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Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

Division for Inclusive Social Development

Megatrends & Families:

Focus on Demographic Change,

Migration and Urbanization in North America

RECOMMENDATIONS

Urbanization

Standardize definitions related to urbanization, taking into account that 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 when formulating plans for sustainable urbanization.

Expand the training and incorporation of urban planners as urban planning needs to consider differing local contexts and trajectories.

Integrating a family lens, gender awareness, and disability knowledge in urban planning.

Include local planners as part of regional and national initiatives.

Create partnership between policy makers, transnational NGOs, and local planners that address the linkages between urban planning and social issues leading to more sustainable urban planning.

Create incentives for economic opportunities, mixed income and use development, and create linkages with transportation planning.
Prioritize long-term private-public partnerships for sustainable urbanization.

Promote more intensive land use. (Sometimes referred to as infill development, instead of allowing cities to spill over into wider and wider areas, create borders and incentives to use vacant housing stock in cities).

Invest in affordable housing and green; acknowledge and support the link between urbanization, physical and mental health, and access to nature.

Incentivize stronger rental markets for urban dwellers.

Design and retrofit urban areas to be flexible use spaces.

Provide safe and easily accessible public spaces that are accessible to all residents of urban areas including vulnerable populations.

Prioritize family, gender, and disability issues, rights, and concerns through formal and informal efforts in urban planning.

Form partnerships with Indigenous scholars and communities to better understand how their traditional family practices are changing particularly considering increased urban residence and growing threats of climate change

Increase capacity for data collection on urbanization as reliable, accurate data allows for private and public investment in infrastructure, housing, and economic opportunities.

Migration

Continue to promote and support immigration to grow shrinking labour force due to the ageing population.

Promote broader national acceptance of ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic, and gender diversity and differences in migration policies.

Prioritize housing and other infrastructure such as clean water and sustainable transportation for immigrants.

Adopt policies that address both family reunification and labor shortage by uniting family members faster and providing a path for newcomers to support themselves upon their arrival.

Collaborate between governments in addressing the challenges in the reunification of transnational families.

Strengthen and streamline family reunification processes to reduce waiting times and bureaucratic hurdles.

Develop clear guidelines and resources to help families navigate the immigration system, including language support and culturally sensitive assistance.

Ensure access to quality education for immigrant children, including language support programs.

Develop community centers that provide after-school programs, mentoring, and tutoring services to help immigrant children excel academically.

Promote culturally competent healthcare services to address the unique health needs of immigrant families.

Implement affordable housing policies to help immigrant families settle in urban areas.

Develop job training and placement programs that cater to immigrant skills and qualifications.

Create social support networks, including counseling and mental health services, to help immigrant families cope with the challenges of relocation.

Foster a culture of inclusion and diversity within urban communities, celebrating the contributions of immigrant families.

Develop public awareness campaigns that challenge stereotypes and

misconceptions about immigrant families, fostering a more inclusive urban environment.

Establish affordable and accessible childcare services to assist immigrant parents in balancing work and family responsibilities.

Allow families to remain intact for better relational wellbeing by recognizing the diversity of family forms for a more inclusive immigration policy.

Recognize the importance of family support systems across all policies that have an explicit or implicit impact on families.

Collect data on the unique needs and challenges faced by immigrant families to inform evidence-based policymaking.

Collect high quality data to monitor stability and change in family wellbeing for different immigrant and identity groups.

Immigrant Latino families

Facilitate policies and programs at the local, state, and national level that would create an environment where undocumented Latino adults would feel safe and comfortable to be able to live their daily lives and not live in the shadows.

Create an environment where school districts can work with each other to help develop genuine Latino family, school, and community partnerships at the local and state levels to help encourage positive learning environments and educational achievement for Latino children and youth.

Develop local, state, and national policies and programs that would enhance financial opportunities including scholarships, other forms of financial aids and employment opportunities that help offset the 'brechas' (gaps) that young undocumented Latino youth have been forced to navigate as they pursue higher education and post-graduation employment.

Intergenerational issues

Encourage local governments, community groups, fraternal organizations, schools, retirement communities, and places of worship to adopt "age integration as a core value."

Promote intergenerational initiatives in local communities. Identify community needs and consider ways in which people of all ages might unite to meet the challenge.

Foster neighborliness and a greater sense of community by developing meaningful community rituals and traditions that people of all ages can enjoy together.

Support greater opportunities for cogeneration, uniting older and younger generations in solving problems and bridging divides.

Facilitate partnerships between intergenerational program practitioners and researchers/evaluators to measure participant outcomes and program effectiveness.

Data collection

Design national and international data governance frameworks to promote the development of effective data coordination mechanisms to ensure societal data needs assessments, data gathering and use while respecting data privacy and ethics.

As part of the enhancement in both administrative and survey data collection pipelines, Develop new protection strategies in response to increased privacy threats resulting from aggregation of multiple sources.

As data availability and integration are key in making informed decision at the local level; ensure that national statistics also include mechanisms for generation of disaggregated regional data.

Ensure data integration, as part of a coordinated strategy, to prevent data overlap and gaps, and promote cost effective and sustainable data.

Engage governmental and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia, and the civil society in building data pathways that enable each partner in achieving their specific mandates.

General

Apply a more inclusive definition of family to help reduce policy inconsistencies among families who may define family differently than how it is enacted in policy.

Focus on improving families' material wellbeing as a starting point.

Support women's labour force participation with accessible, affordable, and quality childcare.

Develop better measures of family and family support beyond the households and analyse the needs and challenges of same-gender and gender diverse households.

Take a holistic approach by establishing a standing interagency that integrates, coordinates, and synchronizes the functioning and collaborating between federal agencies and with non-governmental organizations.

Address societal challenges to benefit all vulnerable groups, e.g., housing affordability crisis, health care system.