state of the migrant. Maintaining healthy relationships allows for healthier workers and citizens which ultimately benefits states and labor markets as well.

Child Migrants. Recently, scholarly focus has shifted to “child migrants” a topic that at least in Western scholarship had been primarily ignored. Child migrants refers to young people who are under the age of 18 and who leave home to pursue life opportunities in other places. Huijsmans (2016) points out that most studies that have looked at the experiences of these children have framed the problem one of “child labor” or “street children” while ignoring the fact that these young people are consistently the ones who have left rural areas to pursue opportunities in urban areas. Many rural areas, especially in low-income context lack the educational and social service opportunities that would entice young individuals to stay. Huisjsmans also points out that this movement is supported by transnational discourses that emphasize “independence” through leaving home and attaining employment and training opportunities (2016). In the global south in particular, these discourses are highly gendered as they focus primarily on males who leave to pursue new ventures. Nonetheless, in contemporary environments brought on by globalization, there exist new work opportunities for girls and young women, making this, an overall young people phenomenon, and not just a male one.

Disability and Migration

A virtually invisible topic in the scholarship on migration are the circumstances surrounding children, youth, and adults with disabilities. The WHO estimates that approximately 15% of the global population are persons with disabilities (WHO & World Bank, 2011). This leads scholars to assume that approximately 3.5 to 5 million migrants may have a disability. Some studies indicate that the numbers may be higher, however. For instance, a survey of Syrian refugees found that 22% had some kind of physical or cognitive impairment (HelpAge International & Handicap International, 2014). Complicating this discussion is that individuals with disabilities may have had these impairments their whole lives or they may become disabled on the migration journey as they flee from violence, war or other types of disasters. In some situations, families may leave individuals with disabilities behind as they attempt to escape from their circumstances and are unable to have to take them on complicated dangerous journeys. This jeopardizes vulnerable individuals even further. Their support structures are dismantled and they become at even greater risk of violence, poverty, and dangerous conditions. Discourses and policies and

programs focusing on migrants rarely, however, acknowledge this population or their needs and complicated situations.

... this population (disabled forced migrants) continues to be cast in a shadow, of epistemological, ontological and practical invisibility. It is hardly theorised in forced migration studies and rarely contemplated in humanitarian intervention. The lives of disabled forced migrants are cast aside in a Eurocentric disability studies that remains global North-centric and focused, while Southern contexts and histories and the geopolitics that envelope them, are forgotten or never known. (Pisani & Grech, 2015)

Disability is closely correlated with poverty conditions. Individuals who are poor often live in unsafe areas and are subject to unhealthy conditions at home and at work, such as poor nutrition, bad air quality, and exposure to toxins. This is of course problematic for all inhabitants, but even more so for persons with disabilities. Moreover, persons with disabilities have difficulty accessing quality health care and education, exacerbating their poverty conditions (Pisani & Grech, 2015). When one adds migration to this mix, the situation becomes exponentially amplified. Poor and disabled individuals may lose whatever social networks they have and become vulnerable to exploitation from smugglers and others with ill intent. This is particularly true for girls and women who are subject to sexual abuse, violence and other human rights violations (Pisani & Grech, 2015). However, as Pisani and Grech (2015) point out, all migrants with disabilities are at great risk. They provide a comprehensive list of the challenges and barriers faced by disabled migrants which include,

- problems in accessing food and water
- unavailability of adequate and adapted food rations (type of food)
- inadequate means and support to consume food
- poor sanitation and inaccessible toilets
- discrimination
- verbal, physical and sexual abuse
- barriers in accessing health care, and inadequate or absent means of referral, in particular to specialised health care and rehabilitation
- limited access to assistive devices
- barriers in accessing information and education, especially in culturally relevant and positioned ways
- lack of knowledge of contextual and cultural framings of disability, bodies and care, including by medical staff
- cultural mediators, translators, humanitarian actors, policy makers and others untrained in disability issues

Thus, migrants with disabilities and their families face specific trials that are often unacknowledged in discourses, programs and policies on migration. Beyond facing the challenges that healthy migrants face, individuals with disabilities may lose their family and community supports depending on the conditions they are confronted with. This can result in the

compounding of disabilities with loneliness and mental health issues. In longer term displacement contexts, individuals with disabilities are often pushed to the periphery. Their voices are not heard and their needs not met. Due to stricter border controls and an emphasis by states on national security, migrants including those with disabilities, may be forced to take even more dangerous paths in an effort to find a secure location.

Conclusion

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, globalization has allowed individuals to access new opportunities in various regions around the world. These opportunities however often come at great personal cost. In order to access better lifestyles, individuals and families often need to migrate within or between countries. While actual migration numbers are low in proportion to the global population, the impacts of migration are significant on a global level. Most individuals migrate as families or in groups, and their leaving and re-settlement has crucial social, political, and economic implications for their home and receiving societies. International migration provides the basis for the creation of new forms of transnational families and the movement of ideas, information, skills, and capital. Migration has also led to significant social changes influencing conceptualizations of romance, marriage, family life, gender relations and parenting. Moreover, displacement has influenced family and community relationships and contributed to the rise of social inequality.

As this discussion has indicated, migration is a multi-dimensional, varied experience. Individuals and families migrate due a wide variety of reasons, and this mobility can be both challenging and / or beneficial. On a macro-level, receiving societies as well as sending societies are impacted by migrants. Depending on socio-historical moment and region, migrants may be welcomed positively (if they bring a desired resource) or they may be regarded with hostility by native born citizens. This can lead to political tensions and restrictive policy responses (Mather et al. 2018). Globalization and the proliferation of communication technologies has also transformed the relationship of migrants and those they leave behind. Historically, migration was a male phenomenon and associated with the loss of familial, community and societal ties. However, contemporary migrants are also often now sole females, due to the proliferation of jobs in manufacturing and service sectors, brought on through globalization. Through rapid advances in technologies, contemporary migrants have many more options for maintaining relationships to their home societies, in contrast to even just several years ago (IOM, 2020). Ease of travel, combined with the Internet, social media, and video conferencing, allow individuals who leave their homes to stay in touch with loved ones and to retain stronger cultural ties. These rapid communications also allow for the rapid spread of ideas, values, and practices as migrants share new impressions and experiences while staying abreast of developments in their home communities.

Evaluating the effects of migration is complex as multiple factors come into play including the number of migrants that move to a specific location, the relationship with the home culture of the migrants, and the parameters that allow access to integration in the host society. In particular, the legal-policy frameworks of receiving societies play a fundamental role with respect to migrants abilities to integrate and contribute to their host countries. This is true for both legal and irregular

migrants. Issues such as the ability to gain lawful employment, participate in the civic life of their communities, stay in touch with their extended families, and send home remittances are all related to the well-being of migrants. But it is important to note that the skills that migrants bring also play a role: the higher the educational and skills levels, the greater their likelihood to contribute to both their sending and receiving societies (Khanna & Lee, 2018). Today it is understood that the capacity and willingness of the host society to assist both high-skilled and lower-skilled migrants with adapting and integrating newcomers is key for a mutually beneficial relationship (IOM, 2020).

Skewing understandings of the contributions of migrants is the fact that so much of the scholarship on migration comes out of the United States' experience with immigration (Fitzgerald, 2014). Such a strong focus on one country's experience has led to a lack of understanding of other socio-economic contexts as well as very little knowledge about the effects of migration on sending societies. In addition, much of this scholarship has focused on economic contributions with little attention being paid to the family, cultural, and civic impacts of migrants. For instance, culinary contributions have broadened the availability of many different types of food across the world and brought together individuals from widely divergent cultures (Khoury, 2016). Treating migration as a homogeneous experience also undercuts the varied contexts, journeys, and challenges migrants may face. The refugee experience differs profoundly from that of a migrant who is seeking economic and / or social opportunities. And those experiences also influence the host communities and how willing they are to learn and assist migrants as they resettle.

Migration has profound family effects on those who move and those who stay behind. There are intergenerational repercussions, as is the case with children, and the wider community may benefit (as for example with respect to remittances). In many cases, mobility may influence and even change gender roles within families due to financial contributions, new practices, or varied belief systems. For instance, amongst married couples, in new environments, marital roles, marital expectations, and marital satisfaction may be re-evaluated against the norms of the new host society with either beneficial, or at times, very negative effects (for instance a rise in domestic violence) (UN Women, 2019). However, again, these are not uniform experiences. Many factors come into play when determining the extent to which marital and other family relationships are affected by the migration experience. Recent scholarship indicates that receiving country policies have a major impact on the stability of family relationships for migrants. Policies that deter family reunification specifically destabilize families due to long periods of separation (Fresnoza-Flot, 2018). Creating pathways for instance for migrant mothers to bring their families to their host communities would strengthen family ties and lead to more positive reciprocal relationships.

Migration research indicates that from a global perspective, the integration of migrants into host communities tends to happen over successive generations. In addition, the marital rates, age at marriage, and fertility rates of migrants tend to converge with those of the receiving country, if not immediately, almost always over time (IOM, 2020; Pew, 2019). These types of family

indicators illustrate that migration and acculturation are actually an iterative process. And yet, around the world, the debates about migration have become increasingly polarized. Politicians, in particular, are increasingly using migration as a powerful political weapon to sow fear and distrust amongst their citizens using an “us” versus “them” approach. These types of discourses have had serious repercussions for public policy decisions and have served to limit the mobility of individuals and families. Furthermore, these types of negative debates and restrictive policy consequences have overshadowed the fact that globally, migrants as a whole, lead to greater entrepreneurship and dynamism in their host societies (Mathers et al. 2018). As for instance the World Bank’s 2009 *World Development Report* stated,

Countries do not prosper without mobile people. Indeed, the ability of people to move seems to be a good gauge of their economic potential, and the willingness to migrate appears to be a measure of their desire for advancement. Governments should facilitate labor mobility. (World Bank 2009, p. 18)

Migration allows individuals and families to better their circumstances and to leave behind, at times, truly horrific conditions. Migrants, however, are not “victims” – they bring resources, skills, and knowledge to their new settings which benefit their hosts as well. However, we need appropriate legal, political, and social frameworks that allow migrating individuals to realize their capabilities and to embed themselves in their new environments.

Low birth rates in high income countries coupled with the aging of their populations, enormous inequality and pay differentials between various parts of the world, increasing ethnic strife, and climate change, foreshadow that migration will continue to grow. Individuals and families from lower-income regions will continue to want, and or need, to migrate within their societies or to other parts of the world and it is predicted that the numbers will expand exponentially (IOM, 2020).

Migration comes with benefits. Especially for countries that are experiencing large migration flows, international migration may slow the ageing process, at least temporarily, since migrants tend to be of young working ages (for instance in Germany). However, migrants who remain in host countries will eventually age themselves raising questions about nationality and citizenship, benefits, and the appropriate policies that help them integrate in a mutually beneficial and positive manner.

Programs and policies need to account for the fact that migration is *not* an individual experience. Migrants are part of larger family groups and often have very specific needs: they may experience a decline in their economic status (as in the case of refugees for example) or they may have had to leave members of their families behind - at great psychological cost. Certain groups of migrants such as asylum seekers and refugees have especially challenging experiences. They may have been exposed to violence and / or abuse at home and are often unwelcome in their new environments. Most migrants have faced losses and hardships that are difficult for those who have not undergone this experience to imagine. And yet, the literature also supports the notion of resiliency: migrants bring strengths and skills to their own lives and to those in their new communities (Merry, Pelaez & Edwards, 2017). They are not “victims” nor do most want to

become dependent on the largess of their hosts. Migrants are active agents of their own lives who despite previous circumstances, want to start fresh and become productive, respected citizens.

All of these factors need to be taken into account in discussions and planning around migration experiences. In order to create supportive policies and programs we need much more information and research about the varied experiences of migrants and especially refugees. A focus on parenting, elder care, persons with disabilities and the unique challenges girls and women face would better inform educational and social services programming for these groups. Also, highlighting the transnational nature of migrant family life and experiences, can foster resilience for migrants, their families and host communities. The fact that migrants have multiple sets of resources moves the focus from a country-centric perspective to a broader transnational one. Their mental health is inextricably linked to their transnational experiences and should be understood as a benefit rather than as an obstacle. Migrants may have access to supports and resources in multiple locales and this is a source of strength for them.

It is also critical to build relationships across groups, between migrants and their new neighbors. Initial steps should attempt to bridge cultural understandings through programming and services. For instance, opportunities for migrants to share their culture (for instance, through food, language and traditions) would alleviate the mistrust that so many non-migrants feel towards newcomers and would build a sense of shared responsibility that is missing when political discourses only focus on migrant's "otherness" (Merry, Pelaez & Edwards, 2017). Groups that come together around issues such as parenting or educational goals would serve to create new types of relationships and would allow migrants to learn about their new surroundings. Service providers and educators also need to learn about the actual experiences of migration: effects of mobility, pre-mobility experiences, and ongoing transnational ties. For policy makers, creating opportunities that bring groups together instead of alienating them from each other is key. They also need to be clear that family reunification policies are critical to the well-being and positive contributions of the new members of their communities. From a research perspective, incorporating extended family relationships into migration studies is a critical, albeit missing part of the literature. In many cultures, families are not just parents and children but instead include many other family members who play key roles, often especially in migration contexts. The goal for all constituencies should be to promote resiliency and mobilize the strengths that migrants bring to their situations and their new communities.

General Recommendations:

Definitions. Migration is not a uniform experience and analyses of migrants and their needs are hampered by the lack of globally agreed on definition of who a migrant is. The term "migrant" has various meanings in different contexts. In some countries migrants are defined by where they were born and in other countries by their nationality. This makes gathering data and comparing the experiences of migrants extremely difficult. Academics need to collaborate with policy makers at a transnational level to come up with a workable definition that all countries can then employ.

Collaboration and implementation. All UN Member States need to implement the Global Compact on Migration that was adopted by a vote among Member States of 152 to 5 (and 12 abstentions) in 2018 and that “ emphasizes that all migrants are entitled to universal human rights and aspires to eliminate all forms of discrimination, including racism, xenophobia and intolerance against migrants and their families. The compact "reaffirms the sovereign right of states to determine their national migration policy". The same goes for the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in which all 193 United Nations member states agreed to uphold the rights of refugees and migrants. The almost unanimous consensus on supporting these instruments indicates that there is the will to recognize and implement policies that support migrants and refugees but this now needs to be put into practice.

Data. Every report from high level transnational organizations such as the UN, OECD, and World Bank, highlights the fact that the global data on migration is fragmented and incomplete. Academics and policy makers need to cooperate in order to assist and facilitate better data collection and data collection methods. While data gathering on migrants is improving, many countries still do not have adequate tools to track when migrants enter and what happens to them once they resettle. The international community needs to come together and set basic standards using technology to understand the differences between various types of migrants. Multiple types of data are needed, including statistical descriptors and qualitative evidence. Data is key for evidence-based policy-making, but it needs to be supplemented by case studies at the local level. This is particularly the case for those areas/groups where data is unavailable or limited. Narratives are key aspects of influencing policy choices and decisions.

There is a lack of data on migration disaggregated by age, sex, and disability as on internal migration. This makes it difficult to create policies and programming to better support migrants who are children, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities.

A family lens. It is critical to incorporate the family dimension into all policy analyses on migrants with the understanding that individuals do not operate in a vacuum. This is particularly the case for all policies that affect migrant children including refugee children. Nation-state policies rely on families to socialize and provide for the next generation as well as maintaining civic life and order; migration however is treated as an individual phenomenon; the two concepts need to be joined with family influences and relationships highlighted – academia can help by highlighting best practices and creating databases of policies that have successfully assisted in strengthening and supporting families.

Holistic approaches. Policies and programming need to approach migrant issues with a holistic lens. Migrants need access to educational, health, mental health and other such services. Many have suffered through traumatic experiences and multiple relocations – they thus, need to be supported physically and psychologically in their new settings.

Understanding migration status and family membership. It is critical to delineate migrant status (legal, illegal, papers missing) and family dynamics. Different members of families may have varying legal statuses and this will affect how they relate to one another. Having a more nuanced

approach to migrant family dynamics will support family cohesion through more appropriate programming.

Promote progress towards the institution of universal protection systems. Make sure the most vulnerable are targeted. Families and communities that live in conflict zones or areas susceptible to natural disasters often have needs that are not accounted for by traditional measures. Safety nets need to be in place specifically for these populations. Also, in many regions, individuals with disabilities and / or families that have members with disabilities are ignored or discriminated against. Creating awareness of their rights and contributions is key. For those families living in poverty, cash and in-kind transfers and subsidies have proven to be a successful mechanism.

A gender lens. Gender inequality needs to be addressed at every societal level but with a specific focus on family and community environments. The SDGs highlight gender inequality, however, there is much progress still to be made in this arena. A gender lens needs to be incorporated into data gathering and analysis, educational initiatives, policy formation and programing. Creating repositories of policies and initiatives from different parts of the world could be useful as a resource base from which culturally specific programmes can then be formulated. Targeted scholarships and stipends to encourage girls' and women's education are a key feature of successful programmes. For instance, evidence from Cambodia and Pakistan illustrate that girls' attendance increases substantially when these types of programmes are in place (UNGEI, 2015).

Specific Recommendations for Policy Makers:

Strengthen global partnership and cooperative agreements around migration. It is critical for states to come together in partnership to ensure the safe, orderly and regular migration of individuals and families from one place to another. This collaboration falls under the basic human rights of all individuals around the world. Strengthening international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration is critical.

Infrastructure investments. States need to increase investments in irrigation, infrastructures, training for new skill sets to help local populations stay in place despite changes to agricultural lands. This would assist in decreasing climate and natural disaster migration from vulnerable areas. In that same vein, states need to strengthen social security programs and community-level supports and interventions in order to minimize the reproduction of vulnerabilities within households.

Support educational and skills-based training. Specific services are needed in order to assist migrants to re-skill in host societies and / or facilitate cross-national recognition of skills, qualifications and competencies of migrants. For instance, there is a need to create targeted skill building programs that are suited to varying differential skill sets for individuals who move to urban areas and to provide child and elder care so that adults who have migrated can learn new skills without worrying about their family responsibilities. Providing educational opportunities for children to ensure their successful integration and economic mobility in their host country is also critical.

Gender Issues. The specific issues facing girls and women in refugee contexts need to be highlighted. Policy decisions and programming focused on migration often ignore the challenges that may arise specifically for girls and women in refugee camps and on the migration journey. For instance, girls and women may need specific designated separate shelters with protected toilets and bath areas for women and girls. There is also a need to create services specifically for female migrants including reproductive health care, family planning and prenatal care.

Support individuals with disabilities. The unique needs of individuals with disabilities need to be recognized. This necessitates creating consultations with persons with disabilities in migration settings in order to ascertain their varying needs; recognize and address the need for funding that specifically targets migrants with disabilities; train staff to understand and work with the varying needs of persons with physical versus mental and intellectual disabilities.

Promote multi-level partnerships between transnational entities, NGO's and states. Create collaborations between NGOs, advocacy groups and local organizations and government groups to reach a wider spectrum of persons with disabilities. A wider coalition would extend the reach to persons with various types of disabilities.

Assist migrants with their legal identities. Create long-term work visas to ensure stability for working migrants or paths to citizenship.

Support specifically transnational working parents. Policies are needed that allow parents who are working away from their families to regularly visit with their children and close family members. This includes providing short and long-term visas so that family member can visit and interact with one another as that would aid with improving mental health for all parties involved. With respect to reunification policies, increased transparency about conditions that need to be met would speed the process and allow especially for children to be more rapidly reunited with their parents.

Provide a wide variety of health services for migrants. This includes mobile health units and specific services to assist migrants in dealing with mental health issues and that address social and cultural differences and conditions.

Create public media campaigns. Assist host populations in understanding that migrants can enhance their communities and bring new skills that improve everyone's lives.

Recommendations for Academics / Civil Society

Create databases and easily accessible knowledge sources. Academics need to specifically create awareness of the various types of disabilities (cognitive and physical) and the impacts of differing types of disabilities and specific needs of individuals on the migration journey and in

resettlement contexts. Policy makers and program staff need to learn how varying disabilities impact families in migration and refugee situations specifically.

Create awareness amongst NGOs and international organizations that work with migrants about the changing definition of disability and the impacts of differing impairments on specific needs of migrants with disabilities.

Assist in analyzing and spreading information about the family and community impacts of climate change. Encourage development programs to take climate change and its impacts on the livelihoods and family lives of local populations into account.

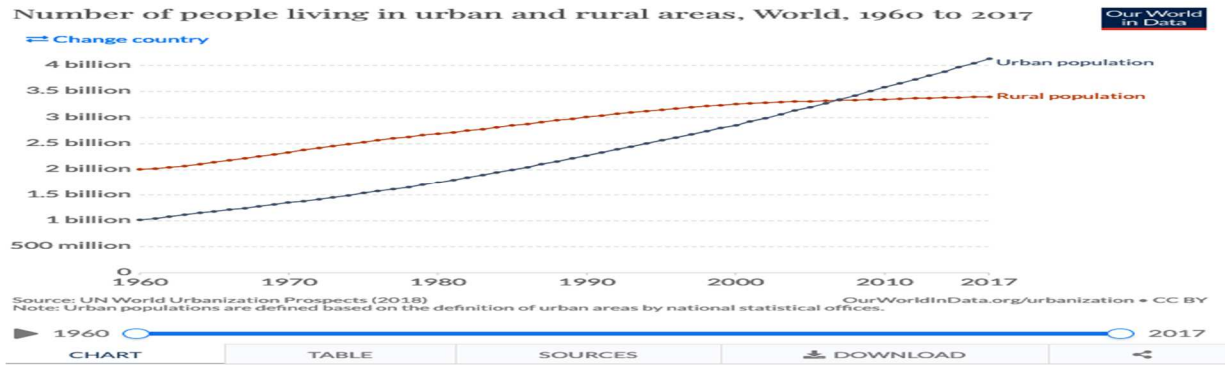
Changing the dialogue about migrants and refugees. Shift the global discourse from migrants being a “burden” to migrants as bringing skills, innovation, and an entrepreneurial spirit that can be used to improve their host settings

Part 2: Urbanization

Linked closely with migration is the rapid urbanization of much of the world. Somewhat more than half of the global population, 4.2 billion people, today live in urban areas. In 2007, for the first time in human history, the urban population outnumbered the rural one – and this trend is expected to keep growing. Many social scientists consider the urbanization of the global population as the single most important contemporary demographic trend as it represents a crucial shift in how humans use the environment (Galea & Vlahov, 2002).

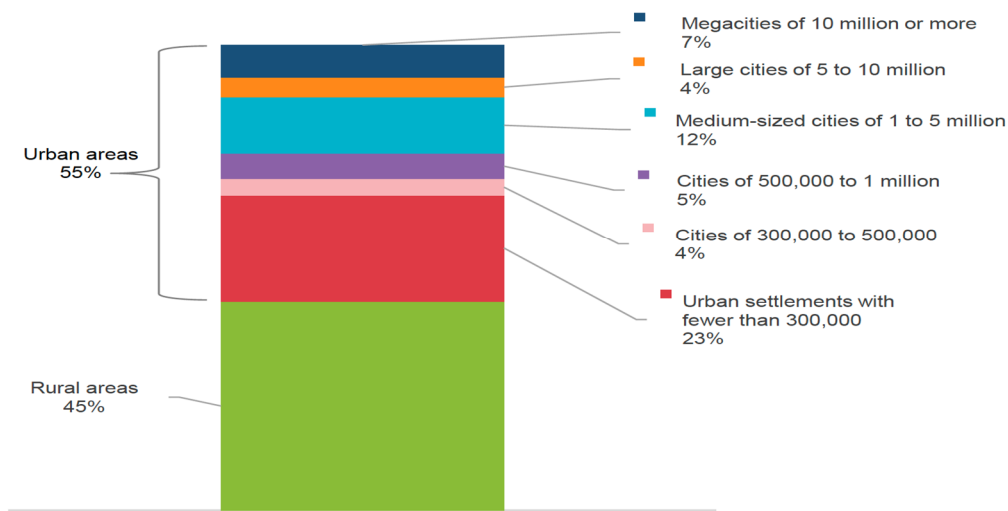
The UNDP (2018) predicts that urban populations are expected to increase by 1.5 billion over the next 20 years, while the number of “megacities” will potentially double. Currently, there are 33 “mega-cities” of ten million or more that with their inhabitants encompassing about 7 percent of the global population. However, most of the urban population lives in much smaller urban settlements including those with populations under 300,000 (23%), and those with between 300,000 to 500,000 (4%). Here we also need to include cities that are 500,00 to 1 million (5%), medium sized cities of 1 million to five million (12%), and larger cities five million to 10 million inhabitants (4%). Importantly, about 95 percent of this urban expansion is taking place in low and middle-income countries. Concurrently, the global rural population is projected to decline by 2050. In 2018 the rural population numbered at about 3.4 billion individuals and it is thought that this will decrease to 3.1 billion in about two thirds of 233 countries. This urban growth-rural decline trajectory is the most common pattern seen throughout the world.⁸

⁸ In a few countries urban population growth is happening concurrently with rural population growth depending on local conditions. For instance, in some countries rapid population growth is occurring in both urban and rural areas. See UNDESA 2018, p. 47 - 48.



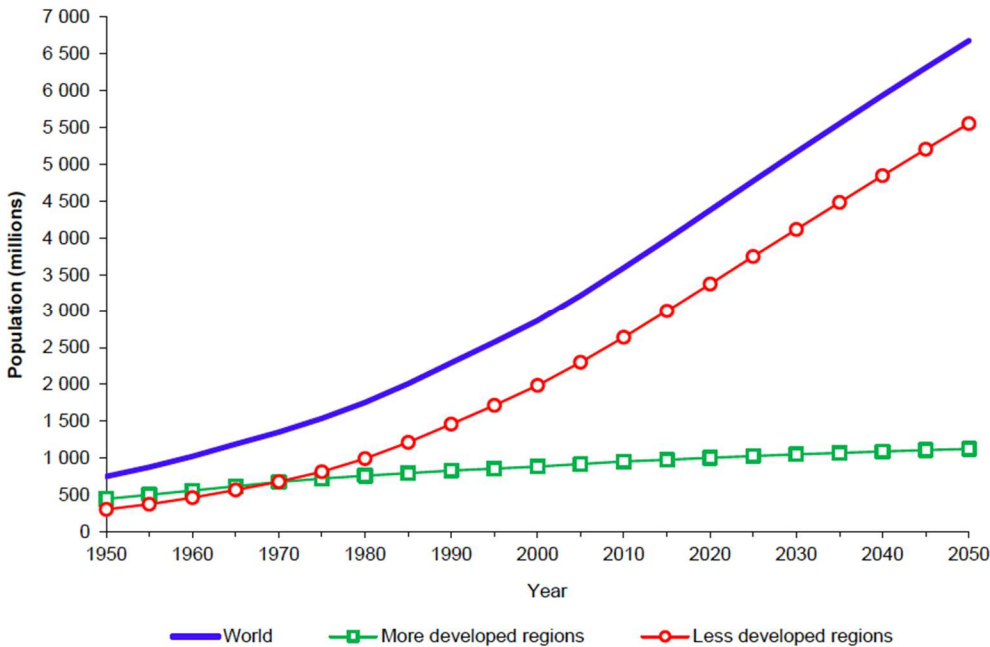
<https://ourworldindata.org/urbanization>

Figure III.1. Population of the world, by area of residence and size class of urban settlement, 2018



(UNDESA, 2019)

Figure I.1. Estimated and projected urban populations of the world, the more developed regions and the less developed regions, 1950-2050



World Urbanization Prospects, 2018

Urbanization is a complex phenomenon as it looks quite different in various parts of the world and affects individuals and families in a myriad of ways. Moreover, rapid urbanization is associated with a wide variety of opportunities and challenges. There are vast differences in the size, types and geographical distribution of cities within and between societies and this is a critical factor in understanding and planning for sustainable urbanization. Urbanization allows for the centralization of services with increased access to employment, education, and leisure activities. These types of opportunities in part, explain why moving to cities is so attractive for many individuals and their families. However, rapid urbanization is also accompanied by formidable challenges. For instance, many urban areas, especially in lower-income countries are faced with decreasing access to fresh water supplies, growing sewage and sanitation issues, lack of access to green spaces, and a decrease in public health. While the world's cities take up only about three percent of the earth's landmass, they account for between 60 – 80 percent of energy consumption, and 75 percent of carbon emissions (UNDP, 2018). The inhabitants of many urban areas are exposed to high levels of air pollution which can result in early deaths, and during the global COVID-19 pandemic, preliminary evidence indicates that the virus spread more rapidly in cities than in rural areas (OECD, 2020).⁹

As can be seen from the summary above, a critical component of urbanization is the relationship between growing urban populations and health. However, research about the factors that influence health in urban living is quite sparse. Instead, most urban health research has focused

⁹ However, mortality in rural areas tend to be higher due to the lack of services and because there are often more elderly individuals (ie individuals who are at greater risk) living in these places (<https://www.ifpri.org/blog/rural-populations-face-heightened-covid-19-risks>, 2021).

on disease and its incidence amongst marginalized groups (Vlahov and Galea, 2002). This has led to research on individual behaviors and increased risks of disease (for example, the spread of HIV). But Galea, Ettman, and Vlahov (2019) point out that there is very little work on the role that urban environments play in influencing health and disease, key determinants in individual and family well-being. Understanding that relationship can help us address the urban factors that contribute to health risks and which ones are protective. This is a critical part of urban planning. For instance, air pollution is often worse in cities – but the presence of larger wealthier populations that provide a more generous tax base can also mean that there are better social services available for urban residents. By better understanding these interrelationships and dynamic processes and mechanisms, we can develop appropriate interventions, preventative mechanisms, and more effective policies.

Urbanization in and of itself is not necessarily a negative development. In fact, with appropriate foresight and planning, urbanization can work to alleviate problems such as poverty, inequality, and environmental deterioration. To that end, Goal 11 in the 2030 United Nations Agenda focuses on human settlements and specifically on making cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. The fact that this is a stand-alone goal highlights the importance of urbanization.

....many argue that how the world deals with its cities in the coming years will do much to define the overall success of the SDGs. As U.N Deputy Secretary General Jan Eliasson said, “Cities are where the battle for sustainable development will be won or lost if we all fail.” Goal 11 contributes to further work that begun as part of MDG Goal 7 on improving basic services and reducing slums. (Local2030.org, 2030, p. 1)

Goal 11 and its various targets focuses on the importance of safe and affordable housing and public transportation, on building environmentally sustainable buildings and increasing green public spaces. The targets specifically address the foundational aspects of urbanization including:

Target 11.1 “By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.”

Target 11.2 “By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.”

Target 11.3 “By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.”

Target 11.6 “By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.”

Target 11.7 “By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.”

How these targets are implemented and monitored will vary between regions and states due to such differing conditions in various parts of the world. Yet, their importance cannot be overstated. As the world becomes increasingly urban, ensuring that individuals and families can live safe and comfortable lives in densely populated environments is going to be critical to the success of human settlements. Otherwise, disease, poverty, and other social ills will turn the clock backwards on the progress that the world has made especially in assisting its poorest members out of poverty.

The importance of urbanization is clear as one sees in the multiple targets that focus on related issues throughout the Sustainable Development Goals. However, since 2015 the international community has adopted several other key agreements that focus on the development of cities. The Paris Agreement, the New Urban Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda all focus at least in part on sustainable urbanization. For instance, the New Urban Agenda emphasizes that in order to plan for better urban outcomes, national urban policies, legislation, spatial planning, and local finance frameworks are needed (World Cities Report, 2020).

Globally, cities in various locations deal with a wide variety of issues and challenges when it comes to issues such as infrastructure, provision of services, and access to adequate housing. In high-income countries, cities tend to have high levels of infrastructure, and construction is occurring faster than population growth in at least half of metropolitan areas. The same cannot be said of urban areas that are located in low- and middle-income countries. In most of those places there is insufficient infrastructure and social services (including educational and health facilities) to serve their rapidly growing populations. Severe housing shortages combined with high levels of overcrowding and congestion are exacerbating the problems that come with rapid urbanization (OECD, 2020). Thus, a global one size fits all solution to planning and policies is untenable and would create more harm than good. Instead, a better alternative is an approach like the new Urban Agenda that was adopted by most countries in 2016 that emphasizes collaboration and supportive partnerships between smaller and larger urban areas in regional areas (UNDESA, 2019.) These types of partnerships support equitable development and incorporate cultural and regional differences to ensure that rural areas are not left behind. It is exceedingly important to note that the rapid global urbanization that we are witnessing is a new phenomenon in human history – and how the world copes with it going forward is going to determine how much of humanity lives for the twenty-first century and beyond.

When urbanization is deliberate with the appropriate stakeholders on local, national, and transnational levels involved in the process, it can be the most efficient and successful mechanism for improving the lives of individuals and families. This necessitates a focus on understanding the complexity of family life in urban contexts: family needs and family supports for new migrants as well as for those who are already in urban areas. Families, in all their multiplicity of shapes and sizes, need to be supported through affordable housing, reliable, safe transportation, and access to education, social services, and green spaces. While, as was pointed out above, SDG 11 highlights each of these factors neither the goal nor the targets specifically focus on families. It can be argued however, that Target 11.1 by focusing on the goal of ensuring access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing, access to basic services and

upgrading slums, that this is a family-focused objective. And since Target 11.7 highlights the importance of providing universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities, this also is a family goal without the explicit use of the term. These targets address specific family factors without which the Sustainable Development Goals will not be achieved.

Defining Urbanization

Urbanization is difficult to define and what is considered urban varies between countries. Interestingly, there is no universally accepted definition of urbanization. In some areas urban is defined by the number of individuals living in a specific area and by population density. In other places, urbanization is associated with the percentage of the labor force that works in non-agricultural sectors. Most commonly, urbanization is associated with both the increase in the percentage of population living in a specific geographic area and the total area occupied by urban (defined by density) settlements (UNDESA, 2019).

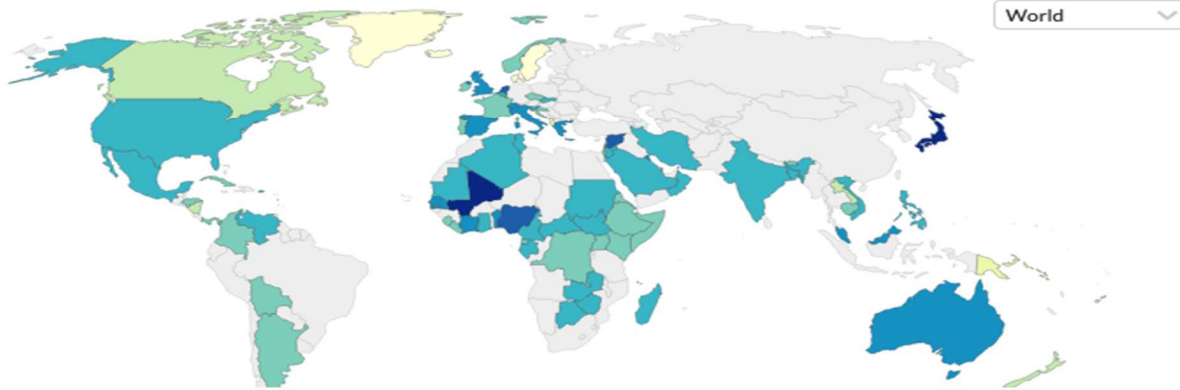
Multiple data sources from the United Nations (UNDESA 2019) and the OECD (2020) indicate that the attainment of SDG11 has been hampered by the lack of a global definition of what constitutes an urban area. This lack of a definition has made it at times impossible to compare indicators across cities and towns in various parts of the world. In that spirit various international organizations including the European Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labor Office (ILO) and several others have come together to create a global definition of degree of urbanization divided into three classes. These groups include 1) cities, 2) towns and semi-dense areas and 3) rural areas.¹⁰ Analyses using these groupings are only now beginning to be published.

Fundamentally, urbanization is a process that alters landscapes and shifts populations from rural areas to urban ones. Urbanization is accompanied by changes in how individuals and families live, by increased economic activities, and through access to new types of lifestyles and cultures. Cities serve as centers for the concentration of transportation, trade, and public services – many of which are not easily accessed in rural areas. Due to the centralization of activities, urban areas serve as hubs for innovation. Individuals are attracted to these places because of the wealth of opportunities that are potentially accessed there. The dynamism that is created through an influx of people, economic opportunities, and services, explains the growth of urbanization over the last several decades in particular. Migration fuels urbanization but as was discussed above, it is not a homogenous phenomenon. Urbanization, thus, needs to be understood as a multi-faceted occurrence that needs to be seen holistically. This means looking at how regionality (area in the world where an urban settlement is located), economics, policies and individual and family life intersect. This is key for sustainable urban planning as we proceed further into the twenty-first century.

¹⁰ This categorization was endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2020 but it is so new that most reports and analysis do not yet employ it.

Minimum number of inhabitants for a settlement to classify as an urban area

Minimum population threshold of a settlement for it to be defined as an 'urban area' based on national definitions. There is no universal definition of what constitutes an 'urban area'; definitions vary significantly between countries. For many countries, there is no defined threshold based on inhabitants; other metrics such as population density, infrastructure, or even pre-defined cities may be used.

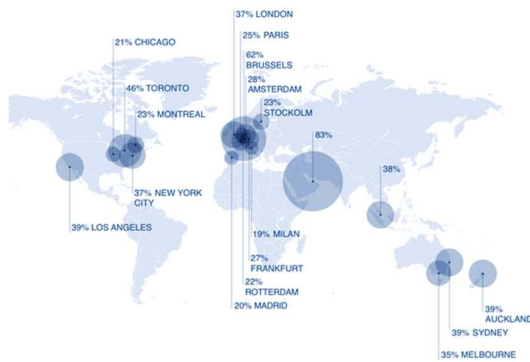


(<https://ourworldindata.org/urbanization>)

Country	National definition of 'urban'
Argentina	Localities with 2,000 inhabitants or more.
Sweden	Built-up areas with 200 inhabitants or more and where houses are at most 200 metres apart.
Japan	Cities defined as shi. In general, shi refers to a municipality that satisfies the following conditions: (1) 50,000 inhabitants or more; (2) 60 per cent or more of the houses located in the main built-up areas; (3) 60 per cent or more of the population (including their dependents) engaged in manufacturing, trade or other urban type of business.
India	Statutory places with a municipality, corporation, cantonment board or notified town area committee and places satisfying all of the following three criteria: (1) 5,000 inhabitants or more; (2) at least 75 per cent of male working population engaged in non-agricultural pursuits; and (3) at least 400 inhabitants per square kilometre.
Zimbabwe	Places officially designated as urban, as well as places with 2,500 inhabitants or more whose population resides in a compact settlement pattern and where more than 50 per cent of the employed persons are engaged in non-agricultural occupations.
Singapore	Entire population.

<https://ourworldindata.org/urbanization>

(c) FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION IN SOME MAJOR GLOBAL OR WORLD CITIES



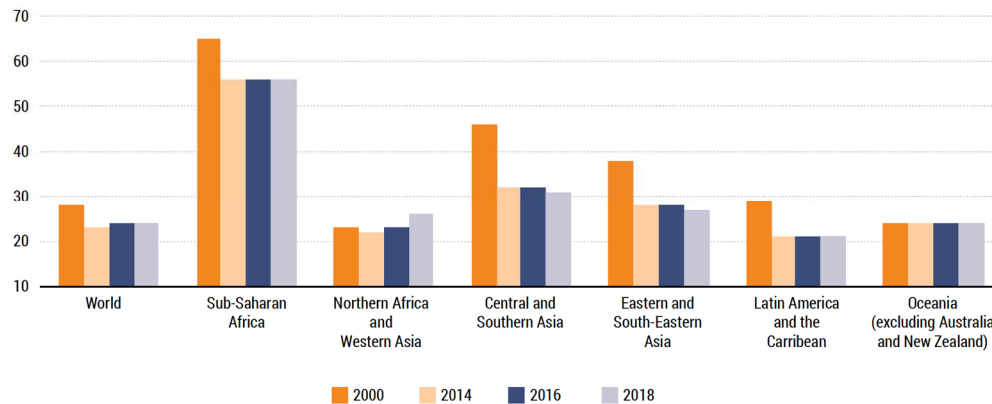
<https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/urbanisation-et-migration>

Urbanization and Slums

Currently about 23.5 percent of individuals who live in urban areas live in slums. In absolute numbers this equates to over 1 billion people with 80 percent living in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (370 million), sub-Saharan Africa (238 million), and Central and Southern Asia (227 million) (UN, 2019). In part, the growth of slums can be explained by rapid migration coupled with the lack of adequate and affordable housing. In fact, the United Nations predicts that by 2030, 3 billion people will not have their housing needs met. While proportionally the number of individuals living under sub-standard conditions has declined, the actual number of people as gone up from 807 million to 883 million.

Since the time of the Industrial Revolution, urbanization has been equated with economic growth. However, contemporary urbanization especially in lower-income countries such as in sub-Saharan Africa has challenged this idea (UNDESA, 2019). Urbanization in these areas is very much a demographic phenomenon – not just an economic one. The urban poor in lower-income countries are much more likely to suffer from living in sub-standard conditions leading to a rise a rise in mortality among children, an increase in diseases in the overall local population, and in other various disparities in health-related factors.

Figure 1.5: Percentage of urban populating living in slums



Source: UN-Habitat, Global Indicators Database 2020.

Importantly, the growth of slums and the urban poor is happening in places that are very vulnerable to natural disasters. As the world increasingly becomes cognizant of the effects of climate change, it is coastal areas and arid regions that are set to experience the worst outcomes. According to the World Bank and the United Nations, at least 60 percent of cities with populations of at least 300,000 people are at risk of one of six different natural disasters: cyclones, droughts, floods, earthquakes, landslides, and volcanic eruptions (World Bank, 2016; UNDESA, 2019). This vulnerability is coupled with climate disasters in rural areas that, as was discussed previously, is leading to increased out-migration.

As families are faced with climate related economic and food insecurity in their home regions, they look to urban migration as a potential solution. However, urban areas that are experiencing unplanned and / or poorly managed growth, will not be able to offer the lifestyles and opportunities that people are seeking. In many areas, urban growth is coupled with a destruction in biodiversity and increased carbon emissions, compounding the problem of environmental sustainability. A case example is Nepal. Bhattarai and Budd (2019) describe how over 65% of the country's population now lives in urban areas. However, most of the urban areas are unplanned and exposed to seismic vulnerabilities and various health factors. Rural-urban sprawl has led to these areas missing the necessary infrastructures to support their exponentially growing populations and most people are living in exceedingly destitute conditions. In addition, unplanned sprawl has led to the loss of biodiversity, natural vegetation and open spaces while air and noise pollution has increased dramatically. There is not enough water for the individuals and families who live in these areas and there is no infrastructure for the disposal of solid and industrial waste (Bhattarai and Budd, 2019).

Urban Margins

In both high-income and low-income countries, urbanization is not a uniform experience. Rapid urbanization often leads to informal settlements that are characterized by poverty and the lack of adequate, safe housing. This situation serves to segregate populations from each other in the same urban area through spatial inequalities. Where in cities individuals and families live, matters and plays a critical role in access to resources. Especially, poor people, young children,

and the older persons, are frequently disadvantaged if they live far away from centers of power and resources. This is not a topic that is often at the forefront of policy makers agendas as it is extremely difficult to determine the extent to which individuals and families do not have access to services and facilities (DESA, 2009; IOM, 2020a).

Due to the effects of climate change, violence and other disasters, migrants from rural areas often settle at the margin of urban centers where they are socially excluded from the social, economic, and political life of cities. These marginal settlements need to be accounted for in the planning and management of today's burgeoning urban environments. Too often, they are subsumed under the term "urbanization" without recognition that within cities, much of the population may have very different experiences. Policies and strategies need to recognize that the lives and access to opportunities of newly arrived migrants differ vastly from those of established urban dwellers, and that those living in the outskirts of cities have vastly different lives from those living in the center.

Urbanization and Housing

A fundamental human right is to have a safe and comfortable home where one can live. This is both a physical necessity and a psychological requirement (Bashir, 2002). However, current housing trends, especially in urban areas, do not bode well for a large proportion of global families. A range of issues from unplanned urbanization to the global domination of housing markets by commercial entities, are influencing housing patterns and housing availability. Housing is foundational to sustaining and promoting family life. Every aspect of life is affected when individuals and families do not have a safe place that they consider their "home." As the U.S. National Housing Task Force suggested in 1988,

"... a decent place for a family to live becomes a platform for dignity and self-respect and a base for hope and improvement. A decent home allows people to take advantage of opportunities in education, health and employment – the means to get ahead in our society. A decent home is the important beginning point for growth in the mainstream of American life" (In Bratt. 2002 p. 15).

While the National Housing Task Force was speaking specifically about the United States, having decent shelter is a basic requirement for all human beings. Moreover, as Bratt (2002) illustrated in a widely cited model, housing has three crucial components that contribute to family well-being: physical attributes, the relationship of housing to the individual living in that home, and community conditions.

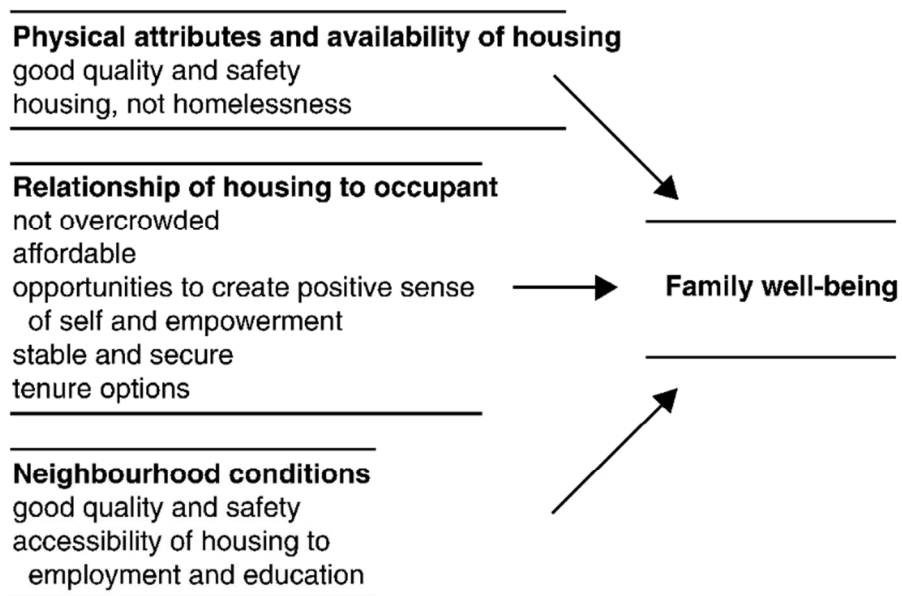


Figure 1. Connections between housing and family well-being.

Empirical research also highlights that stable housing is critical for positive child development. When families suffer from housing instability or homelessness, children’s educational, behavioral, and cognitive development suffers (Harkness & Newman, 2001). A wide literature indicates that children also have a more difficult time exploring the outer world without the experience of an early safe home base (Bratt, 2002; CIEH, 2015; Mueller & Tighe, J. 2007). Home stability and instability directly impacts their immediate family life as well as the families they may form in the future. In addition, if a family’s housing needs are not met, they are not able to access other types of opportunities. As Bratt stated,

.....if housing is dilapidated or otherwise inadequate or if families are living in homeless shelters, it is difficult if not impossible, for family life to function smoothly. If family life is not working, any possibility of a household being able to take advantage of opportunities and become economically or socially more secure would be greatly compromised (p. 16).

Despite our knowledge about the importance of housing in people’s lives, current global trends do not bode well. The lack of housing stock and sky-rocketing prices affect an increasing number of families – including middle-class, working-class and low-income individuals - and their associated well-being.

Low-income families are most affected by the lack of availability housing and sub-standard living conditions. Currently, about 828 million individuals live in sub-standard housing (UNDP, 2018). Moreover, the urban poor primarily live in cramped conditions, often in dangerous neighborhoods. They tend to stay indoors in order to protect themselves and their families from external stressors (Fullilove & Fullilove, 2000). This trend has been shown to have ill effects on the health of individuals and families, and especially children, individuals with disabilities and

older persons. Living in sub-standard housing leads to a variety of health issues including respiratory and neurological disorders and psychological and neurological illnesses. These conditions specifically manifest themselves in those populations who are most at risk: the very young, the terminally ill and older persons (Thomson, Petticrew, & Morrison, 2001). Empirical studies indicate that exposure to overcrowding in childhood, manifests itself in diseases in later adulthood (CIEH, 2015). Living in crowded conditions and sub-standard housing also accounts for later poor mental health, developmental delays, and various other ailments (CIEH, 2015).

Housing is also key to social integration for individuals across the socio-economic spectrum. When people have access to public spaces, civic buildings, and green space, they interact with each other facilitating social relationships. As Bhattarai and Budd, (2019) point out, when individuals live in villages, disputes are often resolved at the local level by village elders. This creates an informal safety net and a linkage of social relationships. However, in sprawling urban environments these types of informal interactions are severed and difficult to build. Young people may not return to the villages of their parents and thus, do not form bonds with their extended families. They then lose out on the informal reciprocity that served as a safety net in the past as they also suffer from the breakdown of extended family relationships. At times, this leads to more youth violence committed specifically by unemployed young people and to an increase in domestic violence and mental health issues. One example of this is found in the Nepalese suicide numbers: in 1990 75 individuals committed suicide and in 2013, 6512 individuals committed suicide (Neupane, 2014 in Bhattarai and Budd, 2019). Overcrowding, lack of employment and money, and no access to electricity, clean water and sanitation lead to stress and conflict in families. This becomes even more exacerbated during extreme weather events and when natural disasters occur.

Urbanization and Regionality

The experiences of individuals and families in cities varies depending on a multitude of factors including in the type of society and urban area is located (for instance, Western vs non-Western or high-income vs low-income state), the socio-economic status of the household, and the migration status (newly arrived vs. longer term) of the individuals involved. Often ignored in analyses about urbanization are the major differences between cities in high-income Western countries and urban areas in non-Western low-income countries. For instance, in Western urban areas it is increasingly common for unmarried individuals and couples without children to live in cities. They are the ones who are likely to relocate to these areas due to job opportunities and the many centralized services that are available. However, Kotkin and Modarres (2013) raised the question if “childless” cities are really a desirable outcome or ultimately beneficial to the overall societies in which they are located. While singles and couples without children tend to utilize the advantages of cities (employment, shopping, restaurants, etc.), they are unlikely to make long term social commitments to the well-being of urban areas. Instead, when they do decide to have children, they often move out to suburbs or more rural areas. Kotkin and Modarres observed that in the U.S. in major cities, formerly family-friendly neighborhoods have increasingly become the domains of well-to-do singles and this has led to significant economic and social consequences (2013). Most often, young families with children are priced out of urban real estate markets. This is the case not just in the United States but increasingly also in world cities such as London, Paris and Berlin. In fact, the geographer Richard Campanella has termed such areas as “kiddie deserts”

(Kotkin & Modarres, 2013). This phenomenon is growing rapidly as urban housing in “desirable” cities is becoming so prohibitively expensive that young families with children find it impossible to find affordable housing in these areas. The issue is compounded by the lack of adequate schools and playgrounds as single individuals are often not interested in contributing to the tax base for such services. This is a relatively new problem that stems from both real estate development that focuses on high-end housing as well as a growing short term urban rental market that focuses on profit instead of urban investments.

The growth of child-less cities is specifically a trend in the West as in most non-Western societies, urban areas are rapidly growing due to family migration from rural areas. Due to the recent nature of this issue, it is not at the forefront of civic discourse nor policy makers and thus, needs more scholarly and policy attention from urban planners and local and state governments.

Urbanization and Youth

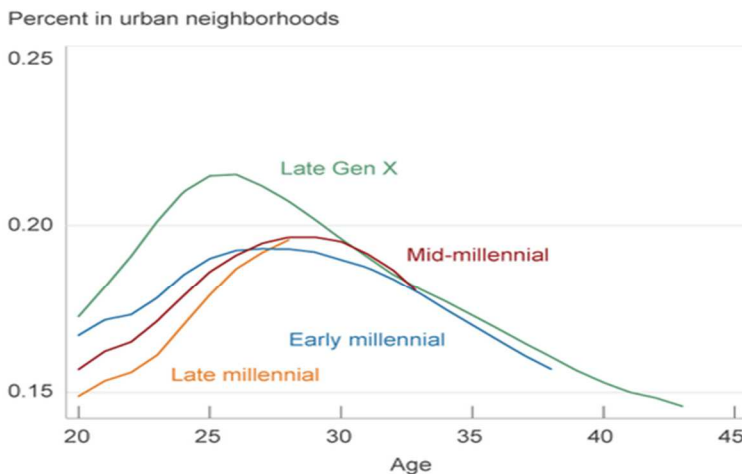
As part of the globalizing process, global youth are increasingly exposed to the opportunities that are open to young people in various parts of the world. Thus, they are aware that through accessing certain educational opportunities they can attain modern, higher-end lifestyles. However, for many youth growing up in smaller regional towns especially in low and middle-income countries, these lifestyles remain an unattainable goal (Brown et al., 2017). Globalization has brought about a dichotomous situation whereby youth are encouraged to seek out an education in order to attain higher-paying employment while simultaneously the potential for attaining middle class lifestyles has diminished. In response to neo-liberal policies many states have reduced public sector employment (often a primary path for youth to achieve economic security) while also not necessarily increasing private sector employment (Brown et al., 2017). This has resulted in a situation where especially in lower and middle-income countries young people will now often have a higher-level of education but may not have access to regular employment. This leads to unrest, dissatisfaction and the inability for young people to leave their natal families to start their own family. Family formation is delayed with a wide range of consequences including lower fertility rates and societies not benefiting from the capabilities of young people. On a more macro-level, dissatisfaction amongst young people can also lead to unrest and societal discord that fragments social cohesion creating a worrying scenario for the future.

Urbanization can provide a mechanism to integrate youth into the social fabric and provide economic, civic, and personal opportunities. It is most often in cities that they can access a good education and the skills that will provide them with solid employment. This requires planning and familiarity with best practices on the part of the various stakeholders including urban planners, educators, business people, the youth themselves, and policy makers. Various examples from around the world illustrate that these types of initiatives can be instituted successfully. For instance, the International Youth Foundation in Chihuahua, Mexico trains youth for jobs in the burgeoning aerospace industry. And the Rockefeller’s Digital Jobs Africa group is working to build a cadre of young people who will work in the information and technology labor markets of Africa. Another example is provided by the International Labour Organization (ILO) which is working to bring together urban-rural youth employment in Kenya by training them to work in road construction and maintenance (World Bank, 2016). When youth

and the various stakeholders co-create new opportunities, they are able to build inclusive urban areas that build and promote the capabilities of today's young people.

In high-income locales (such as U.S. and European cities), urban areas are drawing in young highly educated adults with strong earning power in particular. Young professionals are moving to downtown areas leading to an increased gentrification of neighborhoods that may have been on the decline even just ten years ago. In the United States for example, in the period between 1950 – 2000, suburbs were expanding and cities were shrinking (Whitaker, 2019). However, that trend has reversed with professional and leisure opportunities increasing and encouraged through young people with expendable incomes moving in. As the time between finishing their educations and starting a family has grown, this has led to a longer period when young people move to cities and set up their lives there. From an urbanization perspective, this is a positive phenomenon as high earners add to the tax base of cities and thus, allow for improvements in basic services (Whitaker, 2019). However, these trends need to be understood in the broader context of creating measures that do not price out current residents and make urban living unaffordable for those young people (and others) who may not have the same high level of resources as their professional peers.

Figure 3. Share of Birth Cohorts Living in an Urban Neighborhood by Cohort and Age



Note: Late Gen X includes those born 1975–79; early millennial, 1980–84; mid-millennial, 1985–89; late millennial, 1990–94.
Sources: Federal Reserve Bank of New York Consumer Credit Panel/Equifax, American Community Surveys, and author's calculations.

(Whitaker, 2019)

Urban areas are also increasingly a draw for young people not just for economic opportunities, but also due to the burgeoning focus on creative industries. Cities around the world are becoming known for specific creative enterprises such as Berlin for visual arts, Mexico City for contemporary art and television, Mumbai for film, and Austin for music and technology (World

Cities Report, 2020). These industries contribute to the local economies and also draw in short term tourism, again improving the economies of their respective locales.

Urbanization and Gender

Life in urban areas affects different constituencies in a variety of ways. Of critical importance is addressing gender issues in urban contexts. Women bear the brunt of inequality in urban contexts if they do not have access to transportation or essential services such as clean water. For instance, if a pregnant woman cannot get to a clinic, she or her baby may suffer a disability or even death (UN Women, 2019). Also, girls and women need to be able to move about in public spaces without being fearful of being assaulted or harassed. Unfortunately, sexual violence and sexual harassment in public spaces is an extremely common experience for girls and women in many parts of the world (UN Women, 2019). Streets, public transportation, schools, workplaces, water and food distribution sites and parks are all locations that can be dangerous for them. When girls' and women's freedom of movement and their ability to participate in school, work and public life is curtailed, they may be unable to access basic services and this can negatively impact girls' and women's health and well-being. While intimate partner and domestic violence are now recognized as human rights violations, violence and harassment in public spaces remains an issue that has received little if any attention. In order to address this issue, it is critical that women participate in every aspect of urban governance, planning and financing, and that gender equality measures are embedded throughout these processes (UN Women, 2019).

Several urban areas around the world have begun to recognize the specific obstacles that girls and women face in public spaces and they are beginning to address these issues. For instance, in Egypt, the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Development has involved 100 youth agents (50 young women and 50 young men) to guide activities in schools and community settings to promote respectful gender relationships and safety in public spaces. In Quito, Ecuador local ordinances have been adopted to strengthen legislation against sexual harassment in public spaces. And UN Women has launched a global program in 20 cities that partners with community-based women's organizations to specifically highlight the needs of women in urban centers (UN Women, 2017). Other places in the world can learn from these initiatives: that in order for urban areas to be safe, equitable, healthy places to live, they need to involve girls and women in their planning and development. Gender equality is not just a theoretical concept that applies to a limited sphere of locations such as schools and workplaces. Instead, it needs to be embedded in every aspect of social life including transportation, open spaces, and leisure activities.

Urbanization and Family Life

The relationship between urbanization and family life has been a topic of scholarly interest for over a century now. Early twentieth century sociologists at the University of Chicago focused on the consequences of urbanization on family structure, in particular. In the early 1900s the Chicago School as it was known, warned of the disintegrating forces of urbanization on family life. They suggested that as industrial centers sprung up in cities and young people moved to urban areas in search of jobs, this led to a fragmentation of extended families. Their analyses indicated that with mobility and new types of employment in factories instead of on family

farms, the social support structures that families provided through their kin networks weakened, leaving in their wake disorganization, delinquency and other ills. This was thought to lead to social decay and the decline of the importance of families (Hew, 2003). In a somewhat similar vein, William Goode in *World Revolution and Family Patterns* (1963) predicted that as a result of industrialization (and in so many places accompanying urbanization), varying family patterns worldwide would converge. According to Goode, the end result would be that ultimately we would witness only one family type: “the conjugal family form.” The conjugal family is the small nuclear family that has little contact with extended kin, is highly mobile, and self-sufficient, and characterized by distinct gender roles.

Wherever the economic system expands through industrialization, family patterns change. Extended kinship ties weaken, lineage patterns dissolve, and a trend toward some form of the conjugal system generally begins to appear - that is, the nuclear family becomes a more independent kinship unit (Goode, 1963, p. 6)

Goode hypothesized that around the world individuals would live in heterosexual, married units where individuals would have specialized roles with males being bread-winners and women, homemakers.

Today, we know that urbanization does not necessarily weaken all family ties and Goode’s hypothesis that family types the world over would converge to a simple conjugal family has been discounted. Instead, we understand that there is no single linear model of family development (Cherlin, 2012). The transformation of family relationships depends on a multiplicity of factors including the adaptation of traditional values to new contexts. Globally, we have witnessed the spread of cohabitation before or instead of marriage, the sharing of the breadwinner / domestic roles between spouses, single parenting, same-sex coupling, rising divorce rates and the list goes on. We find these various types of family arrangements most predominantly, globally, in urban areas where there is more ideological room for individuals to live in a variety of household configurations. Furthermore, new communication technologies allow for the maintenance of family relationships and the transmission of values in ways that were difficult to imagine even just a couple of decades ago. The main takeaway from this discussion is that families have not been affected in a uniform manner through economic and social changes (Pesando et al., 2019). Thus, to generalize globally about family change brought about through urbanization would be a fallacy. Instead, it is more useful and realistic to examine several demographic changes that are affecting if not all, at least a substantial part of the global population, and by default also individuals who live in urban areas.

1). *Fertility*. Historically, urbanization led to reduced population growth rates. In agricultural settings children were economic assets as they could work the land while in urban contexts children became economic liabilities (Cherlin, 2012). This trend to lower fertility was usually accompanied by industrial growth in urban areas. Cities served as the economic centers for agricultural workers who sought manufacturing jobs and better wages. Today, in many urban areas we are witnessing decreased fertility, however, without necessarily the advantages of the availability of good paying jobs brought on by industrialization (this is especially the case in

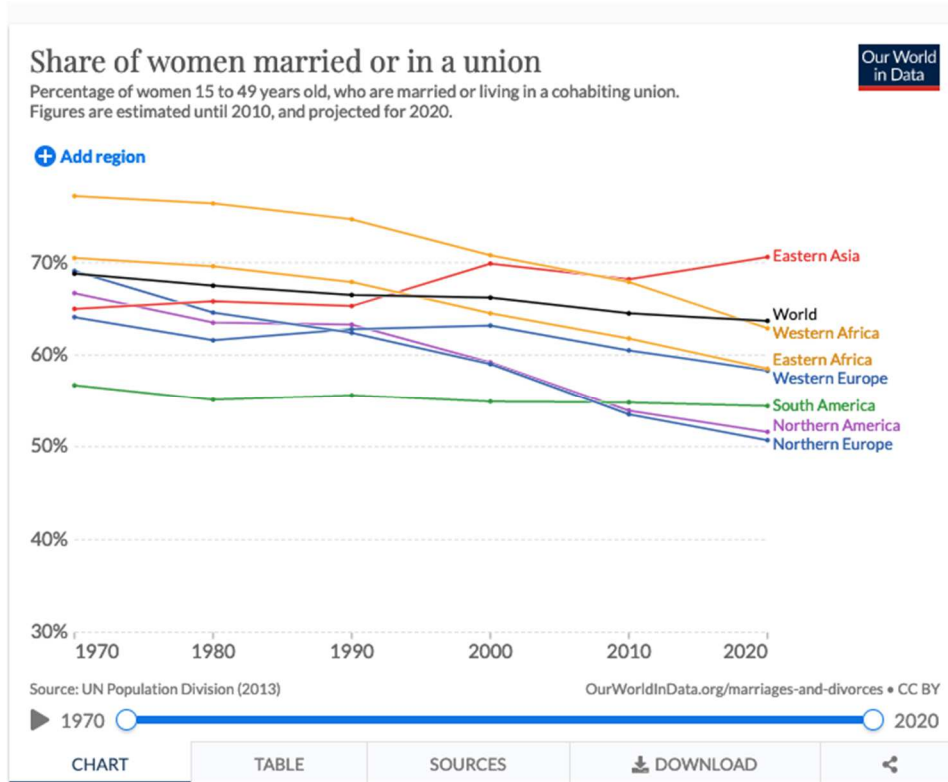
low-income countries). Instead, urban inequality is growing. Some sectors of the urban population are able to attain well-paying jobs and access to safe housing and infrastructure services, while others have limited economic opportunities and availability of social services.

2.) *Later age at marriage.* It is increasingly common around the world for young people to choose their own long-term partners. As parental control over spousal choice has lessened, partner choice based on “romantic love” is becoming the norm. Communication technologies such as the Internet and social media are spreading ideals of intimate relationships and families that are based on chosen love rather than founded on traditional social obligations and the reproduction of kinship systems (Padilla et al. 2007). Concurrently, cohabitation is becoming more common even in areas of the world and among groups where living together before marriage would have been unthinkable several decades ago such as among educated women in Latin America and the Caribbean (United Nations Women, 2019). The rise in cohabitation is closely correlated with a slight decrease in marriage as more couples may test out the option of living together or even completely forego marriage such as is common among younger people in the North European countries.¹¹

While cohabitation is growing rapidly, we currently do not have global statistics on this phenomenon. We do know that in the US, the *US Census Bureau estimates* that the share of young adults between the age of 18 and 24 living with an unmarried partner increased from 0.1% to 9.4% between 1968-2018 (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020). And according to a recent Pew Research Institute survey, most Americans favor giving cohabiting couples the same legal rights as married ones (Pew, 2019). The increase in cohabitation is closely related to people waiting to marry until they are older and to individuals also desiring not to get married. For instance, in the UK, 85 percent of people who married, cohabited before choosing to make their relationship legally permanent (Pew, 2019)

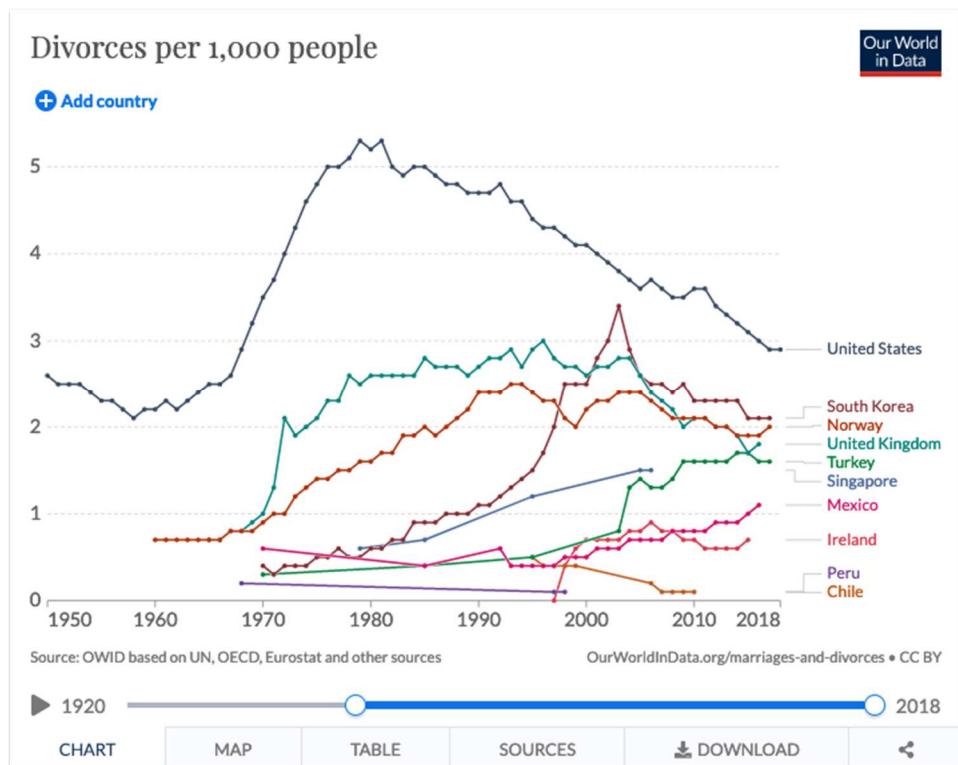
Even though we do not have global statistics on cohabitation, social scientists are using the number of children born outside of a marital union as a proxy data point to estimate cohabitation trends. In 1970, fewer than 10% of children in OECD countries were born outside of marriage. By 2014 that number had doubled to over 20% with some countries even coming in at over 50%. Interestingly, this trend is characteristic even of more traditionally religious societies such as Mexico and Costa Rica (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020.) The only exception is Japan which has stayed relatively stable over the years with very few children being born outside of marriage. While cohabitation is on the rise, marriage rates have only dropped slightly. Statistics from the UN Population Division indicate that in 1970 about 69% of women ages 15 – 49 were married and that by 2020 that had dropped to 64%.

¹¹ For instance, in Denmark 59.4%, Iceland, 57.3% and France 57.2% of women aged 25 – 29 have chosen to cohabit instead of marrying (UN Women, 2019).



(Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020).

3). *Divorce*. Divorce is also becoming more common globally. While divorce rates have stabilized and even fallen in the United States, in other parts of the world they are rising due to a variety of factors including an emphasis on romantic love in marriage, women's increased economic opportunities, a decrease in employment opportunities for some men, and alternatives to marital relationships (United Nations Women, 2019). However, global aggregates of statistics are deceiving as there are significant differences between and within countries. For instance, in South Asia, divorce has doubled over the last twenty years, however only 1.1 percent of women are divorcees and most of them live in urban areas. Divorce tends to be more common in urban areas due to a variety of factors including the heterogeneity of urban populations and the potential availability of paid employment for women hence their higher economic independence.



(Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020).

4). *Longer life spans.* Global statistics indicate that life expectancy at birth has increased from 64.2 years in 1990 to 72.6 years in 2020 and is expected to increase further to 77.1 years in 2050. According to United Nations predictions by 2050, one in six people in the world will be above the age 65 (16%), up from one in 11 in 2019 (9%) (UN Population, 2019). However, as with regional variations in fertility, major differences exist between regions with respect to longevity. Life expectancy at birth in the least developed countries is approximately 7.4 years behind the global average, a fact that can be explained in part due to continuing high child and maternal mortality. Moreover, other societal problems such as violence, wars, epidemics and the continuing effects of HIV contribute to earlier deaths in these areas (UN Population, 2019). In areas with increased lifespans support ratios of working age individuals aged 25 – 64 to those who are over 65 is decreasing rapidly. This fact combined with increased caretaking responsibilities of younger people for both children and the older persons is raising global concerns about the sustainability of family life and what kinds of supports are needed in urban and rural areas.

A growing phenomenon world-wide is that older persons are increasingly “ageing in place” in urban areas (World Cities, 2020). Individuals who are 65 and older are either moving from villages or rural areas to cities - or they are choosing to stay in urban places. Due to physical limitations that may come with age, this population has specific needs. For instance, they require accessible health care, transportation, and appropriate housing. In that vein, places like Hong Kong have created a multi-dimensional approach in order to promote active, healthy aging. This

includes providing community supports, new types of housing configured for older persons, and nearby medical care. Over 700 cities have now become part of the Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities in an effort to improve the quality of life for older persons.

Each of the demographic trends discussed above has profound consequences for the planning and management of urban areas the world over. In the intimate sphere of families, the decline in fertility rates and the increasing longevity of older persons will have profound implications for city life. As fewer children are born, families and societies tend to invest more in each child. Formal educational systems continue to increase in importance and families, when they can, are more likely to devote increased resources to each of their children. This is a global phenomenon, specifically in non-agrarian, urban settings and will require a greater investment on the parts of states in building up and fortifying infrastructures and services (Chi & Qian, 2016). For instance, in China, an increased number of young adults have left their villages seeking work in cities and leaving their “left-behind children” to be cared for by older relatives, especially grandparents. This has become such a trend that the government has begun to address the multitude of issues created through this phenomenon. In particular, policy debates focus on the increased work and caretaking burden on older persons in the family. These individuals are expected to be more productive with respect to agrarian outputs while taking on more family responsibilities. Chinese policy debates focus on expanding health and educational services and improving infrastructures such as better roads in order to facilitate involving whole households in family decisions that impact their well-being (Chang, Dong, & MacPhail, 2011).

Korea provides another example of a state that has been addressing family issues explicitly. In order to strengthen supports for children, women and older persons, they have moved from an implicit family policy to an explicit family policy with the Framework Act on Healthy Families which was passed in 2004. In a similar vein, their Ministry of Gender Equality was expanded to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family in 2005. This brought all family related matters under one government department (Chin, Lee, Lee, Son & Sung, 2012).

Urbanization is closely tied with contemporary demographic trends that are affecting all families globally. We are witnessing the lengthening of the life span, lower fertility rates, narrowing gender gaps with respect to education and opportunities in the paid labor force and significant technological changes in most parts of the world.¹² These forces have impacted family life and family structures – however, linear family development as was predicted by mid-century sociologists, has not come to pass. Instead, the world over, families have adapted to all these changes in a wide variety of ways. Thus, we cannot speak of a uniform life course anymore where young people form unions, have children and age in a somewhat similar cohort manner. Instead, economic uncertainty is affecting union formation and fertility rates in many parts of the world (Pesando et al., 2018). There is also some research indicating that as young people are increasingly living and working in urban environments, the home life / work life dichotomy has grown. This phenomenon stands in stark contrast to the lives of the older generation who were living in more rural settings and in smaller, more self-contained environments. Concurrently, the world over, we see increasing work opportunities in the paid labor force for girls and women. Meanwhile, men are losing their roles as “economic providers.” This is leading to tensions in couple relationships. Compounding all of these issues, young people even in remote areas are

¹² The exception is sub-Saharan Africa and certain places in Asia.

being exposed to Western notions of love and emotional intimacy as the basis for marriage. Thus, Rebhun (1999) for instance, suggested that the traditional supports (extended family, the expectation of land inheritance, and cultural norms and values) that helped keep couples together in past eras are losing their importance. This change in relationship formation is leading to more fragile marital bonds with divorce on the rise especially in non-Western urban areas – despite these being societies were even just a short time ago, cultural norms frowned on marital dissolution and stigmatized individuals (Padilla et al., 2007).

Urbanization is traditionally understood as driving economic growth and alleviating poverty at every level of society. The lure of economic opportunities is thought to encourage individuals and families to migrate to urban areas and to advantage those people who already live in these areas. However, what is much less understood is how urban life is experienced at the household / familial level and how this varies by social-class and actual location. Also, as the discussion above indicates, moving to urban areas is not necessarily a panacea for individuals and families. High rates of mobility strain urban resources such as housing, transportation, and educational and social services. In fact, some individuals and families may actually be worse off in urban locations. They may suffer from worse health outcomes, fewer educational and occupational opportunities, and they may be exposed to new lifestyles that they are unable to emulate or that are at odds with their cultural belief systems. The heterogeneity of urban areas is thus simultaneously advantageous for some and disadvantageous for others (Bhattaria and Budd, 2019). These types of findings highlight the importance of involving a wide variety of stake holders in planning and implementing sustainable forms of urbanization. In addition, a focus on the familial / household level is critical in order to address the micro-level factors that ultimately make cities places where all people can thrive. As the UN World Cities Report (2020) stated,

When cities are well-planned and managed, they can lift families out of poverty, liberate women from gender-based discrimination, point to bright futures for children and youth, offer comforts and supports to older persons in their golden years and welcome migrants looking for a better life. This wide-ranging value of urbanization is one of its most potent features. Cities are the crucible in which social outcomes will be improved for all types of marginalized and vulnerable groups (p. xxvi).

Urbanization, Individuals with Disabilities and Access

About 15 percent of the world’s population, or one billion people, are individuals with cognitive and / or physical disabilities. Approximately, 80 percent of these individuals live in low and middle-income countries and they are predominant amongst the population that is living in absolute poverty (International Disability Alliance, 2018). In many places, they and their families are faced with prejudice, fear, stereotyping and discrimination. Individuals with disabilities are excluded from social participation due to physical barriers – such as access to public spaces and facilities - or due to their inability to communicate due to visual or oral impairments. As the World Report on Disability (2011) pointed out, physical and social environments play a key role in how individuals with disabilities are perceived and the extent to

which they can either participate in the life of their communities or are barred from civic interactions.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) stipulates the importance of interventions to improve access to different domains of the environment including buildings and roads, transportation, information, and communication. These domains are interconnected – people with disabilities will not be able to benefit fully from improvements in one domain if the others remain inaccessible (WHO & World Bank, p. 169).

In low and middle-income countries women are estimated to make up to three-quarters of individuals with disabilities. Marginalization increases when gender and disability intersect. Moreover, disability, gender inequality and discrimination are closely linked. While some girls are born with disabilities, many others become disabled due to gender related risk factors. These can include exposure to violence and harmful practices, lack of access to health services, and gender-biased distribution of basic resources (UN Women, 2017). Women experience higher rates of disability than men also due to poverty, hunger, malnutrition, overwork and depressive disorders. And to complicate matters, these girls and women often experience discrimination based on other factors as well such as social exclusion due to ethnic identification or social class location. Individuals with disabilities were not acknowledged in the Millennium Development Goals, and they thus were not included in many important development programs. Their inclusion in the 2030 Agenda allows for their recognition as active contributing members of their respective societies.

Women and girls with disabilities: At a glance

- One in five women live with a disability globally.³
- An estimated one in four households has a person with disabilities.⁴
- Women are more likely than men to become disabled throughout the course of their lives.⁵
- Women comprise up to three-quarters of persons with disabilities in low and middle-income countries.⁶
- Prevalence of disability is higher among marginalized populations and people in rural areas.⁷

(UN Women, 2017)

Target 11.7 explicitly recognizes the barriers for individuals with disabilities and focuses on the most vulnerable groups within this category. This is a major step forward for our global society and for increasing the well-being and capabilities of all individuals.

Research in this area indicates that there is a wide variety of measures that can improve the lives of individuals with disabilities specifically in urban areas. For instance, in order to promote the general goal of well-being, a focus on safe public spaces and green areas acknowledges that it is necessary for all individuals to be able to move about, access services and employment, and also to have physical and psychological space for relaxation and recovery.

Urban planning efforts that include measures to assist individuals with disabilities, benefit other constituencies as well. For instance, access to appropriate physical accommodations that include areas to relax has been proven to increase well-being for all. Or minor modifications such as ramps on street corners, assist individuals in wheelchairs *and* individuals who are pushing baby strollers (World Disabilities Report, 2011). However, it is not enough to modify physical environments. Public education on disabilities is critical as well.

Even after physical barriers have been removed, negative attitudes can produce barriers in all domains. To overcome the ignorance and prejudice surrounding disability, education and awareness-raising is required. Such education should be a regular component of professional training in architecture, construction, design, informatics, and marketing. Policymakers and those working on behalf of people with disabilities need to be educated about the importance of accessibility (World Disability Report, 2011, p. 169)

Another key component in creating spaces that provide benefits to this population, requires equal participation in design, implementation, and monitoring of all urbanization efforts. For instance, the planning and creation of public spaces is critical. Individuals with disabilities need to be able to move around, access transportation, and feel safe from a physical *and* social perspective. Urban planning cannot and should not just be conducted by corporate elites. Instead, the citizens that actually live in these areas need to assist in identifying needs and helping work out solutions that provide accessibility to physical and social environments.

Urbanization as an Opportunity

While it is predicted that megacities are expected to grow, most urban residents will live in smaller cities around the globe. One estimate suggests that seventy to eighty percent of India is still going to be built by 2030 (Friedman, 2014). While this phenomenon presents a challenge for our generation, it is also an opportunity to increase efficiencies and to create a model of sustainable human living areas. Given their density, urban areas are ideal places to link economics and the marketplace, energy outputs, environmental concerns, and social life. Urbanization is not necessarily a negative phenomenon. If planned and lead correctly, city life can facilitate employment, social life, and sustainability through accessibility and efficiencies. Urban life is a major driver of socio-economic activities and can significantly influence social development. Cities, if well planned, can lead to greater equity, social inclusion and quality of life (UN Habitat, 2016). They facilitate interactions between actors and entities and are catalysts for influencing development agendas at regional, national and international levels. However, poverty still stands as a major determinant of social inclusion and equal participation in urban and rural areas. Study after study highlights the fact that around the world, people living in

poverty and other disadvantaged groups are excluded from decision making processes and often are marginalized and excluded (UN DESA, 2009). When the world's most vulnerable citizens are not part of decision-making processes, their needs are not included, and their challenges are unheard and often misunderstood. That makes instituting more participatory processes in urban and rural areas for poverty eradication a top priority.

It is critical to include the voices of underserved populations in urban planning to ensure that their needs are met. This includes meeting the needs of girls and women. For instance, the city of Vienna, Austria created a "Manual for Gender Mainstreaming in Urban Planning and Urban Development" that took into account the experiences and recommendations of women living in the city. Their experiences as women in an urban area were included in the design of public and green spaces, land-use, restrooms, and transportation (City of Vienna, 2013).

Urbanization and Green Spaces

Unplanned, rapid urbanization leads to settlement patterns that have little public space and as a result, there is less land for basic infrastructures such as sewers and water, and fewer green areas. As new cities are developing they now have reduced allocations for public space, particularly streets. In the U.S. these days it is common to allocate about 15 percent of land to streets in newly planned areas, which is considerably less than it was in the past. In unplanned regions, the average is about 2 percent of land. The generally accepted minimum standard for public space in high density areas (150 people per hectare) is approximately 45 percent (30 percent for streets and sidewalks and 15 percent for open public spaces) (Global Goals, 2017). Allocating adequate public space is crucial to increase accessibility of services and employment, as well as greater connectivity especially for women, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities.

Unplanned and unmanaged urbanization is one of the greatest current challenges facing the planet. Climate change due in part to high levels of pollution, unchecked urban sprawl and the loss of biodiversity are all contributing to human health issues and irreversible damage to the environment. Various projects around the world are reconfiguring cities to include more green and public spaces, and are focused on making these spaces accessible to individuals with disabilities and older persons. For instance, in Cleveland, Ohio, LAND studio which was formed in 2011, brought together individuals from disadvantaged neighborhoods, artists, landscapers and developers to create inner city public spaces that were accessible to their residents. In these communities they are creating green sustainable neighborhoods. LAND partners with city officials, art foundations, the Trust for Public Land and conservancies to create their multi-purpose projects. LAND exemplifies a public-private partnership that includes resident participation and support (LAND, 2018).

Curitiba, Brazil is a different case example of urban planning that has mindfully incorporated green spaces into the design of the city. While the city has grown exponentially over the last 50 years, air pollution is close to WHO guideline levels and is much lower than in many other rapidly growing urban areas. The success of urban planning in Curitiba is associated with a conscious planning process that expanded the amount of green space per resident. As part of the

process, 1.5 million trees were planted and a complex network of pedestrian walkways were incorporated into the city design. Life expectancy in Curitiba is now two years longer for residents than in the rest of Brazil (it stands at 76.3 years) and infant mortality also remains relatively low (Suzuki, Dastur, Moffatt, Yabuki & Maruyama, 2010).

Singapore provides another interesting example of urban design that has emphasized public space preservation. Despite its high population density at 700 square kilometers and a population of 4.8 million, Singapore is distinctive due to its efficient use of land and natural resources. Most of the land is owned by the city-state and the government thus has strong authority over urban planning and implementation. The focus has been on high-density, building up, thereby preserving open spaces, natural parks, and greenery, and on creating an extensive transportation system. About 10 percent of land is assigned as green space, assuring access to the majority of the population (Suzuki, Dastur, Moffatt, Yabuki & Maruyama, 2010). Much of Singapore's success with respect to development, green spaces and sustainability can be attributed to comprehensive planning and the integrated centralized management of resources.

Another example of upgrading substandard housing and spaces comes from Indonesia. In poor neighborhoods called kampongs, that were previously congested with traffic, small alleyways have been closed down to vehicles and have been "greened" with urban pocket gardens. This renovation has occurred as part of a larger overhaul to reduce air pollution and cut down on accidents caused by vehicles. This upgrade has resulted in improved health for children and increased physical activity for city dwellers (WHO, 2012).

Having green spaces and access to nature is also a growing focus of early childhood specialists who advocate that nature-based play facilitates early development and leads to positive youth outcomes (Mainella, Agate, & Clark, 2011). In a 2014 study, Zelenski and Nisbet found that there is a link between well-being and nature, and that this relationship facilitated connectedness to family, friends and home. They referred to this idea as nature relatedness and they pointed out that when this notion is fostered, it also creates more positive feelings and an interest in sustainability. Van den Bosch & Sang (2017) also suggested that spending more time in natural surrounding contributes to positive mental health - which leads to healthier close relationships.

For instance, one promising new area is reimagining cities as supportive ecosystems for children and families. Temple University in Philadelphia Pennsylvania and the Brookings Institution are partnering to integrate urban design and placemaking with the science of learning. The initiative entitled Playful Learning Landscapes Action Network (PLLAN) is creating learning opportunities in everyday places such as bus stops, parks and supermarkets. The emphasis is on playful learning and on enriching social spaces for children, families and communities (Hadani et al., 2021). Several cities around the world including Philadelphia, Chicago, Sana Ana, CA, London and Mumbai are incorporating playful learning into urban design. However, the nascent nature of this initiative means that it is not yet fully incorporated into the urban life of those cities nor has it been scaled up to include all the various elements of urban life. Brookings is now working to bring together local civic leaders, the private sector, and philanthropies to expand this approach in general urban planning contexts. In the context of COVID-19, urban planners and

civic leaders are increasingly recognizing the need to rethink neighborhoods in order to improve health, well-being and economic opportunities. This is one path forward as it emphasizes building children's competencies and reducing social inequities amongst different groups.

Efficient transport systems are also a key aspect to increasing access to employment, health, community services and educational facilities, and green spaces especially for vulnerable populations such as older persons and individuals with disabilities. Transport needs to include walking, cycling and public transport. Centralized planning that is coordinated between the various stakeholders is a key element in this area.

Intergenerational Living Arrangements

Specifically in Western urban areas, intergenerational living arrangements are again on the rise. While historically in Western countries families tended to live in intergenerational groups either in the same household or very near to one another, a push after WW II towards homeownership in the U.S. especially, moved primarily white families away from this model. However, changes in the economy and the aging of the global population are again influencing social trends in new, innovative ways. According to the Pew Research Center, about 60.6 million Americans or 19 per cent of the population live in a house with at minimum two adult generations together. This is in contrast to a low of 12 per cent in 1980. Since that time, in the U.S. multigenerational living has rebounded. During the financial crisis, from 2007 and 2009, there was a 10.5 per cent increase in multigenerational households (Pew, 2016).

Multigenerational living may be on the upswing amongst white Americans, but it is not a new phenomenon among various U.S. ethnic groups. For instance, in 2009, 9.4 per cent of Asian households, 9.5 per cent of African American and 10.3 per cent of Latino homes were multigenerational in comparison with 3.7 per cent of white families (AARP, 2013). Statistics, however, indicate that in recent years, multigenerational living is again becoming common amongst all groups. As the 65 and older population is expected to double to 92 million by 2060, families are once again arranging their lives in such a manner as to be near each other or live with each other again. According to a Pew Research study (2016), for the first time in 130 years, living with parents surpassed other living arrangements for those 18 to 34. Broken down by race, 28 per cent Asians and Hispanics lived in multi-generational households, and blacks accounted for 25 per cent. Meanwhile, whites that live in multigenerational arrangements are at about 15 per cent. Generations United found that families that chose multigenerational living arrangements improved their finances, had more supportive care arrangements, and stronger social relationships (Generations United, 2011).

Multiple factors are contributing to the increase in intergenerational households. One important trend mentioned earlier, is that people are marrying later. In the West, an increasing number of individuals in their twenties are continuing to live with their parents either by choice or through economic necessity. Immigration is also fueling this trend. As an increasing number of individuals from Latin America and Asia immigrate to the U.S., they bring with them cultural norms that encourage intergenerational households. Moreover, economic necessity again also plays a role. As the Baby Boomers age and prosper they too are moving towards

multigenerational households for their parents while also raising their own children. The aging of the population is also critical to the trend in intergenerational living. As people are living longer, they are also plagued by an increase in disabilities and chronic illnesses. One solution for care is through living arrangements that facilitate the interactions between the elderly and younger people (Generations United, 2011).

Other areas in the world are seeing similar trends toward intergenerational living. In 2011, 1 in 5 Australians lived in a multigenerational household and in the UK, these families had the largest percentage increase in all household types over the last decade 2001 – 2011 (Lysnar & Dupuis, 2015). Similar factors, such as in the United States, are encouraging this trend including the impacts of the global economic crisis that resulted in younger individuals having difficulty finding employment and the longer time spent in tertiary education. It is important to point out however, that multi-generational living comes with both benefits and challenges. Besides increasing intergenerational solidarity and easing financial stress, tensions can arise around issues such as individual decision making, privacy, and control over space. Best practice examples and education around rules formation and maintenance are thus, critical aspects of making this living arrangement work, be it amongst a small or larger group of people (Lysnar & Dupuis, 2015).

The return to intergenerational living has led to a global interest in new forms of households that have a “family-like” aspect to them. For instance, one example is Humanitas in the Netherlands. Humanitas is a retirement home, started in 2013 that is based on an intergenerational living model. The programme provides rent-free housing for university students. They in return conduct a variety of activities for the older residents. This initiative has had multiple beneficial results: it has helped create greater intergenerational solidarity and it has eased the housing needs for university students. While still in an experimental phase, this project has drawn a great deal of attention including in Asia as a workable solution to two primary social problems: the lack of holistic care services for older persons and the wide-spread issue of unaffordable housing for young people (Golden Age Foundation, 2017). Similar initiatives have sprung up in the United States and in France all founded on the same principle of enhancing the relationship between generations and easing housing shortages for young people.

Partially state funded multigenerational housing initiatives have become more popular in Germany and Britain and may provide one example for bringing together the very young and older persons. In Germany since 2006, there are currently 450 participating houses under the “Action Programme: Multigenerational Housing.” These *Mehrgenerationenhäuser*, contain a kindergarten, social center for the elderly and public spaces where young families can come by to socialize and youth have access to computers and games. They are based on the concept of the extended family, with different members providing a variety of services including childcare, computer courses, and lunch for school age children.

Urbanization and COVID-19

The challenges with uneven urbanization discussed above, including poor public infrastructures in many cities and the lack of access to adequate housing, health care and sanitation have been exacerbated during the pandemic. Especially in places where individuals live close to each other and depend on mutual interactions, the lack of appropriate basic services combined with enforced physical distancing measures, have had disastrous consequences. This situation has been coupled with inadequate resources to respond to COVID-19 including the lack of intensive care units for individuals with severe cases of the virus, lack of vaccines, and even lack of healthcare data about the situation (Finn & Kobayashi, 2020). We are also seeing how social and economic imbalances have influenced the responses to the virus and how existing inequalities have been exacerbated. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat recently stated the following,

COVID-19 has exposed and exacerbated underlying inequalities in cities. The poor are the most vulnerable and the most likely to die from the disease. Informal workers dependent on daily wages have been deprived of their livelihoods. Children without internet access have lost a year of formal education. Elderly persons, facing risk and stigmatization, are confined to their homes with no opportunities for social interaction. Migrant workers return home after grueling journeys to face a future of poverty. Others are confined to dormitories with high exposure to the disease. Minority groups have also been disproportionately affected. Women were forced to juggle childcare, education and work without access to schools and daycare services. Essential workers continue to toil tirelessly and at great personal risk to ensure that our urban services function uninterrupted. Above all, COVID-19 is reversing the gains made in poverty eradication and is pushing back the possibility of attaining the Sustainable Development Goals by at least a decade if not more. (UN World Cities Report, 2020, p. iv).

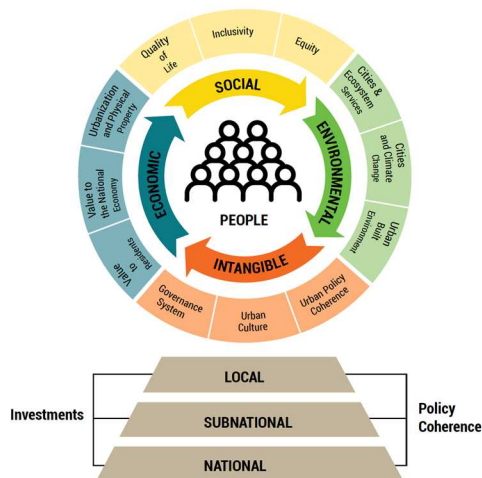
The global pandemic had a disproportionate effect on women and youth. Particularly individuals who worked in the service industry were affected by the lockdowns and subsequent loss of jobs. The 2020 World Cities report estimates that the initial phase of the pandemic affected 2.7 billion workers, representing about 81 percent of the global workforce (p. 31). The pandemic also highlighted the inequalities that exist in urban areas between low-income households whose members were engaged in the informal sector and / or daily wage earners – those who had to leave their homes to earn a living – and high-wage, white-collar earners who were able to work in comparative safety from their homes. These factors in combination with overcrowded slums and informal settlements made urban areas particularly dangerous for the most vulnerable individuals in society: the elderly, the terminally ill, the very poor.

COVID-19 however, has also highlighted the positive role that cities can play in controlling and eradicating the effects of the pandemic. Specifically, the pandemic has drawn attention to the role that local governments play in sustaining and improving the lives of individuals and families. Key to this effort is effective planning and management with a focus on sustainability and promoting care of the environment. The World Cities Report (2020) suggests that,

Countries should seize this moment to deliver on their commitment to sustainable development by investing in cleaner and more resilient forms of renewable energy that will create lasting solutions, reduce the risks of future crisis and adequately mitigate the impacts of climate change (p. xxv).

Through interdisciplinary approaches we can use the information gleaned through the COVID-19 pandemic to improve urban living around the world. Cities have the potential to help move families out of poverty, provide new opportunities for women, youth, individuals with disabilities and others. This is best accomplished through partnerships between academics, health care workers, policy makers, and civil society. It also requires the reimagining of urban areas. For instance, cities that relied heavily on manufacturing in the past, could move to new models that emphasize new economic functions such as knowledge industries, as banking centres, or as reimagining old industrial sites into artistic centers.

Figure 2.1: Conceptualizing the value of sustainable urbanization



(World Cities Report, 2020)

Conclusion

As the discussion above has illustrated, it is critical not to focus purely on the economic function of urban areas. Nor is current global urban sprawl sustainable from a purely environmental perspective. Instead, urban areas need to be planned and viewed from a holistic perspective. Economic development intersects with environmental sustainability and social cohesion. Thus, it is critical to bring together the various constituencies and stakeholders in cities in order to create a more equal playing field where marginalized individuals, women, and low-income residents also have a voice. Moreover, cities need to be viewed as places where families – not just individuals – can thrive. This means that educational and social services need to be a key part of urban agendas. This type of a holistic perspective will allow for the realization of the 2030 Agenda and particularly Goal 11 of making human settlements and specifically cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Well-planned urban areas can decrease social inequalities and promote family

life. By providing affordable, safe housing, accessible transportation options, and safe and green spaces for marginalized groups, cities can be the conduit for more peaceful equitable societies. Well-planned urban areas have the potential to address many of the disparities the world is currently dealing with.

However, these kinds of outcomes are not guaranteed. As we have witnessed with the pandemic, unexpected catastrophes can very rapidly throw populations that are already disadvantaged into even more deplorable circumstances. In order to prevent these types of catastrophes in the future, it is imperative to stem and negate the various social and environmental ills that currently plague so many urban areas around the world. We need to once again place individuals and families and their needs at the forefront of social life instead of letting corporate forces and unregulated economic and environmental forces dominate. This requires a concerted effort on the parts of transnational, national, and community-based players to create a more equitable playing field. Constituencies and pertinent stakeholders at every level need to have a voice in planning and executing those policies and programs that will actually assist individuals and families. And as was stated before, we cannot just assume that what works in one part of the world is transferable to another. Instead, regional and socio-cultural differences need to be incorporated into each aspect of the urban planning process. Moreover, on a more local level, we need to recognize and celebrate the fact that cultural diversity is a hallmark of urban life. The diversity of urban areas is exactly one of the key features that makes them vibrant, inclusive, and attractive to individuals and families. People are exposed to new ideas and practices and innovate in stimulating environments. There is much empirical evidence now that well-planned and managed urban areas that employ inclusive participatory processes are the key to the sustainability of contemporary social life (UNDESA, 2019).

General Recommendations

The Challenge of Standard Definitions. There is currently no accepted definition of what is urban or a city – and what is considered urban can even differ over time in the same society. This creates challenges for making comparisons between places and regions and for planning and executing sustainable urbanization. Efforts such as those encouraged by the OECD (2020) which define urban areas through people-based definitions that measure the concentration of individuals instead of purely land use are a first step in creating a working definition that can be used by policy makers around the world when formulating plans for sustainable urbanization.

The Challenge of Data. A key finding from studies that focus on cities and urbanization is that we are missing good quality, relevant, accessible, and timely data. This problem is influencing not just the monitoring and reporting of policies but is affecting the policies that are needed to effectively respond to rapid urbanization. Accurate data would assist policy makers in tracking changes and documenting which policies make the most impact in cities. Data would help states create appropriate policies and also assist with implementation (UN Habitat, 2016). Reliable, accurate data would also allow for private and public investment in infrastructure, housing, and economic opportunities. By creating monitoring structures, continuous data would also work to allow us to better understand what is working and what is not in a more time sensitive manner. Accurate and correct data and metrics assist cities in making appropriate decisions on the best

policies and means to track changes and systematically document performances at the city level (local2030.org, 2021).

There are a wide variety of issues for which currently no data is available. That clearly impacts decision-making. Data needs to be disaggregated in order to account for gender, age, disability status, social groups, income levels, migration status, and other significant factors. This would allow decision makers to reach the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of their populations. Gathering and disaggregating data requires capacity and collaboration between local and national governments.

New technologies are allowing for innovative types of data gathering, storing, analysis and sharing. For instance, advancements in mobile phones now can use geospatial technology such as GPS (Global Positioning Systems) and RS (Remote Sensing). This type of data gathering allows policy makers to decide on the local allocation of resources to ensure more equitable outcomes amongst their populations.

Stemming inequality in urban areas is critical. The World Cities Report (2020) highlights that the growing inequality in urban areas is leading to social unrest in many areas in the world. Especially in high-income countries inequality has risen leading to frustration, protests, and demonstrations. Specifically, the slow growth of wages for paid work, increased poverty amongst migrants and minorities and reduced health and social welfare programs are leading to this unrest. In order to create social cohesion and thus, peaceful societies and to implement Agenda 2030, states need to address and stem this global phenomenon. For instance, the World Cities Report (2020) highlights the fact that states need to move from an equality-based model to an equity-based one. In order to assist the most vulnerable members of society to access resources, economic, physical and social barriers need to be removed. A primary example is housing. Individuals and families need affordable, safe housing and the many issues that come with sprawling slums and informal urban settlements need to be addressed. This can be accomplished by states partnering with private housing contractors in order to create safe, affordable housing at a rapid enough pace. This is specifically the case in developing countries that have enormous housing shortfalls. For instance, in South Asia, there is a deficit of 38 million housing units (World Cities Report, 2020).

Expand and nurture transnational and national capacities. In order to create and implement national and culturally appropriate social protection plans it is critical for various stakeholders to be involved in every phase of planning and implementing policies and programmes. This necessitates increasing the awareness and collaboration between policy makers, transnational NGOs, and academics that address the linkages between the appropriate SDG's and their targets specifically around migration, urbanization, gender equality, and vulnerable populations. The New Urban Agenda emphasizes these linkages and complements SDG 11 by outlining strategic initiatives in order to support and facilitate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Acknowledge and support the link between urbanization, physical and mental health and access to nature / green spaces. The way cities and neighborhoods are designed affects whether or not it is easy for people to walk, cycle, participate in active recreation, use public transport, and

interact with neighbors and their community. It is increasingly understood that urban planning decisions have a key role to play in combatting growing levels of obesity and helping prevent lifestyle-related diseases through facilitating physical activity and positive mental health (Van den Bosch & Ode Sang, 2017). This requires interdisciplinary teams and community-academic collaborations. A focus on research on intercity comparisons within countries and between research on urban environments between countries could be very useful for this purpose. What features of cities are associated with poor health and which support good health. By comparing urban areas we can learn about the dynamism of urban areas and propose frameworks and interventions for creating healthier cities in the future (Vlahov & Galea, 2002; Galea, Ettman, & Vlahov, 2019).

Providing safe and easily accessible public spaces that are accessible to all residents of urban areas including vulnerable populations. Public space is understood as land that is publicly owned and can be used by all. Public spaces include streets, sidewalks, gardens, parks and conservation areas. They may be publicly or privately managed, and they allow cities and communities to function efficiently, equitably, and lead to greater social cohesion (Global Goals, 2017). Having adequate, well-designed public spaces allows a wide variety of users to access services and opportunities. This is particularly true for marginalized residents and at-risk or vulnerable populations. Including socially excluded and vulnerable populations such as individuals with disabilities, women, and the elderly is key in planning, creating and monitoring the usage of public and greens spaces.

Having enough public spaces is also closely tied to unregulated urban planning. Urban sprawl needs to be checked as cities portend to grow in the next several decades. Key is instituting processes that consolidate efficiencies and mindfully integrate outdoor accessible spaces. Using data from child development and positive youth development can assist in supporting efforts to divert public and private money towards the creation of outdoor nature spaces that support well-being of all vulnerable populations in particular.

Urbanization and financial partnerships need to be promoted. Urbanization needs to be planned and managed with sustained financing. This requires coordination between local and state governments. A well-planned effort also requires a focus on rural areas so that they do not fall behind leading to exponential out-migration.

There is a need for long-term private-public partnerships. The private sector needs to invest in affordable housing, infrastructure and clean technologies (UN World Cities Report, 2020). Specially, affordable housing is one of the key components of promoting healthy family life in urban areas. In spite of knowledge about this fact, housing that is safe and affordable is shrinking in all the global cities of the world. This is happening at a rapid pace and affecting specifically low-income *and* middle-income families.

Urbanization needs to be inclusive of urban margins and underserved groups. In order to meet the needs of all individuals, urban planning councils need to incorporate recent migrants in order

to better understand their particular circumstances. New migrants often live far away from the centers of power in cities and thus, do not participate in the civic lives of their locales. Thus, their voices and needs are not represented in planning processes. By highlighting the needs of recent migrants vs. long-established migrants, programs and policies can better respond to poverty eradication and housing and other needs.

Prioritize family issues, rights, and concerns through formal and informal efforts by states

The creation of family focused ministries and explicit national family policies are a key feature of states that have successful initiatives and programs that support families. Currently many countries only focus on the most vulnerable populations in their societies with respect to providing government supports. However, this approach is insufficient for supporting families across the socio-economic spectrum and also often excludes socially marginalized groups. For instance, however, creating a family ministry has both symbolic and practical implications: it highlights the significance of families and it allows for greater integration of planning and services for families across the socio-economic spectrum as well as families that may be migrants, refugees and / or recently re-settled. In addition, media campaigns through social media and other communication technologies are a relatively simple mechanism for distributing information that can support and strengthen families. One mechanism is through promoting information about educational opportunities, housing and employment assistance in multiple relevant languages would assist recent migrants to urban areas.

Recommendations for Academics / Civil Society

The valuing of diversity. Academics can help create an understanding about the value of cultural diversity and heterogeneity – the hallmarks of urban areas. Through case examples and data analyses they can illustrate how diversity promotes entrepreneurship and enhances the economic and social value of urbanization. In a similar vein, academics can assist in identifying and giving voice to socially excluded groups. This leads to creating more peaceful and inclusive societies and stronger families. Urbanization means different things in different places. Residents have varying needs depending on regionality, environment and a myriad of factors. Academics can assist policy makers in identifying grassroots efforts and initiatives that are locally sustainable.

Creating an understanding around equity instead of purely equality. It is not enough to acknowledge the fundamental human right to equal access to employment, housing, and other basic needs. Instead, academics can assist in providing frameworks for understanding the structural barriers that so often keep individuals from accessing resources, skills, and opportunities. Policy makers and others need to understand the root causes that force some individuals such as women or persons with disabilities to be excluded from attaining basic rights and services.

Translational research and partnership building. Academics specifically can make their findings useful to civil society and policy makers by translating their findings into policy and programming recommendations. In particular, partnering with state agencies, NGOs at transnational, national and local levels creates access to empirical data about the effectiveness of programs and policies. Also, research on policies such as cash transfers in specific contexts

assists policy makers in understanding when such policies make sense for families and when they do not.

Promoting gender equality through mainstream efforts. Gender inequality needs to be addressed at every societal level in every country but with a specific focus on family and community environments. The SDG's highlight gender inequality however there is much progress still to be made in this arena. A gender lens needs to be incorporated into data gathering and analysis, educational initiatives, policy formation and programming. Creating repositories of policies and initiatives from different parts of the world as a resource base would be an initial step from which culturally specific programs can then be formulated. Targeted scholarships and stipends to encourage girl's and women's education and occupational opportunities are a key feature of successful programs. In particular, these efforts need to address migrant girls and women and /or girls and women who live in marginalized communities in urban areas.

COVID-19 has highlighted gender inequality around the world. The most recent [UNDP-UN Women COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker](#) (2020) found that with respect to the feminization of poverty, only 19.6% of 3099 social protection and labor market measures supported women's economic security and unpaid care. This disturbing phenomenon is in part explained by the fact that girls and women are extremely underrepresented in decision-making at policy and programmatic levels. It will be impossible to implement the SDG's and their targets in any kind of a holistic manner without addressing these glaring inequities. As urban areas continue to expand at exponential rates, it will be critical to prioritize a gender lens in creating public spaces and transportation mechanisms.

Introducing a life span perspective to urban planning and the implementation of the SDG's. Individuals have different needs across the span of their lives. For instance, children need safe and secure urban environments so that they can go to school safely and access age-appropriate play and recreation facilities. This leads to reducing inequality and to children realizing their full capabilities. In contrast, older persons need accessible means of transportation and mobility, and social protection programs that will allow them to age with dignity and respect. Academics can assist in identifying the various priorities of different age groups and also family priorities depending on social location.

The creation of databases of multigenerational household good practice examples which are culturally relevant to Western and non-Western contexts can provide a foundation for new, forms of households that assist societies as their populations age.

States need to create supports through tax incentives for multi-generational households including health benefits and housing and care supplements. Given the aging of the global population, both Western and non-Western societies already are or will shortly be faced with similar issues with respect to caretaking at both ends of the spectrum: young families need childcare, and older persons may need eldercare. Multi-generational housing initiatives help bridge the need for service provision, and may ultimately be a more cost-effective mechanism for states that subsidize them.

Conclusion

This overview of migration and urbanization trends and their relationship to family issues, indicates that the challenge for our world is to develop programs and policies that support individuals and their loved ones who live under highly diverse conditions, and yet are faced with rapid changes in every aspect of their lives. We are only now beginning to explore and understand how individuals are more interconnected to the economic and political processes encouraged and supported by globalization, and how this in turn, affects social life, values, and practices. Empirical research on these trends, and appropriate programs and policies that support individuals and families, however, are lagging behind. Thus, we do not always understand how families interact with the varying shifts in their environments (Fingerman & Birditt, 2020). As Pesando et. al. suggest in a comprehensive, comparative analysis of global family change,

The emerging picture of persistent diversity with development has important implications for understanding the social and economic consequences of global development and globalization, and should be considered in the policy for sustainable development and for increasing individual and family well-being (2019, p. 159).

Globalization, competition for jobs and housing, as well as increasing inequality are an inherent aspect of our world. Due to demographic changes, family members have to work longer and care for each other longer than 100 years ago. While families are central to social life, they are often invisible in political and work contexts. As has been discussed above, we see this in the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets. None of the goals mention family life nor do the targets acknowledge the critical economic role families play in all societies around the globe. And yet, families are the key to realizing the SDG's as it is within families (however they may be defined) that individuals are initially socialized and find economic and psychological security. Especially in non-Western parts of the world, families still provide individuals with a sense of identity and belonging – whatever their social class or migration status may be, or any other ascriptive factors. Thus, families still matter on a very personal level. However, families also matter on an institutional plane. Families socialize the next generation, they provide economic and social supports to their members across the life course, and they react to and enact policy decisions. Thus, without centering families and their vital functions at the forefront of every nation-state's agenda the SDGs will not be implemented in the holistic, integrated manner with which they were conceived.

The omission of family centered analyses and programing at transnational and state levels also leaves us with an incomplete understanding about the needs of societies and what is needed for sustainable urbanization and migration. It is important to note that in most places, family policies and programs were developed at a time when families looked less complex than they do today. Thus, there is a critical need for appropriate programs and policies that are responsive to key social and family conditions under various dynamic conditions. What we can currently say, however, is that as families have changed, they have not declined in importance. For instance, research from northern Europe indicates that family life may be gaining in significance instead of lessening in value (Esping-Andersen & Billari, 2015). Moreover, weaker state support for social services in many parts of the world is creating an environment in which families are more, not

less important to the health and well-being of individuals, especially children, the terminally ill, individuals with disabilities, and older persons (Trask, 2010; Trask, 2014). We have certainly witnessed this during the global COVID-19 pandemic. In the recently published World Cities Report (2020), Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations stated,

We cannot go back to business as usual. Cities and communities are demanding that those in authority take the opportunity to build back better. To emerge stronger, we need a sustainable, inclusive and green recovery for people and the planet. That means dealing with the existing challenges of how cities are planned, managed and financed, and ensuring their development is compatible with the goal of net zero emissions by 2050.

With appropriate policies and supportive frameworks, resilient cities with improved housing and infrastructure can bounce back from the devastating impacts of disasters, including pandemics. The Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda provide the blueprint to implement these measures (p.iii)

Responsive programs and policies that strengthen and support families reduce the risks that are brought about by crises such as the recent pandemic. They also allow individuals and families to flourish as they simultaneously contribute and respond to demographic shifts, migration, and urbanization.

A systemic perspective that highlights how various factors and trends intersect and interact with one another is key to creating appropriate responses. This systemic approach needs to be at the top of states' agendas in order to accomplish the 2030 Agenda and ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals are met. We know that strengthening family supports leads to improvements in the social and economic capital of individuals and concurrently, the well-being of communities and states. Through coordinated multi-level responses, all individuals including the most vulnerable individuals world-wide can be reached and assisted in realizing their rights, capabilities, and full potential.

References

- AARP, 2013. 3 Generations under one roof. <https://www.aarp.org/home-family/friends-family/info-04-2013/three-generations-household-american-family.html>
- Ahmed, K., Haq, S., & Bartiaux, F. (2019). The nexus between extreme weather events, sexual violence, and early marriage: A study of vulnerable populations in Bangladesh. *Population and Environment*, 40, 303 – 324. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s111111-019-0312-3>.
- AIC. (2018). Foreign-trained doctors are critical to serving many U.S. communities. American Immigration Council. <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/foreign-trained-doctors-are-critical-serving-many-us-communities>.
- Anant, E. & Gassman-Pines, A. (2020). Snapshot of the COVID crisis impact on working families. *Econofact*. <https://econofact.org/snapshot-of-the-covid-crisis-impact-on-working-families>
- Asis, M. M. B. (2006) ‘Living with migration: experiences of left-behind children in the Philippines’, *Asian Population Studies*, 2, pp. 45–67.
- Baca, M., Laederach, P., Hagggar, J., Schroth, G., Ovalle, O., (2014). An integrated framework for assessing vulnerability to climate change and developing adaptation strategies for coffee growing families in Mesoamerica. *PLOS One*, 9, e88463. doi: [10.1371/journal.pone.0088463](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0088463)
- Barr, Heather. (2019). “Give Us a Baby and We’ll Let You Go:” Trafficking of Kachin “Brides” from Myanmar to China. Human Rights Watch.
- Barrett, H. Bedri, N. & Krishnapalan, N. (2020). The female genital mutilation (FGM) – migration matrix. The case of the Arab League Region. *Health Care for Women International*, 42, 186 0 212. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07399332.2020.1789642>
- Bashir, S. (2002). Home is where the harm is: Inadequate housing as a public health crisis. *American Journal of Public Health*, 92, 733 – 738.
- Bettini, G. & Gioli, G. (2016). Waltz with development: Insights on the developmentalization or climate-changed migration. *Migration and Development*, 5, 171 – 189. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21632324.2015.1096143>.
- Bhattarai K. & Budd, D. 2019. Effects of rapid urbanization. *Multidimensional Approach to Quality of Life Issues*, pp. 327 – 341, ed. B. Sinha. New York, Springer.

- Blizzard, B. & Batalova, J. (2019). *Refugees and asylees in the United States*. Spotlight, Migration Policy Institute, 13 June. Available at www.migrationpolicy.org/article/refugees-and-asylees-united-states
- Bratt, R. (2002). Housing and family well-being. *Housing Studies*, 17, 13 – 26.
- Brown, T., Scrase, T., & Ganguly-Scrase, R. (2017). Globalised dreams, local constraints: Migration and youth aspirations in an Indian regional town. *Children's Geographies*, 15, 531-544. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2016.1274948>
- Bryceson, D. (2019). Transnational families negotiating migration and care life cycles across nation-state borders. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45:16,3042-3064, DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2018.1547017
- Bryceson, D. and U. Vuorela (2002) Transnational families in the twenty-first century, in D. Bryceson and U. Vuorela (eds), *The Transnational Family: New European Frontiers and Global Networks*, pp. 3–30. New York: Berg.
- Carling, J. (2005). Gender dimensions of international migration. *Global Migration Perspectives*. Global Commission on International Migration. www.gcim.org
- Casimiro, C., & Nico, M. (2018). From object to instrument: Technologies as tools for family relations and family research. In Casimiro C. & Neves B. (Eds.), *Connecting Families?: Information & Communication Technologies, generations, and the life course* (pp. 133-156). Bristol: Bristol University Press. doi:10.2307/j.ctv2867xm.14
- Castles, S., & Miller, M. J. (2009). *The age of migration: International population movements in the modern world* (4th ed.). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Castles, S. deHass, H. & Miller, M. J. (2014). Houndmills, Basingstore. London: MacMillan Press.
- Chang, H., Dong, X.Y., & MacPhail, F. (2011). Labor migration and time use patterns of the left-behind children and elderly in rural china. *World Development*, 20, 1- 12. doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2011.05.021
- Cherlin, A. (2012). Goode's "World revolution and family patterns": A reconsideration at fifty years. *Population and Development Review*, 38, pp. 577 – 607.
- Chi, W. & Qian, X. (2016). Human capital investment in children: An empirical study of household child education expenditure in china, 2007 and 2011. *China Economic Review*, 37, 52 – 65. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chieco.2015.11.008>
- Chin, M., Lee, J., Lee, S., Son, S. & Sung, M. (2012). Family policy in South Korea: Development, current status, and challenges. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 21, 53 – 64.

- CIEH (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health) (2015). <http://www.cieh-housing-and-health-resource.co.uk/housing-conditions-and-health/key-issues/> Retrieved on March 9, 2018.
- City of Vienna. (2013). Gender mainstreaming in urban planning and urban development. <https://www.wien.gv.at/stadtentwicklung/studien/pdf/b008358.pdf>
- Cohen, R. (2000) “‘Mom is a stranger’: the negative impact of immigration policies on the Family life of Filipina domestic workers’, *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 32, pp. 76–88.
- Dallmann, I. & Millock, K. (2017). Climate variability and inter-state migration in India. *CESifo Economic Studies*, 63, pp. 560–594. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cesifo/ifx014>
- Davy, Deanna. (2014). Understanding the complexities of responding to child sex trafficking in Thailand and Cambodia. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 3(11/12), 793-816.
- deHaas, H. et al. (2019). International migration: Trends, determinants, and policy effects. *Population and Development Review*, 45, 885 – 922. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45285994>
- DESA. (2009). *Creating an inclusive society: Practical strategies to promote social integration*. <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egms/docs/2009/Ghana/inclusive-society.pdf>
- Dreby, J. (2006). Honor and virtue: Mexican parenting in the transnational context. *Gender & Society*, 20, 32 – 59.
- Dreby, J. (2010). *Divided by borders: Mexican migrants and their children*. Oakland, California, CA: University of California Press
- Esping-Andersen, G. & Billari, F.C. (2015). “Re-theorizing family demographics.” *Population and Development Review* 41, pp. 1–31.
- Ferdousi, N. (2013). Children silent victims in child marriage in Bangladesh: Significance of legal protection for their wellbeing. *Developing Country Studies*, 3, 18 – 26.
- Finn, B. & Kobayashi, L. (2020). Structural inequality in the time of COVID-19: Urbanization, segregation, and pandemic control in sub-Saharan Africa. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 10, 217 – 220. doi.org/10.1177/2043820620934310
- Fingerman, K. & Birditt, K. (2020). A decade of research on intergenerational ties: Technological, economic, political and demographic changes. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82, 383 – 403. Doi: 10.1111/jomf.12604.
- Freeman, R.B. (2006). People flows in globalization. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 20, 145 – 170.

- Fresnoza-Flot, A. (2009). Migration status and transnational mothering: The case of Filipino migrants in France. *Global Networks* 9, 252–270.
- Fresnoza-Flot, A. (2018). Beyond migration patterns – understanding family reunion decisions of Filipino labour and Thai marriage migrants in global reproductive systems. *Migration Studies*, 6, pp. 205 – 224. doi:10.1093/migration/mnx038
- FitzGerald, D.S. (2014). The sociology of international migration. In: *Migration Theory: Talking across disciplines*. Eds. C. Brettell and J. Hollifield. Routledge, New York.
- Fuller-Iglesias, H. (2015) The view from back home: interpersonal dynamics of transnational Mexican families, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 41, pp. 1703-1724, DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2015.1022518
- Galea, S., Ettman, C. & Vlahov, D. (2019). *Urban health*. Oxford Publishing: Oxford.
- Generations United. (2011). Multigenerational Households. <http://www.gu.org/OURWORK/Multigenerational.aspx>
- Golden Age Foundation (2017). A new affordable housing model: Intergenerational Living. <http://goldenage.foundation/new-affordable-housing-model-intergenerational-living>.
- Goode, W. (1963). *World revolution and family patterns*. New York: The Free Press.
- Goulbourne, H., Reynolds, T., Solomos, J. & Zontini, E. (2010). *Transnational families: Ethnicities, identities and social capital*. New York: Routledge.
- Grech, S. (2015). *Disability and poverty in the global south: Critical renegotiations from Guatemala*. London: Palgrave.
- Hadani, H., Vey, J., Pavathy, S. & Hirsh_Pasek, K. (2021). *Understanding child-friendly urban design. A framework to measure Playful Learning landscapes outcomes*. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/understanding-child-friendly-urban-design/>
- Hartmann, H. I. (1981) ‘The family as the locus of gender, class, and political struggle: the example of housework’, *Signs*, 6, pp. 366–94.
- Hatton, T. (2020). Asylum migration to the developed world. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 34, 75 – 93. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26873530>
- HelpAge International & Handicap International. (2014). *Hidden victims of the Syrian crisis: Disabled, injured and older refugees*. <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/hidden-victims-syrian-crisis-disabled-injured-and-older-refugees>

- Hew, C.S. (2003). The impact of urbanization on family structures: The experience of Sarawak, Malaysia. *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 18, pp. 89 – 109.
- Hoang, L.A. & Yeoh, B. (2012). Sustaining families across transnational spaces: Vietnamese migrant parents and their left-behind children. *Asian Studies Review*, 36, pp 307 – 325. DOI: 10.1080/10357823.2012.711810
- Hochschild, A. R. (2001) ‘Global care chains and emotional surplus value’, in W. Hutton and A. Giddens (eds) *On the Edge: Living with Global Capitalism*, pp. 130–46. London: Vintage.
- Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. and E. Avila (1997) “‘I’m here, but I’m there’”: the meanings of Latina transnational motherhood’, *Gender and Society*, 11, 548–71.
- Horn, V. & Schweppe, C. (2017). Transnational aging: Toward a transnational perspective in old age research. *European Journal of Ageing*, 14, pp. 335 – 339.
- Huay, C.S., Winterton, J., Bani, Y., & Matmilola, B.T. (2019). Do remittances promote human development? Empirical evidence from developing countries. *International Journal of Social Economics*, 46, 1173 – 1185. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSE-12-2018-0673>
- Huijsmans, R. (2016). *Generationing development. A relational approach to children, youth and development*. New York: Palgrave.
- IDMC. (2020). <https://www.internal-displacement.org/database/displacement-data>
- IOM. (2020a). *World Migration Report 2020*. <https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2020>
- IOM. (2022). *World Migration Report 2022*. <https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2022>
- IOM. (2020b). *Myanmar: Overview*. <https://www.iom.int/countries/myanmar>
- Khanna, G. & Lee, M. (2018). Hiring highly educated immigrants leads to more innovation and better products. *The Conversation*, 28 September. Available at <https://theconversation.com/hiring-highlyeducated-immigrants-leads-to-more-innovation-and-better-products-100087>.
- Khoury, C.K., H.A. Achicanoy, A. Harold, A.D. Bjorkman, C. Navarro-Racines, L. Guarino, X. Flores-Palacios, J.M.M. Engels, J.H. Wiersema, H. Dempewolf, S. Sotelo, J. Ramirez-Villegas, N.P. Castañeda-Álvarez, C. Fowler, A. Jarvis, L.H. Rieseberg and P.C. Struik

- (2016). Origins of food crops connect countries worldwide. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 283(1832). Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2016.0792>.
- King, R. & Lulle, A. (2015) 'Rhythmic island: Latvian migrants in Guernsey and their enfolded patterns of space-time mobility', *Population, Space and Place*, 21 (7), 599–611, doi: 10.1002/psp.1915.
- Kilkey, M & Palenga-Moellenbeck, E. (2016). Introduction: Family life in an age of migration and mobility. Introducing a global and family life-course perspective. In: Kilkey M., Palenga-Möllenbeck E. (eds) *Family Life in an Age of Migration and Mobility. Migration, Diasporas and Citizenship*. Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Kotkin, J. & Modarres, A. (2013). The childless city. *City Journal*. Available at http://www.cityjournal.org/2013/23_3childless-cities.html
- Krishna, A., Sriram, M. S., & Prakash, P. (2014). Slum types and adaptation strategies: Identifying policy-relevant differences in Bangalore. *Environment and Urbanization*, 26, 568–585. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247814537958>
- LAND/ (2018). LAND Studio: Landscape, art, neighborhoods and development. Available at <http://www.land-studio.org/about/history>
- Local2030, (2016). <https://local2030.org/library/view/296>
- Lowell, B.L., Findlay, A. & Stewart, E. (2004) *Brain strain: Optimising highly skilled emigration from developing countries. Asylum and migration Working Paper 3*, Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), London. <http://www.ippr.org.uk/ecomms/files/brainstrain.pdf>
- Lysnar, P. & Dupuis, A. (2015). Meeting the housing needs of multi-generational households. The University of Auckland and Massey University, External Research Report. Available at <https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/creative/about/our-faculty/School%20programmes%20and%20centres/Transforming%20Cities/ER4-Housing-Multi-generational-Households.pdf>
- Mahdavi, P. (2016). *Crossing the Gulf: Love and family in migrant lives*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Mainella, F., Agate, J. & Clark, B. (2011). Outdoor-based play and reconnection to nature: A neglected pathway to positive youth development. *Recreation as a developmental experience*, 130, 89 – 104.
- Mahler, S.J. (2001) Transnational relationships: The struggle to communicate across borders. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 7. pp. 583–619.

- Mathers, C., G. Stevens, D. Hogan, W.R. Mahanani & Ho., J. (2018). Global and Regional Causes of Death: Patterns and Trends, 2000–15. In: *Disease Control Priorities: Improving Health and Reducing Poverty*, Jamison, D., Gelband, H. & Horton, S. eds. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The World Bank. Washington, D.C.
- Merry, L. Pelaez, S. & Edwards, N. (2017). Refugees, asylum-seekers and undocumented migrants and the experience of parenthood: A synthesis of the qualitative literature. *Globalization and Health*, 13, 75. DOI 10.1186/s12992-017-0299-4
- Migration Observatory. (2019). Migrants in the UK Labour Market. <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/migrants-in-the-uk-labour-market-an-overview/>
- Mueller, E. & Tighe, J. (2007). Making the case for affordable housing: Connecting housing with health and education outcomes. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 21; 371 – 385. doi: 10.1177/0885412207299653
- Neupane, S. P. (2014). Life expectancy and new challenges. *Setopati*. <http://setopati.net/opinion/4680/Life-expectancy-and-new-challenges/>.
- OECD. (2016), Attracting and retaining skilled migrants and international students in the Netherlands », in Recruiting Immigrant Workers: The Netherlands 2016, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264259249-9-en>.
- OECD. (2017). A portrait of family migration in OECD countries. *International Migration Outlook, 2017. OECD 2017*. <https://www.oecd.org/els/mig/IMO-2017-chap3.pdf>
- OECD. (2019). Family ties: How family reunification can impact migrant integration. *International Migration Outlook, 2019*. <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/ee76638d-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/ee76638d-en>
- OECD. (2020). Cities in the world: A new perspective on urbanization. *OECD Urban Studies*. OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/d0efcbda-en>
- Outshoorn, J. (2014). The trafficking policy debates. In *Global Human Trafficking*. Ed. Dragiewicz, M. London: Routledge.
- Padilla, M., et al., (eds.). (2007). *Love and Globalization: Transformations of Intimacy in the Contemporary World*. Nashville, Tenn.: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Parreñas, R. S. (2001) ‘Mothering from a distance: emotions, gender, and intergenerational relations in Filipino transnational families’, pp. 361–90.

- Parrenas, R.S. (2005) Long distance intimacy: Class, gender and intergenerational relations between mothers and children in Filipino transnational families. *Global Networks* 5, pp. 317–36.
- Parrenas, R.S. (2010). Transnational mothering: A source of gender conflicts in the family. *North Carolina Law Review*, 88, 1825 – 1855.
- Pesando, L.M., & the GFC Team. (2019). Global family change. *Population and Development Review*, 45, 133 – 168.
- Pisani, M. & Grech, S. (2015). Disability and forced migration: Critical intersectionalities. *Disability and the Global South*, 2, 421 – 441.
- Pew Research (2016). A record 60.6 million Americans live in multigenerational households. Available at <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/08/11/a-record-60-6-million-americans-live-in-multigenerational-households/>
- Pew Research (2019). *Key findings about U.S. immigrants*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/06/17/key-findings-about-u-s-immigrants/>
- Pew Research (2020). Facts on U.S. immigrants, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2020/08/20/facts-on-u-s-immigrants/>
- Rebhun, L. A. (1999). *The Heart is Unknown Country: Love in the Changing Economy of Northeast Brazil*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Shepherd, A., Mitchell, T., Lewis, K., Lehnadt, A., Joes, L., Scott, L., & Muir-Wood, R. (2013). *The geography of poverty, disasters and climate extremes in 2030*. ODI. <https://www.odi.org/publications/7491-geography-poverty-disasters-and-climate-extremes-2030>
- Singh C., & Basu R. (2020). Moving in and out of vulnerability: Interrogating migration as an adaptation strategy along a rural–urban continuum in India. *Geographic Journal*, 186: 87–102. <https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.12328>
- Suhardiman, D., Rigg, J., Bandur, M., Marschke, M., Miller, M.A., Pheuangsavanh, N., Sayatham, M., & Taylor, D. (2021) On the Coattails of globalization: migration, migrants and COVID-19 in Asia, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47:1, 88-109, DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2020.1844561
- Suzuki, H., Dastur, A., Moffatt, S., Yabuki, N. & Mauyama, H. (2010). Eco cities: Ecological cities as economic cities. The World Bank: Washington, D.C.
- Trask, B.S. (2010). *Globalization and families. Accelerated systemic social change*. New York: Springer.

- Trask, B.S. (2014). *Women, work, and globalization: Challenges and opportunities..* New York: Routledge.
- Urry, J. (2007). *Mobilities*. Cambridge: Polity.
- UN. (2019). <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/goal-11/>
- UN DESA (<https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/>)
- UNDESA (2019). *World urbanization prospects. The 2018 revision*. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
- UNDESA. (2021). <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11>
- UNDP. (2009). *Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development*. United Nations Development Programme.
http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/269/hdr_2009_en_complete.pdf
- UNDP. (2020). COVID-19 Global gender response tracker. <https://data.undp.org/gendertracker/>
- UNFPA. (2018). Five reasons migration is a feminist issue. <https://www.unfpa.org/news/five-reasons-migration-feminist-issue>
- UNGEI. (2015). *Gender and EFA 2000 – 2015. Achievements and challenges*. United Nations Girls Education Initiative. UNESCO. Available at
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002348/234809E.pdf>
- UN Habitat. (2016). *Monitoring framework, SDG Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities*. Available at <https://unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/SDG-Goal%2011%20Monitoring%20Framework%202025-02-16.pdf>
- UNHCR. (2020). <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>
- UNICEF. (2018). <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-migration-and-displacement/displacement/#>
- UN Population. (2019). United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
https://population.un.org/wpp/Publications/Files/WPP2019_10KeyFindings.pdf
- UN Women (2017). *Making the SDGs count for women and girls with disabilities*. Available at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/6/issue-brief-making-the-sdgs-count-for-women-and-girls-with-disabilities>
- UN Women. (2019). *Progress of the World's Women 2019 - 2020: Families in a Changing World*. United Nations. New York. progress.unwomen.org

- Van den Bosch, M., & Ode Sang, Å. (2017). Urban natural environments as nature-based solutions for improved public health – A systematic review of reviews. *Environmental Research*, 158 (Supplement C), 373-384.
- Vlahov, D. & Galea, S. (2002). Urbanization, urbanicity, and health. *Journal of Urban Health. Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 79, S1 – S12.
- Vara, V. (2018). The family feud. *Foreign Policy*, 228, 32 – 38.
- Whitaker, S. (2019). Population, migration, and generations in urban neighborhoods. Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. DOI: 10.26509/frbc-ec-201908
- WHO and World Bank. (2011). *World report on disability*. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- WHO. (2012). *Health indicators of sustainable cities in the context of the Rio +20 conference on sustainable development*. Available at http://www.who.int/hia/green_economy/indicators_cities.pdf?ua=1
- World Bank. (2009). *World development report: Reshaping economic geography*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- World Bank. (2016). A tale of twin demographics: Youth in cities. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/jobs/tale-twin-demographics-youth-cities>
- World Bank. (2016). *Shockwave. Managing the impacts of climate change on poverty*. Washington, DC.
- World Bank. (2021). Recovery: COVID-19 crisis through a migration lens. Migration and Development Brief 35. World Bank – KNOMAD. .: World Bank. https://www.knomad.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/Migration_Brief%2035_1.pdf
- World Bank. (2021). Remittance flows register robust 7.3 percent growth in 2021. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/11/17/remittance-flows-register-robust-7-3-percent-growth-in-2021>
- World Cities Report. (2020). *The value of sustainable urbanization*. Nairobi, Kenya. UN Habitat.
- World Economic Forum. (2017). *Which countries have the most immigrants?* <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/02/which-countries-have-the-most-immigrants/>