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The Role of Families and Family Policies in Achieving Inclusive Societies. Focus on Sustainable Development Goals 16 & 11:

Ensuring Social Rights through Legal Frameworks, Participation, Housing, and Public Green Spaces

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Executive Summary

The implementation, success, and sustainability of SDGs 16 and 11 are greatly dependent on a family focused approach that takes into consideration the contexts within which decisions about laws, policies, and programmes are made. Isolated approaches that target individuals without consideration of the larger family environments in which they are embedded are destined to fail. It is thus, imperative that families in all their various forms, need to be recognized, targeted, strengthened, and supported.

SDG16 promoting peaceful and inclusive societies relies on families to create and raise the next generation of peaceful, stable citizens and productive workers. Encouraging positive child and youth development is a key component of this goal, as well as stabilizing family environments through strengthening family relationships and providing basic financial stability. The eradication of poverty is key to decreasing stressors on families.

SDG16.3 promoting the rule of law lays the foundation for peace. Regulatory frameworks that are based on a human rights approach, promote participation, take into account gender equality and protect marginalized groups. States have an obligation under the international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights that was adapted in 1966 to care for the social and economic welfare of their citizens. Children specifically have a legal right to family life.

SDG16.9 providing legal identity for all is a fundamental aspect of human rights. Proportionally, women and marginalized groups are less likely to have a legal identity and face more and higher barriers. Lack of legal identity hinders the ability to exercise civil and political rights and secure socio-economic benefits from the state. The displacement of over 65 million people as of the end of 2016 also creates serious challenges with respect to access to legal identities.

SDG 11.1 ensuring access for all to adequate safe and adequate housing and services is foundational for family life: having a decent home allows members to access education, health, and employment opportunities. Specifically, low-income families are affected by sub-standard housing. States need to regulate the runaway housing markets that are dominating the global rental and homeownership scene. Moreover, contemporary experiments in multigenerational living promise to re-center family life and are leading to successful outcomes for youth and the elderly.

SDG 11.3 enhancing participatory urbanization can only occur if representation from multiple constituencies throughout society work together. Inclusive societies take into account the special needs of women, and vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Inclusion leads to the design of more functional urban spaces.

SDG11.7 providing access to safe and inclusive green spaces is key for encouraging well-being. Recent research indicates that being able to access nature facilitates physical and mental health and connectedness to family, friends and home.

The 2030 Agenda is based on integration and an emphasis on a global compact focusing on universal participation, shared responsibility, and improved accountability. Sustainable development can only be carried out through a focus on families combined with participatory leadership, adherence to the rule of law, and a stronger role advocating for their citizens by states. Joint efforts by transnational, national, and local stakeholders will be the key to success.

The Role of Families and Family Policies in Achieving Inclusive Societies. Focus on Sustainable Development Goals 16 & 11:
Ensuring Social Rights through Legal Frameworks, Participation, Housing, and Public Green Spaces

A global milestone was accomplished in September 2015 when the new development agenda, *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* was adopted by all the United Nations Member States. The Sustainable Development Goals or the SDGs as they are commonly referred to, are unique because they encompass goals and challenges that, in contrast to previous initiatives, *all* countries need to meet. The primary focus of the SDGs is on *ensuring and enhancing the wellbeing* of each member of the global population. Specifically, the Agenda prioritises in a general sense, economic development, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion. Implied is that these are all interrelated goals and that success is attained only when each of the objectives is met. The SDGs build on the very foundation of the philosophical underpinnings of the United Nations: that *all* individuals have a right to life's basic necessities including attaining their *social* rights as well. A foundational aspect of the Agenda is that it stresses the importance of establishing, adjusting, and supporting policies that are appropriate within specific national and cultural contexts, in order to be sustainable (United Nations General Assembly, 2016).

While a fundamental emphasis of the 2030 agenda focuses on the need for strengthening the social aspects of development, the importance of the role of families in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals is overlooked in most of the 17 goals and the 169 targets. Family is only mentioned in relation to family planning, to highlight assistance to family farmers and to promote shared responsibility within the household. However, it is families that are central to the realization and sustainability of each of the SDGs including the following that are the focus of this report:

- SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

    o 16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

    o 16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.

- SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

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

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

- o 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.

The realization of each of the SDGs, the ones highlighted in this report, as well as the others included in the 2030 Agenda, is contingent on careful planning and focused, integrated efforts. Specifically, attention on the development of healthy, engaged children who become productive, committed citizens of their societies and the inclusion of vulnerable populations in participation and implementation are key. Sustainability is one of the primary foci of the SDGs – and thus, healthy, well-adjusted children and social integration are foundational to this goal.

The primary argument in this paper is that the implementation and sustainability of every one of the SDGs can only occur through the recognition of the critical role that families play in individual and community life. Accordingly, families in all their various forms, need to be recognized, targeted, strengthened, and supported. The success of the SDGs is *dependent* on a family focused approach that takes into consideration the contexts within which decisions about laws, policies, and programmes are made. The implementation and successful realization of the goals cannot take place through isolated approaches that target individuals without consideration of the larger environments in which they are embedded.

The Importance of a Family Focus to the Success of the SDGs

A fundamental challenge to implementing Agenda 2030 and the SDGs is that an intensive, specifically Western focus and debate in recent years on the diverse and changing forms of families, has led to a programmatic and academic lack of focus on the critical role that families play in the lives of individuals, and thus, in the implementation of policies and programmes in Western and non-Western contexts (Trask, 2010; Trask, 2015). Different social, cultural, and economic contexts will give rise to varied family forms. Despite this variation, the fundamental obligations, rights and duties of how closely related individuals are bound to one another, remain, and must be adequately supported in order to contribute to the development of children and the stabilization of adult personalities (Baumrind, 2005; Bogenschneider, 2014). Furthermore, shrinking state support for social services around the world is creating an environment in which families are more, not less important to the health and well-being of individuals, especially children, those who are ill, have disabilities as well as older persons.

Family Functions. In a classic report on family support, Ooms (1996) highlighted the fact that it is impossible to create social change without a clear-cut family focus. She identified four functions of families that are relevant to the successful implementation of social agendas, policies, and programmes: 1. Families provide individuals through membership, a sense of personal and social identity. Families give a form of meaning to most people's lives and a sense of belonging that often extends to their communities as well. 2. Families are the unit of basic

economic support for their members and for society. They provide shelter, food and clothing for their dependents. 3. Families around the world continue to be the most efficient unit for rearing and nurturing children (despite some failed experiments to the contrary historically). They promote the well-being, health, education and safety for children and are the primary resource in early life for social status and morals and values. 4. Families provide care for those vulnerable individuals that cannot live on their own such as the disabled, the terminally ill, and the frail elderly (Ooms, 1996, p. 6). These foundational aspects of families are the underpinning of all societies and provide the starting point on which all other policies and programmes need to be built.

The Importance of an Ecological Approach. Over the last several decades social science approaches that focus on the implementation of social policies and programmes have increasing adopted what is referred to as an ecological or systems approach. Based on the work of Urie Bronfenbrenner (1986), this approach emphasizes that individuals do not exist in a vacuum. Instead, they live, work and are embedded in a variety of contexts that shape their life experiences and their decision-making capabilities. Every individual simultaneously interacts within various systems, with each system affecting the others. The most critical system to which an individual belongs is the family (Bogenschneider, 1996; Bogenschneider et al., 2012; Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Fundamental concepts about gender relationships, about values, about the distribution of resources and about the delineation of tasks are initially realized in family contexts (Trask, 2010). These decisions, in turn, affect the relationship that individuals have with their larger school, work, and community environments.

Children and Families. Social scientific and cross-cultural empirical evidence unilaterally indicate that family and community environments are the primary initial influence on children and adolescents. Strong, supportive family environments allow children to develop their full potential (Woden, 2016). In order for children to flourish and become productive, committed citizens of a society they need to grow up in an environment that is "responsive, emotionally supportive, and developmentally stimulating and appropriate, with opportunities for play and exploration and protection from adversities" (Black et al. 2017, p. 3). By the time they are school- age they need to be: healthy, have adequate nutrition, securely attached to caregivers, able to interact in a positive manner with family members, friends and teachers, able to communicate in their native language and be ready to learn (Naudeau et al., 2011). Children who grow up in extreme poverty, who are refugees, who do not have legal identities or are part of families without legal identities, are much less likely to achieve these important markers than children who grow up in families with more resources who are securely embedded in stable environments (Woden, 2016).

The Issue of Poverty. When children grow up in extreme poverty and experience a variety of deprivations, they are much less likely to become productive, healthy citizens with the necessary skills to take care of themselves. A problematic aspect to discussing children and families in poverty is that poverty is often defined purely in monetary terms. However, the extremely poor are often faced with multiple disadvantages that extend to their lack of understanding and ability to access their rights. In a classic article, Wresinski described the conditions of extreme poverty as the following:

"A lack of basic security is the absence of one or more factors that enable individuals and families to assume basic responsibilities and to enjoy fundamental rights. Such a situation may become more extended and lead to more serious and permanent consequences. Extreme poverty results when the lack of basic security simultaneously affects several aspects of people's lives, when it is prolonged, and when it severely compromises people's chances of regaining their rights and of reassuming their responsibilities in the foreseeable future" (1987, p. 6, quoted in Wodon, 2016).

Wresinski's definition of poverty is important for this discussion because it highlights the fact that lacking basic securities can have a cumulative effect on an individual's life and that this insecurity, which is usually a family insecurity, can last over an extensive period of time. Moreover, deprivation is often associated with the inability to exercise fundamental rights making the realization of the SDGs for the most vulnerable members of their respective societies a true challenge.

Implementing the SDGs Through Family Focused Approaches. Poverty and inequality lie at the heart of implementing the SDGs for families across the globe. Growing economic disparities have widened the gap between families within and between societies. Development efforts can only succeed if they take into account the protection and promotion of the rights of vulnerable populations such as the extremely poor, children, persons with disabilities, and older persons, as well as the promotion of equality between women and men in families and communities. These populations cannot and should not be addressed in isolation. It is their membership as part of family groups that defines critical aspects of their experiences.

Historically, families have always been the primary group to socialize children and to teach and transmit values. However, the changes brought on through globalization have impacted families world-wide. Particularly in Western societies, the "traditional" family composed of a married couple with children where the woman's primary role is as caregiver and homemaker and the man as provider and father, has weakened as an institution and has been replaced by "families of choice." These families of choice include cohabiting partners, voluntarily childless families single parent households, and step-families among others. These transformations are often attributed to increased secularization, the growth of individualism with an emphasis on self-fulfillment, new forms of reproductive technologies, and innovations in contraception. However, one serious consequence of these changes has been a politicized discourse about the role of family in society and specifically which norms now constitute the "right" or "acceptable" norms (Bogenschneider et al. 2012; Trask, 2010). The politicization of family has led to a fragmentation of scholarship on the various aspects of family life, as well as a decreased policy emphasis on the needs and supports for families.

We cannot speak of providing access to rights frameworks, a legal identity or housing, just by addressing individuals as isolated entities. That approach obscures the realities of people's lives: both the advantages and the challenges that are created through family membership. We need to understand how families cope with difficult conditions and carry out their familial responsibilities such as raising healthy children and the caretaking of other vulnerable members in the legal, social and economic contexts in which they exist. It is also imperative to understand which family behaviours need to be targeted in order to improve the conditions for all members.

Families also have agency: they need to be involved in the assessment and planning for their own needs depending on context.

As will be argued throughout this paper, the current focus on individuals instead of family groups is critically disadvantaging our most vulnerable members of society and makes the successful implementation of much of the SDGs a virtually unattainable goal. It is problematic that so many global, national and community-based policies and programmes disaggregate children from parents, women from men, and individuals with disabilities from their families. Instead of taking into account the holistic, synergistic relationships of the human experience, a focus that segregates individuals into categories has led to an abstract approach to dealing with social problems. By exclusively focusing on individuals or just aspects of individual's experiences (for instance, their disabilities), the ecological or the systemic piece - the interrelated aspect of human relationships is lost. As has been highlighted above, families are functioning, relational systems within communities (Bogenschneider et al. 2012; Ooms, 1996; Trask, 2010). Moreover, families are influenced by their context – and in a dynamic fashion, they influence their environments.

Only by shifting our unit of analysis away from individuals to families, can we begin to create an enabling legal and policy-based framework that moves towards gender equality, rights for vulnerable populations, and greater social equality for our global citizens. Policies that strengthen and support families reduce the risks that are brought about by poverty, dislocation, climate change, and crisis. However, we need to understand and incorporate into all of our work a systems perspective in order to design and implement *effective* policies and programmes. The SDGs were conceptualized as systemic, synergistic and interrelated – thus, they need to be implemented through an analogous approach. As Ooms (1996) states, "Systems thinking helps identify entry points that offer leverage for change" (p. 10). By targeting families, other linked systems can be accessed, making the successful realization of the various SDGs a more likely, concrete prospect. Strengthening family capital leads to improvements in the social and economic capital of individuals, and the well-being of individuals and communities is dependent on this process. Most importantly, it is specifically through a systemic, family focused approach that we can reach the most vulnerable, individuals world-wide and assist them in realizing their rights and full potential.

Part 1:

SDG16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
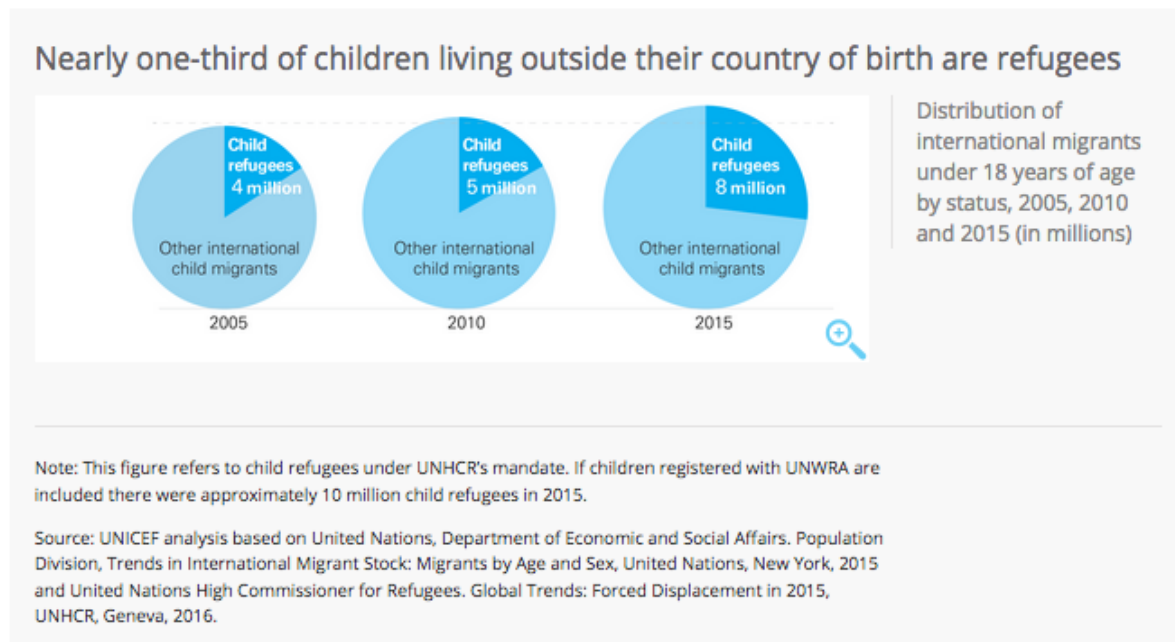
Families create and raise the next generation of citizens and productive workers, raise caring and committed citizens, make efficient investments to reach societal goals and provide an effective way of promoting positive child and youth development (Bogenschneider & Corbett, 2010). Empirical, longitudinal studies illustrate that when families are supported through appropriate policies, societies benefit through having a caring, committed group of citizens. Families are also the primary unit that promotes peace in society. For instance, Cole and Rutter (1993) suggested that when families create a "sociology of peace" in their family systems, these models are

transformative in national and international contexts of inequality and political violence. They highlight the notion that families can be helped in developing "the skills necessary to bring about a peaceful balance between the demands of the social, ecological, economic, and emotional/spiritual aspects of their existence" (p. 269). From this perspective, the interrelationship and interdependence of members of families are a micro-level reflection of the interdependence of people, states, and the global environment.
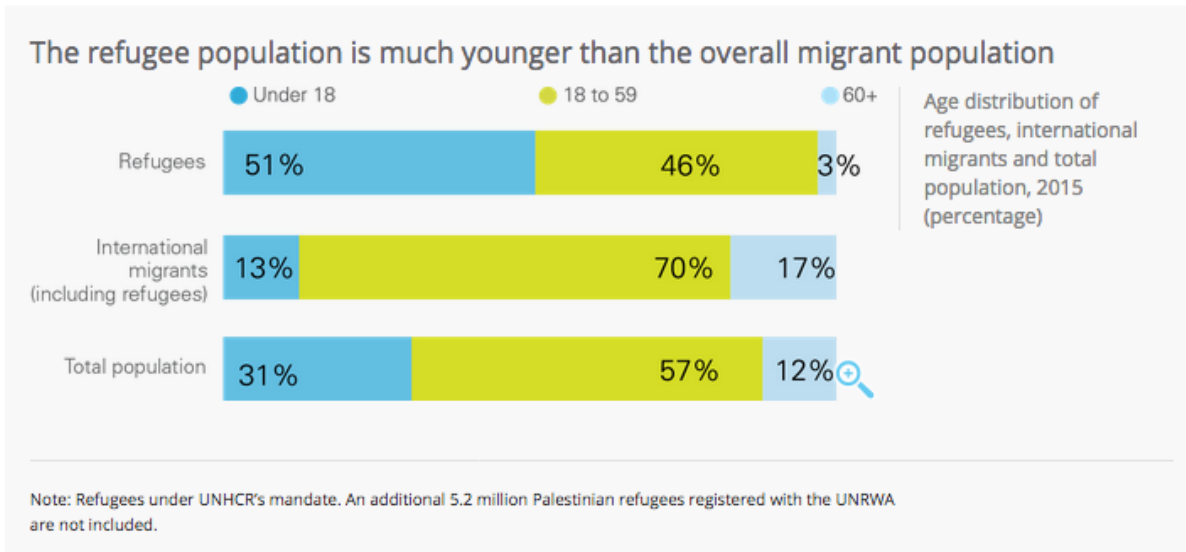
Empirical evidence suggests that when individuals are at peace with themselves, they are more likely to lead peaceful family lives. In other words, generally speaking, peaceful families are likely to have peaceful internal members (Cole & Rutter, 1993). As members of a family interact in a peaceful manner, this synergy is reflected to the outer world. Thus, a setting with peaceful families will likely be a peaceful environment. Building on this notion, peaceful communities with peaceful members leads to nonviolent nations who in turn pursue less conflictual relations, leading to a more peaceful world. These interconnected relationships amongst individuals, families, and larger social structures are key: families are the link between creating peace in individuals, peace in society, and peace between nations. When viewed from this perspective, families become the crucial mechanism and active agent in promoting and disseminating global peace (Cole & Rutter, 1993).

Families, Children and Political Violence

War, terrorism and violence have deleterious effects on families and children. 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

Distribution of international migrants under 18 years of age by status, 2005, 2010 and 2015 (in millions)

Child refugees 4 million / Other international child migrants — 2005

Child refugees 5 million / Other international child migrants — 2010

Child refugees 8 million / Other international child migrants — 2015

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.

The refugee population is much younger than the overall migrant population

● Under 18   ● 18 to 59   ● 60+ | Age distribution of refugees, international migrants and total population, 2015 (percentage)

Refugees: 51% | 46% | 3%

International migrants (including refugees): 13% | 70% | 17%

Total population: 31% | 57% | 12%

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

Source of Table: (UNICEF, 2018)

What these UNICEF tables indicate 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 even more at risk through forced migrations – both internally within their countries, and are often then also displaced to other places, cultures, and societies. UNICEF also estimates that children are the civilian group that accounts for the largest number of civilian deaths from landmines (UNICEF, 2013). These numbers suggest that families – and specifically – children are the definitive victims of wars and violence.

Families as Agents of Peace
While as the statistics above indicate political violence is a highly destructive force on families, throughout history, individuals and families have also worked to build more peaceful societies. Nonviolent movements for peace, social justice and human rights have been organized through a variety of social, religious and political groups, and have included men, women and children as participants (Boulding, 2000). While nonviolent movements are often associated publicly with great figures such as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, the success of their movements need to be understood as the grassroots collaboration of individuals, families, and communities. It is their contributions that have led to the transformation of taken for granted social norms and social policies. For instance, Boulding (2000) described how the anti-Vietnam movement became successful through the peaceful collaboration of individuals, families, and communities, which led to a successful political lobby against the war and ultimately the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam in 1975 (Boulding, 2000). Successful collective nonviolent social action serves as a reminder of the power and dynamism of the interaction effects of micro and macro-level forces. What happens at one level, for instance at the family and community level, can have a powerful effect on the macro-level such as on government and politics.

Families need to be recognized as active agents in the interplay of social, political, and economic forces (Bogenschneider et al., 2012; Trask, 2010). Thus, the relations, norms and values that are promoted within families are critical - and influence larger social and societal concerns. As was suggested above, peaceful families influence the social climate, and create more peaceful societies. Micro-level family influences and macro-level political and economic interconnections ultimately shape the dominant attitudes and belief systems of current and subsequent generations (Bengtson & Allen, 1993).

The Importance of Family Environments

The Role of Secure Attachment. Families are foundational in the initial socialization of children. When children develop secure attachment relationships in their families, they grow up to be more self-reliant and empathetic individuals. Studies of attachment relationships suggest that when securely attached, children later exhibit characteristics that promote peaceful societies; they are less hostile to peers, they tend to be involved in community affairs, and they exhibit social competence with respect to problem-solving. (Cigala et al. 2018; Englund et al. 2000;). Moreover, longitudinal studies indicate that children that have secure attachments early in life with their primary caregivers, are later on more likely to have strong romantic relationships, leading to more stable family lives.[1] Growing up in stable families creates environments where children develop positive cognitive, emotional, and social dispositions (Amato, 2005). Thus, a focus on supporting early childhood and adolescent relationships in families is a key aspect of creating stable, peaceful adults (Wodon, 2016).

The Significance of the Transmission of Values in Families. A relatively large and significant literature has empirically illustrated the role that families play in the transmission of values. Research indicates that moral development specifically influences individuals' and families' sensitivity to war, violence, and terrorism in local and global settings. Since initial socialization occurs in families, values, attitudes and roles are initially associated with parents who are usually the primary caregivers of children (Baumrind, 2005). For instance, according to Piaget (1970), parents model their values and beliefs to their children who then internalize those qualities. Social experiences become part of an individual's knowledge bank and contribute to a sense of self and belonging to the larger society (Kucznski, Marshall, & Schell, 1997).

More recently, a view of children as active agents in the creation of knowledge has taken greater hold. For instance, more contemporary theorists posit that parents and children all partake in the value transmission process (Kucznski, Marsahll, & Schell, 1997; Marks & Dollahite, 2011). This leads us to understand that both parents and children actively construct and reformulate values related to war and peace over time. In other words, parents and children together formulate a stance (at least initially) towards the state of their communities and nation. Parents may serve as the initial gatekeepers and purveyors of information, but children are also influenced these days by media and other cultural stimuli (Gergen, 1991). Thus, studies indicate that positive parenting techniques play a critical role in how children, and later on adolescents, internalize and externalize values and behaviors (Snider, Clements & Vazsonyi, 2004). Research on ethnic

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[1] Until recently most research on secure attachment focused on the mother-child relationship. There is now a move underway to study attachment between very young children and fathers as well as with other caregivers such as in larger family and childcare settings. See Bretherton (2010) for a review.

socialization for example has found that family context is critical in predicting youths' cultural orientation. Specifically, family values are mediated by families' socialization practices (Umana-Taylor, Alfaro, Bamaca, & Guimond, 2009). Thus, supports for how families socialize their children towards having a peaceful orientation in life is critical.

The Role of Gender. Family environments are the primary arena for gender socialization and gender role acquisition. Yet too often, girls and women are spoken of in isolation with little focus on the role that parents, siblings, and extended families play in "practicing" gender and instituting cultural norms around gender. Gender equality and empowerment are intimately intertwined with family and cultural issues. Girls and women do not live, and are not socialized, in a vacuum. Instead, decisions about every aspect of their lives are embedded in family relationships.

Empirical research indicates that it is the decisions made in families that determine many of the positive or negative trajectories of women's lives (Plan UK, 2015). Especially in the patriarchal settings that are still so prevalent around the world, most critical decisions for girls and women (such as when to marry, when to bear children, if they may study or if they can work outside of the home) are made by the men in their lives; their fathers, brothers, and husbands. These decisions can even include the types of nutrition girls and women receive, and if they can access health care. For millions of girls and women, particularly in the developing world, Western gender-related concerns such as the division of labor in families, patriarchal norms, or the struggle for self-realization and autonomy, are not the primary foci of their lives, nor are these issues that they necessarily identify with (Plan UK, 2015; Trask, 2014).

Despite world-wide developments in girls' and women's educational and employment opportunities, these have not translated into gains for them with respect to economic participation or empowerment everywhere (Plan UK, 2015). Without addressing the relationships of men and women in families and the cultural norms and behaviors that so often influence these processes, we cannot make progress on the goals of gender equality and empowerment, and subsequently the various Sustainable Development Goals that are closely interrelated with these concepts.

Equality between women and men has been a doctrine that has been fundamental to international law since the adoption of the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human* Rights (United Nations, 1958) and gender equality has been foundational to an international discussion on women's rights since the 1975 – 1985 UN Decade for Women. Although these initiatives and a specific Millennium Development focus on gender equality and gender mainstreaming, progress in this arena has been slow. The reasons for this lack of progress in Western and non-Western regions differ, and vary within societies.

There are a number of explanations why global gender parity has not been achieved despite significant efforts in this arena. Regional and cultural contexts play a critical role. For instance, in Sub-Saharan Africa, early marriage and early motherhood continue to disadvantage girls and women. In other parts of the world such as the Middle East, North African and South Asia, the cultural favoring of boys in families, leads to continued greater investments in their education (Plan UK, 2015). In many areas a strictly gendered division of household labor disadvantages young women who due to familial obligations are unable to access training and occupational

opportunities. Girls are often perceived as having lesser income-generating capabilities and may even incur cost to the family due to the expenses associated with their marriages (Hallman & Roca, 2007; Plan UK, 2015). This is particularly the case among lower-income families and / or rural families in non-Western societies. Depending on cultural context, families may also believe that it is more prudent to invest in boys who are seen as providing a form of old age insurance to their ageing parents one day. Achieving gender equality is also hampered by the notion that this ideology is often perceived in non-Western contexts as part of the neo-liberal economic package that forces countries to emulate Western style models of contemporary life. Thus, it is not uncommon for local responses to reject initiatives that empower girls and women as these are based on the assumption that they are part of a larger Western style of cultural domination (Freeman, 2001; Plan UK, 2015).

Analyses indicate that the most frequently cited obstacles to implementing policies are related to the low status of girls and women and the limited empowerment and participation of women is based on prevailing local customs, beliefs and practices (UNFPA, 2014). From this slow progress, we can understand that gender equality and empowerment initiatives need to be understood as embedded in widely disparate economic and cultural contexts, and the success of the new SDGs is thus, dependent on incorporating gender issues in families and communities into their implementation. Moreover, a critical aspect of success is related to the targeting of boys and men. As Connell (2005) states, "Gender inequalities are embedded in a multidimensional structure of relationships between women and men, which, as the modern sociology of gender shows, operates at every level of human experience, from economic arrangements, culture, and the state to interpersonal relationships and individual emotions" (p. 1801). In many contexts, boys and men remain the gatekeepers for implementing gender equality. Thus, the family context is a crucial target for recognizing and targeting gender inequalities and creating change.

The Role of Family Economics. An important component of stability is economics. A wide-range of studies indicate that the stressors caused by growing up in poverty have long range effects on child and youth development. Thus, it is imperative for states to create family policies that allow for families to function effectively. Families carry out unique functions that cannot be replicated by other social groups with respect to socialization and caretaking. When families are faced with stressful conditions such as extreme poverty, the lack of health insurance, poor childcare and schools or political violence, they are unable to perform their functions in a successful manner. Creating and implementing policies and programmes that strengthen and support families is therefore imperative. When children grow up in families characterized by supportive social relationships and basic financial stability, they in turn become caring, committed citizens that help create more just, peaceful societies (Bogenschneider, 2014).

Families and Societal Inequality. Across the socio-economic spectrum, parents need to be supported while raising their children in order to ensure their health, well-being, and safety. Central to this concept is the recognition of inequality within and between societies. Not all families face the same challenges nor do they have the same supports. This creates challenges for implementing policies and programmes that support the well-being of children and families. Epidemiologists Wilkinson and Pickett argue convincingly that from an international perspective that there is a very strong correlation between bad health, social problems, and inequality (2009).

Interestingly, they point out that differences in income between countries are less critical to well-being than inequalities within societies.

Wilkinson and Pickett indicate that trust between members of a society is much higher when income differentials are less. They highlight through their data that in the European context, people trust each other more in the Scandinavian countries and less in unequal countries such the United Kingdom and Portugal. (2009). They indicate that when there is greater inequality, individuals feel undervalued and less worthwhile. Drawing on the sociological literature they point to research that indicates that greater inequality leads to greater differences between individuals and families with respect to social class and social position. As social class and social position become increasingly important, those at the lower end of the spectrum tend to suffer from greater anxiety and worry about their access to resources.   This increased anxiety is closely related to a lack of trust in institutions such as government and the market, and makes forging relationships between families and other societal entities increasingly complex.

Youth and Families. A major concern in the coming years is also the growing population of adolescents in the world. Sustainability is dependent in large part on the next generation – how it is being raised, what options these young people will have and which challenges they will confront. It is this new generation that will live with the effects of changes to legal frameworks, climate change and environmental deterioration, and the accompanying risks to well-being and housing shortages (Heckman, 2006). How youth are supported in their healthy development is a critical aspect of attaining the Sustainable Development Goals. Raising healthy, well-adjusted youth who are aware of their capabilities and able to access opportunities is key to the sustainability of families and to our world. Family sustainability, maintaining and strengthening relationships between family members and creating a sense of unity, is a vital aspect of societies and key to creating a more peaceful world.

According to a recent UN report, there are more young people alive today between the ages of 10 and 24 than ever before in the history of human beings (UNFPA, 2014). Our current global population is estimated at about 7.4 billion, out of which 1.8 billion are young people.
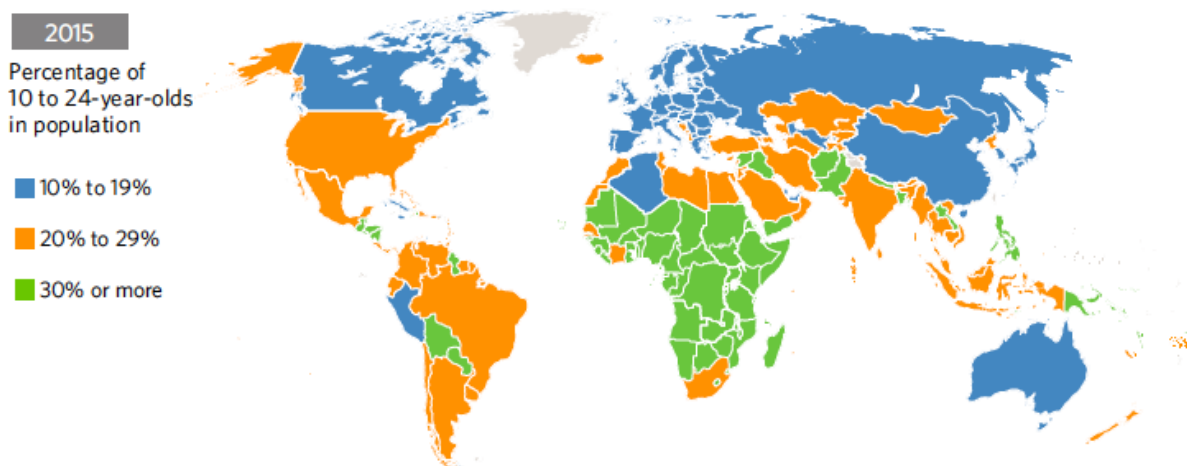
Source of Figure: (UNFPA, 2014 p. 4)

This staggering figure is raising concerns about the sustainability of our current educational systems, providing adequate training opportunities for young people, and concerns about their incorporation into the paid labor force. Every year, approximately 120 million youth reach working age (UNFPA, 2014). In order for such large numbers to have a positive effect on their respective societies, they need to be meaningfully employed and they need to be integrated into the civic life of their societies (Heckman, 2006). Particularly in low-income countries where there is a lack of opportunities for young people, this large number of youth forecast a difficult future unless this issue is addressed directly. We are already seeing some ripple effects of youth unemployment with social unrest in various places in the world, and migration from low-income contexts to high-income places (UNFPA, 2014; Waldfogel, 2010) straining specifically the social services and educational parts of current welfare systems.

Often times, young people in low-income contexts are faced with multiple, interrelated problems: poverty is rampant, they lack access to adequate health care and schooling, and there are very few if any job opportunities (Waldfogel, 2010). Youth underemployment and unemployment has a strong connection with family issues: without economic means, most young people cannot marry and create stable families and this has the potential to lead to great social unrest. Moreover, through communication technologies and social media, young people today are extremely aware of the divides within and among societies. The experiences of great inequality combined with the perceived and real lack of opportunities are dangerous as they tend to provide a foundation for political and social unrest (Word Bank, 2006).

Globalization and Families. Globalization, defined as rapidly increasing interrelated movements of capital, knowledge and people, is related to profound changes for individuals and families around the world. Jobs and whole occupational sectors have been eliminated or moved to other parts of the globe as part of the cost cutting practices associated primarily with the power of transnational corporations. This process has had significant economic impacts on families, especially at the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum in most societies. Moreover, as communication and information technologies change the ways that individuals connect, access information, and interact with each other, perceptions of poverty, inequality, citizenship and life chances are transforming simultaneously.

In the face of growing uncertainty caused specifically through globalization, individuals are increasingly faced with vulnerable and uncertain economic futures. As is suggested above, this particularly impacts youth and young adults. When young people cannot find steady employment, they are unable or less willing to form long-term relationships and enter into parenthood (Mills, Blossfeld & Klijzing, 2005). Globalization has had other serious effects as well. Specifically, it has led to the breakdown of labor unions and other protections for employees who were the economic providers in their families. Economic uncertainty destabilizes families and leads to life course decisions that may have deleterious effects for family members.

Growing uncertainty in the economic sphere coupled with more and more blurred family and life course options, leads to individuals to being less certain about which choices will lead them down the most successful path. For many people it is increasingly unclear when they should choose to enter employment, a partnership, or have children, and which constellation of those choices will be most beneficial to them. This stands in contrast to even just twenty or thirty years

ago, when in most parts of the world, a more prescribed life course provided a blue print for when to finish school, gain employment, enter into a long-term partnership, and have children (Mills, Blossfeld, & Klijzing, 2005). A large body of research indicates that young people in particular postpone entry into marriage and parenthood when they are in economically unstable positions. This is particularly the case in low- and middle-income societies where job chances for many young people are increasingly bleak. Fertility is also affected by these trends. For instance, women will postpone childbearing if they are faced with the need to acquire education and skills to attain employment in the paid labor force (OECD, 2011).

When state policies address these family related issues, the response is quick and leads to economic gains. For instance, in the north European countries, relatively new social welfare policies that allow women to reconcile family obligations with child bearing have had a strong influence on upward fertility trends (OECD, 2011). The Republic of Korea provides another example where explicit family policies have re-directed family trends. Beginning in the mid 2000s, the Government instituted new work-family policies aimed at assisting working families with young children balance labor force responsibilities and family caregiving through multiple leave options and child care support. Also, the introduction of the Framework Act on Healthy Families redirected local governments to deliver family services through family support centers. These efforts to strengthen and support families have begun to elevate fertility levels and have had economic benefits through better employee retention and less turnover due to illness (Chin, Lee, & Sung, 2012).

Recommendations
The parenting literature provides a plethora of information for how to strengthen communication in families and resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner. An expansion of Family Life Education programmes that help educate parents about raising their children in a healthful manner in culturally specific environments assists in spreading a culture of peace and raising stable, well-adjusted children. For instance, currently, there are programmes underway in China that help human services professionals understand that taking a more intentional, family-focused approach leads to more effective outcomes (Cassidy, 2016). Singapore, Taiwan and Canada have also increased their support for Family Life Education programmes with significant success (Darling & Turkki, 2009). One impressive example is found in Singapore where the Ministry of Social and Family Development dedicated $40 million in 2013 to cultivate a pro-family environment (MCYS, 2016; MSF, 2017).

University programmes and research centers world-wide, in sociology, psychology, family studies and related fields need to be supported in establishing programmes that focus specifically on improving family relationships and early childhood and adolescent development. These findings need to be disseminated to policy makers and more general audiences. For instance, in Korea universities have expanded their online curricular content on child development in the form of generally available television channels, online venues and apps that are available for download (Taguma, Litjens, Kim & Makowiecki, 2012; Kim, 2018). Parenting materials and relationship guidance should also be disseminated in a similar manner through appropriate state and educational venues. Contemporary technologies provide underutilized mechanisms for the distribution of appropriate family related academic materials.

Combating gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices is a key feature to creating more peaceful societies. Discriminatory social institutions impede girls and women's life trajectories and affect their well-being and encourage boys and men not to treat women with respect. Discrimination affects key empowerment arenas such as family life, health, education, and employment. A crucial step is eliminating discriminatory laws and practices and discriminatory attitudes and norms in areas such as early marriage, nutrition, and domestic and caretaking responsibilities. Unequal power relations disadvantage girls and women and restrict them from equally accessing information and resources that could improve their health, well-being, and life opportunities. Gender mainstreaming makes gender equality a fundamental concept that is embedded in the structures and practices of society, institutions and the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes.

An important step forward would be to increase the transnational capacity of appropriate organizations. This could be accomplished through public and private donations that would be used for developing local-global partnerships that are gender sensitive and gender responsive. These collaborations can strengthen reporting mechanisms for victims of sexual abuse and domestic violence. For instance, the UNDP has worked in Sri Lanka in partnership with various districts to improve referral mechanisms, service provision, case management, and psychological support for victims (UNDP, 2016). In Bosnia-Herzegovina the introduction of mobile legal aid units assists women and children fleeing from violence. These units provide free legal aid and put women and children in touch with social workers and programmes that can provide the medical, mental health and educational services that they may need (UNDP, 2016).

Health services need to be coordinated with educational facilities in order to support families to deliver care and facilitate early childhood and positive youth development. The health care system needs to expand its vision of health from disease prevention to include the promotion of nurturing care of young children in families in particular (Richter et al., 2017). Well-being encompasses physical and mental health. Increased interaction and centralized services between entities that focus on both is critical for families.

States need to address the issue of youth training and employment specifically. Digital media and online platforms that reach young women and men, including those that are socially excluded or live under other harsh conditions, are a relatively cost-effective mechanism and can assist in bridging the divides that currently exist between young people living in rural and urban areas.

Progress towards the institution of universal protection systems needs to be promoted and sustained in order to ensure that the most vulnerable members of their respective societies are targeted. Families and communities that live in areas that are conflict zones or 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. These include cash and in-kind transfers and subsidies. Cash transfers have proven to be a successful mechanism to reach vulnerable families. Evidence from Latin America indicates that targeting children in poor families who are most in need is an effective method for raising school attendance and attainment in schools (Baulch, 2011). Being able to stay in school increases youth opportunities and stabilizes family life.

16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all

The rule of law is foundational to the relationship between individuals, families and states: it is the fundamental social contract between a government and its citizens. The rule of law encompasses both substantive justice and procedural fairness: it promotes equality and fair treatment by safeguarding and ensuring non-discriminatory practices, equal opportunity and access to resources and services necessary for well-being.

The 2030 Agenda highlights the fact that human rights, peace and security and development are closely intertwined and reinforce one another. They lay the foundation for peace. Sustainable Development Goal 16 – to promote peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, emphasizes that individuals have the opportunity to influence the decisions that affect themselves, their families and their communities (UNDP, 2016). This human rights approach has multiple facets including the promotion of participation in the creation and implementation of laws, policies, and procedures that take into account gender equality and draw attention also to the rights of marginalized groups. However, delineating the relationship between law and family life is complex. There exists an inherent tension between legal frameworks that protect individuals and support their wellbeing (a basic function of states), and the intrusion of states into what are understood as personal relationships. However, specifically in the OECD states, supporting and strengthening families has become a primary goal, that is to be accomplished through regulatory frameworks (OECD, 2011).

Families under the Law
Intertwined with an emphasis on policies and laws that strengthen and support families, are normative arguments about which types of families should be promoted and protected, and the extent to which a diversity of family forms is beneficial or detrimental to societies. (Farrugia, 2013). The politicized arguments about family types aside, courts around the world acknowledge the fundamental rights of children to family life which includes duties and obligations that are not necessarily dissolved through the divorce or separation of parents.[2] Farrugia (2013) pointed out for instance, that the European Court of Justice has determined that children have the right to enjoy the company of their parents, that this right extends to children born in and outside of formal unions, and that they have inheritance rights. There is a financial aspect to this determination: when family members are divorced from the need to provide for certain individuals, those individuals may fall under the purview of the state. Thus, the state needs to be involved in the complex determination of who is a family member and what the obligations of individuals are to each other.

Acknowledging and supporting the rights of women is also today part of the legal and regulatory structures of most states. In the MDG's and SDGs frameworks gender equality is understood as a fundamental human right and global gender targets are regularly incorporated into the political

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[2] The rights of children to family life are clearly delineated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989 and ratified by all states except for the U.S. In fact, already in the preamble it states, "Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community."

agendas of most countries around the world. Gender targets allow nations to identify the scale and effectiveness of their programmes, and to measure the variety of factors that are associated with gender inequality. Despite legal frameworks that support gender equality and transnational movements and policies that promote gender mainstreaming, most countries have not come close to realizing these ideals in practice. In 2013 the ICPD (International Conference on Population and Development) called on the UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) to conduct a global review of progress on gender equality. For this review the UNFPA surveyed 176 Member States and seven territories. The conclusion of this extensive review illustrated that these goals have not been attained: for instance, nine tenths of the countries had a commitment to ensuring equal access to sexual and reproductive health, and yet, less than one fourth reported achieving their targets (UNFPA, 2014). The most frequently cited obstacles to implementing policies were related to the dominance of local customs, beliefs and practices that condoned the low status of girls and women. Girls and women's limited empowerment is closely related to these factors.

States are also embroiled in the complexities of having to identify which families are "strong" and which ones need strengthening. Farrugia (2013) suggested that this means that families need to be placed into some type of a classification framework. Those families that need assistance are then required to be given resources or they are to be reworked in some form. For instance, if adult caregivers are unable to provide for their children, the state may have to intervene and take the children into its own custody. Gillies (2005) pointed out that this is a highly controversial subject and may lead to the state having to highlight specific parenting practices that it wants to promote. From a larger perspective, this is an example of where family and the rule of law intersect: the state attempts to promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice for all including its most vulnerable members, young children.

It is critical to recognize however, that states do make judgments about who is "deserving" and why with respect to family life. As was mentioned above, states define (differentially depending on a multitude of factors including cultural context, politics, social agendas, etc.) which families are in need of "strengthening" and then provide benefits. These benefits are often tied to specific behaviors. For instance, since 1996 in the United States, individuals with children who live under the poverty line and who apply for state assistance, must show on a continuous basis that they are searching for work. The tie between a paid job and being a "good" parent is thus, defined at least partially, by the amount of effort individuals exert outside of their family life. In the European context, the relationship between the state and families differs somewhat. Individuals who are capable of supporting themselves and their dependents are expected to do so, while those who need assistance can rely on state support for their basic needs. In this context, a strong family is seen as a state responsibility and is also a social and economic right (Farrugia, 2013).

Protection under the Law as a Human Right
Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) all individuals, and especially the most vulnerable (children, women, persons with disabilities, the poor) have the right to protection and well-being. Thus, states have actually become more accountable for ensuring that all of their citizens receive adequate supports. The extent to which this occurs on the ground so to speak, is quite varied depending on a multitude of factors. Nevertheless, there is growing awareness that a state's responsibility to its citizens has a human right's component. Once states

agree to observe or adhere to certain legal frameworks (such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC), they then are held accountable. Conversely, individuals can also expect a basic level of treatment in relation to their basic rights. In practical terms, what this means is that since all states are subject to UDHR, citizens should be able to access a lifestyle that is basic and essential to their existence as a human being. Unfortunately, this knowledge about the international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights that was adopted in 1966 is often ignored or passed over. The reasons for this omission are varied and include a lack of resources by states as well as the reality that most states are not under direct legal scrutiny with respect to fulfilling these rights for all their citizens. However, in the European case most specifically, states *are* held accountable through a legal framework identified by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. Farrugia (2013) cited a number of cases where a state has been found guilty of violations with respect to the socio-economic conditions of a family. For instance, in one widely cited case, the Czech state was found guilty for not providing a home that could keep a family together. She cites Pieterse (2004) who argued that "whether we like it or not, socio-economic rights are as justiciable as civil and political rights" (p. 204 cited in Farrugia, 2013, p. 363).

A problematic aspect of this discussion is that in many countries, individuals and families, especially vulnerable populations, do not have access to legal frameworks (or even knowledge about these frameworks) unless they are in the paid labor force. In other scenarios, they may have benefits that they are unable to access. For instance, Mokomane, (2012) pointed out that in Africa, 39 heads of state adopted a social policy framework in 2009 that provides certain benefits (such as for maternity leave, old age, and disability) but only to those individuals who are in the formal paid labor force. Such a framework, however, excluded workers in the informal sector who accounted for 72 per cent of non-agricultural workers. In contrast, in the Republic of Korea, family solidarity is prized over individual rights and thus, is built into legal work-family contracts. When a child is born, for instance, the government offers childcare leave to employed parents with a wage replacement of 40 per cent. However, these benefits are usually not used because of cultural reasons (specifically men are discouraged from taking leaves) and for low-income individuals, such a reduction in salary is not a realistic option (Chin et al. 2012).

Contradictory Bodies of Law
Enforcing the rule of law to ensure due process and the fair distribution of resources for women and vulnerable populations is wrought with difficulties. The lack of laws and structures, inconsistent and uncoordinated policies, insufficient resources, and inadequate monitoring all contribute to gender-related discrimination in particular. When states fail to address egregious crimes such as gender-based violence or do not recognize the unequal burden of women's unpaid care and domestic work, gender stereotypes are reinforced and lead to further barriers to realizing women's human rights. In the legal sphere, those laws that address family-related issues such as divorce, marital property and inheritance, also often directly sustain and amplify discrimination against women. For instance, in Rwanda, the law recognizes equal inheritance rights for daughters and sons. However, according to the law, what women inherit depends on where they are in their family cycle. Women inherit differently if they are caretakers of children, are a widow, or remarry. Thus, what women are actually able accomplish is variable and they are unable to fully exercise their rights depending on context and conditions (IDLO, 2016).

Moreover, in virtually every country, formal legal systems exist side by side with customary, religious or regional systems. Often times, this leads to contradictory, overlapping and competing laws and authoritative bodies. Women in particular, are affected by this plurality of different normative systems as they may have rights under formal laws but not under customary law. For instance, in Sri Lanka, four different sets of laws govern inheritance rights (Scalise, 2009). Moreover, rural and poor women are often unable to access land rights because they have limited ability to interact with central administrative bodies that control these processes. Titling and registration programmes usually require national identity cards, birth and marriage certificates and land deeds. Rural and poor women often lack this documentation and they are not tied into supportive political and social networks that could assist them in obtaining this documentation (IDLO, 2016).

Customary family laws in many countries also have specific gendered components that disadvantage girls and women socially and economically. The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women highlighted in its general recommendations that "Inequality in the family underlies all other aspects of discrimination against women and is often justified in the name of ideology, tradition and culture. An examination of States Parties' reports revealed that in many states, the rights and responsibilities of married partners are governed by civil or common law principles; religious or customary laws and practices; or some combination of such laws and practices, that discriminate against women and do not comply with the principles set out in the Convention" (2015).

Gender Discrimination
Formal legal systems also remain discriminatory against women. The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women noted that barriers to women's access to legal rights "occur in a structural context of discrimination and inequality, due to factors such as gender stereotyping, discriminatory laws, intersecting or compounded discrimination, procedural and evidentiary requirements and practices, and a failure to systematically ensure that judicial mechanisms are physically, economically, socially and culturally accessible to all women. All of these obstacles constitute persistent violations of women's human rights" (UNCEDW, 2015). Moreover, women are often excluded from participating in decision-making processes that directly affect them such as those around trade, land use, and the environment. But often, women are also not part of the informal social networks based on patronage that benefit their participants. These networks function outside of formal legal systems and lead to the adoption of rules and processes that then affect whole communities.

Another obstacle for women is that they may lack legal literacy, the knowledge and understanding about the rights and protections that they are entitled to in their communities under state law. Women need to be able to access this information that may protect and improve their lives. A significant problem for women world-wide is that while laws protecting their rights may be on the books, customary laws may contradict these privileges, and women may not have the knowledge about how to access their formal rights. For instance, legal cases from Tanzania and Mozambique indicated that courts usually uphold the rights of women to land but enforcing these laws at the community level remained unattainable (IDLO, 2016). Another challenge is that ingrained ideas about women's gender roles may discourage women from seeking their rights. In communities, where the primary voice of the family is the father or head

of household, women are often excluded from decision-making processes. Women may be afraid to assert themselves as they are then considered disrespectful. In some communities, such as rural Vietnam for instance, women are perceived as having to maintain social harmony. Should they deviate from this norm, they put themselves at risk of losing social status and in worst case scenarios, of violence (Cam & al., 2013). However, taking only into account the opinion or actions of the male head of household obscures women's voices and creates a false picture of family dynamics and the needs, desires and experiences of the various members of the domestic unit (World Bank, 2014).

A critical mechanism for examining and encouraging the processes by which societies respect women's rights is through the rule of law. Each year approximately 10 million young girls are still forcibly married with human trafficking of women estimated at $32 billion. What's more, n many areas of the world girls and women remain second-class citizens whose rights are controlled by their male relatives (UN Women, 2015). Moreover, despite making up the majority of the global agricultural labor force, women consistently have less access to and control over land and productive resources (IDLO, 2016). In Bangladesh for instance, women make up 3 per cent of landholders, in Sri Lanka, 16 percent and in Thailand 27 percent. Estimates suggest that throughout Africa, women own less than a quarter of the land despite making up more than half of the agricultural labor force in many countries (IDLO, 2016). Inequalities in this arena are understood as violations of women's human rights. When women lack economic power they also generally also have a lower social and political status as there is a dynamic relationship between these two spheres.

In the majority of countries (155 out of 173) there are still laws and administrative rules on the books that directly discriminate against women. They range across different areas including the legal capacity to enter contracts, open bank accounts, register businesses, access inheritance rights as well as protection against domestic violence and receive equal pay for equal work (IDLO, 2016). While there has been increased attention to the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment, progress in this domain has been very slow. This lack of progress is very surprising given the attention to gender issues in international human rights treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda again upholds the centrality of gender equality in a stand-alone goal (SDG 5) as well as recognizing gender equality within many of the other 16 goals, including Goal 16, which highlights the rule of law.

Under international and national laws states are obligated to ensure that women have equal access to economic resources such as land ownership and paid employment. For instance, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food suggests that "for rural women, access to land in conditions that ensure security of tenure is the single most important condition for economic empowerment. This is because access to most other productive resources is conditional on land ownership, and because land is often a condition for social inclusion" (ADB, 2013).

Especially in rural areas, women play an often undervalued and formally unrecognized role as farmers and agricultural wage laborers. Despite the importance of rural women to the economic

livelihoods of their families, the OECD highlights the fact that only 9 per cent of agricultural development aid was focused on women in 2015 (OECD, 2016). Gender-based inequalities with respect to land ownership lead to other problems as well. For instance, women are unable to raise collateral for loans and may not have equivalent choices to men with respect to cash crops.

Stronger laws and legal protections for women in the economic sphere are directly related to their influence and power within their families. For instance, when women own land, they are better able to make decisions related to the purchase of food and consumption and their children have been found to be less likely to be underweight (Allendorf, 2007). OECD data indicates that in those countries where women lack the right to own land, there are 60 per cent more malnourished children than in places where women have some or equivalent access to land (Cerise, 2012). Generally speaking, when women have a more dominant role in household decision-making, children are born with higher birth weights and better nutritional well-being. This helps break the cycle of intergenerational transfer of poverty and malnutrition. Research indicates that when women have access to nutritional resources they make investments directed to improving the livelihoods of their children (Smith et al, 2003).

It is important to note that the protection of women's rights should not just be linked to their roles as mothers and caregivers of the family. This emphasis on women's reproductive and caregiving roles deflects attention from the human rights that women have as individuals to live in dignity. The FAO emphasizes that "women must have equal access to economic resources, including the right to inheritance and the ownership of land and other property, credit, natural resources and appropriate technology, as well as measures to respect and protect self-employment and work which provides a decent living for wage earners and their families" (FAO, 2007). In that same vein, children have a right to adequate nutrition, amongst other rights. States, thus, need to put in place enforceable laws that ensure these rights.

Strengthening the Rule of Law
Measures that strengthen the rule of law are critical for creating accountability amongst the members of a society as well as between citizens and their governments. Peaceful, cohesive societies are the necessary foundation for sustainable development. Without fundamental safety and security, individuals cannot realize their full potential nor can they function optimally in their families and communities (UNDP, 2016). When legal institutions fail and individual's rights are compromised, the legitimacy and credibility of governments dissipate. For legal rights to be enforced and supportive, they need to be supported by a coherent and coordinated legal and policy framework. They need to incorporate participatory approaches and be consistently monitored. A wide range of stakeholders including community, religious, and traditional authorities need to be integrated in policy and programme approaches.

The UNDP's Global Programme on Strengthening the Rule of Law and Human Rights for Sustaining Peace and Fostering Development is one mechanism for strengthening the planning and monitoring on the rule of law across societies. They advocate for legal aid to ensure that access is not limited just to elites and those in power. For instance, they partner with local civil society organizations to provide free legal aid services, especially for women, children and victims of conflict. They also support human rights institutions to help fight abuse and ensure accountability measures. This type of work becomes extremely critical in situations such as what

the globe is currently facing: approximately 65 million people are currently displaced and 80 percent of humanitarian need is created through conflict (UNDP, 2016). Moreover, these conflicts are accompanied by widespread human rights violations and breaches of International Humanitarian law. We are witnessing this in the targeting of schools, hospitals, humanitarian workers, and civilians. These conflicts also spill over borders into those neighboring countries that are attempting to maintain stability and not become involved in wars. Violence does not only disrupt individual's lives but destroys the longer-term societal compact. Thus, it is critical to incorporate human rights principles with the rule of law in order to allow for greater access to justice and resilience.

In the area of gender equality, formal laws are gradually gaining ground globally. For instance, in 2012 the High Court of Botswana issued a landmark decision on women's inheritance rights. While customary law gives inheritance rights to the youngest-born sons, the constitution of Botswana guarantees gender equality. In this particular case, the High Court ruled in favor of three sisters and asked that the government remove all discriminatory laws from the statute books (World Justice Project, 2013). Societies as diverse as the Philippines and Somalia have also recently instituted legislation providing access to family planning methods and protecting women from female genital mutilation. However, the challenge in all of these scenarios is local cultural opposition to practices that are often associated with Western liberal ideologies.

Recommendations
In order to combat deleterious practices, rights-based education is key. Girls and women need to be educated about their rights to an education, to not marry at a very young age, to divorce, and to voice their concerns. In this manner, education can be a central tool for civic transformation. A central issue is that in many places, laws that promote women's rights exist. However, they are either misinterpreted or not implemented. Thus, it is not enough to have legal guarantees. Instead, advancing women's rights is also about individual education and empowerment. Women need to know what rights the law accords them and they need to learn how to make the law work for them.

In order to achieve gender equality and prevent violence against girls and women, it is however not adequate to educate women about their rights. Instead, youth and men need to a central focus of educational and legal frameworks. For instance, initiatives that teach boys and men about alternative masculinities have been proven to be highly effective in lessening violent behavior towards women (UN Women, 2010).

From a general perspective, it is recommended that individuals and families receive information about their rights and responsibilities – not just with respect to political and legal rights, but also social and economic rights. Dissemination through digital media, legal aid units and community trained leaders provide multiple mechanisms for teaching individuals about which services and facilities they are entitled to.

States need to provide clear indicators of criteria that provide the basis for applications for social and economic assistance or grounds for interventions in families. Moreover, states need to be held accountable for their obligation to strengthen and support families in a public, democratic

manner. Instead of promoting one family type over another, institutions and programmes that work with a range of families need to come together and provide guidance for which services and legal frameworks best support families. This will allow for a greater democratization of family support and access of individuals to appropriate legal frameworks and justice. This is also critical in order to ensure that individuals in families are able to access their own personal rights should an injustice occur for instance with respect to domestic violence, inheritance rights, or personal choice. For instance, child marriage (marriage before the age of 18) and gender violence remains serious problems in various parts of the world. Girls and women need to be able to access legal institutions in order to ensure their personal rights.

16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration

About 1.1 billion people in the world today lack official identification (ID), including children up to the age of 14 whose birth has never been registered as well as many women in poor rural areas of Africa and Asia (World Bank, 2017). UNICEF estimated that about 230 million children under the age of 5 have not been registered and that 290 million do not have a birth certificate (Dunning, Gel, & Raghavan, 2014; UNICEF, 2016). The World Bank noted that when including children up to the age of 14, the number stands closer to about 625 million unregistered births (World Bank ID4D Global Dataset, 2017).

Legal identity is a fundamental aspect of the rights that are delineated in the Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. These include the right to a name, a nationality and to recognized family relationships on both the father's and the mother's sides (Dahan & Gelb, 2015). "Legal identity" is often correlated with a specific national document such as a national identity card, however in the context of the SDGs, the concept is more extensive than that since not all countries issue national identity cards and sometimes have very complex procedures for identifying nationality. Yet, having a legal identity is particularly for the poor and vulnerable a key determinant for their ability to access social protections and resources. For instance, in South Africa, children are required now to be formally registered as a condition for accessing child support grants, leading to a sharp rise in registrations. But inflexible ID requirements can also work in the opposite direction and create obstacles for attaining services (Dahan & Gelb, 2015).

What is Legal Identity?
Legal identity predicts and sustains social, economic, and political exclusion. Without a legal identity basic rights and services such as social allowances, health care, school enrollment, the right to vote, opening and maintaining bank accounts, and the ability to move within and outside countries is often restricted or out of reach. However, problematizing this issue is the fact that it is at times unclear how legal identity is determined. For instance, in many cases, in order to access basic services it is not sufficient to have an ID or just a birth certificate. Instead, these types of documents serve as the initial basis to establish legal identity. The SDG identity target thus deals with a larger more complex issue: that there is no internationally recognized definition of identity credentials. The SDG indicator instead refers to something more multifaceted: that no one should be denied access to social or economic life including basic services if they lack identification credentials. Legal identity credentials should be available to individuals throughout

their life cycles and be robust enough to allow access and be widely accepted under the laws and customs of the respective societies (Dahan & Gelb, 2015). Dahan and Gelb (2015) suggested that because there is currently no internationally recognized definition of identity credentials, that a working concept could be credentials that allow all individuals in a given society to fully participate in social and economic life. Such a broad definition would allow countries some flexibility with respect to how they define national identity in their particular cultural contexts.

Lack of legal identity hinders the ability of women and marginalized groups to exercise their civil and political rights and secure socio-economic benefits from the state. Administrative hurdles, poverty, limited awareness, and discriminatory legal provisions bar unregistered women and vulnerable, marginalized groups everywhere from securing their citizenship or registering their marriage or child's birth. Currently there are about 870 million people who are living in extreme poverty and do not have assistance to any kind of social protection programme. Even though the World Bank has committed 16 billion dollars for the explicit purpose of reaching these individuals and their families, the inability to identify the actual beneficiaries has hampered these efforts. Identification measures make government institutions more accountable and allow for a more précised targeting of vulnerable and at-risk populations (Dunning, Gelb, & Raghavan, 2014).

Legal Identity has a Gendered Component
The widespread lack of official identification (ID) in developing countries disproportionately affects women and girls, who face more and higher barriers to obtaining IDs. Barriers include: restrictions on women's freedom to travel outside the home or community; distance; financial cost; time constraints; illiteracy; lack of information and lack of awareness; and, lack of support or opposition from other family members (Hanmer, 2015). For instance, in rural areas women often need proof of identity to use banks: one in six unbanked females say they do not have documentation which is why they have no accounts – this in turn has economic repercussions. In Nepal for instance, daughters-in-laws are the least likely individuals to possess citizenship documents (Hanmer, 2015). Because there is very little sex-disaggregated data on possession of ID documentation, this issue is currently not being addressed in a satisfactory manner. Rural, conflict, or post-conflict contexts often comprises additional challenges because of factors such as displacement or lack of documentation at the time of birth. Lack of legal identity comes with as wide set of costs not least of which is the inability to vote and exercise one's civic rights.

Changing Political and Social Consciousness around the Legality of Individuals
The issue of lack of documentation is becoming even more complex as high-income countries such as the United States and other countries in Europe have become increasingly stringent about border control and the deportation of noncitizens in the name of national security (Dreby, 2012). Due in part to terrorist threats, the Syrian refugee crisis, the wars in Iraq, and Afghanistan, and climate disasters in various parts of the world leading to individuals and families fleeing, the issue of who "belongs" and who does not has taken on political and social ramifications with a variety of consequences for families specifically.

Displacement Issues as a Serious Challenge: By the end of 2016 65.6 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide – this is more than the population of the United Kingdom and approximately 300,000 more individuals than last year. Horrifically, this is the largest number of

individuals that has been displaced since World War II. The conflict in Syria, now in its seventh year, was the world's biggest producer of refugees (6.1 million displaced from their homes and 5.6 million seeking refuge in neighboring countries) followed by refugees from South Sudan, Colombia, Afghanistan and Iraq (UNHCR, 2016). UNHCR estimated that about 10 million individuals were without a nationality or at risk of statelessness at the end of 2016. However, official data supplied by governments was limited to 3.2 million stateless individuals from 75 countries (UNHCR, 2016).

There are serious family consequences created through displacement. Under the circumstances caused by war and violence, families are often torn apart creating serious problems such as orphaned and unaccompanied minors. For instance, UNICEF estimates that 170,000 lone child refugees applied for asylum in Europe. Globally the number of unaccompanied child refugees has increased five-fold since 2010 (UNICEF, 2017). However, that number does not tell the whole story as many countries outside of Europe and North America do not gather data on unaccompanied child refugees. There are also specific gender issues that affect girls and women under these types of crisis. It is not unusual for them to be raped and become pregnant with no legal protections for them (UNICEF, 2017). Without family and legal protections, children in particular become vulnerable to all forms of exploitation and violence.

In the contemporary situation we are have multiple examples of the myriad of problems caused through the lack of a legal identity.

Case Study 1: A current case example of this complex situation are the Rohingya. The Rohingya are currently a stateless Muslim minority of about 1 million people who before August 2017, lived in the Rakhine state, on the border with Bangladesh, where they accounted for about a third of the population. They are not considered a part of the 135 recognized national ethnicities in Myanmar and live under a segregated system that limits their ability to move for employment and restricts access to schooling and healthcare. The government of Myanmar refused to grant them citizenship and as a consequence the vast majority of the group's members have no legal documentation. The Myanmar state has gone so far as to restrict access to marriage, family planning and freedom of movement for the Rohingya. For instance, couples that reside in the northern part of the state must seek permission to marry and are only allowed to have two children (CFR, 2018). Because they have no legal status, those Rohingya who have fled to states such as Bangladesh, Malaysia and Thailand, are unable to work, leaving their families without access to education and health care. This vulnerable condition has made them susceptible to exploitation, sexual enslavement and human smuggling.

Case Study 2: The case of the Roma minority who are spread throughout Europe also provides a window into the problems caused by the lack of a legal identity, or as in the case of the Roma an ambiguous legal identity, caused in part through their migratory existence. Currently there is no international, legally accepted definition of minority. The types of minorities that are protected under international laws vary precisely because of this lack of a definition. Due to the lack of codification, states can easily elude their obligations to protect unpopular minorities and can invoke the lack of international clarity to support their domestic policies. The Roma are a case in point. For instance, in Austria, Belgium, Estonia and Spain, there is virtually no information about the status of the Roma and the enforcement of anti-discrimination laws. In Ireland no data

is collected on Roma in the official census, and in Italy the Roma have been denied the status of national minority as well as linguistic minority. Depending on national context, the lack of data has different implications. It is difficult to monitor discrimination and it makes it difficult to adopt useful policies and programmes that may assist the group especially since they do not have a permanent, settled location (Chopin, Germaine, & Tanczos, 2017).[3]

Illegal Immigrants in the United States: The global lack of academic and policy focus highlighting the importance of family relationships to child outcomes is reflected in recent trends in the United States as well. As the U.S. government has decided to "crack down" on illegal immigration, U.S. born children are increasingly being separated from both their mothers and their fathers as they are deported for not having legal status in America. Mexicans currently comprise about 30% of the foreign-born individuals in the United Sates and about half of illegal residents (Pew Research, 2017). An emphasis on enforcement that targets Mexicans at the level of public policy has specifically had consequences for young children, many of whom are American citizens but have parents who are from Mexico. In a unique study of its kind, Dreby (2012) documented through qualitative interviews with a large number of parents and children the specific family problems that are created through deportation policies meant to keep "the United States safe." She illustrated that it is not just actual deportations that tear families apart but instead even the fear of deportation of a parent is enough to alter parent-child relationships. Children in families lacking legal status tend to live in a constant state of fear and often go on to discard their immigrant and ethnic identities. Dreby also pointed out that a lack of a family focus leads to children's experiences with their parent's legal status being misunderstood and obscured. Child well-being is often ignored in these discussions and in policy creation and implementation, and we know little about the long-term effects on development in these contexts. Moreover, as Dreby found in her study, immigration is increasingly conflated with illegal status creating the illusion that there is a much larger swath of the population that does not really "belong."

The U.S. example of illegal immigration highlights a trend found in other high-income countries as well: as societies grapple with national identity issues, there is a growing tendency to "other" those individuals who are perceived as not belonging – even if those individuals are legal members of the society (but may be foreign born or of another race or ethnicity or religion). This adds another complex layer to the issue of national identity and what it means to "belong." An individual or a family may have the "papers" needed to confirm national identity, however, there may be a social dimension that puts them in the position of still being discriminated against. In order to fully recognize national identity, provisions need to be put in place that ensure that all citizens of a society are fully aware of their rights *and* that their rights are fulfilled in a non-discriminatory manner.

Recommendations to Strengthen Legal Identity Targets
The lack of birth registration has been a primary mechanism of social exclusion in the past specifically for indigenous groups in many countries. Registration centers are usually located in

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[2]In the 20th century states have attempted to force nomadic groups and tribes to sedentarize as it is considered difficult to monitor these individuals, especially across borders. For instance, there have been multiple attempts and initiatives in the Middle East to settle ancient pastoral nomadic tribes with varied levels of success (Kark & Frantzman, 2012).

towns making it difficult for individuals who live in remote areas to access such sites. Moreover, civil registries have often rejected registering individuals with indigenous names. However, recent efforts have negated some of these trends. For instance in the Amazonian region of Peru, UNICEF has launched a socio-linguistic map of indigenous communities in order to document where these individuals live, with the goal of providing more accessible services. UNICEF has also created a network of civil registries for indigenous people in the furthest away regions where it is estimated that the proportion of unregistered individuals is around 26 percent. They have also provided training for civil servants in order to increase acceptance of traditional names being included in formal registries (UNICEF, 2010). The success of this programme provides a model instituting best practices to increase legal identities especially for vulnerable and indigenous groups.

Dahan and Gelb (2015) suggested assisting countries by forming a steering or centralizing group. This entity would work as a mechanism to bring together those stakeholders responsible for providing identity services with the various ministries and agencies who represent the individuals who need legal identities. As part of this effort, advice and support on data security and the legal frameworks for data privacy would need to be incorporated into these efforts. Furthermore, increased cooperation within countries as well as between countries is necessitated in these types of efforts. Especially in poorer countries where developing such systems is not always prioritised, strengthening legal identity needs to be understood as actually contributing to more efficient and inclusive development.

States need to institute social protection systems that ensure that individuals can exit from poverty reduction programmes but do not forfeit their rights to social protection should they need them again for whatever reason in the future. This necessitates data that supports the impact of these types of investments.

In order for states to reach the world's poorest and most vulnerable individuals, they must ensure that such communities can make the laws work for them. Given the resistance on the part of states to implement stronger laws with respect to legal identity, it is incumbent on transnational organizations and international courts of law to protect those groups who are clearly being exploited under the current systems. For instance the Indigenous Peoples Maternal, Newborn and Child Health and Nutrition (IPMNCHN) Project of the European Union and United Nations Population Fund has assisted in 9,000 unregistered individuals in the Philippines in attaining a legal identity through late birth registration (UNFPA, 2014). Refugees and other groups fleeing from persecution and violent environments need to be given similar special protected status, as their situations are worked out in the courts. This is a global problem at this point, and should be dealt with in a much more focused, monitored and transnational manner.

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

A fundamental human need is to have safe and comfortable shelter. This is both a physical necessity and a psychological requirement (Bashir, 2002). However, current trends do not bode well for a large proportion of global families with respect to housing. A range of issues from

unchecked urbanization to the global domination of housing markets by commercial players, are influencing housing patterns.

Housing is fundamental to family life. Without a place that individuals call "home," their other spheres of life are severely impacted. As the 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 of human existence. 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.
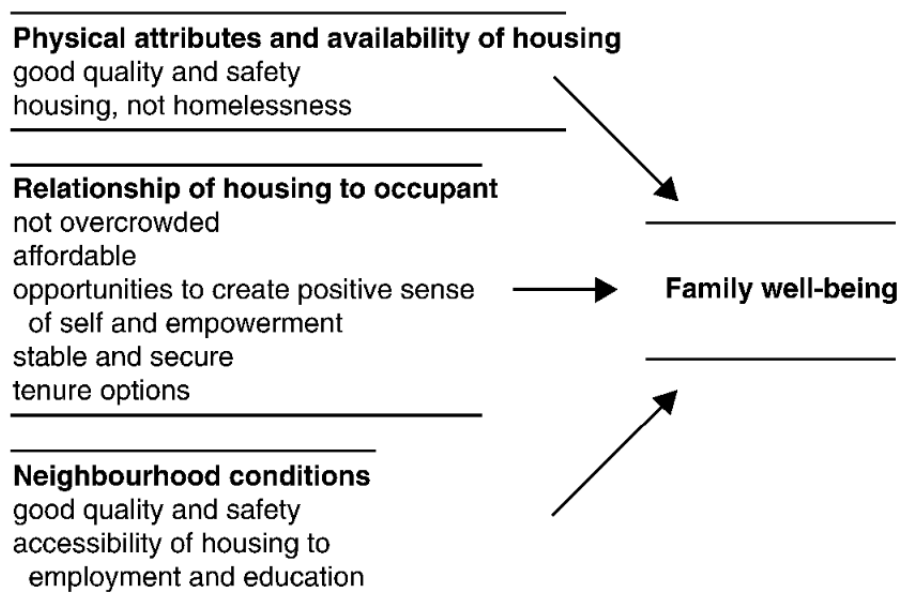

Physical attributes and availability of housing
good quality and safety
housing, not homelessness

Relationship of housing to occupant
not overcrowded
affordable
opportunities to create positive sense
  of self and empowerment
stable and secure
tenure options

Neighbourhood conditions
good quality and safety
accessibility of housing to
  employment and education

Family well-being

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). Subsequently, drawing again on attachment theory, children also have a more difficult time exploring the outer world without the experience of an early safe home base. Home stability and instability directly impacts their immediate family life as well as the families they may form in the future. Despite a wide literature on the importance of housing in people's lives, current global trends do not bode well for improvements in housing for families and their associated well-being.

Changing Urban – Rural contexts. Approximately half of humanity, 3.5 billion people live in urban areas today. 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 double. There will be 358 "million cities" with one million or more people, and 27 "mega-cities" of ten million or more. Furthermore, 95 percent of this urban expansion will take place in developing countries. This rapid urbanization is putting pressure on fresh water supplies, sewage, the living environment, and 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 centralization of human populations in urban areas creates great challenges – but it also presents opportunities for creating efficiencies with respect to various resources including energy.

Health Consequences of Sub-Standard Housing
In particular, low-income families are affected by the lack of housing and sub-standard housing. 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).

One serious health consequence often attributed to living in overcrowded and sub-standard conditions is asthma. According to the WHO about 235 million individuals suffer from asthma with about 383,000 associated deaths per year (2017). Most of the deaths due to asthma occur in low- and lower-middle income countries. Both indoor and outdoor triggers seem to be the cause for the rise in this chronic disease. Especially, poor children and children living in urban environments are most affected by triggers that are most commonly associated with sub-standard housing. Deteriorating conditions in housing often have harmful chemical contaminants that affect vulnerable individuals. Moreover, mold, bugs, mice and rats, and environmental toxins tend to be more commonly found in these homes. These domiciles are also often situated near highways and other major traffic intersections resulting in ambient particulate matter and diesel fumes pervading living quarters with high levels of contamination (Pacheco, Ciaccio, Nazir, Daley, DiDonna, & Rosenwasser, 2014). In the U.S. especially minority families are influenced by poor housing conditions where indoor environmental exposure puts families at risk. The rise of asthma among blacks is particularly extensive with just under a 50 percent increase from 2001 to 2009 (Akinbami, Moorman, Bailey et al, 2012). Extensive research now documents that sub-standard housing conditions create health conditions for children and families that have long-term deleterious effects.

Substandard Housing as a Public Health Crisis
In the United States multiple studies are also linking the effects of sub-standard housing and the *lack* of housing with a public health crisis. For instance, in California, ACORN (the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) and Housing LA partnered to create a $100 million trust fund to build affordable, safe housing as a response to what was termed a public health crisis. California has some of the oldest housing in the United States and experts suggest that around 4000 additional housing units need to be built every year to meet current needs. In 2014, there were 490,000 more low-income families than there were housing units that they could afford to live in (Think Progress, 2015). Moreover, an increasing number of families can barely afford any form of housing. Currently, about 52 per cent of all poor renting families in the U.S. spend over 50 per cent of their income on housing, and one out of four families spent over 70 percent on rent and utilities.[4] Racial-ethnic families are disproportionally impacted by these trends (Desmond, 2018). From an international perspective, this is an extraordinarily high number. Only 4 per cent of households in Finland and Portugal, 16.5 per cent of those in the United Kingdom and 22 percent of those in Denmark spent more than 40 per cent of their disposable income on housing in 2010 (European Commission, 2013). The disproportionate amount of money needed for rent has led to a rapid rise in housing evictions. Desmond highlighted the fact that in New York City alone, over 350,000 eviction cases are processed every year (2018). He also pointed out that the United States is a unique case in the Western world with respect to the lack of affordable housing for poor families. However, this phenomenon is related to a larger more insidious process where the price of housing is rising much faster than the rate of incomes. Moreover, the same issues around housing are found in other parts of the world as well. For instance, according to current estimates, approximately six million new homes are needed in Brazil. This large housing deficit specifically affects families with a monthly income that is less than 500 USD (Giannetti et al., 2018). In order to address this housing crisis, the government is currently subsidizing major social housing projects but as is discussed below, there are various factors that are posing significant challenges to creating new housing.

The Challenge of Globalization and Housing
A major challenge to SDG 11 is the pace and extent to which financial corporations are taking over the housing sector (Farha & Porter, 2017). Instead of housing being understood as a place to live in a community, housing has become a commodity on the global market place. It is to be bought and sold for profit and treated as a means for the accumulation of great wealth for a few while making housing unaffordable for others. This is sometimes referred to as the "financialization of housing." This refers to the manner with which capital investment in housing has increasingly separated housing from its social function: providing a place to live. Instead, financial markets are impervious to the role that housing plays in the well-being of families and communities. The financialization of housing directly contradicts the notion that housing is a human right and that housing is linked to personal dignity, security and the ability to flourish in a community (Farha & Porter, 2017).

The extent to which financial markets have taken over housing is overwhelming. Estimates indicate that global residential real estate is valued around US $163 trillion, which is more than

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[3] Until recently the broad consensus in the U.S. was that families should not spend more than 30 per cent of their income on housing in order to leave money for other necessities.

twice the world's total GDP (Savills World Research, 2016). Various types of financial institutions such as banks, pensions, private equity firms and hedge funds seek out housing as a safe place to deposit excess capital. Moreover, they often then benefit from tax shelters. Through this process, housing prices no longer correlate with household income levels and instead are driven by market forces that prioritise housing assets. This process has raised housing prices in many cities around the globe by over 50 percent over the last five years (Sassen 2016). Fluctuations in prices now are driven by the dynamics of global capital instead of the need for housing. This trend has had repercussions not just for the poor but also for middle-class families who are then forced out of their homes due to spikes in mortgage costs or high rents. To quote Farha and Porter "The devastation of lives and the scale of evictions and displacement by inadequately regulated corporate financial markets is unprecedented (2017, p. 106). They go on to point out that in the US, in the five years after the financial crisis, more than 9 million households were evicted and in Spain the figure hovers just over 300,000. While these types of statistics should incite outrage as a form of human rights abuse, there has been little public discussion of this issue. Instead of becoming accountable to families and communities, states have primarily dealt with this issue through their relationships with private equity markets and credit rating agencies. States can be understood as having sold their housing assets at bargain prices to corporate entities.

This phenomenon of the corporatization of housing is not limited to high-income countries or large growth cities. Even in low-income countries, informal settlements have become the targets for speculative investment. Residents are displaced and often become homeless, in order for luxury homes to be built in those areas. Instead of a view of housing as a means for creating solid communities and land use being part of a common good, "slum upgrading" usually involves corporate entities that partner with states. This has led to increased privatization and a strong push to view housing as primarily a commodity for the garnering of greater wealth (Sassen, 2016).

The primacy of corporate actors in the housing sector has happened gradually and without much recognition by the public. However as Farha and Porter (2017) point out, *the commodification of housing on a global scale is a direct assault on individual and family rights.* As the market takes over the building and costs of housing, governments are no longer held responsible to the needs of families and communities. Instead, housing is increasingly dominated by international financial institutions. Decisions about housing – types, locations, and cost have been separated from human needs. This is in *direct contradiction* to target 11.3 which calls for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning. This process also increases inequality: it creates wealth for a small minority and leaves the poor without adequate housing and stable communities. Housing becomes a commodity divorced from human needs and rights. Moreover, legal frameworks now protect the builders, investors and traders, while residents are denied their rights. This phenomenon is not limited to housing needs in the developing world. Various news outlets in the United States have recently been highlighting the critical need for new housing (Kusisto, 2018; Loudenback, 2017). As corporate developers tend to make a larger profit on very high-end homes, they have moved away from building middle-class or government sponsored housing. This phenomenon is part of the same globalizing trend where profit instead of human needs and rights drives production and consumption.

Linking Human Rights and Housing

By recognizing target 11.1 as a human rights obligation, we can detail a new approach that provides a system of norms and values to inform decision-making policy, planning and development. It places individuals and families at the center, instead of market domination and pressures. While financial markets and their associated global forces are often perceived as external to the control of states, the opposite is the case. Financial regulations are a product of states, and international and national treaties are negotiated by states. Governments have the ability to redesign laws and policies and to highlight the centrality of the rights of individuals and families to have adequate housing. This needs to happen at every level: including the community, national, and international. Moreover, states need to regulate private corporate actors and financial markets. An underlying neoliberal philosophy is that markets operate on their own rules and are subject only to the actions of private entities (Trask, 2010). This sublimates the role of domestic laws and policies and also ignores the fundamental right to housing. While international human rights law may not require private corporations to provide affordable housing for the poor, states can require this as a condition for building on their land. States need to be actively involved in developing and implementing strategies that assist in realizing SDG 11 and not allow corporate entities take over their roles and functions.

By employing a human rights approach, states can empower individuals and families and resist the growing corporatization of housing and settlement needs. They can put pressure on developers to build affordable housing that takes into account the needs of families and communities. Increasingly, communities are rejecting the current commodification of housing and pointing to *housing as a fundamental right that needs to be understood in a framework of human dignity and security*. While this approach has received support on local levels, it is at the state level that real change needs to happen. Through levying taxes on foreign purchasers of residential real estate and instituting property speculation taxes, some states have been able to force developers to change their real estate plans to include housing that meets the needs of residents instead of building luxury housing. For instance, in Andalusia and Catalonia in Spain, local governments have introduced policies that emphasize the social function of housing (Farha & Porter, 2017). However, these types of local regulations will not be enough to stop the sweeping globalization of housing markets. Instead, states *must* engage with financial markets and corporate entities in order to realize individuals and families' rights to housing. This is a social obligation of governments. Through the use of a rights framework, monitoring agencies need to ensure that governments, corporations and other entities involved in real estate are ensuring that affordable, safe housing becomes the priority instead of purely as a means to wealth accumulation.

Housing and Sustainability

Housing is interrelated with energy concerns and sustainability. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) buildings over their life time take up about 40% of global energy use, 60% global electricity, 25% of global water, and release about 1/3 of global greenhouse gases. Housing is also closely related to employment. For instance, buildings (and the construction sector in general) provide about 5- 10% of direct jobs and generate between 5 – 15% of GDP across nations (https://www.unenvironment.org/). However, there are significant differences between developed and developing countries. In developing countries, the construction sector can represent up to 40% of GDP. This arena thus, provides economic and

social opportunities, especially with respect to new environmentally sustainable housing solutions.

Family Relationships and Access to Housing
Housing plays a dual-centered relationship in society: on the one hand, housing provides a service as it is an accommodation, and on the other it is an asset, especially through home ownership, for families. Housing is a major cost, but it can also represent a key means to saving and wealth accumulation. The growth of homeownership in many countries raises questions about the role of housing and intergenerational transfers of financial resources within families (Gulbrandsen & Sandlie, 2015).

A recent financial trend suggests that especially in the West, the increase in house prices has put middle and upper-class parents in a stronger position to provide financial support to their adult children, thereby strengthening family relationships. A wealth transfer from parents to adult children is made possible due to an increase in the standard of living combined with the rising value of homes. The growth in resources has enabled parents to assist their adult children through intergenerational wealth transfers to enter the housing market. The same trend, the increase in housing prices, has also made it more difficult for adult children to buy homes. They, thus, are becoming more dependent on receiving financial assistance from their families, illustrating that intergenerational family solidarity is critical and relevant even for well-to-do individuals. The increased need for family assistance is also highlighting the significance of intergenerational solidarity in high and low-income contexts. Concurrently, the growth in house prices has also led to an increase in the value of inheritances in developed countries, leading to better life chances for the offspring in those families (Piketty, 2014). However, as Gulbrandsen and Sandlie suggest, "This may have implications not only for family solidarity as such, how the family distributes its resources among and assures the wellbeing of its members, but also for the broader issues of social policy, social inequality, and social integration" (2015, p. 79). Private intergenerational transfers can lead to increased social inequality, and the family support that individuals receive is becoming an ever-stronger contributing factor to accessing life opportunities. As states retreat from welfare provisions, and as housing prices increase, the significance of family and family support in the West is becoming ever more important.

Financing and Housing: The Chinese Example. A little explored aspect of acquiring housing is the role of sibling relationships, borrowing resources, and the interplay of finances with cultural norms. However, in a fascinating recent study conducted in China, the authors found that the patriarchal norms that still govern the society are also played out in the acquisition of housing (Wang & Zhou, 2017). China has amongst the highest rate of home ownership in the world, with urban home ownership reaching about 80 percent in 2010 due to housing reforms and the privatization of the Chinese housing market (Wang, 2011). However, attaining the capital for owning a home is quite complicated and is often related to raising informal capital through family relationships rather than borrowing from formal banks, a relatively expensive option. In fact, only 36 per cent of homeowners ever borrowed money from a bank in order to buy a home, and only 10.5 per cent have unpaid debt incurred from a house purchase. Instead of borrowing money from formal institutions, most urban Chinese pay for their houses in cash. In order to access this money, most Chinese rely on informal family transactions. In their study, Wang and Zhou found that having a brother increased the possibility of home ownership by approximately 3 per cent for male siblings in contrast to females. In order to buy a home having a male sibling

provided an informal credit option that was nonexistent for women. Male siblings tend to help each other out, while women are often excluded from these negotiations. This lack of access to financial resources also plays itself out in intra-household bargaining where married women have less power than men due to their inability to access informal financial markets (Wang & Zhou, 2017). Wang and Zhou's study raises the possibility that housing acquisition functions quite differently in the developing world than in the West, with family relationships and gender norms playing a more significant role than is currently understood.

Intergenerational Living Arrangements.
Cultural context plays a critical role in the acceptance and desire for intergenerational living arrangements. While historically in the West there was a greater emphasis on families living in intergenerational arrangements, a push after WW II towards homeownership in the U.S. especially moved primarily white families away from this model. However, economics 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 becoming mainstream. As the 65 and older population is expected to double to 92 million by 2060, families are once again moving towards arrangements where they live with or near each other. 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 are at the tail end with 15 per cent. Generations United reported that families that had moved towards multigenerational living arrangements felt that this arrangement had improved their finances, care arrangements, and social relationships (Generations United, 2011).

Multiple factors are contributing to the increase in multigenerational households. One important trend 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 multigenerational 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 multigenerational 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 multigenerational living. In 2011, 1 in 5 Australians lived in a multi-generational 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 multi-generational 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.

Recommendations on Housing
States need to regulate the runaway housing markets that are dominating the global rental and homeownership scene. Governments have the powers to redesign laws and policies in order to ensure the rights of individuals and families to have adequate housing. Governments need to engage with financial markets and corporate entities to create stronger laws, policies and monitoring which is key.

Stronger data on private wealth transfers with respect to accessibility of housing needs to be incorporated into policy formation to ensure that low wealth individuals are not disadvantaged with respect to access to safe housing.

Stable housing is a key feature for health and well-being and for connecting people to services such as community centers, health clinics, and schools. Government housing policies are needed to position affordable housing as an anchor for creating communities where families thrive and ensure that their members have access to services. These policies need to be comprehensive and not just focus on housing stock, in order to build safe, stable neighborhoods. This type of broader based approach necessitates building partnerships across sectors and including residents in design and implementation and emphasizing access to transport and public services as well. A widely cited example of successful housing policies comes from Chile where the proportion of families that have no housing or live in sub-standard housing has declined from 23% in 1992 to

10% in 2011 (Salvi Del Pero, 2015). State subsidies to low-income and middle-income households have promoted access to homeownership. Also, the government provides tax deductions for mortgage interest, thus, encouraging families to buy houses.[5]

Housing policies need to specifically target the poorest families. As in many countries the lowest income families tend to often live in informal housing (ie. with relatives and / or friends or without a contract) and they have a very difficult time transitioning to their own households. A lack of focus of policies and programmes on the lowest income groups is associated with the fact that house ownership has become the predominant model in many places (Murray & Clapham, 2015). Empirical data indicates that a stronger emphasis on building up the individual rental housing sector as well as the social housing market (housing owned by the state) would be much more beneficial for the poorest sectors of societies. Low-income families, even if they are able to buy a home with subsidies, often lack the funds to maintain these houses over the longer term and have limited opportunities to sell them due often to poor location and quality.

Rental housing is also preferred specifically for young families. Subsidized, owned dwellings often become too small for families as they tend to grow over time and need more space for children and / or elderly parents. Chile has introduced a new programme since 2013, the *Programa de Subidio de Arriendo de Vivenda*, that provides subsidies specifically to low- and middle-income young families with the underlying emphasis that they are to delay their application for homeownership subsidies several years until their housing needs stabilize (Salvi Del Pero, 2015).

Tax incentives that encourage landlords to rent to low-income and vulnerable families are a key feature of successful housing policies. Examples from Germany and Chile indicate that it is beneficial for states to provide support for rental housing for families as long as the law strikes a balance between the interests of the renters and the landlords (Salvi Del Pero, 2015).

Housing and health are closely correlated, particularly in substandard housing contexts. In developing countries about one quarter of the urban population uses coal, wood or biomass for cooking and warmth. This creates indoor air issues and contributes to outdoor health pollution. Improving home energy systems even in the poorest households needs to be prioritised (WHO, 2012).

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.

Family life education programing needs to be expanded to promote the benefits and challenges of multi-generational living arrangements. These programmes need to be introduced to those parts of the world where FLE is not yet common or well understood.

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

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[4] The Chilean programmes are not entitlements. Access to the subsidies depend on the availability of funds and eligible households are ranked until the number of available subsidies are reached (Salvi Del Pero, 2015).

older persons. In Germany since 2006, there are currently 450 participating houses under the "Action Programme: Multigenerational Housing." These *Mehrgenerationenhaueser*, 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 child care, computer courses, and lunch for school age children.

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.

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

Social integration is a critical aspect of sustainable human settlements. It is understood as a process that enables all people to participate in social, economic, cultural and political life on the basis of equality of rights, equity and dignity. The goal is to create societies that are safe and just, and that protect and promote human rights and dignity. In other words, as the Word Summit for Social Development declared in 1995: "a society for all" (DESA, 2009). The failure of social integration was also already understood at that time as it could lead to, "social fragmentation; widening disparities and inequalities; and strains on individuals, families, communities and institutions as a result of the rapid pace of social change, economic transformation, migration and major dislocations of population, particularly in areas of armed conflict" (DESA, 2009, p. 6). Specifically, inclusive societies take into account the special needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, the democratic participation of all members, and are governed by the rule of law. The underlying principle of equal participation ensures that social stability and sustainability will be strengthened even in the face of change.

In order to achieve this goal of inclusivity and participation, respect for all members and the rule of law at national and international levels is foundational. Each member of the society needs to be able to participate in an equal manner and have access to resources which they need to ensure their basic needs and livelihoods. Individuals need access to shared infrastructures and facilities such as water supplies, electricity, schools, parks, and resource centers in order to have a sense of belonging. This principle also encompasses the concept of diversity. Through accepting and celebrating diverse backgrounds, ideologies and cultures, a sense of unity is created instead of a focus on that which divides groups.

Integrating Indigenous People
The principle of diversity needs to be broad and include markers beyond race, ethnicity, religion. For instance indigenous peoples are often marginalized and face social exclusion. This causes low levels of participation, social capital and engagement in civil society (Hunter, 2000).

Indigenous groups face discrimination and prejudice in both high-income and low-income countries. While they make up about 5 per cent of the world's population, they constitute about 15 percent of the poor. Individuals belonging to indigenous groups are frequently excluded from accessing basic services and they are limited in their ability to participate in democratic processes. For example, in Guatemala, 53.5 per cent of indigenous young people aged 15- 19 have not completed primary education, as compared to 32.2 per cent of non-indigenous youth and in Bolivia, the infant mortality rate among the indigenous population is close to 75/1000, as compared to 50/1000 for the non-indigenous population (ECLAC, 2005).

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 per cent 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 the economy, energy outputs, environment and social life. Urbanization is not necessarily a negative phenomenon. If steered 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 profoundly 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. Study after study highlights the fact that around the world, the poor are excluded from decision making processes and often are marginalized and isolated (DESA, 2009). When the world's most vulnerable citizens are not part of the decision-making processes, their needs are not included and their challenges are unheard and often misunderstood. It is then clear that participatory processes are indispensable for poverty eradication.

Poverty affects individuals and their families in every aspect of their lives. We cannot speak of democratic participation without including the household or family level of decision making into the equation. Social protection coverage needs to take a unit focus on families in order to ensure that all the members of a household are cared for. On the other hand, only when people have their basic needs met, can they participate in civic society (DESA, 2009).

Multi-Dimensional Urbanization

A fundamental characteristic of contemporary life has been the creation of what is referred to as "private life" or the "private sphere." This private life is associated specifically with family life. However, the greater urbanization of the world has led to new types of social networks. Through reciprocal involvements and supports, individuals in urban areas today create new partnerships and collaborations that involve both emotional and practical needs (such as networking to find jobs) (Watters, 2003). The extensive use of social media is blurring the private / public distinction that was the hallmark of family life in the twentieth century. New social networks are intersecting in complex ways with family life and need to be studied as such.

In Western urban areas the unmarried and the married without children are increasingly an important part of city life. Kotkin and Modarres (2013) raised the question if "childless" cities

are really a desirable outcome or ultimately beneficial to contemporary life. While singles and couples without children tend to utilize the advantages of cities (shopping, restaurants, etc.), they tend not to make long term social commitments to the well-being of urban areas. Instead, should they ultimately have children, they often move out towards suburbs or more rural areas. Kotkin and Modarres observed that in the U.S. in major cities, family-friendly neighborhoods increasingly become taken over by well-to-do singles and this has significant economic and social consequences (2013). Young families with children are priced out of real estate markets. In fact, the geographer Richard Campanella has termed such areas as "kiddie deserts." This is specifically a Western phenomenon as in most non-Western societies, urban areas are rapidly growing due to family migration from rural areas. Again, this is an area that needs more scholarly and policy attention.

Urban Margins
In both high-income and low-income countries, regionality plays a critical role in access to resources. Especially, poor people, young children and 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). 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, multiple planes of existence are the reality for the majority of the population. Policies and strategies need to recognize that the experiences of the newly arrived migrants differ vastly from those of established urban dwellers.

Integrating Gender Equality into Planning and Management of Urban Areas
In order for urban areas to be safe, equitable, pleasant places to live, they need to involve the citizenry in their development. Of particular importance is an emphasis on gender equality. 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, 2017). Also, girls and women need to be able to move about without being assaulted or harassed. However sexual violence and sexual harassment in public spaces are extremely common experiences for girls and women. Streets, public transportation, schools, workplaces, water and food distribution sites and parks are all location that can be dangerous for them. This reduces their freedom of movement and their ability to participate in school, work and public life. This danger limits their access to basic services and can negatively impact their health and well-being. While domestic violence is now recognized as a human rights violation, violence and harassment in public spaces remains an issue that has received little if any attention. Thus, 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, 2017).

Several urban areas around the world 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 programme in 20 cities that partners with community-based women's organizations to specifically highlight the needs of women in urban centers (UN Women, 2017).

Recommendations on Participatory Urbanization

Strong Data is Foundational

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. Data would help states create appropriate policies and also assist with implementation (UN Habitat, 2016). There is 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 such significant factors. This would allow decisionmakers to reach the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of their populations. Gathering and disaggregating data requires capacity and collaboration between local and national governments. It also necessitates international support and collaboration.

Protect and Promote the Capabilities of Girls Women

Governments need to redesign laws and policies to highlight the centrality of including girls and women in participatory processes. This needs to happen at every level including at the community, national, and international levels. Including women in the design of programmes and policies is critical in order to understand the challenges and opportunities they may face in their specific contexts.

Identify Socially Excluded Groups and Regions

Discrimination and marginalization of minority groups remain a persistent problem throughout the world. This leads to a lack of opportunities with respect to paid employment, housing, education and other services. In order to create peaceful and inclusive societies, socially excluded groups need to be identified and supported.

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

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). 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.

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.

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 and sidewalks. In the U.S. these days it is common to allocate about 15 per cent 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 per cent of land. The generally accepted minimum standard for public space in high density areas (150 people per hectare) is approximately 45 per cent (30 per cent for streets and sidewalks and 15 per cent 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.

Individuals with Disabilities and Access
About 15 per cent of the world's population, or one billion people, are individuals with cognitive and / or physical disabilities. Approximately, 80 per cent of these individuals live in developing 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 owing to visual or oral impairments.

In low and middle-income countries women are estimated to make up to three-quarters of individuals with disabilities. When gender and disability intersect, marginalization is compounded. Disability, gender inequality and discrimination are closely linked. While some girls are born with disabilities, many others acquire disability 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, 2017b). 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 programmes. 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, 2017b)

Target 11.7 explicitly recognizes the barriers for individuals with disabilities, and focuses on the most vulnerable groups within this category. 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. Women experience higher rates of disability than men due to a number of factors that include gender discrimination, poverty, hunger, malnutrition, violence, overwork and depressive disorders. Access to appropriate physical accommodations that include areas to relax has been proven to increase well-being. In order to create spaces that provide benefits to this population, equal participation in design, implementation, and monitoring of all efforts related to planning and creation of public spaces is key.

Transportation is a fundamental element in creating urban areas that are sustainable, safer for pedestrians, and more energy efficient. Moreover, walking and biking have attendant health benefits. WHO studies indicate that in cities such as Copenhagen, cycle commuters have a 30 per cent lower annual mortality risk. Urban areas that have good pedestrian walkways and safe extensive transit systems offer accessibility to persons with disabilities, older people, youth, and the poor (WHO, 2012).

Creating Green Spaces and Access
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 neighborhoods that are characterized by high levels of sustainability. 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).

While Curitiba is considered a central Brazilian success story with respect to urban design, a lesser known but significant model of participatory planning comes from Belo Horizonte in Brazil. Belo Horizonte is Brazil's fourth largest city with 2.5 million inhabitants in the municipality and 3.7 million in its metropolitan area. Like all other major Brazilian cities, favelas make up about one fifth of its core and are found primarily on land that is deemed as unworthy for development and which is then settled with informal dwellings. In contrast to traditional urban planning processes, in favelas infra structure development occurs after informal occupation, and currently lack of proper sewage drainage is *the* major problem in these areas. To address the issues around urban migration, a new mayor in 1993 introduced participatory budget planning (PB) in Belo Horizonte, a process that had already been experimented with in the southern city of Porto Alegre. PB is a process where hundreds of thousands of citizens meet in public assemblies and establish investment priorities for their particular communities After the meetings, 25 projects per community, are chosen according to priorities voted on the by the participants.
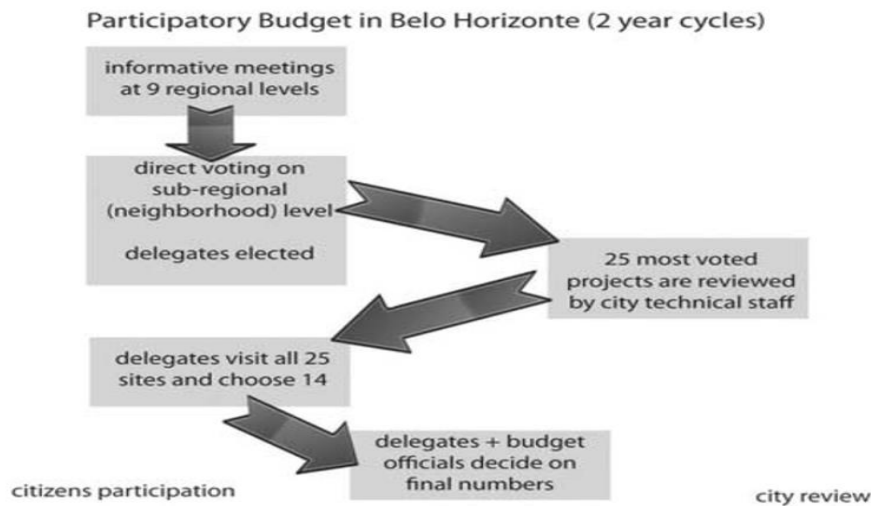
Figure 1: Diagram of participatory budget process in Belo Horizonte.
Source: Drawn by the author.

(Lara, 2010)

This process in Belo Horizonte has addressed specifically some of the most problematic issues found in the favelas and has resulted in new infra structure that includes many miles of roads, and the relocation of 1100 families that lived in areas subject to flooding. Of particular note is also that new waterways and green spaces and parks have been created in areas that are characterized by a density of 300 individuals by hectare (Lara, 2010). Moreover, the construction process has included about 80 per cent of workers from inside the favelas. Belo Horizonte exemplifies the process of inclusive participation and provides a noteworthy case due to the longevity of the democratic decision in this region which has has led to such significant changes to a complex environment.

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 per cent 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).

Recommendations on Creating Public and Green Spaces

The inclusion of socially excluded and vulnerable populations such as individuals with disabilities, women, and older persons is key in planning, creating and monitoring the usage of public and greens spaces.

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.

Efficient transport systems are key to increasing access to employment, health and community services and educational facilities especially for vulnerable populations such as the elderly and the disabled. Transport needs to include walking, cycling and public transport. Centralized planning that is coordinated between the various stakeholders is a key element.

Conclusion

The new framework provided by the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs is based on integration and an emphasis on a global compact focusing on universal participation, shared responsibility, and improved accountability (Global Monitoring Report, 2016).

Growing global interconnectedness is one of the most significant transformations brought on by changes in communication technologies. In tandem with increasing urbanization and the integration of markets, this is leading to increased interaction between nations. While as a reaction to globalization there are nationalistic overtones at work as well in many societies, the changes the world is facing cannot be stopped. Thus, it is critical that transnational organizations assist in brokering a global compact between nations. Effective implementation of the SDGs will need to take these globalizing trends into account in order to capitalize on them and to mitigate risks. New conditions may require new approaches. The SDG's allow for innovative, novel ways of thinking about global problems. Some of these problems are region specific, however others such as urbanization have universal elements that could be addressed through joint efforts by transnational, national, and local stakeholders.

FIGURE 2.4 Global connectedness has increased through intensified trade and communications

a. Global trade and finance are more integrated

b. Internet and mobile phone use is skyrocketing
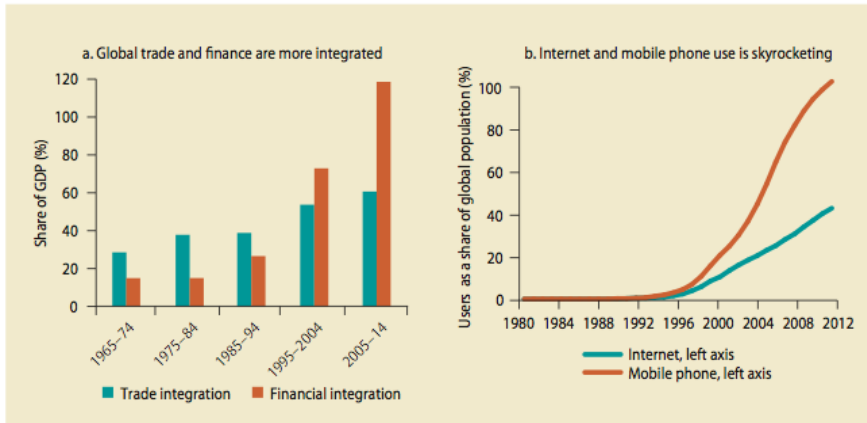
(Global Monitoring Report, 2015/2016, p. 101)

The SDGs specifically focus on the three elements of sustainable development: economic, environmental, and social development (Global Monitoring Report, 2016). While economic and environmental development have clear markers associated with them, the social dimension is more difficult to capture. Certain aspects such gender equality and gender mainstreaming have received a great deal of focused attention, but other elements such as equal civic participation of individuals without legal identities, and social rights to safe housing and green spaces for youths, and vulnerable or marginalized groups have been somewhat side lined. Contributing to this omission is a lack of focus on the institution of family in society and the roles that families play as a mechanism for integrating their members into the larger community.

Despite the great global progress that has been made with respect to gains in human development, inequality between individuals, families, communities and societies remains a major problem. Extreme poverty, a global refugee crisis, climate change, unemployment and vulnerable employment especially for youth, and economic instability pose major challenges to the implementation of the SDGs. Each of these factors is contributing to increased inequality and threatens the success of the social dimensions of the SDGs.

Lessons learned from the lack of progress in realising many of the Millennium Development Goals, suggest that the lack of the rule of law and weak institutions played a major role (UNDP, 2016). We cannot speak about participatory decision-making or urban planning, and sustainability if we do not take into account the largest youth generation in the history of the world: 1.8 billion individuals, and the many vulnerable populations such as those without legal identities and people with disabilities. However, we risk all of these people being marginalized and unheard, due to a lack of attention to their primary form of identification and support: their family relationships. As has been illustrated throughout this paper when examined from a family and life course perspective, it becomes clear that what happens earlier in life, such as being exposed to sub-standard housing or overcrowding in childhood or adolescence, is critical to subsequent processes of accumulating inequality (Lopoo & London, 2016). Those families that are deprived of resources in one arena of life, are usually also deprived of resources in other ones. The converse is also the case: those with access to resources, consistently and usually

49

increasingly, are able to access greater resources. The differential access to resources engenders and heightens inequalities across groups over time.

While educational policies, programmes today are focused primarily on early childhood as is reflected in policies and funding of education, more attention needs to be paid to the occupational training and attainment of life-long learning skills of youth. Young people need to learn about their legal and social rights and be encouraged to partake in civil society. As the UNDP 2016 report suggested, "… any attempt to build resilient governance must empower young women and men as key agents of change in their societies and communities" (p.16) The primary mechanisms to reach these young people is through their family memberships, the educational system and social media. The same holds true for reaching and empowering other vulnerable populations such as individuals with disabilities, women, and those who lack legal identities, are refugees, or belong to otherwise socially excluded groups.

Sustainable development can only be carried out through participatory leadership, adherence to the rule of law and a stronger role advocating for their citizens by states. This will require that the private and public sectors partner together and act in the interest of individuals and families. This overarching goal requires data that is accurate, timely and available to policy makers. This is a particular problem for low-income countries who often do not have the resources to engage the kind of researchers and field supervisors who can gather this kind of data (Sachs, 2012). If governments invested in real-time data gathering and reporting, they would be able to strengthen their policies and programmes through advocacy, participation, and evaluation and feedback.

In order to be successful, the SDGs need "the unprecedented mobilization of global knowledge operating across many sectors and regions. Governments, international institutions, private business, academia and civil society will need to work together to identify the critical pathways to success in ways that combine technical expertise and democratic representation" (Sachs, 2012, p. 2211). Ultimately, the realization of the SDGs is contingent on an understanding that individuals and families play a critical role in their implementation. These are not abstract processes. Instead, individuals and families are affected by issues such as the global housing market, community and national adherence to the rule of law, and the lack of conflict in their societies. Conversely, individuals and families help create and modify laws, procedures and policies at local and national levels. Sometimes in an overt manner as the example on participatory budgeting from Belo Horizonte in Brazil exemplified, and many times at a less obvious level such as raising healthy, peaceful children.

On the one hand, there exists a popular global rhetoric exhorting the important contributions of families make to their members and to society. On the other, placing families and their social rights at the center of policy design and implementation is not common or easily achieved. However, 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. Each one of the goals, including the ones discussed in this paper, can only be accomplished by recognizing how foundational families are to the implementation and sustainability of the 2030 agenda.

General Recommendations:

1. *Increase Awareness among Policy Makers on the Linkages between Family Functions and Contributions and the Sustainable Development Goals.*
Policy makers need to understand the concrete relationship between poverty, inequality,, child and youth development, family functioning the implementation and success of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets. This requires holistic, coherent approaches and analyses. In order to create inclusive, peaceful societies, individuals and families need supports across the various sectors of employment, health care, education, and housing. Particular attention needs to be paid to gender issues and vulnerable populations.

2. *Emphasize Relevant Data Collection*
A critical recommendation that would strengthen the implementation of the SDGs discussed in this paper and that impacts family life, is the need for specific data gathering and analysis.

Virtually every report discussing the new SDGs highlights the need for more extensive and disaggregated data. This is particularly the case in non-Western contexts and low-income countries where data gathering is often a low priority. Moreover, many places do not have the trained social scientists needed to conduct culturally relevant data collection. 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.

Investing in data collection and analysis would lead to stronger family policy formulation. Today's technological advances allow for new data gathering techniques that could be taught at the community and even family level. Academics, states and communities need to work in collaboration with transnational organizations and educational institutions to implement such data gathering and analysis techniques. Data needs to be collected specifically on the characteristics of families and households with an emphasis on child and youth well-being as well as gender specific criteria.

3. *Create National and Transnational Capacity*
Social protection is a critical aspect of protecting the most vulnerable families. In order to implement national, cultural and regionally specific social protection plans, a variety of stakeholders need to be part of the planning and implementation teams. This necessitates increasing awareness and interaction among stakeholders: policy makers, transnational NGO's, and academics that address the linkages among the SDGs specifically around poverty, hunger, law, education and gender equality and empowerment. Capacity building is a key feature of implementing the SDGs in a sustainable manner.

To create capacity multiple stakeholders need to be involved in order to integrate appropriate information into policy formation and programme implementation and monitoring (i.e. build teams that include social scientists, policy makers, NGO representatives, family representatives (both women and men), community leaders, and other stakeholders). Bringing together community leaders in order to better understand and address the obstacles facing vulnerable

individuals and families is also necessary. Many individuals only have access to community based political processes. Thus, it is necessary to increase engagement at that local level. Moreover, inter-ministerial approaches to working with families need to be supported and furthered. Issues such as poverty are closely linked with mental health and from a more macro perspective with creating more peaceful environments.

4. *Prioritise the Inclusion, Protection and Participation of Vulnerable Populations and Families*
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. Evidence from Latin America indicates that targeting vulnerable children and families who are most in need is another effective method for raising school attendance and attainment in schools (Baulch, 2011).

5. *Facilitate Delivery of Services and Increase Civic Participation through Digital Media*
Digital media has the potential to enhance individual and family lives by facilitating access to economic, social, legal and political sectors. Digital identification can reduce basic barriers to exercising rights and accessing services, and it can accelerate innovation in how services are delivered. The use of these new types of technologies can reduce gender imbalances and increase participation by vulnerable groups such as individuals with disabilities, refugees, and those without a formal legal status.

6. *Engage Youth to Create Peaceful, Sustainable Communities and Nations*
Engaging youth is going to be a key factor with respect to creating peaceful societies in the future. Given their numbers, transnational, national, and local initiatives need to specifically target enabling educational and occupational policies and programmes. Youth participation in decision-making at all levels of society needs to be highlighted and promoted.
These initiatives need to involve both males and females and take cultural contexts and constraints into account. This requires knowledge about family relationships in various environments.

7. Prioritise Gender in every Aspect of Family and Community Work
Gender inequality needs to be addressed at every societal level 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 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 girl's 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).

8. Monitor Progress of the Implementation of the Social Aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals 11 and 16 with a Focus on Families.
States should develop national strategies which will be subject to review towards the targets identified that have implicit family implications. These reviews need to be conducted in a participatory manner that includes states, international organizations and civil society. It is also extremely important that cultural context be taken into account.

Recommendations for Governments / States

1. Prioritise Family Issues, Rights, and Concerns through Centralized Efforts by States
The creation of *family focused ministries*, or a branch within a ministry that focuses on families is an important mechanism for supporting and strengthening families. In addition, instituting explicit, holistic national family policies are a key feature of states that have successful initiatives and programmes. 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. Korea provides a useful example of a society that moved from an implicit family policy to an explicit family policy with the Framework Act on Healthy Families which was passed in 2004. Furthermore, 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). Creating a family ministry has both symbolic and practical implications: it highlights the value of families and it allows for greater integration of planning and services.

State supported *family hubs* are another significant approach to centralizing services that pertain to laws, policies and programmes for families. Poverty is closely related to physical and mental health. Centralizing services specifically about physical and mental health as well as educational opportunities would lead to easier dissemination of knowledge about legal rights and services, especially for vulnerable and marginalized populations and families. For instance, using schools or child care centers as hubs where families can meet for child care, youth activities, elder care, and training opportunities facilitates interaction and the dissemination of knowledge. Family hubs are gaining in popularity in the UK in particular. Several initiatives are expanding child centers as hubs for local services and family support which include birth registration, postnatal services, information on childcare, employment and debt advice, substance abuse services, and relationship and parenting support (BASW, 2016; Essex Govt. UK, 2018;).

2. Encourage the Dissemination of Information about Early Child Development, Positive Youth Development, Gender Equality, and Family Communication and Relationships
States need to engage in information campaigns that include formal educational venues, social media, and community trainings to disseminate information about the importance of early childhood development, positive youth development and gender equality. There are already many best practice examples from various regions of the world including Sub-Saharan Africa using non-traditional educational materials to educate women and men about these issues. The family life education field and sociology of the family are also sources of information for

information on strengthening relationships within families and reducing conflict between members.

3. Boost States' Efforts to Enforce the Rule of Law to Support Specifically Women and Marginalized Populations

The rule of law is a key feature to improving individuals and families' lives. In particular, violence against women, older persons and the disabled can be lessened by strict enforcement of formal laws that are already on the books in most places. States need to ensure that formal laws take precedence over customary laws and that individuals and families are aware and able to access their rights.

4. Facilitate the Exchange of Good Practices

States need to create forums where regional stakeholders including community members and officials can exchange information about best practices and policies that support and strengthen families.

Recommendations for Academics / Civil Society

1. Engage in Global Family-Focused Research

Academics need to conduct empirical quantitative and qualitative research in order to assist local, national, and transnational policy makers. They need to document the impacts of programmes and policies on family life and conduct evaluations of intended and unintended consequences of programmes and policies. Academics can assist by developing appropriate indicators and implementable methodologies for gathering data on families and for evaluating the direct and indirect effect of policies and programmes that affect family life and well-being.

2. Create Interdisciplinary Research Teams

The creation of interdisciplinary social science teams is a key element of investigating the relationship between families and local and global conditions. Unemployment, sub-standard housing, poverty, health, and access to services are often interrelated issues. Comprehensive, holistic studies can provide the much needed data to justify expenditures and the creation of programmes and services that support families. This type of research can lead to the creation of a repository of best practice examples with respect to policies and programmes that enourage and strengthen family life.

3. Design Educational Family-Focused Programmes that are Relevant in a Globalized World

Academics need to properly prepare future policy makers by ensuring that social science programs which emphasize families also have a strong global focus. This includes embedded global curricular experiences and a global slant to undergraduate and graduate family oriented programs.

4. Advocate for Skills Attainment and Inclusive Participatory Decision-Making Models that Include Varied Family Members

A highly globalized world necessitates investing in skills attainment and educating citizens about the importance of participatory approaches to decision-making. Given the gendered nature of

many societies, it is important to include both women and men in participatory groups. Social excluded groups also need to be given a voice in creating sustainable, inclusive cities and human settlements. Academics can advocate for inclusive participation in local, national and transnational environments by providing best practice examples and empirical data.

5. Expand Information about the Foundational Aspects of Education

Academics need to emphasize to relevant policy makers that investment in formal and informal educational opportunities for women and marginalized groups is a key aspect of creating peaceful, sustainable societies. Understanding the cultural conditions under which families live is critical in order to ensure that all family members have access to these opportunities. Academics can provide case studies and recommendations about how to best create participatory, egalitarian educational and training opportunities that reach all members of a particular society.

6. Advocate for social protection with a Focus on Families.

Every individual and family has economic, political and social rights. Academics need to provide "hard" data about which types of programmes and policies provide appropriate, culturally relevant social protections for children and families.

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