Family Homelessness

THROUGH THE LENS OF THE UNITED NATIONS 2030 AGENDA:

VOLUME II

UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL

Foreword

UNANIMA International is a coalition of 22 communities of religious women and a group of friends who bring their voices, concerns and experiences as educators, health providers, social workers, development and community builders to the United Nations (UN). Since obtaining UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) special accreditation in 2005, the organization has committed itself to working for peace and human dignity, by service to our members, the UN and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and community based groups, through advocacy, collaboration, education and action. UNANIMA International's continued and evolving focus on women and children/girls who have been displaced has prompted the organization to take a lead role in homeless advocacy at the United Nations, as well as research. As noted in volume I,[1] our present focus is on Family Homelessness and displacement as one of several global concerns that we continue to seek to address with partners at the United Nations.

In volume I, we firmly established combating the issue of homelessness as integral in achieving the 2030 agenda. We were in the middle of highlighting the extreme numbers of family homelessness when struck by COVID-19. It will take us some time to know the extent of the numbers that are emerging during this pandemic. It is also too early to know the full extent of the economic, social and psychological effects this crisis is causing. While the top priorities for governments is to stop the virus, the UN Secretary General, Antonio Gutteres, has clearly stated that the 2030 Agenda is a natural organiz-

Photos by Eye for Ebony and Marco Ceschi

ing principle once the world can shift its focus to recovery.

The COVID-19 crisis has changed the way we look at the world. It has caused us to re-evaluate how society operates. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can give us a broader perspective in order to tackle this global crisis. The pain of the virus has had devastating effects on sustainable development, in fact the effects of the virus has put in jeopardy the meeting of the goals by 2030. And yet in the face of this uncertainty the SDGs can be a great framework to counter the devastating effects, and be used as a roadmap for recovery now, at the time of the crisis and into the future.

In this edition, UNANIMA International will analyze Family Homelessness and its intersections with the SDGs in the context of human rights and COVID-19. Staying true to our mantra "don't talk about us, without us" through a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) we will explore lived experiences, practitioners, advocacy, policy recommendations, and present resources highlighting SDGs 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15 and 17. In doing so we will be calling on all State and Non-state actors to support local, national and international targeted policies that support the most marginalized in our communities, especially those left furthest behind in our world.

Sincerely,

Jean Quinn

Jean Quinn, DW
Executive Director
UNANIMA International

Acronyms

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
COP21	Paris Agreement Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
COVID-19	Coronavirus pandemic 2019
CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities
CSocD	UN Commission for Social Development
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Council
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GCM	Global Compact for Migration
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
LDC	Least Developed Countries
NAB	National Advisory Board
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
ODA	Official Development Assistance
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNCRP	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WGEH	Working Group to End Homelessness

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Introduction

Hantasoa Fida Cyrille Klein
Diplomatic and Consular Agent
of the Republic of Madagascar

As a Diplomat of the Republic of Madagascar I have been committed myself in the fight against Family Homelessness for many years and set as one of my priorities to engage my country, as well as other African countries, in the long and difficult Journey to fight against homelessness. Not only SDG 1, but all the 2030 Agenda Goals and Objectives, will not be reached if the issue of homelessness is not tackled. Homelessness is a common challenge for all countries around the Globe and concerns both developed and developing countries. Homelessness in Africa is a real issue, as housing difficulties are a very big challenge for governments.

During my time serving as Malagasy Diplomat at the United Nations in New York, in partnership with the civil society, namely the NGO Working Group to End Homelessness (WGEH), I engaged the Group of African States at the United Nations to take the lead in the Homelessness issues in the works of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD) at the United Nations, as Africa is

Photo by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

much concerned by the issue. Our focus was notably towards street children, as well as other African related challenges such as conflicts, and natural disasters. This led to the adoption of homelessness, by United Nations Member States, as the priority theme for the 58th session of the United Nations Commission for Social Development in February 2019: "Affordable housing and social protection for all to address homelessness."

For the first time in the history of the United Nations, the serious issue of homelessness was openly addressed and discussed by Member States as well as all other stakeholders. Yet the work does not stop there; the next step is to bring the issue of homelessness to the next level, which is the United Nations General Assembly through its Third Committee. Step by step, with the leadership of African Countries, Homelessness is addressed by United Nations Member States and I am convinced this will lead to more adequate global responses to Family homelessness.

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND
Family Homelessness and SDG 1

1 NO POVERTY

In recent decades we have seen a distinct fall in the number of people living in extreme poverty, marking one of the world's most successful, cohesive pushes towards sustainable development. Unfortunately, as reported by the UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research, the global COVID-19 pandemic, threatens a rise in extreme poverty of up to 8% for the first time in 30 years.[1] Poverty is both a cause and a symptom of family homelessness. Given the context, poverty and homelessness can and do present themselves in various forms globally. Perhaps displaying poverty in its most visible form, SDG 1 and the 2030 agenda as a whole cannot and will not be achieved unless the issue of Family Homelessness is addressed. If it is not addressed it will continue to push people further to the margins through lack of access to social and economic means and services.

Like homelessness, poverty is not only about how much income a person or family receives – but it is also about denial of opportunity.[2] As multidimensional and intergenerational issues, if poverty and homelessness are not addressed they can become cyclical, affecting individuals throughout the life cycle. This is especially true in the case of child poverty where a lack of fulfillment of basic needs often results in deficits that cannot easily be overcome later in life.[3] Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we have seen the ways in which individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness have been disproportionately affected. Those who were already living in vulnerable situations prior to the pandemic have fallen into further poverty, reducing years of socio-economic progress which remains at risk of further damage. While each of SDG1's indicators can be linked to homelessness, targets 1.4 and 1.5 can be directly improved if the issue of family homelessness is addressed.

Photo by Rostyslav Savchyn

Analysis

Willy Missack
Independent Climate Expert in Vanuatu and the Asia-Pacific

Among other projects, I'm part of the Technical Advisory Group under the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations,[4] focused mainly on climate migration in the Pacific. Where I am from, Vanuatu, the homelessness issue is quite sensitive and also less spoken about. However, people are confronted with it in different forms. For example back in 2018, a volcanic eruption caused the massive displacement of people, a whole island of whom had to settle in new lands.[5] This disaster really impacted young women and girls, and even in a visible way, that was so sad. When I walked into the communities I saw the impacts of relocation. What really hurts me is reports from young women about sexual abuse and violence that is happening.[6] We have different forms of homelessness, including where we have a family that will accommodate more than six other families in their house.

It's kind of silent homelessness where we don't even see it, but it's there. In Vanuatu, generally, there is a culture of respect and love that you have among people and communities that are living that way. However, gender inequality is an issue in different aspects of society, and when it comes to homelessness, women and young girls are very much vulnerable, even in the hidden situations. They may spend a lot of time trying to find ways to protect themselves from what is happening in the household, and to make sure that where they live their rights are respected and applied.

The capital is where people tend to move to from rural communities, and finding a settlement is quite challenging - particularly for people experiencing poverty. Often they find it challenging to access food and to find money, as finances are difficult nationally, and even working at minimum wage presents struggles. When we look at poverty in terms of climate change, the question is for those people who become poor, what happens to them? When people have lost buildings and don't have the finance to rebuild, they will find materials themselves - build from scratch, using local materials, so their shelters remain vulnerable. On a large scale, this is related to security. From climate change you can visibly see shortages and losses, including for the government losses. In commu-

Photo by Logan Weaver

nities, people are losing everything, including health and culture, and hunger has been created.

So with the current pandemic, COVID-19 exposes another challenge to economic development for our country as a home, for the Pacific Islands. We talk about the SDGs fight on poverty and climate change in the global scale, yet see regional and state scale increases in poverty and vulnerabilities to climate change.[7] For developing countries, there's too many of us taking the first step of changing environmental laws, and for developed nations, the need to implement them, as a preventive measure to reduce Family Homelessness. In the past islands have been very much directly impacted by high carbon emissions. While the pandemic gives opportunity to some of the developed countries to address carbon emissions by increasing the focus on environmental degradation, it becomes clear many other countries are using it to find solutions to the economy. For example, now in the Pacific, deep sea mining is being pursued, though it will hurt the environment.[8] This really highlights other issues in terms of the gender impact, as women are very much exposed to COVID-19 and climate change. Already many cultures have not allowed the equality of men and women; this really increases vulnerability, and these elements combined do intersect with Family Homelessness and displacement.

The greatest solutions are built in partnership (SDG 17). Civil society organizations, private sectors, government agencies (regional and international) who sit together and design policies and plans must really support the development of the community, to build ownership from the community perspective. Let's use and want these goals! From the global and regional perspective there's a gender gap, affecting SDGs from 1 to 17. Women have limited access to resistance and to justice. It is clear that women tend to be more poor than men and experience very high poverty rates - that leads to homelessness exposures, less economic power, and more trauma. In governance, those limited spaces that women have really increases their vulnerability in different aspects of society and all the aspects of development. If we really want to address these issues, we should focus on the gender gap. In Vanuatu under the National Advisory Board (NAB) on climate change[9] we aim to engage women to mainstream the agenda. One of the aspects is making sure that women are really contributing in the development of climate change

adaptation and mitigation projects and they'll become more effective.

Effective responses and policies leave no one behind, as is true in poverty and climate change prevention, adaptation and mitigation, as well as in industry strategy. Those policies must really incorporate the language of homelessness. In looking at policies which address displacement or relocation, it needs to make sure that children's education access and women's and girls access to clean water, issue of different cultural norms and protocols, sustainability of the shelter, access to energy technology and new century products that can improve livelihood, among other things, are considered. They must be very comprehensive. I don't see it yet in Vanuatu or even Rwanda. When the government gives informal settlements - the people brought there - you're not securing them. If we are not looking at the dignity of the people that move from one area to another area, and using a Human Rights-Based approach (HRBA), then we allow and open up the opportunity for the negative impacts of climate change, COVID-19, homelessness. One of the ways forward is policy integration: leave no one behind in all policies.

Note: this analysis was given through a virtual dialogue with UNANIMA International

Human Rights

We see the inequalities between nations manifesting in some's impoverishment or sustained statuses as underdeveloped or developing, and recognize historic and systemic reasons for this. In its local manifestations, poverty looks differently, has many intersections, and exists even where it is unexpected. In exploring the connection between poverty, Family Homelessness and human rights, wealth and income inequality are important to discuss in relation to the actualization of each and every human having their needs met and achieving holistic well-being. When our social policies and protections are not human-rights based, and rather punitive, we have lost the most essential element needed to end poverty, including in poverty's relationship to homelessness and housing insecurity. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) **Article 22** puts forth, "everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality."[10] The experience of extreme poverty, and the more pervasive and versatile experiences of homelessness and housing insecurity, are evidence of the great need for social security, specified as a human right. Though this topic is more openly discussed within international politics since the 2018 UN CSocD,[11] we nevertheless need to explicitly connect human rights obligations to the realm of "home" as part of plans and goals to end poverty and actualize social protection, and make sure that women, children, migrants and refugees are given special concern, as we know that social protections must account for the range of needs and drivers that continue to grow, especially with the theme of climate change. Relevant objectives from the Global Compact for Migration (GCM), in line with human rights laws, include: "Minimizing factors that compel people to leave their country of origin" (Objective 2) and "Reducing vulnerabilities of migrants in countries of origin, transit and destination" (Objective 7) among others.[12]

SDG 1 is essential to fulfill, but it is important to acknowledge that experiences from Human Rights-Based endeavors at the local level can provide evidence to encourage a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) to poverty reduction.[13] In

Photo by Aaron Thomas

his input for UNANIMA International's side event at the UN CSocD58, former Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, Philip Alston highlighted a good practice, "Barcelona was a very encouraging example. I met with the very charismatic mayor of Barcelona. They have set up an advisory group on homelessness which includes homeless people and women, trying to find solutions to these problems."[14] In a July 2020 interview with UNANIMA International Julieta Perucca, Deputy Director of The Shift also pointed towards the city of Barcelona for their significant work to end homelessness. The city had a 2015-2020 strategic "plan for fighting homelessness" that extends until the end of this year.[15] Perucca went on to share another example of grassroots efforts to address these issues, "there's a huge intersection with human rights based upgrading of informal settlements, and climate change. Communities actually know, or with just very little capacity building they can know, how to upgrade informal settlements in a manner that's human rights compliant that uses local material, that's very climate change friendly and that's resistance to climate disasters brought on by climate change. We work with partners in El Salvador that are doing really amazing human rights compliant work with communities, upgrading informal settlements - it's all grassroots. They make sure that the settlement is resistant to flooding, to heat. It's really, really incredible work."

Testimony

Mukuru Slum, Kenya

Homeless due to injury & lack of social protection floors

"My name is Aida, I have 5 children. My home is not mine. The bed is not mine, only clothes belong to me. My friends have supported me. Once I had my own house where I lived and took care of my children really well until I got in a road accident, and was admitted to the hospital. I stayed there for long. By the time I came back the landlord took all my things; they took over my household to compensate for the rent. Back then I had a small business selling groundnuts. If I wasn't in the hospital I would be able to pay the rent. The biggest challenge of getting my own house again is paying the house rent because I lost almost everything and am recovering. The children are really suffering because when I was able to pay the rent, I had a bigger house with a bed for the children, too. But currently the children sleep on the floor. And the beddings are not that good or enough for the children. The community, like the neighbors, have tried to assist. A Catholic church and Mukuru Promotion Center have been supporting me with food and clothes.

Life has been very difficult because my parents were not well off and I didn't go to school, so it has been very diffi-

cult without an education. Three of my children have gone to school and the government pays the school fees. My first born is very bright, but the lack of school fees past primary school affected his ability to go. My message to the Kenyan Government and the United Nations is that I pray I can have my own house where my children can be comfortable, and able to go to school and have a better education. I believe if we were able to get our own house and my children access to education, my problem would be well solved. My husband has gone away. He abandoned me. When I was pregnant with this baby, he wanted me to get an abortion because he did not want another child. I decided to keep the baby. He is working, he has a nice job, but won't support me at all. An opportunity to start my own business again would be very useful. I am not happy to go around begging for food or a place to stay. My body is naturally big, so sometimes people don't believe me when I say I am in need - but I am. Given the opportunity to start my own business, I would be very comfortable and able to support my children. That's what I want to do. I always pray to God for comfort, all of the stress and my problems I just give to God.

*Note: *Aida participated in a formal interview with UNANIMA International, translated from Kiswahili by Jacinta Kihiu, Social Worker at Mukuru Promotion Center*

* Name change

Responder

Elizabeth Mwangi
Programs Manager at Reuben Center

Life is precarious for more than 700,000 people living in Mukuru slum. They are forced to live in inadequate housing and have little access to clean water, sanitation, health care, schools and other essential public services. They also live under the constant threat of forced eviction from the makeshift structures they call home. Their houses are constructed either of mud or iron sheets and are crammed up together. Each household has an estimated 5- 7 members living in a 10'x10' room/house without ventilation - only a door. There are no drainage/ sanitation systems and raw waste passes through open drains and leaks through some houses and spills into the river. COVID 19 has exacerbated the situation with the containment measures causing thousands to lose their livelihoods thus frustrating the poverty reduction milestones made. Family Homelessness cannot be addressed effectively without addressing povert. To help reduce the brunt effects of poverty Ruben Centre is engaged in the following activities: Food security initiatives; Community education; Skills training; Advocacy initiatives; Psychosocial support; Provision of affordable health services; Provision of free primary education.

Photo by Eunice Mobegi

Advocacy Recommendations

Acknowledging the role civil society, the private sector, and citizens play in advocacy for resolving issues of poverty in the context of Family Homelessness, **we recommend:**

- Increase advocacy targeting services for maternal, mental, and physical health and poverty reduction that will extend to children
- Advocate for a Human-Rights Based Approach to contribute to poverty reduction
- Educate about the pervasiveness of poverty as an underlying cause of many other drivers of homelessness (including family break-down, unemployment, and inability for shelter to withstand climate change processes)
- Promote understanding that poverty and inequalities remains present in the Global North and Global South, despite the great variation in manifestations
- Encourage closing the technology gap, to bring innovation and accessibility of resources and knowledge to individuals in poverty

Policy Recommendations

We believe the following policy recommendations are essential to addressing and preventing Family Homelessness, and are applicable at the local, national and international levels. **We encourage:**

- Implement policies that ensure access to education, nutrition, and holistic healthcare from an early age
- Implement gender sensitive social protection policies available to all people dwelling within a society, for short-term and long-term effects on poverty reduction in an effort to curb inequalities and exclusion; these must address income and wealth gaps, inequality of access to basic services like healthcare and education, and gender inequality especially in times of crisis
- Protecting and ensuring children's rights in order to eradicate child poverty, and contribute to eradicating poverty in all its forms.
- Ensure access to reliable electricity and water sources as a first step in overcoming poverty, followed with access to new technologies
- Create national policies that allocate financial resources to make sanitary products affordable for all women

Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness: ***"Reaffirms that poverty has various forms and dimensions, including homelessness and living in inadequate housing, which is often linked to lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihoods"***[16]

– Draft Resolution Point 5, p. 4

Resources

Global Coalition to End Child Poverty, "Briefing Paper: Child Sensitive Social Protection," https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56588879e4b0060cdb607883/t/59f9b821e31d1932688d7524/1509537833016/CSSP+Briefing+Branded.Final_01112017.pdf

NGO Committee on Migration, "An Overlooked Emergency: The Poverty of Forced Migrant Children," https://ngomigration.files.wordpress.com/2018/09/an-overlooked-emergency-the-poverty-of-forced-migrant-children-june-2017-1.pdf

Global Citizen, "Why Climate Change and Poverty Are Inextricably Linked," https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/climate-change-is-connected-to-poverty/

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND
Family Homelessness and SDG 2

2 ZERO HUNGER

Historically, hunger has been one of our global community's largest and longest lasting issues. As noted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation, while there is more than enough food produced to feed each of us around the world, inequality and poor distribution continues to drive the issue.[17] After decades of decline, in 2015 the number of individuals and families experiencing hunger and malnutrition began to increase both in developed and developing nations.[18] Homeless Children are among the demographics most vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition as they often have limited access to food, especially food that satisfies their nutritional needs.[19] Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we have witnessed further attention drawn to the disparity of access to food and the effects of hunger and malnutrition within vulnerable populations. Homeless and housing insecure families in particular were among the most severely affected with the closure of soup kitchens and distribution centers amidst lockdowns leading to, or increasing food insecurity.

It is evident that eradication of Family Homelessness has the potential to contribute significantly to the realization of goal 2, specifically **Target 2.1**, "by 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round," as alleviating a person's vulnerability has the potential to ensure increased food security.

CARMELITE SISTERS
OF CHARITY
VEDRUNA
MUMBAI

Analysis

Pablo J. Sanchez, MS, MA
Data Scientist - Measurement, Evaluation & Learning, The Hunger Project

The Co-Incidence of Homelessness and Hunger

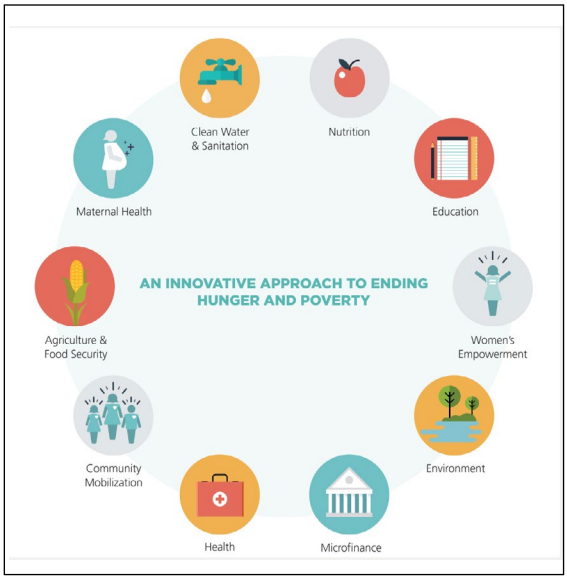
During times of crisis, hunger can be both a driver and consequence of Family Homelessness. In anticipation of a global economic downturn triggered by the effects of COVID-19, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) forecasts an increase of 14.4 million to 80.3 million undernourished people, with a majority increase anticipated in low-income countries.[20] Organizations such as Refugees International and the UN Refugee Agency warn of the pandemic's intensification of existing vulnerabilities to the world's refugee and forcibly displaced populations, which prior to 2020 sat at an estimated 70.8 million people worldwide, with countless more lacking adequate housing.[21] In this crisis, it is critical that international organizations and civil society groups pursue clearer understandings of the scope and degrees of hunger and homelessness, and lean into proven, small-scale, community-driven and gender-focused solutions as both preventative and alleviating measures.

Missing Data and the Implications on Action

There is a notable lack of research on the relationship between housing and food insecurity globally, and specifically, within a rural context. As a result, hunger and homelessness are often used as interchangeable and static descriptors of poverty, despite research indicating that there are complex patterns of food insecurity that exist on the individual level that vary with the resources available (e.g., higher monthly income and regular shelter use) and obstacles faced (e.g., domestic violence, drug, and physical and mental health problems).[22] Acknowledging that hunger is not uniformly experienced based on existing factors, we can conclude that chronically homeless and forcibly displaced people, who suffer multiple deficits, are particularly food-insecure and vulnerable to shocks to systems that supply sustenance. Still, more research is needed on the adaptations of vulnerable families in both rural and urban contexts, particularly when drivers of displacement are present and supply chains are disrupted, but barriers to mobility exist, as is being globally experienced through the current pandemic.[23]

Insights from The Hunger Project

In 2019, The Hunger Project conducted 14 studies, reaching 3189 rural households across 7 African nations. Results from the studies indicated, unsurprisingly, that households reporting shelters made of inadequate roof, wall or floor material were on average 7 times more-likely to also experience severe to moderate hunger within the last 30 days, when compared to households with shelters made of more stable materials. Yet, anecdotal evidence from these same communities indicates that visible homelessness is rare, as families can rely on extended networks of support, shared labor and more accessible space to construct homes made of available materials. Data from the same communities supports these observations, indicating that respondents reporting more members per household were less-likely to experience severe to moderate hunger. Without a more adaptive and global definition available, traditional poverty measures cannot adequately convey the complexity of homelessness and its impact on hunger. It must be noted that the methodologies employed demonstrate bias toward sheltered families and do not effectively sample for those not visibly sheltered within the participating population.



Source: https://www.thp.org/our-work/our-approach

SDG Recommendations

Recommendations to address Family Homelessness within SDG 2's framework include: the adoption of a global definition of homelessness, with attention to the experience of rural communities where the drivers exist but individual and family adaptations vary; empowering communities to create, stock and manage their own food reserves as a preventative measure to disrupted supply chains; focusing on women

as catalysts for resilient families and communities; and strengthening relationships between community leadership and local governments, where much of the needed resources are managed and distributed. Among the SDG 2 targets, the following should be prioritized for their implications on Family Homelessness: **Target 2.1** "ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round;" **Target 2.3** "double agricultural productivity and income through land access, productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets, value addition opportunities and non-farm employment;" and **Target 2.4** "ensure sustainable food production systems through the implementation of resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production while maintaining ecosystems and adaptability to the effects of climate change[24] Globally, displaced populations often find themselves adapting to the triple burden of food, housing and healthcare insecurity.[25] As peri- and post-pandemic realities come into focus, it is imperative that SDG targets evolve to reflect the realities of people living at the intersection of these issues, those furthest left behind.

Human Rights

The Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition highlights international legal instruments including CEDAW, UNCRC, UNDRIP, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination and ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) as relevant to the right to food and nutrition.[26] Though the right may not be disputed within many contexts, the connections between food and shelter, or security and nutrition, can be overlooked. Migrants and refugees, people who are displaced and on the move, or new to a socio-political environment, often will experience difficulty in having this right met. De-emphasizing this particular human right would be detrimental to general human health and wellbeing, as enjoyment of the other human rights would be difficult without one's most basic and biological needs being met. Food and nutrition, most especially for children and youth whose brains are yet developing and nursing mothers, affects physiological development.

The UDHR explicitly states in **Article 25.** "(1) Everyone has the

right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection."[27] The Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition provides insight on national legal aspects concerning this right, explaining: "the State recognizes the right to adequate food if that right is explicitly enshrined in the state's legislation, i.e. the constitution, supreme law, framework legislation, ordinary legislation, statutes etc (i), depending on the national legal order. Also, legal recognition of the right to food can take place via direct incorporation of the ICESCR into the national legal order."[28] This legal recognition from states, with complimentary legislation and programs for its fulfillment would be a necessary start to ensuring the human right to nutrition and fulfillment of SDG 2.

Testimony

Sister Joséphine Gueye, Society of Mary
Social Worker in Senegal

“In conflict situations groups of people and especially women, young girls and children are displaced for multiple reasons. We all agree that during their displacement these groups fall progressively into situations of extreme vulnerability, sometimes bordering on total destitution. There are always people who are more affected than others... Within this group of most vulnerable people we cite women, young girls and accompanied children with whom we work at Caritas Dakar. Our zone of intervention is Dakar itself and its suburbs in Senegal.

I am a Social Worker, responsible for a Project “Mère et Enfant” (Mother and Child) at a welcoming centre for refugees and immigrants (P.A.R.I.), a service of Caritas Dakar where we strive to support women, young girls and migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking children, with an approach assuring them a better future. This is done through various activities: financial support to secure housing for homeless migrants, providing food, financing of micro projects, professional training and education for children. Many refugee women and children meet

difficulties trying to satisfy basic needs. Regarding food, we distribute food kits called "hungry stomachs have no ears" to work towards independence regarding food needs.

We offer women professional training in catering, while providing school fees for children by giving scholarships. We also accompany women and young girls with AGR funding (Income Generating Activities). To enable this vulnerable group to be self sufficient, [in particular so they may meet their nutritional needs], it is necessary to give them the possibility of earning an income. Because of limited means and huge demands on these small resources, we are obliged to select the most vulnerable women and young girls. We are able to orient certain women and young girls towards other NGOs when it comes to cases of trauma, which we do not have the capacity to deal with in our structure. ”

Note: Sister Joséphine submitted a written statement to UNANIMA International

Photo by Vision Pic

Responder

Éamonn Casey
Project Officer - Human Rights & Advocacy, Misean Cara, Ireland

Misean Cara members operating in over 50 countries readily identify with the links between inequality, denial of rights and multiple vulnerabilities of certain population groups, on the one hand, and the problems of hunger, food security and nutrition that undermine progress towards SDG2, on the other. Disparities in access to food and the effects of hunger and malnutrition are particularly true for marginalised and excluded population groups, which vary with context but often include (inter alia) women, children, persons with a disability, and forcibly displaced or homeless people, including refugees, IDPs and some categories of migrants.

In addition to enhancing income-generation and sustainable livelihoods options for poor and marginalised groups, it's vital then to build up assets and coping capacities; help empower and mobilise communities; and engage policy-makers and duty-bearers to achieve changes in policy and practice (on agriculture, food, credit, land use, rural development, etc.) that support SDG2 and the right to sustainable livelihoods. Similarly, it's important for advocates to identify linkages (and coherence problems) across different SDGs, while bringing awareness of commitments and incremental gains from human rights mechanisms into SDG processes - and vice versa.

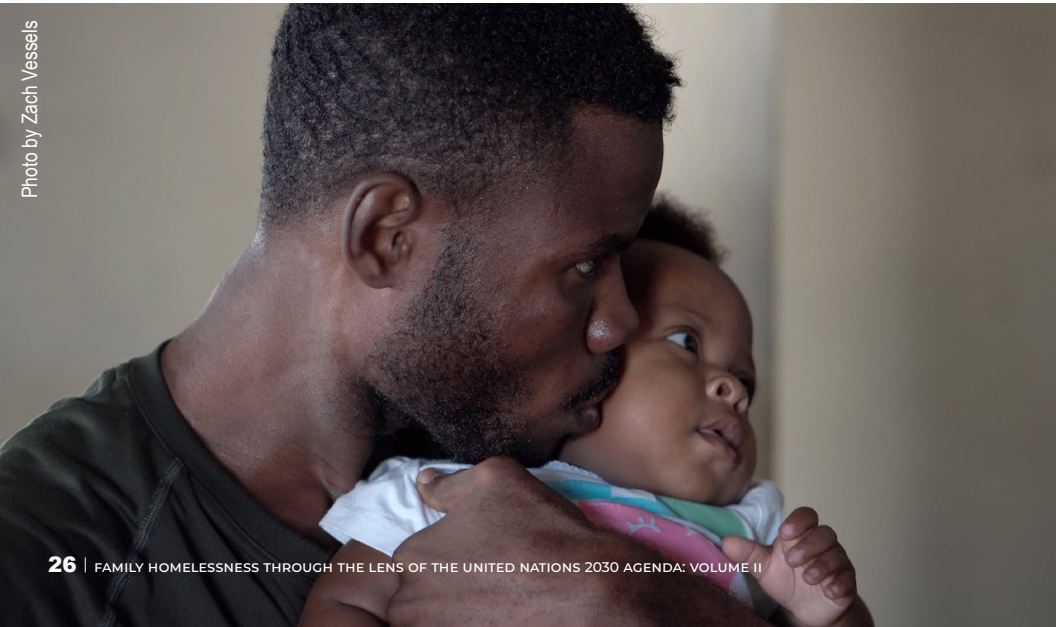


Photo by Zach Vessels

Advocacy Recommendations

Acknowledging the role civil society, the private sector, and citizens play in advocacy for resolving issues of hunger and food insecurity in the context of Family Homelessness, **we recommend:**

- Encourage community-led models for food access, production and security
- Educate about women's right to land and how land access and ownership will strengthen agricultural systems, as well as reduce housing insecurity
- Ensure sustained focus and political will towards meeting all children's nutritional needs, reducing bodily trauma, and setting children up for healthy lives
- Advocate for country strategic planning and analysis of barriers each country face in the efforts to eradicate hunger, food, insecurity and malnutrition
- Advocate for the use of green technology to address issues associated with hunger including food desserts, malnutrition and agriculture

Policy Recommendations

We believe the following policy recommendations are essential to addressing and preventing Family Homelessness, and are applicable at the local, national and international levels. **We encourage:**

- A policy recommendation is needed in the area of transformation in agriculture and food systems, and the empowerment of rural people,-women and men, as critical agents of change
- Implement Social Protection and Food Systems that are Economically efficient, Socially inclusive, and Environmentally Sustainable
- To provide tools and training to increase farm production at the local level driven by traditional and organic methods.
- Implement policies and strategies to address barriers to food deserts, especially those associated with inadequate and social housing
- Ensure disaster risk reduction policies to address access to adequate food

"The rent eats first."[29]

– Matthew Desmond

Resources

FAO, "The Right to Food around the Globe: Constitutional Recognitions of the Right to Adequate Food Database," http://www.fao.org/right-to-food-around-the-globe/en/

Trinity College Dublin, "SHARECITY100 Database," https://sharecity.ie/research/sharecity100-database/

The Hunger Project, "Our Approach," https://www.thp.org/our-work/our-approach/

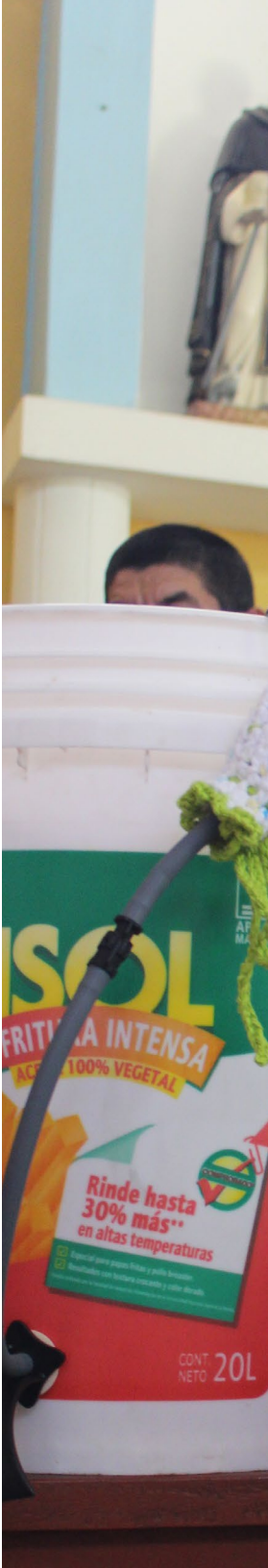
LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND
Family Homelessness and SDG 6

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Photo by Kamil Mehmood

With water scarcity, poor water quality and inadequate sanitation negatively affecting food security, nutrition, health, and educational and economic opportunities for poor families across the world, the realization of SDG 6 is integral if we are to achieve the sustainable development goals. In 2017, every tenth child death was caused by diarrheal disease, diseases the World Health Organisation (WHO) describes as "both treatable and preventable" when access to clean water and sanitation is ensured.[30] While substantial progress has been made in increasing access to clean drinking water and sanitation, billions of people—mostly in rural areas—still lack these basic services. Among these are individuals and families experiencing homelessness or living in inadequate housing.[31]

As noted by the WHO, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of sanitation, hygiene and access to adequate clean water.[32] Unfortunately, it has also highlighted the inequalities and lack of access to these precious resources that are faced by individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Proper addressal of homelessness and housing insecurity as issues includes focus on access to water and sanitation, therefore contributing to its achievement.



Analysis

Meera Karunananthan

Director of Blue Planet Project and UNANIMA International Woman of Courage Award Recipient in 2016

The Blue Planet Project works with communities around the world to promote the human right to water and sanitation.[33] We also support communities, in circles against the privatization and commodification of water. My PhD research focuses on struggles for access to water for women living in precarious housing settlements and informal settlements, and also people who live in what they call "townships" in South Africa. These peri-urban neighborhoods outside of the core of the city were racialized communities and impoverished communities. These amazing movements for access to water - a lot of them are dominated by women - who are fighting for their rights. Frontline communities and their experiences can better support international analysis of global policy. But also we can "co-construct" policy, by building challenges, channels and solidarity with frontline communities.

Housing rights are very much linked to: what does the house provide? It provides shelter. It also provides access to services like water and sanitation, and those are basic to be able to live, to have a healthy, safe, dignified life within a house. So a house is not just the structure. Socio-economic rights are all interconnected. And water is seen as sort of a cross-cutting, basic right. It's connected to the SDG on cities (11), SDGs that relate to the environment (13,14, 15), and to public health (SDG 3). As a solidarity NGO, we hosted a webinar with people from frontline communities sharing their stories and providing a sort of analysis on access to water and public health within the context of COVID-19.[34] One of the people from an informal settlement in South Africa talked about the fact that in one part of the informal settlement there were 4,000 houses sharing two toilets. And how does one practice safe social distancing in that context? So the crisis really highlights the ways in which public health, water and sanitation and housing are closely linked.

With the COVID-19 crisis in particular, we're seeing how problematic and dangerous private financing for water and sanitation services or any kind of essential public services can be. If you look at the history of how we acquired public utilities, public water, and sanitation utilities in North America, or in

Photo by Markus Spiske

Europe, it had to do with the containment of epidemics; governments realized that this patchwork of private services that existed at the turn of the 20th century was leading to their spread. You couldn't contain them just by providing water to rich neighborhoods. Everybody needed healthy and safe drinking safe water to contain the spread of disease, in order to keep the general workforce safe. But this model was never fully developed in the Global South, in part because around that time, in Africa and in Asia, colonial cities were being built around the needs of the colonial elite. When those countries were decolonized, there was a big push to bring in private financing which has the model to service those from whom they can make profits. So, that's created in cities throughout the Global South: the patchwork of access. So the SDGs, if they are to address that challenge, must promote public funding for public water and sanitation services - that meet the needs of all.[35]

Water tends to be from outside the city. Often you see as urban populations grow, you need more and more water and you need to go further and further to access that water. Urban areas are centers for capital accumulation. And so to service that, you have resources being stripped from rural areas. Rural lifestyles become unsustainable for a number of different reasons. It's a much bigger question, where we look at it in the water justice work in the campaigns to support rural communities against mining, or their battles against big beverage companies that are dispossessing small farmers in rural communities, indigenous communities [having] their rights to water, or big agriculture and the ways in which small farms are disappearing. It becomes more and more impossible to have healthy rural communities. We can't talk about environmental solutions without talking about the kinds of strategies we need at the local level for people to have control over their resources and services. Public control over water is vital to talk about, if we're going to talk about what climate adaptation and mitigation looks like.

It's been really important for me working at the UN, the international level, to always be grounded in analysis that is provided by colleagues who are much closer to the front lines of struggles for access to water. This research for example in Cape town, actually looking at climate mitigation and adaptation strategies of cities, and the work that's happening at the international level to promote particular models of climate adaptation, my ability to critique that has been through conversations that I've had with women who are activists - who are fighting water meters and all of these strategies that have been used by the city of Cape town to restrict their access to water. I have information from women who've talked about what that means for them living on the outskirts of the city, where already the flow is restricted, what it means for them to stand with a bucket, in line, and then wait for the water to drip into their buckets so that they can go home and do their work. Keeping these channels of conversation and communication going both ways has been useful in developing new critiques but also supporting the collective sharing of experiences and analysis and knowledge.

Note: this analysis was given through a virtual dialogue with UNANIMA International

Human Rights

According to UN-Water, the right to safe drinking water only became binding through international law as of 2010, and "the human right to sanitation was explicitly recognized as a distinct right by the UN General Assembly in 2015."[36] Nothing regarding water was specifically mentioned in the UDHR, though the livelihood stipulation of **Article 25** is undoubtedly relevant. In UNCRC **Article 6** "1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life. 2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child,"[37] water is of the utmost relevance as it is a physical necessity above, though related, to all else. There is much that must be done to actualize this right around the world, and homeless, housing insecure, informal settlement and displaced populations face special and considerable barriers to achieving each of these rights, as well as reporting issues surrounding them, or addressing them without external support. The affordability of the services are another factor of the states' expectations from human rights law, and as Meera Karunananthan points out both in her verbal analysis and through a Blue Planet Project report, "ac-

cording to human rights norms, domestic resources should be mobilized to ensure that "maximum available resources" are deployed to ensure access to water and sanitation services for all."[38] To meet this call, "fully public financing and delivery models" are called for by water rights experts, because private service providers have competition, are driven by profits, and are not legally bound to fulfill human rights in the way member state governments are.[39]

There have been considerable efforts, too, to keep momentum around the fulfillment of these rights.[40] Katie Tobin of Water Aid's January 2020 article, *It's a human right! Reanimating the international guarantee of water and sanitation for all in 2020*, points out the connection between water and sanitation and menstrual health - showing an intersection with gender equality and various health clauses of international law.[41] It is essential that in fulfilling human rights, others are not disregarded, or considered unrelated; the right to safe and adequate housing encompasses rights to water and sanitation, and both contribute to the fulfillment of health and wellbeing rights, and demonstrate action for children as called for in the UNCRC and for women as called for

Photo by Melissa Jeanty

in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and more. As roughly a quarter of humanity faces a looming water crisis,[42] and already the connections between water security and local, regional and international conflict have been drawn, we must consider the dimensions of this topic as related to human rights of security, both bodily and societal, and the implications of it for future livelihoods. Water security must be addressed with urgency to mitigate the present and prospective security threats that denial of this human right incite.

■ Testimony | Christian Heiden
Founder of LEVO International[43]

"Housing insecurity in Haiti is a big deal. The people that we work with in particular are smallholder households that are scraping by at all times. In the rural region that we work the quality of housing is extremely poor. Either it's lacking rooms or you're putting 12 people in one small, one room hut which doesn't have running water. The majority of households in the area do not have running water; they don't have access to adequate sanitation and most homes have dirt floors and leaks, no beds or one bed for the heads of the household. In Haiti, It's not really that much unlike most countries and most areas of the world where if you are driving down the street, I don't think I've ever seen a woman sitting down. There's a high level of men sitting down and not working versus women are consistently moving water and working constantly. And, just like in the United States, you have a higher amount of women who have several children and no spouse in the household helping support their family. Food insecurity in Haiti, from what I understand does just by the numbers affect women on a greater level than it does men.

What we are looking to do is provide security solutions that can be leveraged to create economic independence and food independence for these small households, particularly in rural Haiti, but increasingly so in other areas rural and urban. We have a distributed family-based model. What our technology does is allows you to grow anywhere and with very little space and very little water. So if someone owns a little plot of land, such as 50 square feet, they can put in one of these systems and grow food for their families using only a couple of gallons of water a day, but also actually as a potential market generator. The system allows them to be purchased by people who are under that $2 a day mark, creating potential economic opportunity on a decently sized scale. It's still a small plot of land, but you can potentially create, using cash crops, a solid revenue source for a family.

A big part of our model was evaluating the traditional development model, which is really focused on the top-down, large policy approach, taking things that may have worked in Kenya and saying, well, Kenya is pretty similar to Haiti, so let's do it there... And not recognizing that there's different cultures and different things going on, different problems. So I'm definitely excited about hydroponics in particular because I think that does provide an opportunity to adapt depending on what region and what community you're working in all the way down to the family level, versus countries or even larger communities. Our Head of Operations on the hydroponics side of things is involved with their community and has been our voice for the community. We've employed a dozen or so people that we work with in Haiti. And that's probably the most impact that we've had in the short-term. We had planned expansion in 2020, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we really have not, but our systems are still operating.

Note: Christian participated in a formal interview with UNANIMA International

Responder

Sister Fran Gorsuch, CBS

Vocation Director/USA Leadership Team and Member of the UNANIMA International Board

"Pure water is the world's first and foremost medicine."

– Slovakian Proverb

While not diminishing the life-saving importance of accessibility to water, preventing the commodification of water, and recognizing water as a human right, there are millions throughout our world who have access to water, but not to safe, clean drinking water. In one small corner of our planet we are making a difference. In collaboration with Water with Blessings, we have provided training, support and the necessary equipment to hundreds of women in Peru to provide safe, potable water for their families and neighbors. So much of the available water is contaminated due to the unrestricted use of land for mining and dumping that even the deep pools of water, rivers etc. are unsafe for drinking, cooking and bathing. Through the simple, inexpensive and conscious use of a portable water filtration system children can attend school and flourish. Adjunct healthcare treats parasites and allows primarily women, the elderly, and children to remain in their homes, even those in areas such as Nuevo Jerusalem on the dirt hills outside of Trujillo, as well as the interior communities of Huancayo and Huacho. Each small step is only that, a small step, but for each woman it is lifesaving for her family!

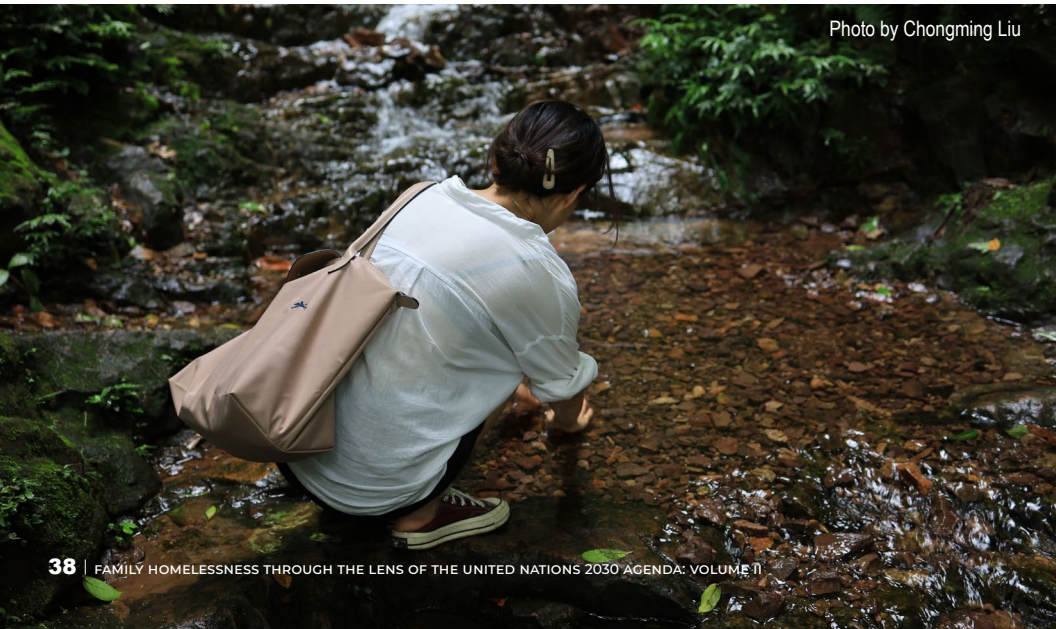


Photo by Chongming Liu

Advocacy Recommendations

Acknowledging the role civil society, the private sector, and citizens play in advocacy for resolving issues of water insecurity in the context of Family Homelessness, **we recommend:**

- Advocate for co-construction of policy with grassroots groups and local political actors
- Need for reframing of global security to be oriented towards water security, moving away from militarism[44]
- Engage water-insecure communities, and particularly women in the creation of advocacy and education plans and strategies
- Ensure plans for water access address the needs of peri-urban areas, and rural areas, in addition to urban areas
- Advocacy and education around women and girls safety and water, especially in informal settlements

Policy Recommendations

We believe the following policy recommendations are essential to addressing and preventing Family Homelessness, and are applicable at the local, national and international levels. **We encourage:**

- Implement legislation that requires there to be public water and sanitation services present within every jurisdiction
- Ensure all stakeholders, including housing insecure people, are involved in decision-making for the creation of water and sanitation policies, programs and services
- Assess, within all jurisdictions, water resource vulnerability and risks, including identifying the percentage of resources which are privatized and potential pollutants
- Use the Rights-Based Litmus Test before allowing any development projects
- Implement policies to ensure as a resource, water remains available and affordable for all irrespective of the social, economic, environmental or geographic context.

"Persons in informal settlements often lack access to safe WASH services or pay disproportionate amounts of their income on bottled water…Persons in informal settlements in turn can be reluctant to claim water and sanitation services: fearing eviction, they rather avoid interference of the government."

– UN Water[45]

Resources

The UN NGO Mining Working Group, "Rights-Based Litmus Test," https://miningwg.com/about__trashed/rights-based-litmus-test/

UN-Water, "Eliminating Discrimination and Inequalities in Access to Water and Sanitation," https://www.unwater.org/publications/eliminating-discrimination-inequalities-access-water-sanitation/"

Recording of Webinar Hosted by Blue Planet Project, "Water Justice in the time of C-19: Check-in with communities on the frontlines," https://www.blueplanetproject.net/index.php/water-justice-covid/; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_jLB9iqABI&feature=emb_logo

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND
Family Homelessness and SDG 7

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Photo by Vivint Solar

Globally there has been distinct evidence of progress towards affordable and clean energy for all. With a vast range of clean energy options becoming more widely available, and as a whole more sustainable, global acceleration of SDG7 has begun to occur especially in developing countries.[46] As noted in the World Bank's Report "Tracking SDG7: The Energy Progress Report 2019" despite progress, reaching underserved populations including, people living in overburdened urban grids, hard to reach locations and displaced peoples (inclusive of homeless individuals and families) remains a challenge, leaving millions without or with sporadic access to reliable or clean energy sources.[47] Additionally, unclean energy production continues to contribute to a vast range of issues affecting us globally like air pollution, leaving vulnerable demographics such as women and children further behind. The World Health Organisations estimates that every day around 93% of the world's children under the age of 15 years (1.8 billion children) breathe air that is so polluted it puts their health and development at serious risk.[48]

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we have seen the importance of reliable and clean energy as a means of preventing and treating disease and the need to ensure it is achieved for all. From powering healthcare facilities to enabling communications and IT services that connect people, access to electricity and energy has been essential in "flattening the curve." Unfortunately it has also highlighted the inequalities between communities and individuals and families with and without adequate access to it. **Target 7.1** specifically states, "by 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services." Unless family homelessness is addressed it is extremely unlikely that SDG 7 will be achieved.

Photo by Appolinary Kalashnikova

■ Analysis

Kirin R. Taylor, MA

Research Fellow UNANIMA International and Adjunct Professor, St. John's University

SDG 7 is connected to Family Homelessness and displacement in ways that range from the safety of people and property, to the macroeconomic effects of energy policy, to the implications of energy usage for livelihoods, water and land rights and territorial claims. It is crucial to enhance energy efficiency and to invest in renewable energy, in order to reach everyone while simultaneously fulfilling the rest of the UN 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. **Target 7.a** states "by 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology..."[49] Energy usage and activity reflect laws, norms, and culture, and currently is unsustainable from a global lens; various societal patterns and systems create and contribute to Family Homelessness and displacement, and will increase these issues further. Long-term investments are necessary and efforts must include aspects of gender, global equality and technology, that require political commitment, global energy planning, and shifts to increased public funding, as well as a heightened concern for families, and vulnerable groups globally that include people experiencing homelessness and people living in informal settlements.

Renewable energy sources present the most plausible and desirable alternatives to carbon-based sources. Hydropower is the most widely-used renewable, producing close to 20% of the world's total energy.[50] While hydropower's benefits include minimal pollution and attraction of industry,[51] water insecurity and displacement resulting from large-scale hydro projects must be considered. Notably, "as much as 98 percent of the world's electricity depends on water and could be affected by a water shortfall by 2030."[52] UN Water explains, "with the existing climate change scenario, by 2030, water scarcity in some arid and semi-arid places will displace between 24 million and 700 million people."[53] Hydropower projects affect the flow of rivers, water temperature and habitats, and water quality can be damaged.[54] Additionally, hydropower affects people and communities: forced resettlement as a result of new projects is a major concern.[55] Additionally, there's a historical correlation between dam placement and conflict, another driver of homelessness.[56]

An important discussion is how energy sustainability can be achieved while inequalities are eradicated.

789 million people globally have no electricity access, while over 2 billion people use dirty cooking fuels.[57] We see the biggest gaps in access within Sub-Saharan Africa and generally in LDCs and "underdeveloped" nations, and disproportionate energy usage from developed nations. The United States of America (USA) case provides examples of where colonial legacies, paired with insufficient federal action, have necessitated grassroots efforts to achieve energy sovereignty for the sake of the environment and communities that face high rates of homelessness and housing insecurity. In *Renewable Energy for Puerto Rico* it is asserted that, "despite recovery efforts [after Hurricane Maria], the continued vulnerability of the energy infrastructure threatens Puerto Rico's future…98% of its electricity comes from imported fossil fuels…"[58]

Solar energy is decentralized and localized.[59] The Caribbean region has natural solar and wind resources that energy policy and governance must recognize. Casa Pueblo, a Puerto Rican "community self-management project,"[60] has, "increased the installation of solar energy systems," though primarily in one community on an island of over three million people.[61] In the Pine Ridge Reservation located within South Dakota, USA over 40% of Lakota residents are unable to access electricity, "10 times higher than the national average."[62] Part of the colonial legacy on reservations are their occupation of "some of the harshest landscapes," which increases energy needs in various ways.[63] Lakota Solar Enterprises, "100% native-owned and operated," began in response to these conditions and takes advantage of renewable energy using the strong winds

and sunlight that persists despite the cold.[64] Their expertise reduces costs of solar panels for the community,[65] creates "green job training," and access to the market for renewables,[66] while asserting their sovereignty.

As Ban Ki Moon said, "Energy is the golden thread that connects economic growth, increased social equity, and an environment that allows the world to thrive."[67] When renewable energy is not pursued by states this "represents a disregard for the most marginalized of society…and the environment."[68] Without access to clean, affordable energy, it is impossible to achieve goals like poverty eradication, equality between people and nations, and good public health. We must not rely upon grassroots innovations that go against the norm but also implement policies and plans of action to achieve SDG 7 and the rest of the UN 2030 Agenda, eliminating drivers of Family Homelessness immediately. In light of the COVID-19 crisis, it is essential to link fulfillment of SDG 7 to recovery from the setbacks the crisis has spurred[69] - many of which affect women, children and girls disproportionately.[70] In the article on *Energy can power Africa's recovery from pandemic and recession* discussion of the continent's expanding youth population prefaces the assertion, "these new global citizens deserve access to reliable, affordable and sustainable energy in order to have the best chance of pursuing healthy, prosperous lives for themselves, their families and their societies."[71] We must look at the current reality and future projections, and be motivated to create positive alternatives for our world and its people, as the 2030 agenda gives both guidance and a framework for.

Human Rights

Notably, nothing on energy is specifically mentioned in the UDHR, likely because environmental activism and policy became more prominent in many developed countries in the 1970's or later. In *Urbanization, democracy, bureaucratic quality, and environmental degradation* the effects of rapid urbanization on the environment are explored. It is stated, "the adverse effect of urbanization on climate change is more severe on human health, livelihoods, and agriculture especially in the tropics because of the lax environmental regulations."[72] In addition to reinforcing the essential conclusion that social injustices are intersectional in nature, this quote draws attention to the relevancy of the law in the perpetration of environmental injustice, and by this point, this issue is contributed to by systems and institutions. Research addressing this topic is often said to, "ignore the political economy dynamics in the urbanization–carbon emissions relationship."[73]

Renewable energy does not mean that human rights related to well-being, security, adequate housing and others are being met. A 2020 study by Trocaire, *Women Taking the Lead: Defending Human Rights and the Environment,* "paradoxically, the report highlights how some renewable energy projects are putting additional demands on land and have become a growing threat to human rights. Forty-seven attacks on human rights defenders documented by the Business and Human Rights Resource Center in 2019 related to renewables. The sectors involving the most attacks last year were mining (143 attacks) and agribusiness (85 attacks)."[74] There are other issues related to development projects displacing Indigenous peoples or other groups, without their consent. Essentially, a human rights-based approach (HRBA) must drive our societies shift to clean energy, as well as the planning, collaboration, and actualization of these transitions.

Photo by Science in HD

■ Testimony

Melina Laboucan-Massimo
Lubicon Cree from Northern Alberta,
Founder of Sacred Earth Solar[75]

“One of the things that I have noticed, especially from the research I've been doing with Power to the People, our Indigenous Clean Energy TV show and my fellowship at the David Suzuki Foundation is the concern around dams and hydroelectricity and the differentiation that needs to be made between mega and larger scale dams and micro-hydro. The large-scale are very controversial and have actually displaced Indigenous communities and farmers from very good farmland, affecting their ability to have food sovereignty and the ability for communities to have locally owned and operated energy. There have been legal cases against the British Columbia government because of the impact to traditional foods, traditional land, and farmers being very concerned about it up in the Northern part of the country. This reflects a monopoly on energy.

Micro-Hydro is smaller and is what we call here “run of the river,” which impacts the environment and the climate less, as it uses the natural landscape to create localized energy, which still does produce a good amount of energy for surrounding communities. This is something communities are actually advocating for be-

cause of how it affects land. In one of the communities we profiled that's putting in a micro-grid to try to displace diesel in their community and utilize solar, they're actually not even connected to the grid but ironically are right beside a mega-hydro dam in Ontario, that washed away grave sites. In this case, they weren't even informed, and they were displaced. Historically many communities had been displaced from their homelands with no consultation.

Energy sovereignty, or community energy, is ensuring that we're differentiating between the energy sources and types. Resource extraction of fossil fuels, in line with colonialism, has had a massive impact on the way in which communities have been displaced from their own homelands, contamination and deforestation. We don't want to continue that type of colonialism even for green energy. It is also necessary to ensure that there's ways for communities' needs to be involved in energy planning; in some cases even "green energy" can have a massive impact on the environment.

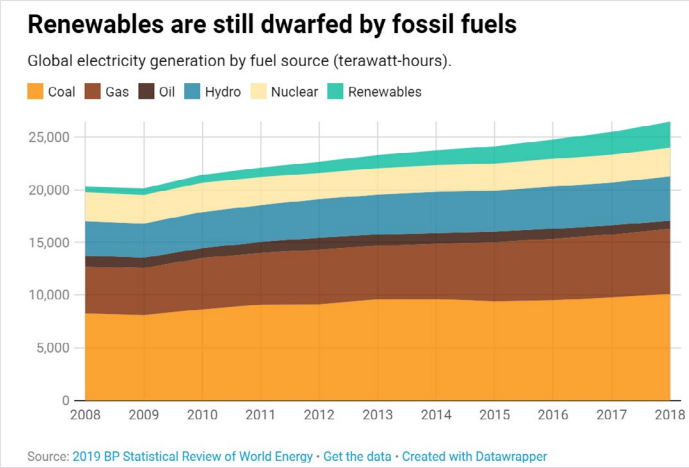
Democracy actually means, as we move forward with the SDGs, ensuring that communities have access to renewable energy and clean technology and are empowered - as opposed to just a switch over and "overlords around clean energy."

Empowering communities makes us more sustainable and less vulnerable to climate change, when we can own and control our own community energy and transition to community systems Communities are slowly taking back matters into their own hands and having their own expertise to build their own culturally appropriate housing, but also weather appropriate housing, ideally in more sustainable ways where it's built within communities from like their own sustainable forestry or lumber; that's specifically for communities, as opposed to other people profiting outside of the community on the backs of indigenous peoples once again, as we see from the housing crisis in Canada."

Responder

David Gerke
Specialist Civil Engineer, Entura, Australia

While many renewable technologies are in their infancy, there is a global push to develop guidelines and address some of the issues raised above. In my experience, it is becoming more common for renewable projects globally to include increased levels of local partnerships and clauses which aim to assure human rights are being achieved are becoming more common. International Hydropower Association Protocols (IHA), lending agencies such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, Diesel offset programs and government renewable programs are each acting as leaders in this process whose guidelines and implementation include: the participation and consultation of local and vulnerable groups in planning, construction and ongoing employment, as well as upskilling and capacity building of these communities or the implementation of offset of profits programs which cycle funding into the community. In the context of displacement and homelessness, such programs give hope with the aim to address and include peoples in vulnerable situations, often experiencing the ugly side of development. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of these relies on the government/local authorities, which can be obstructed by differing ranges of level of corruption, availability, funding, administration and the enforceability of suitable guidelines, many of which continue to leave behind women and children.



Advocacy Recommendations

Acknowledging the role civil society, the private sector, and citizens play in advocacy for resolving issues of clean energy accessibility and energy usage in the context of Family Homelessness, **we recommend:**

- Focused advocacy for ensuring energy access at essential locations, such as health facilities and for social service providers
- Pursue the specific creation of jobs for women in the energy sector
- Encourage access to clean and affordable energy, considering its critical connection to children's development and wellbeing, including in effect on children's learning and health
- Promote energy sources which will increase communal sovereignty, while not polluting air, land, nor sea, and energy solutions which can reach vulnerable communities, such as solar lighting and solar pumps
- Advocate for safe, clean and affordable transportation to school for children, with designs accessible to those with disabilities

Policy Recommendations

We believe the following policy recommendations are essential to addressing and preventing Family Homelessness, and are applicable at the local, national and international levels. **We encourage:**

- Ensure ocean-energy development assesses risks for displacement in coastal communities
- Allocate Member State finances to improve women's access to skills and education, as well as jobs in the clean energy sector[76] and provide safe spaces for children to learn, discuss, and take action on the SDGs, including SDG 7
- Require new infrastructural and architectural designs, projects and products to use as clean energy sources as are available in the local context
- Pursue national policies which promote clean, affordable and sustainable energy through increasing the energy accessibility and sovereignty of communities, including vulnerable populations such as Indigenous groups
- Implement policies for reforestation and halting deforestation immediately, to reduce the carbon in the atmosphere and ease the transition to clean energy

"The energy sector remains one of the least gender diverse sectors in the economy, despite recent efforts to promote and encourage women's participation. Women face structural and cultural challenges and the lack of women in leadership positions in the clean-energy sector compounds the difficulty in recruiting and retaining female leaders."

– Celia Tam, Senior Energy Analyst at IEA[77]

Resources

Energy Sector Management Assistance Program (ESMAP) *Note: WorldBank affiliation* "Gender and Energy Equality E-Learning Course," https://www.esmap.org/multimedia/gender-and-energy-equality-e-learning-course?resources

The Global Solutions Initiative Foundation, "A Sustainable Housing Solution," https://www.global-solutions-initiative.org/young-global-changers-blog/sustainable-housing/

Kiri Team in the Climate CoLab 2018 Buildings Contest, "Eco Slums flexible toolkit," https://www.climatecolab.org/contests/2017/buildings/c/proposal/1333879

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND
Family Homelessness and SDG 8

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Photo by Bundo Kim

Sustained and inclusive economic growth has the ability to promote social progress, create decent jobs and improve living standards for all.[78] at a individual and familial level access to decent work not only provides the individual and often their family with a livelihood and a protected income, but it can also enable the cycle of poverty to be broken. While progress has been made on SDG 8, accelerated action is needed, especially if we are to address this goal in the context of those furthest left behind. Unfortunately, individuals experiencing Family Homeless are among the furthest left behind, as they often face numerous barriers to obtaining employment and decent work. Single women with children in particular—the largest demographic of homeless families—frequently face further struggles having to juggle domestic duties and childcare with formal work, leaving many unpaid and unprotected and working within the informal sector. Children experiencing homelessness specifically are vulnerable to child labor, trafficking and exploitation as they participate primarily in the informal sector to help provide for their families.[79]

The importance of achieving SDG 8 has been highlighted globally throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, during which, according to the International Labor Organization (ILO) nearly half the global workforce has been at risk of losing their livelihoods, a disproportionate number of those being women.[80] In addition to this, economies globally were disrupted and forced into decline having a multiplier effect on individuals and families participating in it. Addressing Family Homelessness has the ability to contribute significantly to achieving each of the targets outlined in this goal as it will promote economic growth and enable the employment of a significant portion of the global population.

"Governments must take bold and decisive action to build a new, human economy that will deliver for everyone rather than a rich few, and that values care and wellbeing above profit and wealth."[81]

– OXFAM International

Photo by Madhavan R

of Sacks

Analysis

Michelle Macías De Pozo

Goodwill Global Ambassador for Mexico, UN representative for Man Up Campaign and UNESCO Center for Peace

We can no longer justifiably separate the concepts "economic growth," "decent work," and "sustainability," as they have become intrinsically connected. The recognition of this within nation state policies as well as within international diplomacy has become vital to life on earth thriving, and is necessary for restoration of human dignity, and the fulfillment of human rights. For economies to thrive and all of humanity to survive, not just the rich, we need to reform our systems by connecting economic matters to those of equity and ecology. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 calls for the promotion of sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. Tackling this goal is essential to achieving the rest of the SDGs, especially eradicating poverty, reducing inequalities, empowering women, and promoting quality education, health, and wellbeing.

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), "the SDGs promote sustained economic growth, higher levels of productivity and technological innovation. Encouraging entrepreneurship and job creation are key to this, as are effective measures to eradicate forced labour, slavery, and human trafficking. With these targets in mind, the goal is to achieve full productive employment, and decent work, for all women and men by 2030".[82] With this being said It is important to highlight the need to reduce economic gaps and deficits in the labour market, to fully achieve SDG 8 - taking into account the importance of an approach to address the needs of families and people experiencing homelessness, ensuring that no one is left behind, especially in the redesigning of a fairer economy. We have to make sure to tackle socio-economic inequalities that are root causes of homelessness, in conjunction with providing access to decent and productive opportunities in the labour market that will allow everyone to have the chance to thrive, (considering the positive impact of providing access to decent and productive job opportunities as the fulfillment of human rights; as security, well being, dignity in the development of people, as well as the indirect consequences). In addition to this, we need to take into consideration gender equality, inclusion, and holistic lens in the taking of further

Photo by Leonard Beck

steps, to help make SDG 8 a global reality, since many of the people who are still harmed by the current economic system are women, children, and families experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, among other vulnerable groups.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the progress of SDG 8 has slowed due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, which "with its dramatic economic and human costs, is making it even more urgent to accelerate progress in delivering SDG 8."[83] Before the pandemic crisis we already were facing challenges such as: 201 million unemployed of which 71 million are young women and men, depending on the development of the region 45-90% of workers were in the informal economy, 168 million children in child labour and forced labour worldwide, and women´s average wages are between 4-36% less than men´s.[84] Due to unemployment and underemployment caused by the current crisis, some 1.6 billion workers in the informal economy—half of the global workforce—are significantly impacted. Globally, the income of informal workers is estimated to drop by 60% in the first months of the crisis.[85]

Decent work and access to employment have a great role in enhancing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness to escape the situation but also a role (which we can take further advantage of) in preventing homelessness; this can be done by fostering a just economic system, which necessitates collaboration in the co-creation of a human rights-centered and green economy that will allow changing the structural causes of social injus-

tice and unsustainable aspects of the global economic system. Some of SDG 8's key targets and indicators include: **Target 8.5** "by 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value," **Target 8.7** "take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms," and **Indicator 8.B.1** "total government spending on social protection and employment programmes as a proportion of the national budgets and GDP."[86] Accomplishing each one of these targets and indicators and SDG 8 as a whole requires collaborative efforts; it requires everyone, but especially UN Member States, to address and focus on the nexus between Family Homelessness, decent work, productive employment opportunities, and inclusive, sustainable economic growth. What is also vital, is the collaboration through strategic partnerships that comprise all sectors in society and will foster efforts and further action towards achieving the entire UN 2030 Agenda.

Human Rights

SDG Target 8.8 "Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment,"[87] will ultimately require trauma-informed practices in work environments, as many causes of migration are traumatic, including displacement. Trauma-informed care and trauma-informed public services are steps towards meeting the holistic health needs promised to all within UDHR, among other international laws. Women, who still do not receive equal pay to men, face violations to several provisions within CEDAW as well as **Article 23** of UDHR; likewise, people experiencing poverty (including people in slums) are often unable to choose meaningful, safe, or unionized employment, or even employment within the formal economy which may meet other human rights such as social security. **Article 4** of UDHR which prohibits slavery in all its forms,[88] is being violated by the rampant human trafficking trade: "modern slavery," which also curbs employment opportunities within the formal and legal economy.

Several articles of UNCRC necessitate action from governments in the

areas of economic opportunity, social protection, and employment, because lack of action leads to children's vulnerability and exploitation, in the forms of human rights abuses. This is relevant to **Article 26** "1. States Parties shall recognize for every child the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance, and shall take the necessary measures to achieve the full realization of this right in accordance with their national law. 2. The benefits should, where appropriate, be granted, taking into account the resources and the circumstances of the child and persons having responsibility for the maintenance of the child, as well as any other consideration relevant to an application for benefits made by or on behalf of the child."[89] This clearly shows that focus must extend beyond the child to their family, and other members of society who may rear them (this would not be limited to educators and healthcare providers). **Article 32** "1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development." The second point of this article specifies topics for governmental concern and regulation,

not limited to regulation of hours and age of employment. As demonstrated in this SDG's testimony section, such regulations must be accompanied by other social supports and protections, educational opportunities, and meeting the human right to adequate housing - which requires a shift away from commodification. Related to Article 32, **Article 34** specifies, "States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse…"[90] Housing security and adequacy is one way to reduce the risks of sex trafficking. Sexual abuse, as demonstrated by literature review and reported to UNANIMA International by service providers, people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, experts and academics, occurs more easily when people lived "doubled up" with too many people in a small space. Drug and alcohol abuse, which can be systemically reinforced and a product of untreated trauma, also increases the likelihood of sexual abuse.

■ Testimony

*Amelia, Youth from Jamaica, living in Atlanta, GA, USA
Homeless due to financial difficulties

"I'm 22 years old. I came to the United States at 15 years old. Then I was emancipated, so you could still say I was a child but technically I was legally independent. The government supported my first apartment and ended up stopping paying because of fraud from the person that owned the apartments. I ended up having to move out. And I had to do prostitution. I had to sell my body. I had to be a webcam girl, escorting, just to make by. That's when I got my second apartment. I tried other alternatives. Nobody wants to just get up and do prostitution. I tried to get a job at the mall. I tried getting a job at the fast food places. But at the age that I was they only gave me but so much limited hours. The fact that I don't have my education like I'm supposed to, it hinders me. I was in it by myself.. People started stealing money from me. So even when I was doing that, I still had no money. So then I became depressed. Three times I was robbed in the second apartment...I got evicted. I lost everything so quickly. It's hard, because it's like you're already nervous. I didn't know what to do. I didn't have my computer

to webcam. I didn't have my phone for any of my clients. I didn't have no back-up money to get a hotel, even get a new phone or get a new laptop. So it's just like, I'm back at square one. For what? The police ain't do nothing about it. They feel like I'm a part of that whole situation. It's very depressing dealing with that on a daily basis. Especially when you don't associate yourself with that kind of thing. I'm living in a tent in the woods. There's a lot of people at tent city. We call it "tent city" because there's a lot of people there and there's a lot of different tents. And all of us, really, are working. Either they have a night job or day job. So there'll be times when I'm coming in from work at night and I see someone else leaving for work in the morning. So it's not like we're all just sitting there, using drugs, taking up space. No. We just need this place to lie down at night, so that we can have a good morning or a good night at work. We need our sleep just like anybody else, you know.

*Note: *Amelia participated in a formal interview with UNANIMA International*

* Name change

Responder

Ana de Luco, SFCC
Founder of Sure We Can

Family homelessness is one of the most complex realities of our time with enduring repercussions for present and future generations. Less than a hundred years ago, no matter how poor your family could be, there was always a place - even a shanty, a hut, a caravan - you could call "home" and feel relatively secure and protected within, except in war displacements or natural disaster moments; even in those circumstances, the society or their communities seemed to be more prepared to accommodate families temporarily because of the essential value of providing a 'home' for a family to survive, to keep going, no matter how hard their living conditions might be. Today, in a highly urbanized society where the sense of 'community' is lost, in a world where profit is above human beings and a secure 'place' to live called home is a commodity attainable only by those who have the money to have it, the target 11.1 of the 2030 agenda "to ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services" sounds unrealistic and unattainable. Only if we believe and proclaim that homelessness is one of the most cruel human rights violations and that HOME is an essential need for any healthy human growth, if we listen and walk with people, families, who experience the anguish of homelessness, we will be compelled to join hands in building partnerships between civil society (local, national and global) and governments, developing real policies and, making the public and private sector accountable for their implementation.

Photo by BBH Singapore

Advocacy Recommendations

Acknowledging the role civil society, the private sector, and citizens play in advocacy for resolving issues of economic inclusion in the context of Family Homelessness, **we recommend:**

- Promote the permanent, supported housing model to house at risk families, which will make housing security independent on income
- Encourage work places to be trauma-informed, adopt support services and adapt their environments to ensure employees are at home in their work environments and trauma is reduced
- Consider how technology deficits may affect access to employment (i.e. employment services, identification and employment documents, computers to access job postings or remote work)
- Promote the recognition of unpaid and informal work and the sharing of domestic and care work between all genders[91]
- Recognize the provision of safe and adequate housing, economic opportunities for women, and education and skills training as risk mitigators for child labor and trafficking

Policy Recommendations

We believe the following policy recommendations are essential to addressing and preventing Family Homelessness, and are applicable at the local, national and international levels. **We encourage:**

- Adherence to the CSOCD58 draft resolution clause, "invites Member States to consider adopting labour market policies that strengthen institutions and provide adequate labour protection to all workers, especially the most disadvantaged, including through minimum wage policies"[92]
- Member states should provide universal basic income in order to reduce homelessness and housing insecurity, while reducing poverty and insecurity for all within a society
- Implement social protection for all including surrounding un and underemployment, adhering to ILO Convention No. 169 specific to Indigenous and Tribal peoples[93] and ILO Recommendation 202 which guides the building comprehensive social security systems[94]
- Invest in the ecological restoration industry to create more sustainable employment that benefits the planet[95]
- Create policy measures to eradicate forced labor, end modern slavery and human trafficking, including recruitment and use of child soldiers

"Women are not only more likely than men to work in precarious, informal jobs, but they also shoulder a greater share of unpaid care, adding to their burden."

– United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)[96]

Resources

IWRAW Asia Pacific video,"Advancing Women's Access to Justice in the Context of Labour Rights," https://www.iwraw-ap.org/resources/advancing-womens-access-to-justice-in-the-context-of-labour-rights/

YWCA Toronto, "Safe and Affordable Housing Calculator," https://calculator.ywcatoronto.org/?_ga=2.39085729.388566299.1590770736-1773927198.1590081905

Forced Migration Review, "Economies: Rights and Access to Work," https://www.fmreview.org/economies

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND
Family Homelessness and SDG 9

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Photo by Belle Maluf

Industries, innovation and infrastructure have always been and continue to be driving forces of economic and social growth, trade and employment globally.[97] An integral ingredient in development, their advancement is essential if we, as a global community are to achieve the 2030 agenda. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we have witnessed the way in which innovation and infrastructure—specifically digital infrastructure—can contribute through being at the forefront of response and recovery, and enabling a level of social and economic connectivity and access to workplaces and services which we have never seen before. However, unfortunately there are still widespread issues of limited connectivity, dated or little infrastructure and inadequate access to markets that continues to affect many people globally, fueling inequalities and leaving the most vulnerable behind.[98]

Among the people often left behind are individuals and families experiencing Family Homelessness who often lack access to technologies. This was highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic when many homeless children were left unable to access school work via distance causing them to fall further behind their peers. By addressing family homelessness we will be on the way to ensuring access to the above for all, in turn contributing to the achievement of this goal.

Photo by August de Richelieu

Analysis

Jincy George Kunnatharayil, M.Arch

SDG 9 plays a crucial role in fostering all peoples' right to claim power over their future. Research has long shown that built environments influence human moods and behaviors;[99] in seeking to address and prevent Family Homelessness and trauma consideration of this is essential. Housing, whether temporary or permanent, impacts the way people view the environment and themselves. Current infrastructure intended for people experiencing homelessness is not equipped to meet the needs of people who've experienced great traumas, people transitioning from the street, or people who are unable to make a stable transition due to mental and physical illness, and people. In general, temporary accommodation, architecturally speaking, takes the form of beds in an old building, limited facilities, and an unfriendly setting. Many of the existing design approaches do not tackle the main problems of homelessness. Housing is part of the solution-it gives a sense of belonging and a sense of home. **Target 9.1,** "Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, focusing on affordable and equitable access for all" is relevant here. Architects can design a range of shelters and permanent, supported homes that foster autonomy, self-sufficiency, well-being and integrity. As an architect, I offer the below model for consideration in addressing Family Homelessness in conjunction with SDG 9 and the UN 2030 Agenda as a whole.

Designing homeless shelters based in a phasing model offers a dynamic framework for a transformative space: the space can transform the occupant as they move through it. The transition between homelessness and housing insecurity and adequate, safe shelter is so important that people cannot move from one to the other without going through an intermediate point. The design of these phases provides opportunities for transformation for the residents through the organization, layering, and intermingling of spaces facilitating a transitional process. The model is a framework that can be adopted in any environment and any location. Careful consideration of culture, context and surroundings, the needs of the community and the needs of the inhabitants are the forces behind the creation of a building that is a place of transi-

tion, interaction, and transformation: a place that aims philosophically and programmatically to enhance the lives of the inhabitants by promoting social cohesion. The architecture adopts the characteristics of their surrounding spaces while remaining distinct from them.

The model consists of three main phases: separation, transition, and integration. Each phase has distinct spaces, emphasizing the significance of each space's particular uses and features, leading to greater awareness in the occupants as they transition. Some key features include-

Organization of spaces: Organization of space brings together different forms to provide a cohesive structure to the design so that spaces relate to one another in a specific way fulfilling a particular purpose in each phase. The organization can induce different understandings and perceptions among occupants of their relationships and behaviors.

Open spaces: The open spaces for shelter help create a healthy and restorative atmosphere where the inhabitants can find relief from the traumatic past while improving their physical and mental health. Such open spaces also enhance water and air quality. These spaces may be green spaces or hardscaped, providing possibilities for active

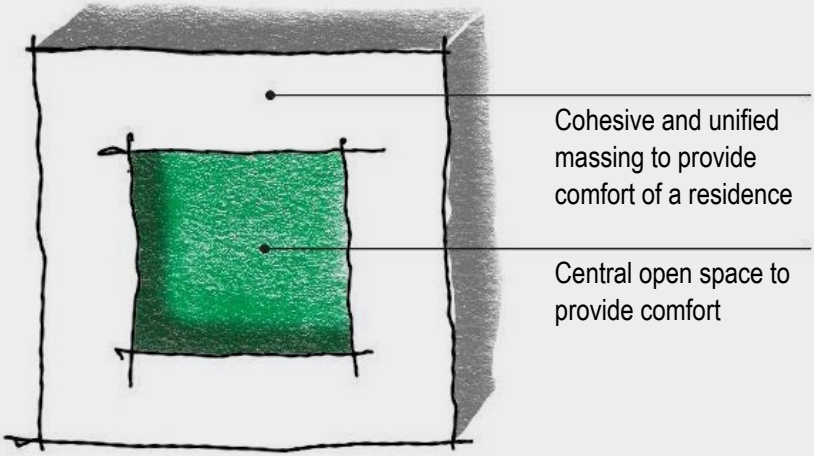
Photo by Ev style

and passive recreation and making for a holistic, integrated design.

Identity: Architecture represents identity, and is dependent on a community's traditions, behaviors, visions. Consequently, as Norberg-Schulz cites, the essential act of architecture is to understand the place's "vocation." The sense of belonging within a community and the relationship with architecture should also be considered in the shelter's design. The first encounter people have with a building is its architectural identity, right before they enter it. If interpreted correctly, this identity can inspire confidence or even comfort. The most important message that architecture can convey is to make occupants experience their existence with profound meaning and purpose, thereby helping them actively remember who they are.

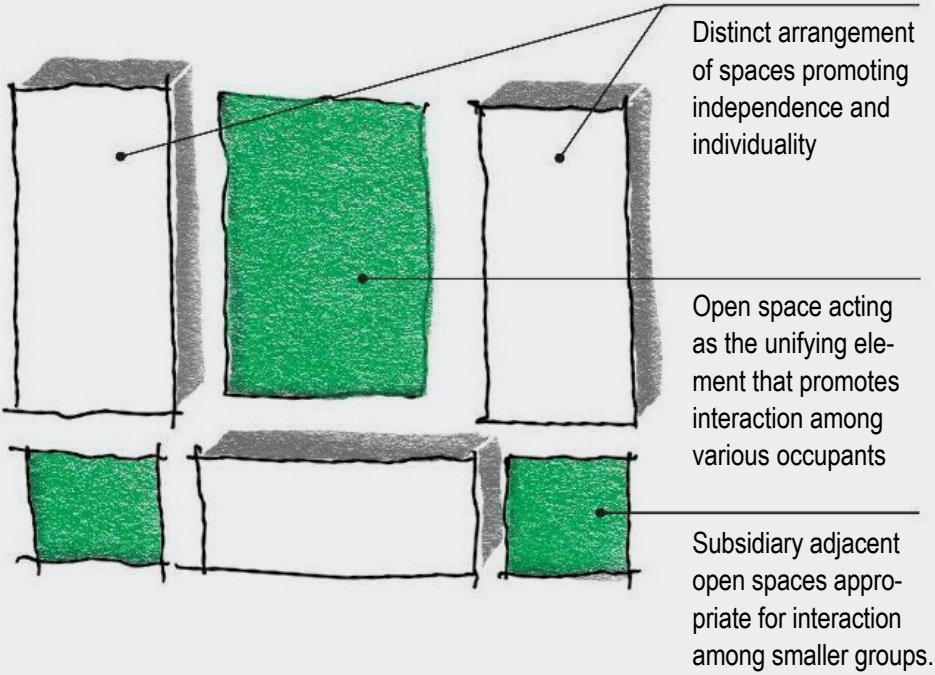
Phase 1: Separation Phase

The first stage is called a phase of separation. Residents are welcomed to adequate, safe shelter. The first phase creates a transformative transition between society and the shelter. The architecture should have enclosed areas and open areas. The recommended organization is spaces grouped around an ample, central space typically used as an internal or social space. The whole composition of phase 1 through layout and critical characteristics acts as the separation zone between the city and the shelter.

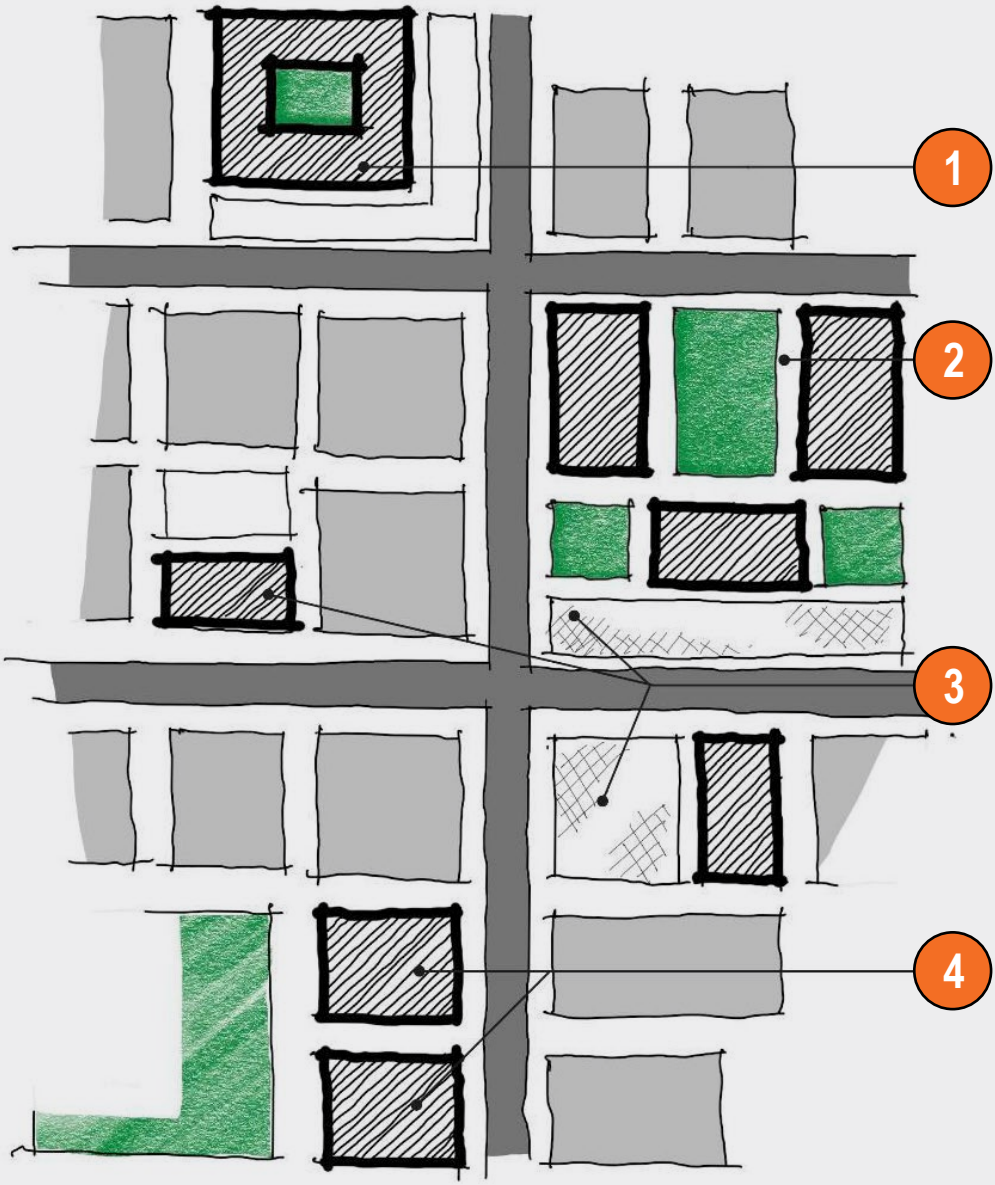


Phase 2: Transition Phase

In the transition zone, residents are not fully expected to re-engage with society. The transition phase assists occupants in the formation, rebuilding, and/or fortifying of their sense of self. In this phase, the intent is to develop, learn, and grow in skills. Engaging with others is a part of the process. Hence activities like farming and carpentry workshops can be encouraged, thus helping occupants to interact and grow. These activities could also aid in revenue generation for the families and/or services. The organization of spaces in this phase consists primarily of smaller spaces, linked through open spaces which will become the primary interaction spaces. Adjacency of open spaces with the separate housing spaces allows for continuity and promotes engagement among the users.



Urban diagram of all the phases working together as a transitional shelter



Phase 3: Integration Phase

The creation of a community is essential to the integration phase. The phase has a transformative nature through which a new understanding of oneself and others can be grasped. The purpose of this phase is to help occupants become a part of a healthy society. The design constitutes strategic plugs in the existing social fabric, thus blurring the shelter's interface to society; these plugs, like markets, stores, cafes, and florists, and low cost housing would be positioned at locations to benefit maximum healthy interaction and exchange. Unlike the second phase, this phase will have programs spread out, creating a network within the society. Most of the activity happens in open spaces. These spaces are dissimilar in size, form, and function, but related to one another by proximity. This model houses several permanent activities at once and will also be able to host as many types of temporary activities as the community can imagine. This model is a social unifier.

1

Phase 1: Located as its own entity but in proximity to other phases to create heightened awareness among the residents about the later phases and opportunities.

2

Phase 2: Positioned in close vicinity of phase 1 and benefits open visual and physical connection to the street and adjacent surroundings.

3

Phase 3: Program plugs like café, informal markets and store which serve the existing fabric and enhance opportunities for residents to interact with outsiders.

4

Low-cost housing units as inserts in the residential fabric thus becoming a part of the society.

Human Rights

UDHR specifies in **Article 3** "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."[100] Life, liberty and security of person can each be jeopardized through bad infrastructure as is made perfectly clear within the testimony section from this SDG. Industrialization, too, when not respectful to the human and environmental needs, health, and natural resources, can be detrimental to security on a fundamental level. Asking all development efforts to have concern for human life at the forefront is necessitated, once international law is brought forth. In UNCRC the following articles highlights the universality of the call to meet childrens' needs in every context: **Article 2** "1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status," and **Article 3** "1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration. 2. States Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of his or her parents, legal guardians, or other individuals legally responsible for him or her, and, to this end, shall take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures. 3. States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision."[101] UNCRC **Article 23** speaks specifically to the particular attention and actions required of state parties to meet the needs of mentally and physically disabled children, which would extend into the realm of infrastructure and industrialization as it affects communities' abilities to fulfill other rights, as is particularly difficult within informal settlements.

Photo by Artem Beliaikin

MARSHMELLO

■ Testimonies | From Mukuru Slum, Nairobi, Kenya

As an industrial hub, Mukuru attracts many people seeking employment - from near and far - and the population is reported to be continually increasing, with many grassroots predictions of an increase preceding the 2022 election in Kenya. But already the generally narrow build of the slum communities and roads, made often with mud and temporary materials, greatly hinder the movement of other-abled people. In an interview with Lucia Mjogu, Program Coordinator at Songha Disabilities Center, she identified a main challenge for the families in the slum: "[here it is] so congested...their houses are so squeezed." Fires spread from the close range of shanti homes, and inability to access some parts of the slum by road. One special needs teacher at the center told UNANIMA International, "movement is not easy... especially during fire." Ms. Mjogu went on to share that the majority of the children served at the center have challenges in communication (50% of the children do not have fully developed speech); when these children become burned they are unable to scream.

In an Interview with the Head of Education (Primary, Secondary and Vocational) at Mukuru Promotion Center, Risper Ogutu, commented that children with physical disabilities are "hidden" normally. Songha Disabilities Center is the only center in Mukuru, meaning children are served from all over the slum, though the staff say confidently that not all those with needs are reached, partially due to the stigma, and also in part due to the barriers created from the infrastructure - which make reaching the center from a far distance nearly impossible. The children's wheelchairs remain there and the parents carry them, as Ms. Mjogu clarifies is because, "they will not be able to pass because of the congestion of the houses... the ground is uneven." When children become too heavy this causes back and chest pain for parents.

When speaking with an accountant at Songha who had grown up in the slum and attended Mukuru Promotion Center's schools, he named the biggest challenge for these children and their families to be infrastructure. Within Mukuru, flooding is a huge issue that constantly risks families' livelihoods and is connected to the organizational structure of the slum communities, the drainage and sewage systems, and the creation of housing in relation to water sources. According to the accountant, the river flooding, "makes it difficult to bring kids to the center."

Meanwhile, because there are a multitude of challenges facing residents of the slum, that are even increased for other-abled children, it is essential they are able to reach the center which provides food (30% of the children will reportedly not take another meal in their homes), therapy, and education, as well as an important social environment.

Note: UNANIMA International conducted field research in Nairobi, January, 2020

Responder

Ciaran O'Brian

Practice Director at OBFA Architects Ltd. and Architect to Sophia Housing Ireland Projects

As a professional architect in Ireland for the last 25 years I have been deeply involved in the design and delivery of housing for individuals and families who have experienced homelessness. A number of these projects have involved the provision of places of safety and refuge for women and children at risk and in crisis. Our response to crisis could be considered to be universal – irrespective of wealth, technology, civilisation, age or gender. A person's reaction is to seek safety, routine, familiarity; to remove exposure, observation and judgment until such time as one can bear these interactions. The architecture of the spaces we live in and interact with can express those reactions in a very tangible way. This is architecture with a small 'a' – universal yet personal, mundane yet essential. It should be a goal of all designers of spaces that we seek shelter in - to have regard to those primal responses and to recognise the intrinsic value and wisdom of delivering a home first – and supporting the person from that point.

Photo by Fabrizio Verrecchia

Advocacy Recommendations

Acknowledging the role civil society, the private sector, and citizens play in advocacy for resolving issues of industry and infrastructure in the context of Family Homelessness, **we recommend:**

- Advocate for a paradigm shift for infrastructural and architectural approaches to ensure green and community spaces are included in designs, as this will improve mental, physical and environmental health; this should also apply to the design of shelters, public housing, and permanent, supported housing
- Investment in community infrastructure and safe spaces for all specifically women and girls, including the construction of community schools, medical clinics (women) and public spaces with access to clean, safe water
- Promote consideration and inclusion of marginalized groups within development planning, policies and implementation
- Encourage Member State allocation of funds to support women's skill training and employment opportunities in all levels of industry, infrastructure and architecture, as related to development
- Encourage the creation of all-season roads for families, to reduce poverty, complimented by positive environmental actions such as reforestation

Policy Recommendations

We believe the following policy recommendations are essential to addressing and preventing Family Homelessness, and are applicable at the local, national and international levels. **We encourage:**

- All development policies, programs and schemes must include community-stakeholders, including women, and consider the needs of other-abled individuals and other vulnerable groups within the context
- Implement inclusive infrastructure that addresses the needs of all its users including vulnerable groups, individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
- Ensure that the development of human-settled communities assess the health risks for the population; Member States' formal recognition of informal settlements within their jurisdiction is a necessary action to precede such assessments
- Allocate resources to the development and sharing of technologies that will improve families' livelihoods and standards of living, specifically adopting policies to support full digital inclusion and digital equality for women, girls, children and all marginalized groups
- Increase access to information and communication, providing universal and affordable access to the internet, crucial for women experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity to improve their situations, and for children's access to opportunities within the global age

"...seizing the opportunity for sustainable development created by urbanization and enabled by growing local action critically hinges on creating 'cities without slums.'"[102]

– Brelsford, Et al.

"IN SOME COUNTRIES, MORE THAN 30% OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FIND THAT TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC SPACES ARE NOT ACCESSIBLE"

Source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (UN DESA). "Realizing the Sustainable Development Goals By, For and With Persons with Disabilities: UN Flagship Report on Disability and Development 2018." United Nations, 2018. p. 37, https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2018/12/UN-Flagship-Report-Disability.pdf

Resources

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LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND
Family Homelessness and SDG 12

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Photo by Tony Pham

Throughout history, global consumption and production has been a driving force of the economy and development. Unfortunately for the most part, this has come at the cost of the environment and the world's most vulnerable societies and groups. Children specifically are more sensitive to the exposure of chemicals and are therefore at greater risk of developing adverse health effects in their presence.[103] As noted by the FAO, sustainable consumption and production contributes substantially to poverty alleviation.[104] As such it is inherently intertwined with the issue of Family Homelessness and its eradication. Inadequate housing and slums (forms of homelessness) are often associated with the outcomes of unsustainable consumption, with many of the world's slums connected to waste disposal sites. Lessons on sustainable consumption and production must be taught and employed within these settings and elsewhere to enhance material flow management and reduce waste.[105]

Addressing the issue of homelessness in all its forms has the potential to contribute to a societal shift in the way we think about and implement production and consumption processes and policies. In the wake of COVID-19 we have seen a shift in consumption trends offering us, as a global community, an opportunity to rethink and reverse current trends, allowing us to change our consumption and production patterns towards a more sustainable future giving everyone, including individuals and families experiencing Family Homelessness.

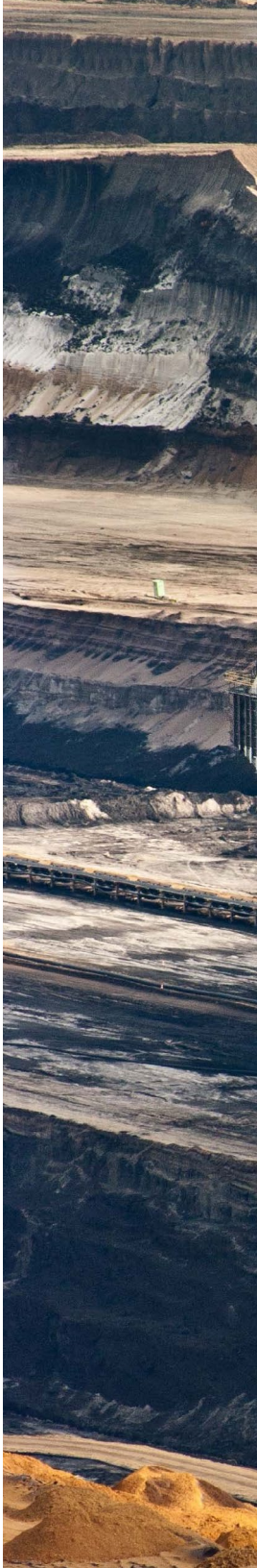


Photo by Pixabay

KRUPP
SIEMENS

Analysis

Jacqueline Witwicki
Former St. Joseph Worker - Congregations of St. Joseph NGO at the United Nations

Family Homelessness is a failing of the international system, observable to various degrees across all modern cultures, and particularly affecting women and children. While programs and policies often target the results of homelessness, it is crucial to examine the root causes of this issue in order to ensure its permanent eradication. It is projected that resource extraction could increase by 190 billion tons by 2060.[106] Consciousness of the methods utilized to extract these resources and the locations these resources are sourced from is crucial for addressing the root causes of Family Homelessness and meeting SDG 12.

The achievement of SDG **Target 12.3**, "by 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment," is crucial for the elimination of Family Homelessness. Irresponsible handling of chemicals, waste, and manufacturing byproducts has contributed to the 450% increase in annual major manmade and natural disasters since 1975.[107] This increase in disasters has resulted in an increase in homelessness. This is true for example within the Amazon, Congo and Indonesian contexts, on which the NGO Mining Working Group focus.[108]

The Mariana Dam Disaster is a textbook example of the human cost of irresponsible manufacturing waste byproduct disposal. In 2015, when the Brazilian Dam burst, between 55 and 62 million cubic meters of mine tailings contaminated the water supply and destroyed the nearby town.[109] This rendered over 300 families homeless.[110] While manmade disasters like Mariana continue to result in Family Homelessness, SDG 12 cannot be achieved.

This ties into **Target 12.C**, "rationalize inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption by removing market distortions, in accordance with national circumstances, including by restructuring taxation and phasing out those harmful subsidies, where they exist, to reflect their environmental impacts, taking fully into account the specific needs and conditions of developing countries and minimizing the possible adverse impacts on their development in a manner that pro-

Photo by Yogendra Singh

tects the poor and the affected communities." Currently, harmful fossil fuel subsidies contribute to widespread displacement and homelessness. The 2020 Responsible Mining Index Report found that only half of all mining companies examined, "assess the potential impacts of involuntary physical and/or economic displacement of project-affected people." Notably, not all of these impacts would be immediate, making specific measures to evaluate the long-term effects of mining actions necessary to meet human rights in the long-term. Additionally, only a quarter of companies had mechanisms in place to develop strategies and address the aforementioned impacts. Ultimately, the effectiveness of these programs was dismal, with few companies reporting on their effectiveness or internally reviewing their performance on the issue.[111]

This is exemplified by the case of coal subsidies in Australia. The cost of supply combined with the costs associated with local pollution and global warming effectively price Australian coal at ~$7/GJ. However, fossil fuel subsidies place the retail price of Australian coal at ~$3/GJ.[112] Meanwhile, this industry has been tied to increased rates of homelessness and indigenous displacement.[113] One Australian coal mining town experienced a 150% increase in homelessness over a 5 year period as a result of economic displacement associated with the mining industry.[114] Considering the heightened risk of homelessness for women and chil-

dren, in both visible and invisible forms, a June report from the Responsible Mining Foundation *Gender Inequality Runs Deep in Mining,* should prompt more attention to the intersection between SDG 12 and other SDGs, such as SDG 5; the foundation concludes that the 38 large-scale mining companies they evaluate have generally not taken adequate action on this issue.[115]

Action on SDG 12 is directly tied to Family Homelessness and is directly related to the wellbeing of children and future generations. Consumption and production patterns that result in Family Homelessness, including the disproportionate consumption from the Global North, cannot be considered sustainable. As identified, man made disasters and disasters resulting from global warming have become an exponentially damaging factor, resulting in countless families experiencing homelessness. Fossil fuel subsidies that contribute to Family Homelessness and its drivers cannot continue if SDG 12 is to be realized. Additionally, for the phasing out of these subsidies to be sustainable under SDG 12, care needs to be taken to ensure that the transition away from fossil fuels is socially just and does not result in the further displacement of families.

Human Rights

With discussion of "consumption" and homelessness, the average mind may wander towards substance consumption and the damaging stereotype that most homelessness is driven by drug abuse, which shifts responses and programs away from solutions to root issues. In reality, consumption patterns from whole societies (particularly in the Global North) are driving or underlying many contexts of displacement and migration, as well as inadequate housing such as slums around the world. In July 2020, the UNHCR reiterated claims of the UN Special Rapporteur on toxics, Baskut Tuncak, "States must stop exporting unwanted toxic chemicals to poorer countries, says UN expert."[116] Additionally, "the expert said that wealthier nations often create double standards that allow the trade and use of prohibited substances in parts of the world where regulations are less stringent, externalising the health and environmental impacts on the most vulnerable."[117] In 2014 the ILO reported, "forced labour generates annual profits of US $150 billion"; 34 billion of this is within construction, manufacturing, mining and utilities,[118] which has encouraged new strategies and assessments for stake-

holder inclusion and labor oversight, though focus must remain in these areas. Development projects trying to feed demands for resources and products have historically failed to involve the people whose territory would be affected as primary stakeholders.

A Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) would adhere to international law and human rights clauses which attribute decision-making power and sovereignty to individuals, families and communities alike. In 2013 Franciscans International released a notable publication questioning, *Development: Sustainable for Whom?* Which is a question that we must all continually ask.[119] In July of 2020, they released *Call to action: Realizing the rights of the child through a healthy environment* which informed: "each year more than 1.7 million children under the age of five lose their lives as a result of avoidable environmental degradation...Children's rights are under threat due to insufficient government measures to address the climate crisis, unprecedented levels of biodiversity loss, exploitation of natural resources, exposure to toxic substances and waste, and widespread pollution of the air, water and soil. Negative effects are disproportionately experienced by girls, children in poverty, indigenous children, children with disabilities and others in vulnerable situations, exposing them to intersecting risks and often violating the principle of non-discrimination."[120]

For women and children, their special and focused rights as outlined in UNCRC and CEDAW among other international laws and agendas, require action on the part of the State, and other decision makers, to act in their best interests. Inclusion of these groups in development efforts and planning is essential. UNDRIP is an essential framework for protecting Indigenous groups globally who are too often excluded from all levels of decision making, as well as the world's most biodiverse lands, and Indigenous knowledge. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) is particularly relevant to ensuring consumption and production do not negatively affect livelihoods and succeed in recognizing the intersection between the economic, social and cultural components of life. **Article 1** of the ICESCR conveys a relationship between the right to self-determination, control over one's own resources, and the part played by governance in ensuring the fulfillment of these rights.[121]

Testimony

Sister Nonata Bezerra, SND
Assistant General and International Coordinator for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation and Member of the UNANIMA International Board

"Being a native of the Amazon Region, born in the state of Acre which borders the countries of Peru and Bolivia, I grew up in the midst of nature, and from an early age I learned to love, appreciate and preserve nature. My mother was a teacher, so from earliest childhood I learned that Mother Earth is sacred and must be respected. Until the age of seven, I lived in a small rural village where I was surrounded and in daily contact with nature. It was a reality where human beings, rivers, flowers, and animals lived in communion and harmony. Until the age of 15, the river was the road and boats were the principal means of transportation that carried people, food, medicine, and clothing to their destinations. Our food was all-natural, produced in the area and nothing was wasted - everything that was not consumed returned to nature to be transformed into natural fertilizer for the land itself. At that time, I did not know about St. Francis of Assisi, but today I see that we lived his spirituality of being in relationship with all of nature as brothers and sisters. Our relationship with nature was mutual and very respectful. My mother taught us that nature should not be destroyed and animals should not be mistreated. When I was 8 years old, we went to live in the city to continue our studies and I be-

gan to see a different reality of disrespect and destruction of our common home.

After I became a Sister of Notre Dame, as a teacher, and nature lover, I had many opportunities to educate people in the care and preservation of the environment. For 7 years I lived in a town called, Jordão, Acre, isolated and "lost" in the Amazon jungle. I believe that UNANIMA International can play an important role in assisting the indigenous peoples of Brazil in their struggle for human rights. We can serve as a voice in the United Nations, calling upon the UN to oversee, monitor and press the Brazilian government to respect the rights of these native peoples. The UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has raised awareness and action on behalf of indigenous peoples, but there is still much to do. Exploitation, discrimination and the violation of property rights will continue unless strong advocates speak up. The Brazilian government needs to be held accountable to the Constitution of our country and the requirements of the Declaration, especially as pertains to the rights of indigenous peoples, the first and genuine owners of Brazil. A second issue that deserves special attention and action is the urgent need for DEMARCATION OF INDIGENOUS LANDS. Indigenous people and tribes are forced off their land by large multinational companies engaged in logging, mining and other forms of land exploitation. The Brazilian Government chooses not to enforce laws and regulations that would protect the rights of the indigenous landowners. In the area of the Brazilian Amazon where I worked, there are no "homeless" people in the sense that they do not have houses. While the people may have houses, they are often in very poor condition, without running water, without basic sanitation, without electricity, without many of the things that provide for basic human needs. There is certainly the possibility to have clean energy, particularly solar energy because of the natural availability of sunlight. What is needed is strong and consistent government support to provide the resources needed to make this a reality.

Note: The above is an excerpt of a written statement submitted to UNANIMA International

Responder

Sonia Olea Ferreras
Human Rights and Public Policies Expert, Lawyer

Energy, water and food are not infinite resources. Nature's ability to recycle, and the necessary pace for this are not being respected. In the Amazon, I have been able to see how Indigenous peoples in Peru, Ecuador and Brazil can no longer use the water from their springs because it is contaminated by heavy minerals and hydrocarbon remains; they cannot fish or produce vegetables, they suffer from chronic diseases. This causes the impossibility of enjoying the human right to a home, to a habitat, to adequate housing as defined in General Comment No. 4 of the ICESCR,[122] causing permanent situations of homelessness (loss of the environment, evictions, migration to urban centers…). The fulfillment of the objectives of SDG 12 entails concrete actions on the part of consumers, companies and multinationals and Governments. We cannot continue to consume uncontrollably and waste energy, water and food while millions of people and hundreds of Indigenous peoples in the world see their life, their identity and their future in danger.

Photo by Tom Fisk

Advocacy Recommendations

Acknowledging the role civil society, the private sector, and citizens play in advocacy for resolving issues of ocean health in the context of Family Homelessness, **we recommend:**

- Promote multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral discussions of the impact of production proposals within various contexts,[123] including "project-induced displacement and resettlement" reviews of extraction projects, not limited to oil
- Encourage forest monitoring to ensure illegal actions aren't being taken
- Pursue communal ownership of land models that ensure women's inclusion as stakeholders, that will be able to collectively review attempts for production on their land
- Pursue more research on historical extraction-induced displacement, noting the effects for vulnerable groups, including women and children
- Stand with Indigenous movements and projects to protect their lands, sovereignty and address climate change drivers and effects

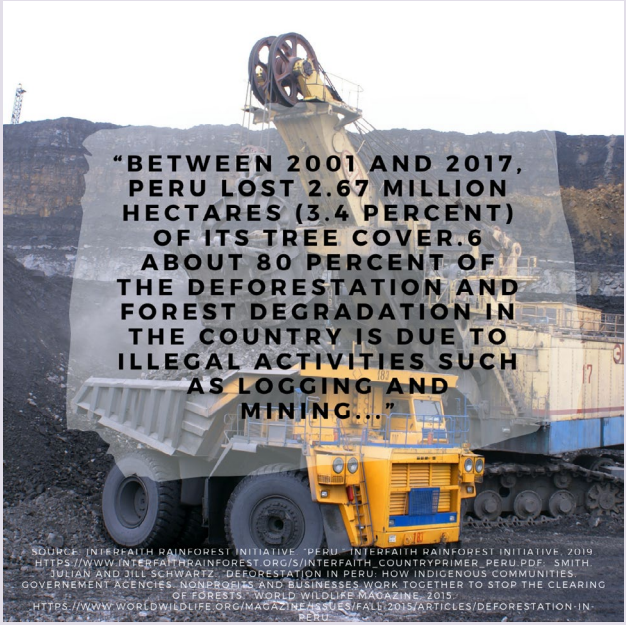
Policy Recommendations

We believe the following policy recommendations are essential to addressing and preventing Family Homelessness, and are applicable at the local, national and international levels. **We encourage:**

- Implement policies that incentivize or require consumption of local products, ensuring healthy foods in particular are available to all; reduce food waste and improve food production and sustainable consumption to better preserve the planet and provide for children, who disproportionately suffer from hunger;
- Amend Member State educational curricula to include education on sustainable production and consumption ensuring knowledge around emissions and pollutants, waste disposal and degradation of Indigenous and other lands
- Create policies and programs to prevent illegal mining and extraction activities, and limit other projects in areas where biodiversity is endangered, in consultation and collaboration with stakeholders including women and children.
- Meet international law for children's rights, including UNCRC, and ensure that children's voices are heard and acted upon, in particular related to the environment[124]
- Assess the need for interventions on infrastructural and industrial design, as related to communal health and housing and land security,[125] and consider opportunities for creation of community gardens in urban food-insecure areas

"Environmental harm to children now and in the future is intimately linked to our economic structures and commercial activity."[126]

– Social Justice Ireland



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LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND
Family Homelessness and SDG 14

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

Photo by Guille Pozzi

Oceans are an integral global system that are key in making Earth habitable for humans. As a population we rely heavily on their systems and production for many things including food security and wellbeing. Rain and drinking water, climatic and weather systems, coastlines, food production, biodiversity and even the oxygen we breathe, are influenced, regulated and somewhat produced by oceans.[127] While ocean management and even pollution during COVID-19 has improved globally, the continued deterioration of coastal waters, pollution, overfishing and ocean acidification are continuing to have a destructive effect on the ocean's ecosystems, biodiversity, as well as on individuals and communities globally.

Target 14.7 specifies, "by 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism." Ensuring communities and families, especially children are involved in decision making and have agency in their management and protection is essential to addressing Family Homelessness especially in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) as it is inherently linked to elevating vulnerable communities out of poverty and achieving sustainable development.

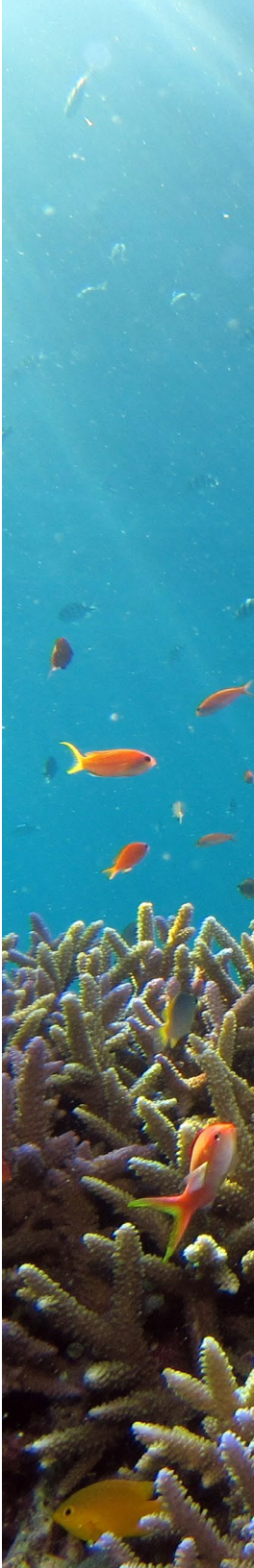

Photo by Hiroko Yoshii

Analysis

Uma Balakrishnan, PhD
Associate Professor at St. John's University

Human development, the foundation on which all sustainable development rests, depends itself on the family unit. The ability to sustain emotional cohesion, characterized by the existence of strong emotional bonds between members of any unit where the focus of the relationship extends beyond the rational and the transactional, rests at the core of the family. Globally the family home remains the most common means to achieve this emotional cohesion, which also reduces the likelihood of trauma, and provides support when trauma is encountered. Any disturbance, disruption or destruction of the home severely damages human development thus making sustainable development impossible. The degradation of our planet impacts individuals, economies and societies. SDG 14 focuses on issues that damage the oceans and marine environment.

SDG 14 also focuses on the protection of resources in the marine environment. Threats to the oceans and seas fall into two separate categories, both of which have severe implications for families and children: the first includes overfishing and pollution of the marine environment, while the second category involves the damage caused by climate change and the warming of oceans. Fish constitute some of the "cheapest" and potentially most easily available animal protein. In 2017 fish provided, "3.3 billion people with almost 20% of their average per capita intake of animal protein."[128] Ocean expert Sunil Murlidhar Shastri told UNANIMA International in an interview:

> "The problem is most of the fish - for example, fish produced through "aquaculture or mariculture" (as well as through "capture fisheries" for that matter) around the world - goes to feed the rich people. Essentially, the poor people produce it. All of the good stuff ends up... in the "developed" world. So it is technically a cheap source of animal protein - but it is not cheap for poor people, it is cheap for rich people."

The demand continues to rise leading to overfishing and depletion of global stock. **Target 14.4** addresses the question of overfishing and according to FAO estimates, even though the target for 2020 will not be reached, the movement from fish capture to aquaculture bodes well for the future of the fishing industry.[129] However, at the same time the pollution of marine environments

Photo by Catherine Sheila

threatens to jeopardize fishing as well as local economies and populations that depend on clear water.[130]

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) 80% of all marine pollution consists of runoff from non-point sources.[131] This "can make river and ocean water unsafe for humans and wildlife. In some areas, this pollution is so bad that it causes beaches to be closed after rainstorms."[132] Although the actual process of fishing is dominated by men, women constitute 85% of the workforce that deals with "gutting, filling cans or other processing."[133] These women are also primary caregivers with the men being away at sea. A reduction in catch thus ripples into a reduction in jobs for women, lowering living standards for the family, particularly the children. Most fishing communities exist on the margins of the economy and thus any collapse in the fishing industry brings about large scale destabilization of the population. Such devastation can be seen in rich and poor countries alike. The ripples can also be felt across generations with children growing up in unstable environments where malnutrition and Family Homelessness severely compromise their health and capacities as adults.

As mentioned, the second category of threats to marine environments come from the warming of the oceans as a result of the greenhouse

effect. Rising sea levels caused by the melting of ice at the poles increase the vulnerabilities of fishing communities.[134] Extreme weather events cause seasonal flooding devastating family homes and disrupting further the livelihood of already poverty stricken communities. Changes in ocean temperature also lead to fish die off which disrupts the food chain leading to increasing pressure on the oceanic ecosystem. SDG 14 **Targets 14.1** and **14.3** to **14.6** deal directly with overfishing and marine pollution. Achieving these goals will stabilize the fishing communities allowing families that are at risk of homelessness increased security. With climate change in mind, **Target 14.2** deals with the need to "protect the marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans." **Targets 14A** to **14C** address the need for effectively using international law and organizations to create sustainable marine environments thus strengthening families for generations to come - fulfillment of international law can greatly mitigate the drivers of Family Homelessness.

Human Rights

The connectedness between human rights and the wellbeing of the oceans and marine life should not be underestimated; ocean health affects the health of the beings inside of it and humans as consumers,[135] the atmosphere, and even the ability to travel and connect between nations - something promised within many international laws and agendas as a means of ensuring human peace and prosperity. Additionally, the ocean plays an important role in mitigating climate change.[136] The effects of climate change make the fulfillment of human rights more difficult by creating situations which challenge sovereignty (of individuals, communities, groups, and even nations) making interventions from governments or even transnational actions more necessary, yet not always actualized, and sometimes made without a holistic view of the human rights effects. The New York Times reported in August of 2019 *A Quarter of Humanity Faces Looming Water Crisis* stating, "From India to Iran to Botswana, 17 countries around the world are currently under extremely high water stress, meaning they are using almost all the water they have, according to new World Re-

sources Institute data..."[137] The Ocean's water resources paired with technology and good practices, have potential to mitigate water crises, which not only create physical suffering, but also instigate conflict (which can be attributed to other factors such as clashes between ethnicities, which may be relevant, but not at the root of the problem - resources). However, with increasing acidification and pollution, the potentialities of this solution not creating additional challenges to health and wellbeing are diminished.

Photo by Todd Trapani

BBC Reported in October 2019, "millions more people will be at risk of coastal flooding from climate-driven sea-level rise later this century."[138] They cite a study that predicts, "190 million people will be living in areas that are projected to be below high-tide lines come 2100."[139] All of these people are at risk of homelessness, which necessitates preventative actions, comprehensive response plans, and preparations to address the trauma which results from climate shocks and livelihood disruption. The Ocean Health Index actually implies in their key findings that fulfillment of international laws will lead to improved ocean health. They write, "regions with stable and effective governance tended to score much higher than regions where corruption, dictatorship, civil strife, war and poverty have been chronic. This underscores that improving ocean health will require efforts from all sectors to promote peace, justice, gender equality, socially-responsible business and other aspects of civil health, because progress in those areas makes it much easier for communities and nations to improve the environmental and economic conditions needed to boost ocean health."[140] Therefore CEDAW, ILO Resolutions, UNDHR, and other human rights mechanisms must be accepted as connected to phenomena such as ocean health and Family Homelessness, and prioritized to be met.

Testimony

Sister Joyce Meyer, PBVM
International Liaison, Global Sisters Report

I was excited when [two Kiribati women, Kawi Arebonto and Tenta Maritino] agreed to be interviewed about their experience of religious life in an international congregation and also to learn how they see climate change impacting the future of their island country. Kiribati comprises three island groups, Phoenix, Line and Gilbert, which consist of 33 islands, all but one of them coral atolls (ring-shaped coral reefs, each with a lagoon in the center and featuring the tip of an undersea volcano). Twenty-one islands support the population of around 110,000. "Land is the exception rather than the rule in Kiribati," Keenan [the translator] explains. My first question to the sisters was to ask them to share their experience of the impact of climate change in their island communities. Both expressed gratitude that their congregation is committed to ecological justice where they learned about the issues of climate change and now recognize it happening before their very eyes.

They see collapsing sea walls, stronger storms and flooding in some places but decreasing rainfall in others, increasing temperatures, and stunted plant growth and even loss of species. As the sea rises and erodes the beautiful beaches,

they hear of family wells getting dirty and contaminated by seawater. Sister Tenta reported that one family she knows well has moved five times since 1987 as the sea encroached upon their land. They fear that soon they will have no place to go and are eager to help build seawalls and plant mangroves to keep the sea contained...How do people make a living in this kind of environment? A limited few are hired as government workers, teachers, retail and restaurant owners, and sailors, but the majority engages in cottage industries, subsistence fishing, small farming, and collecting and selling copra (coconut flesh processed for oil). Life is generally lived in villages and focused on family. These women will face many challenges, but clearly will become important leaders to keep the people united in facing the vulnerabilities of their future as a small nation.”

Note: This testimony is a shortened version, reprinted with permission, from a Global Sister's Report article, “Good Samaritans' ministries face challenges of Kiribati's vulnerable future,” first published in February of 2019.

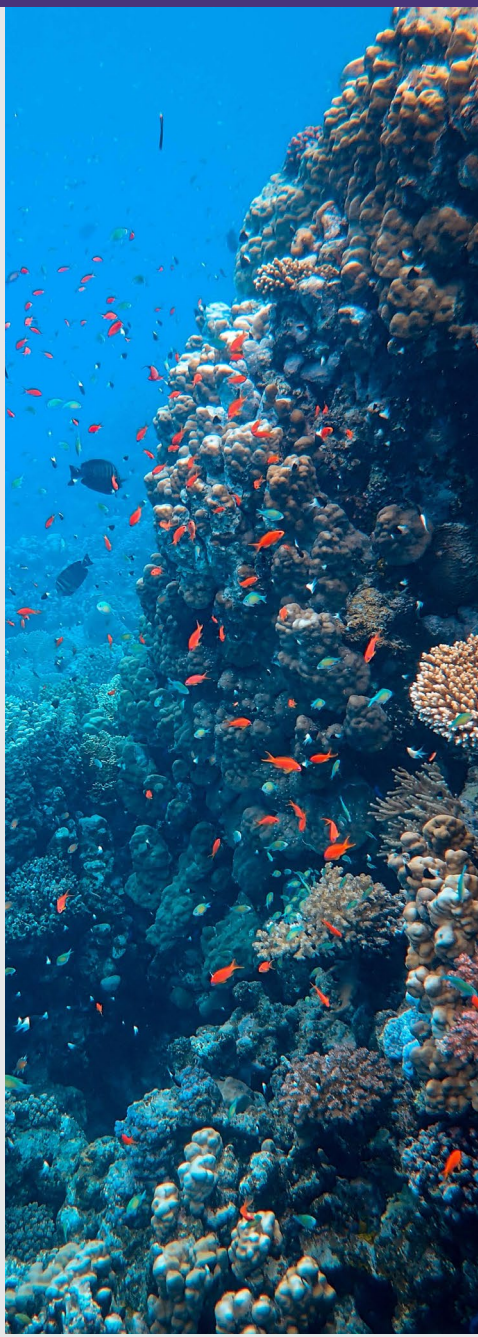

Photo by Francesco Ungaro

Responder

Sunil Murlidhar Shastri, FRGS, FRSA
Director, OceanGovernance Limited,[141]
United Kingdom

Protection and preservation of the marine environment, in the countries that come under the remit of the United Nations Office of High Representative for Land-Locked and Geographically Disadvantaged States, Least Developed States and Small Island Developing States (UN OHR-LLS), is crucial. The ocean is our past and our present and, ever more crucially, our future, as the poorest of the poor who will suffer the consequences of the manifold manifestations of Climate Change and related impacts on the global ecosystems. Coastal ecosystems will be stretched as they are home to the most vulnerable of species quite apart from coastal communities whose lives are traditionally and overwhelmingly dependent on the well-being of the marine environment.

Photo by Liana Mikah

Advocacy Recommendations

Acknowledging the role civil society, the private sector, and citizens play in advocacy for resolving issues of ocean health in the context of Family Homelessness, **we recommend:**

- Encourage the co-construction of efficient management policies, programs, and implementation of plastics and other ocean pollutants, with coastal communities, including women and other vulnerable groups in the process
- Create educational curriculums to discuss climate adaptation and response plans as related to both life in water and life on land, which will reach children
- Reframe discussions of marine pollution and acidification and other abuses of water sources to the negatively affects they have on coastal communities and SIDS
- Encourage world leaders to acknowledge the strong connections between climate and environmental issues and Family Homelessness, and to take actions to transition towards green economies
- Recognize sea-level rise and coastal erosion as causes for long-term migration, that require gender, age, and social justice lenses for formulating policy responses

Policy Recommendations

We believe the following policy recommendations are essential to addressing and preventing Family Homelessness, and are applicable at the local, national and international levels. **We encourage:**

- Ensure coastal communities are protected from tourism and other industry-induced displacement
- Create proactive plans for relocation of communities and families where there is a level change; Implement response plans for potential and predicted sea-level rise and coastal erosion in all human-settled coastal areas
- Adopt agendas that promote and strengthen, "sustainable ocean-based economies, in particular for SIDS and Least Developed Countries (LDCs)"[142]
- Enact a moratorium on Deep Sea Mining until at least 2030 [143]
- Mitigate migration towards urban areas located on vulnerable coasts, through increasing allocation of funds to support the livelihoods of rural communities, as well as to poverty eradication and increased employment opportunities throughout Member States' territory

"The marine realm is the largest component of the Earth's system that stabilizes climate and support life on Earth and human well-being... Scientific understanding of the ocean's responses to pressures and management action is fundamental for sustainable development"[144]

– United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

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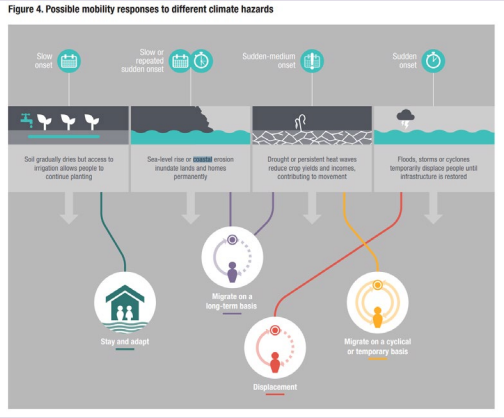

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LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND
Family Homelessness and SDG 15

15 LIFE ON LAND

Photo by Ives Ives

Contributing to carbon dioxide levels, weather patterns, and food production, Life on land and nature are critical to our survival as a population.[145] Children and youth especially in recent years have clearly expressed that protecting and preserving all living things is central to the well-being of our planet, people peace and prosperity.[146] While globally we have seen encouraging progress towards achieving SDG15 such as forest loss slowing down, an increase of key biodiversity areas being protected, and more financial assistance towards biodiversity protection, acceleration is needed.[147] Unfortunately, land degradation, biodiversity loss, illegal poaching and trafficking of wildlife continues to occur, damaging the ecosystems and species they interact with, and leaving the realization of this goal unlikely.[148]

As noted on the UN's Sustainable Development website, 74 percent of the poor are directly affected by land degradation globally.[149] Many of these people are part of families who are experiencing Family Homelessness or housing inadequacy, especially people living in slums. Addressing Family Homelessness and ensuring adequate housing for all will not only help to alleviate the poverty faced by families, but it also has the opportunity to contribute to conservation of the environment and biodiversity as well sustainable land use and rehabilitation.

Photo by Roman Synkevych

Analysis

Uma Balakrishnan, PhD
Associate Professor at St. John's University

As stated in the opening part of the discussion on SDG 14, the family home is intimately tied to the physical environment within which it rests. Destabilization or destruction of that environment will necessarily damage the home and thus the family itself. SDG 15 targets issues that damage the physical environment within which the home rests. There are a number of threats to terrestrial ecosystems and primary among them are deforestation, desertification and the loss of biological diversity. Damage to one of these creates ripple effects on the others ultimately cascading into ecosystemic collapse (see photo). The synergistic relationship that exists between these ecosystems and the family is incontrovertible. Members of a family rely on the resources easily available and this holds true for urban and non-urban settings alike.

Ecosystems consist of synergistic linkages between every living and non-living entity within their boundaries. As such a change in one will bring about a change in the other components. Most of the time these effects are absorbed by the system and the equilibrium is maintained. However when thresholds are reached the ecosystem becomes unable to absorb the shifts leading at times to the system becoming unstable or failing. When ecosystems collapse all elements of that system including human beings are forced to adjust. In most cases, it is the extreme poor who are directly dependent on the physical environment. As long as the systemic threshold is not breached families can at least survive. However when such thresholds are reached the systemic response usually forces a reevaluation of the options available including a reexamination of policy.

For instance, when desertification (**Target 15.3**) sharply decreases the amount of food and water required for survival, families are forced to move and the cycle of homelessness begins, like ripples when a stone is thrown into a pond. The movement of families puts a great deal of pressure on their new habitat causing friction and instability which leads to a collapse of those systems as well. **Targets 15.1 - 15.5** focus directly on the repair of ecosystems in order to rehabilitate families and rebuild communities. **Targets 15.6-15.8** address systemic obstacles that have a negative impact on the first five goals. The most serious of these

obstacles stems from the structural economic disparity between the rich and the poor states, which has been exacerbated by the globalization agenda. The degradation of natural ecosystems is intimately connected to the development component of SDG 15. Globalization rests on capital growing without limits in order that the "rising seas of prosperity" lift boats everywhere.[150] Rampant and unthinking consumption that accompanies the globalization of economies depends on continual availability of new sources of raw materials, increasing the pressure not just on untouched natural systems but also on societies to privatize these resources. Privatization of common property widens the gap between the rich and the poor causing greater pressure on natural systems at both ends of the economic spectrum as seen in the dynamics of the Amazon system.[151] Population displacement and the resulting destruction of Indigenous families makes this a tragedy of genocidal proportions.[152]

The strategies in goals **15.9 - 15.C** help the process of rehabilitation ensuring that policy makers address structural issues like equity of distribution and the sharing of knowledge including access to new developments in genetics and controlling and eliminating the market for "exotics" – plants and animals through coordination of international legal

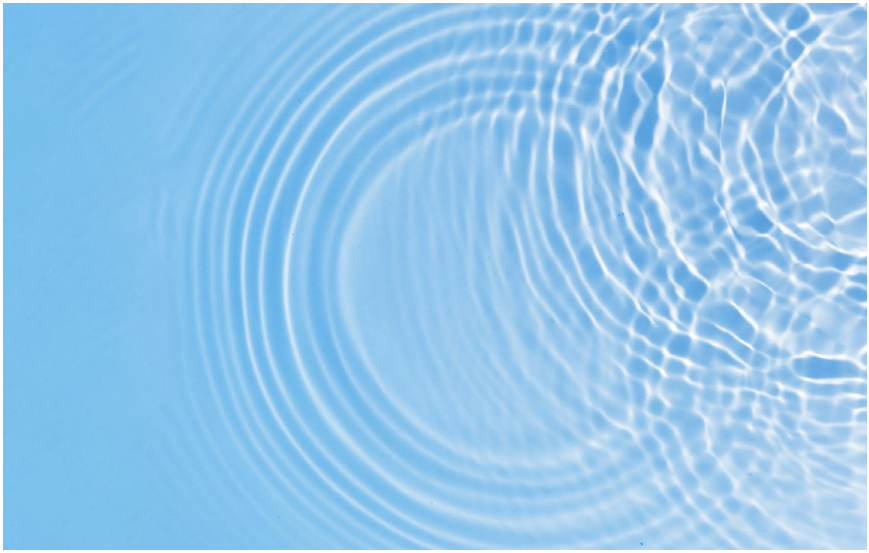


Image source: https://insider.integralads.com/ripple-effect-study/

systems (15.C). One cannot emphasize enough the importance of poverty alleviation and the maintenance of the family unit in its natural environment as a key factor of sustainable development. Such restructuring of the power systems requires the coordination of policy making not just in terms of geography (the local / global divide) but also in terms of expertise in issue areas, such as Family Homelessness and other social issues intimately tied with environmental ones. Reductionism and compartmentalization have led to fractured and disconnected policies which ultimately do not serve any of the goals of the project.

Target 15.9 "by 2020, integrate ecosystems and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes and poverty reduction strategies, and accounts," reflects that a holistic approach to decision making is key to the success of SDG 15 and addressing and ending Family Homelessness. It is worth reiterating that policymaking, strategizing and planning must include grassroots voices, and as such, making information on this topic available to target women and children is essential.

Human Rights

Deforestation in itself represents a process that is detrimental, with few exceptions, to individual, familial, communal, and universal rights. Not only have forests and trees been scientifically proven to contribute positively to human and atmospheric health, they also hold qualities that contribute to overall wellness,[153] which transcends the physical realm, to mental, emotional, and even spiritual ones. The potential to halt or reverse adverse effects of climate change and the negative impacts of high carbon emissions through halting deforestation, and initiating reforestation of areas where this is possible, must not be ignored as instruments through which many human rights laws and needs may be achieved. The Paris Agreement **Article 5** states, "1. Parties should take action to conserve and enhance, as appropriate, sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases...including forests," and continues later in the article to promote sustainable forest management, noting the utility of this practice beyond CO2 mitigation.[154]

Indigenous rights in particular are explicitly violated with land-grabbing, often related to deforestation. On a smaller scale, many individuals - protesters and activists, educa-

tors in their own right - have had their human rights violated and have even been killed because of unsustainable and unwarranted development efforts. For example, in "Brazil: Amazon land defender Zezico Guajajara shot dead."[155] Many big businesses and corporations actively contribute to environmental degradation that hinders human achievement of rights. Some national governments do the same. The United States of America's military alone is known for its extensive pollution, and emits more CO2 than many industrialized nations' total emissions.[156] The gendered lens is ever-relevant to this SDG, as Women's Earth and Climate Action Network explains, "when we analyze root causes, it is clear that women experience climate change with disproportionate severity precisely because their basic rights continue to be denied in varying forms and intensities across the world. Enforced gender inequality reduces women's physical and economic mobility, voice, and opportunity in many places, making them more vulnerable to mounting environmental stresses."[157] In the academic article, *REDD+ and Human Rights: Addressing Synergies between International Regimes,* it is argued that, "concerns over the social impact of REDD+ activities [within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC)] may be addressed by resorting to clearer and stronger links with human rights instruments."[158] Here again, Family Homelessness/Displacement, and vulnerabilities to these, can be prevented through using a HRBA to the design of local policies and interventions which follow ambitious, global frameworks that respond to urgent issues.

■ Testimony | Pereka, Sister of Charity
Based in Malawi

“Attempting to help with reconstruction and the rebuilding process, Sister Pereka shares, “we have the list of 20 and that’s all we can do at the moment. The quality of houses at first was not that good, so now we are trying to build stronger houses...the community needs is very clear. We are inundated with people coming to ask for help.” Sister Pereka is serving in a community where over 3000 households were affected by Cyclone Idai. Many people were displaced as a result of the cyclone, and in some places in the diocese camps were set up. In this context homelessness also manifests as people going into neighbors or family member’s homes, which are already crowded, and “the older people sleeping outside to allow the children to sleep in doors.” Sister Pereka admits, because of the terrain – rivers and valleys – it is hard to know what’s happening even nearby. Her belief is that this natural disaster was climate-induced, and there is a relationship between deforestation and vulnerability.

As of the Fall of 2019, a local committee for the community’s reconstruction met every month and included people who have been affected by the cyclone. There is a big focus on capacity building for stakeholders and beneficiaries, and

collaboration with traditional leaders (a significant number of whom are female). Sister Pereka reports that it is clear that the residents are really passionate about restoring banana trees that had been destroyed by a disease that wiped out all the bananas trees in the area five years ago. The bananas were the people's main source of income and livelihood and they are trying to build their livelihoods again by revamping the banana plantations. "Because of the terrain and limited acreages of land available to the people to grow crops, productivity is low. There is also a problem of poor soils as the land is constantly being farmed and not given a chance to lie fallow. This enhances the degradation of the soils in the area.

An extremely important element that the cyclone revealed is that within the community, those with a lot of trees around their houses had their housing survive. Sister Pereka explains, "the people themselves got that insight. So we got Sesbania sesban seeds for the people to plant. They are fast growing trees, and within three years it is fully matured. The moringa trees – the leaves are a good vegetable, you can dry them and be used as an herb to prevent all types of illnesses. Within 3 months you can use leaves...Even just as a way to conserve that water, trees can be helpful. Trees can help preserve the soil." Despite all of the progress being made by the community and with external support towards making sure everyone has a home, there is an underlying misunderstanding that relates to the natural disaster. Sister Pereka claims, "they blame themselves for the tree cutting. For whatever is coming. They're not aware of the impact from the Global North on what is happening now. The change they see, they put it down to all the trees that they've cut down. That's how they see it. The whole change in the weather pattern." Sister Pereka, like UNANIMA International, notes the world's unequal contribution to environmental devastation and Family Homelessness when climate-induced. We all therefore play a part in bettering the world and achieving SDG 15. ❞

Note: Siser Pereka participated in a formal interview with UNANIMA International

Responder

Teresa Blumenstein

Justice Coalition of Religious (JCoR) Coordinator and Representative to the NGO Committee on Migration

Dr. Balakrishnan and Sister Pereka lift up an essential truth that the security and stability of the family unit is predicated not only on a stable, sound structure to call home but also on a stable, sound ecosystem whose resilience is not routinely overwhelmed by record storm surges, unprecedented droughts, and unsustainable development projects. Their findings agree with those of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, which reports that 24.9 million people were newly displaced from their homes by environmental disasters in 2019 alone.[159] On the macro-level, reforestation and conservation of life on land contribute directly to relieving the threats posed by environmental catastrophe, because they stabilize the intricate infrastructure that evolution has spent millennia delicately fine-tuning to support all life in our macro-home, planet Earth. On the micro-level, land and wildlife conservation allow for the protection of day-to-day food and potable water supplies and for the maintenance of basic shelter, which enables individual families in all walks of life to live in dignity in their place of origin.

Photo by Polina Rytova

Advocacy Recommendations

Acknowledging the role civil society, the private sector, and citizens play in advocacy for resolving issues of planetary health in the context of Family Homelessness, **we recommend:**

- Increase advocacy around reforestation, revegetation, tree planting and biodiversity conservation, highlighting women's great achievements in these aims thus far globally
- As part of advocacy for equality, encourage redistribution of land as well as capital
- Encourage understanding of migration as adaptation to changes in the natural environment, as well as reflective of human societies and governance systems[160]
- Promote the inclusion of all stakeholders, including women and children in the management and decision-making surrounding local forests, ecosystems and their inhabitants; education about biodiversity and animals will help ensure that stakeholders are informed about the impacts of their decisions and actions
- Reframe forestry policies and movements as essential to the global fight to reduce carbon emissions, fighting climate change and mitigating drivers of displacement

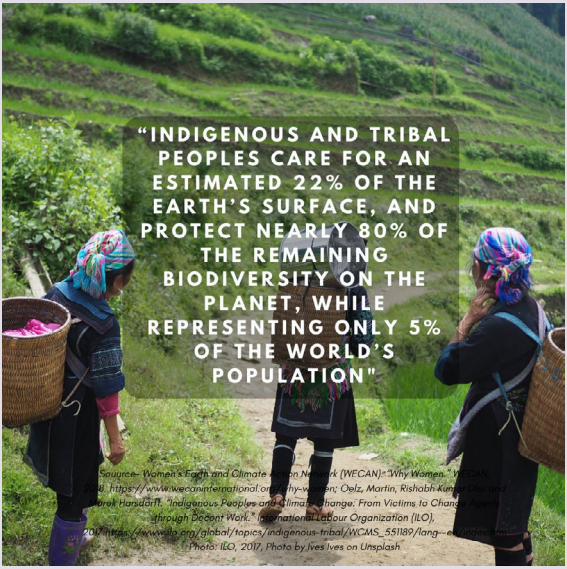
Policy Recommendations

We believe the following policy recommendations are essential to addressing and preventing Family Homelessness, and are applicable at the local, national and international levels. **We encourage:**

- Create legislation that drastically decreases rates of deforestation; support women's and other grassroots movements that focus on reforestation
- Redistribute land to decrease poverty and achieve social justice, complimented with guidance to positively impact preservation of biodiversity, encourage the cultivation of local food sources, and create alternatives to rural urban migration in search of livelihood
- Make displacement of Indigenous groups from their land for conservation or development projects illegal within national legislation, most preferably through constitutional amendments
- Implement human rights-based migration policies which apply to whole families, allow for human response to changes in resource access that may prompt international movement
- Recognize the necessity of animal and plant species' survival to human health and wellbeing, creating protections for them and initiatives for their restoration or preservation where necessary

"We need to stop turning a blind eye to the human cost of wildlife conservation because in doing so we are failing both people and biodiversity. It is also time we stop seeing man as separate from nature and start acknowledging the historical power relations embedded in conservation issues.[161]

– Arzucan Askin, *London School of Economics*



Source: Women's Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN): "Why Women." WECAN International, https://www.wecaninternational.org/why-women; Oelz, Martin, Rishabh Kumar Dhir and Marek Harsdorff. "Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change: From Victims to Change Agents through Decent Work." International Labour Organization (ILO). 2017. https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/indigenous-tribal/WCMS_551189/lang--en/index.htm. Photo: ILO, 2017, Photo by Ives Ives on Unsplash

Resources

WECAN International, "Women for Forests," https://www.wecaninternational.org/women-for-forests

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), "The global assessment report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Summary for Policymakers," https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2020-02/ipbes_global_assessment_report_summary_for_policymakers_en.pdf

ILO, "Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change: From Victims to Change Agents through Decent Work," https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/indigenous-tribal/WCMS_551189/lang--en/index.htm

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND
Family Homelessness and SDG 17

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

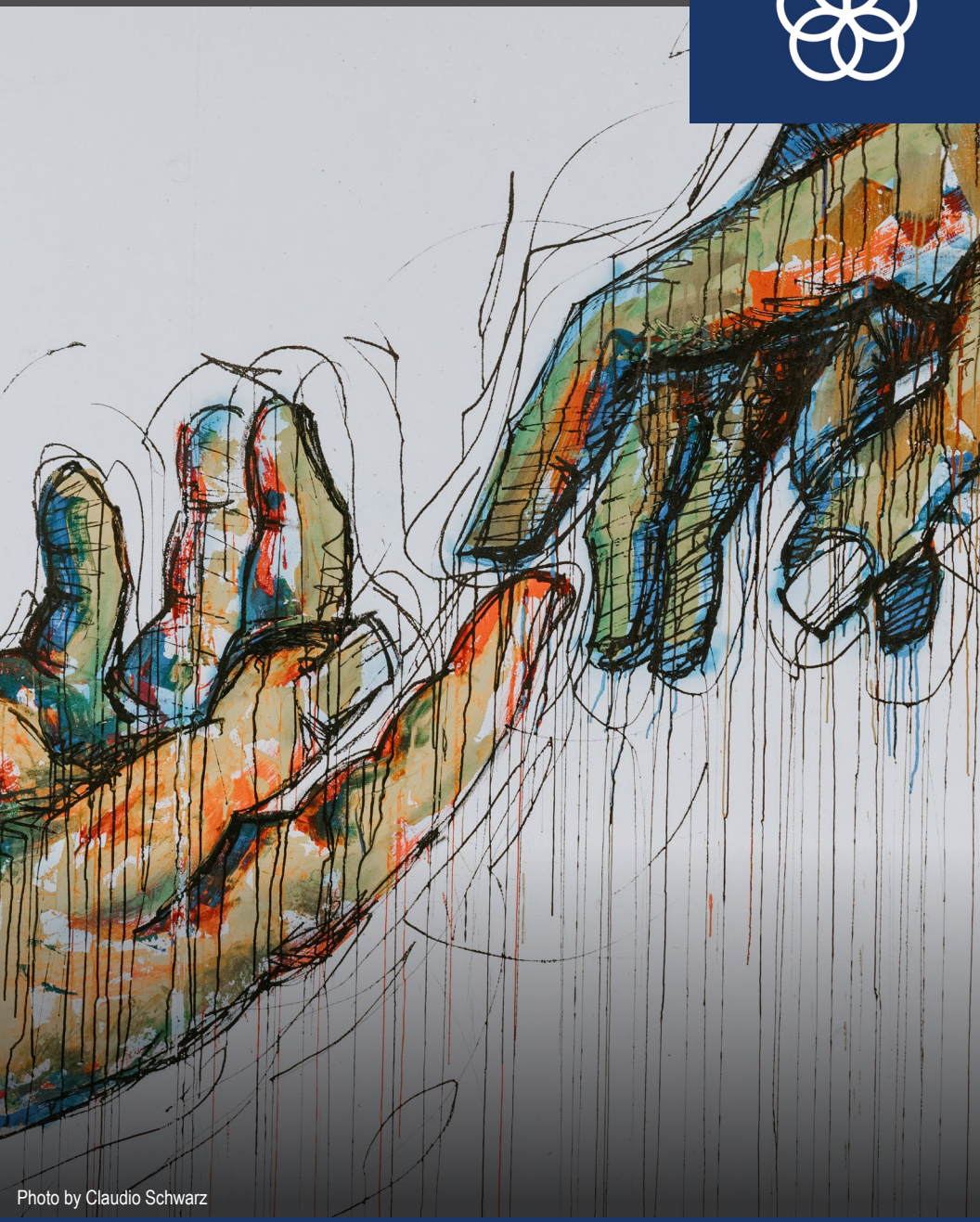


Photo by Claudio Schwarz

The SDGs and the 2030 Agenda can only be achieved with strong local, national and global partnerships and cooperation. Such partnerships must be inclusive and built upon principles and values born from a place of shared visions and goals.[162] The 2030 Agenda encourages us to "leave no one behind" if we are to truly realize the agenda we must ensure efforts are both inclusive and cohesive where the voices of all are included, specifically women and children. Everyone should have a seat at the table throughout the whole process including design, implementation and follow up. Along with people, planet, prosperity and peace, partnerships are an integral ingredient in ensuring sustainable development.

While in many respects partnerships have increased and diversified, the 2020 Financing for Sustainable Development Report of the Inter-Agency Task Force found that international economic and financial systems are not only failing to deliver on the SDGs, but there has unfortunately been substantial regression in key action areas due to mounting pressures on development.[163] Target 17.17 "Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships" is both a tool to achieve and an outcome of the 2030 agenda. It aids in addressing Family Homelessness, the COVID-19 crisis and in turn sustainable development and social inclusion.

Photo by Hannah Busing

Analysis

Sister Margaret O'Dwyer
NGO Representative of the Company of the Daughters of Charity NGO at the UN, a part of the Vincentian Family

All 17 Sustainable Development Goals relate to the reality of Family Homelessness. SDG 17 speaks of strengthening the means of SDG implementation and revitalizing global partnerships for achievement of the goals. Seventeen's title alone implies that addressing the needs of families without homes requires a multilayered and team effort. Housing requires more than simply an address; families without homes also may need financial assistance, help securing food and energy, access to meaningful employment, referral to healthcare counseling related to trauma or domestic violence, education for children, childcare and more. Provision and access to these same things can also prevent Family Homelessness from occurring in some circumstances. These issues involve multiple SDGs and various professional, social and volunteer services, as well as financial and resource assistance.

Many of SDG Seventeen's 19 targets and 25 indicators speak of finances, taxes, remittances, technology, and the like. When we think of homelessness, we don't usually think of debt structuring or whether countries have met their Official Development Assistance (ODA). We really think of people at the grassroots - lived experiences of people without homes - their struggle to find a home in which to raise their children, their peril while surviving on the streets or in inadequate housing, perhaps their efforts to escape domestic violence or to locate a job which will sustain their families. But finance assistance is indeed essential, both on the micro and macro levels. The World Bank report Global Economic Prospects[164] indicates that the global economy is predicted to be reduced by 5.2% this year, which can launch us into the deepest recession since World War II. And the World Bank expects that approximately 60 million people will be pushed into extreme poverty. That will definitely impact people without homes, including families with children and separately, the many children surviving on the streets. Of course, countries are all going to be scrambling to pay for COVID-19 related healthcare, social services, unemployment schemes, and any economic packages to aid their people.

Targets 17.6 to **17.8** relate to technology. Again when considering

families without homes, technology is not the first issue which comes to mind. And yet, technology can facilitate access to vital information for homeless and housing insecure families about how to stay safe in the midst of pandemics or natural disasters, as well as where to access resources, shelter, and needed support. Technology could enable authorities and families to confirm the location and safety of their loved ones. Relatedly, the UN Economic and Social Council recently approved a resolution which calls for collecting data related to homelessness which can be achieved through technology. **Target 17.9** calls for enhancing international support for capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the Sustainable Development Goals. It has been said that every form of human rights violation occurs in slums, thus, any support for capacity building and addressing **SDG 11.1** would help in reducing the more hidden situations of homelessness occurring in slum communities.

Targets 17.13-17.15 address systemic issues, which perhaps most affect families, children, and girls without homes. **Target 17.15** "Respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development," would enable countries to identify and remedy root causes of homelessness within the context of their own cultural, societal, and national experience. Because the Sustainable Development Goals interlink, it is important that government policies interlace and anticipate cross-cutting issues and influences when countries are preparing frameworks and tools for addressing homelessness. We must keep homelessness on the agenda of the United Nations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Issues encountered by people who are without homes are faced in developing and developed countries alike.

Photo by Asso Myron

The Vincentian Family's 13 Houses Campaign is an example of the

partnership SDG 17 calls for; it's a collaboration that engages multiple stakeholders, with a goal of creating 13 houses, "in each of the 156 countries where the Vincentian Family works."[165] Multiple organizations provide finances, government may assist with grants for construction, volunteers may help staff services to families or children, as has occurred in Georgia, the USA, Croatia and other locations. I am aware of private entities holding fundraisers for services; restaurants donating food; individuals chipping in on personal protective equipment or offering counseling services.

There must be partnerships in order to ensure that there's more accessible and affordable housing, partnerships to ensure persons without homes have access to resources and services, partnerships to stop the commodification of housing, partnerships to measure homelessness and evaluate related efforts, partnerships to get essential information to people both globally and locally - to educate. There are many more examples, and we keep in mind the varying circumstances and partnerships accompanying each of them. These show that, "together, we can!"

Human Rights

Throughout the United Nations 2030 Agenda, and especially encompassed in the 17th SDG, we see the imperative for cooperation in order to achieve the progress we've identified as necessary for people, planet and prosperity. However, while looking through the lens of this agenda, we must not forget that these actions are necessitated by international and human rights law. The United Nations, as an institution, is intended to itself uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states in **Article 1** "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."[166] The reality that there are conditions around the world - economic, social, and cultural - which violate the actualization of human freedom and dignity (especially of women, children and girls, migrants, and refugees) incite us to action, and the 2030 Agenda is simply one iteration of this call. As ECOSOC, or civil society through this council, have increasingly made efforts to include people with lived experiences of the issues discussed, including Family Homelessness, we are encouraged but not complacent in a seemingly expanding ability to make meaningful, sustainable change to the most pervasive and intersectional issues of the modern world.

As members of Civil Society, and representatives of people serving others experiencing homelessness, housing insecurity, displacement, and more, UNANIMA International are also reacting directly to many violations of human rights that are displayed even through the necessity of our work, but definitely, and unfortunately affirmed anecdotally in many of the testimonies we hear through our Family Homelessness/Displacement and Trauma research. Actualization of Human Rights, has in fact, been a considered part and clause of many of the international treaty bodies upon which international law and order is based. Most notably, UDHR **Article 28** "Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized,"[167] UNCRC **Article 4** "States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international co-operation."[168] It is a human rights obligation therefore, for partnerships for the goals to be an unwavering focus of the United Nations.

Sister Noelene Simmons, SM
Former President of Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH) and Member of the UNANIMA International Board

Working in partnership to address issues such as Family Homelessness is essential. No one person or organisation has all the wisdom. By sharing insights and experiences a strong, credible voice emerges to bring about systemic change that positively impacts on those who are at risk.

Elizabeth Madden
International Advocate and Lived Experience

In terms of addressing Family Homelessness at the United Nations, partnerships between people with lived experience and NGOs are crucial to policy development, personal change and overall societal change. I noticed [at CSocd58] that the people who were participating in discussions around family homelessness were greatly involved with the issue of homelessness. I encountered a lot of speakers, policy makers and shapers, who have spent a long time committed to the cause of ending homelessness. I attended to speak of my lived experience, I was valued, and when I spoke, people listened. These are the first steps towards addressing any social issues. In the UN, I was treated with great respect and equality, and this gave me a sense of confidence. When a person has high self-esteem, they believe in themselves and can believe that they can achieve greater things in life. They believe they deserve a home, a job, an education. The mere fact that the UN is including lived experiences is showing human progression, not just progression around housing and homelessness.

Monica Jahangir-Chowdhury
International Movement ATD Fourth World

Just like our organization, UNANIMA International always carries the ambition of bringing to the United Nations the voices, experiences and hopes of those who are directly affected by the issue discussed. We were honored and delighted to work with UNANIMA on the 2019 Commemoration of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, where we united our efforts to bring the voices of parents, mothers, and children experiencing poverty and homelessness to the forefront. We look forward to continuing our partnership with UNANIMA International and

together creating a space so those left behind can be heard.

Bette Levy
Soroptimist International
Main Representative to
the United Nations/NY

Whether it's work on the ground at the grassroots level or at global policy level, nothing can be achieved without partnerships - that's why Goal 17 is so important and for homeless women (head of households) this is even more dire. Governments can not do it alone; they rely on partnerships with NGOS and it is organizations such as Soroptimist International and UNANIMA International that are on the front lines housing the women and their children in our shelters or supporting other grassroots projects that make the day to day difference in the lives of women. Many are victims of domestic violence and these shelters are the only way for survival. While difficult and often pushed to the side by Member States, as too controversial, it's very important and relevant that the discussions are front and center at the UN as the only place where all countries come together to take on the world's health and if we are to achieve the SDGs and Leave No One Behind.

Mark Mc Greevy
Co-Founder of Institute of
Global Homelessness (IGH)

While shelter is vital to ending family homelessness, it must not stop there. Government, academia, private corporations, and nonprofit organizations must work together to create strong programs and nimble systems that can efficiently and effectively bring families out of poverty and into stable housing. Sustainable Development Goal #5 recognizes the importance of gender equality and empowerment yet none of its indicators mention women's homelessness. Partnership across all sectors and SDGs will be necessary to address women's and family homelessness. With UNANIMA International's expertise on women's and family homelessness, combined with the leadership of women who have experienced homelessness, and the coalition of NGOs and Member States working together through the Working Group to End Homelessness, we will lead the world on its way to ending and preventing homelessness.

Note: UNANIMA International's partners submitted written statements

Responder

Amarachi Grace Ezeonu, SNDdeN

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, UN NGO Représentative New York

Homelessness robs an individual of their human dignity. No human being should have to go through this dehumanizing experience because "even birds of the air have nests." A house or shelter is not necessarily a home. A home is a place where one feels genuinely safe and secure. In many major cities around the world, we can find individuals tucked in blankets on street corners. We hardly notice them as we hurriedly walk past. People experiencing homelessness often are blamed for their predicament, as many associate them with criminals or drug addicts. But this is not always the case. Anyone can fall into this situation. It only takes a slip along the way; a business deal went wrong, an illness, loss of a job, or other misfortune. As it sometimes happens, one disaster would lead to another until one finds self in the 'quagmire' of homelessness. And once in this situation, outside intervention is often needed to help get the individual back on track. Everyone deserves a life of dignity, no matter their story. I applaud the tremendous efforts of Jean Quinn, DW, and UNANIMA International in bringing forth the issue of Family Homelessness at the United Nations.

Governments have a responsibility to provide safe and affordable housing for all its citizens as a form of social protection. The pledge in the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind must also include people experiencing homelessness since they are among the furthest left behind.

Photo by Jon Tyson

Advocacy Recommendations

- Acknowledging the role civil society, the private sector, and citizens play in advocacy for resolving issues of institutional and policy inclusiveness in the context of Family Homelessness, **we recommend:**
- Advocate and actively participate in partnerships with other non-state and state actors ensuring individuals and families with a lived experience of Family Homelessness are included in the conversation
- Encourage sharing of equal responsibility to private sector in addressing and preventing Family Homelessness
- Advocate for more creation of environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable public housing and permanent, supported housing in Member States
- Encourage institutional adoption of policies that ensure people with lived experience of homelessness and housing insecurity are involved in the design and provision of related services, including within the context of complex emergency and disaster responses, and development of plans to address and prevent root causes of Family Homelessness
- Help incite a paradigm shift, so that homelessness becomes viewed as what it is: a civil rights and human rights issues

Policy Recommendations

We believe the following policy recommendations are essential to addressing and preventing Family Homelessness, and are applicable at the local, national and international levels. **We encourage:**

- Initiate needs assessments for affordable housing including all stakeholders, followed by the implementation of quotas for creation of environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable public housing in Member States
- Pursue disaggregated data collection, also noting gender and age, on homelessness, including invisible forms such as "doubling up," and censuses of slums within member states, to better inform all levels of policies and targeted programs for addressing and preventing homelessness
- Implement policies that ensure people with lived experience of homelessness and housing insecurity are involved in the design and provision of related services, and development of plans to address and prevent root causes; these stakeholders should be treated equally, as well as compensated adequately for their time and expertise
- Recognize and adhere to international good practices including the Housing First model and permanent, supported housing which are evidence-based and culturally adaptable
- Amend all levels of legislation, especially national to support the fulfillment of international laws and agendas, in particular the basis of human rights law (UDHR), and the essential targeted protections for children (UNCRC), women (CEDAW), Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and persons with disabilities (UNCRPD); adhering to these international laws with result in the elimination of countless drivers of Family Homelessness, displacement and trauma

"How can the 75th anniversary of the United Nations be used as an opportunity to reinvigorate the spirit of optimism and global solidarity?"[169]

– Bahá'í International Community Representative Offices

Resources

Civicus, "Monitor - Tracking Civil Space," https://monitor.civicus.org/

UN DESA and UNITAR, "Stakeholder Engagement & the 2030 Agenda: A Practical Guide," https://rb.gy/esa5qx

Wonhyung Lee and Kristin M. Ferguson, "The Role of Local Businesses in Addressing Multidimensional Needs of Homeless Populations," *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, https://ighhub.org/resource/role-local-businesses-addressing-multidimensional-needs-homeless-populations

Conclusion

Kirin R. Taylor, Research Fellow at UNANIMA International

Family Homelessness Through the Lens of the United Nations 2030 Agenda Volumes One and Two were based in new research findings and extensive literature reviews, created with a range of expert inputs, and dependent upon the testimonies of those working with families experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity as well as the ultimate experts with lived experience. The lens of the UN 2030 Agenda was ideal for our analyzing Family Homelessness, because it is - and must be considered - a multilateral issue. The 2030 Agenda rests within a world constructed with many colonial and now neo-colonial influences and severe gender inequality, that desperately need positive peace through social justice in response. Addressing and preventing Family Homelessness is absolutely essential for the UN 2030 agenda to be achieved and for neo-colonialism, gender inequality, and social injustice to be countered.

The comprehensiveness of the agenda allowed for thorough recognition of Family Homelessness' drivers that are multi-faceted and fall within the "5 Ps" of the SDGs: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships. Just as the SDGs require multi-stakeholder engagement and work towards solving, so does Family Homelessness. These publications in themselves allowed UNANIMA International to progress work towards solving a critical issue through relationship-building, awareness-spreading, paradigm-shifting, and calling to action all political actors. As the IISD SDG Knowledge Hub asserts, "It's clear that the SDGs will not be achieved using the same conventional approaches used in the past. Building the evidence-base on the transitions needed to attain the SDGs is a key area where science and transdisciplinary research can make a tangible contribution."[170] Equally important, and certainly highlighted through the work of leading organizations, experts and good practices highlighted herein and in our other publications *Hidden Faces of Homelessness: International Research on Families Volumes One and Two,* is the use of a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to homelessness solutions, climate solutions, and economic reform. We need the HRBA in our international politics as well - even in their design and administration, such as in the United Nations diplomatic setting, other transnational, regional and local institutions and beyond. International Laws, treaties and agendas, if followed, necessitate this approach.

In a final effort to promote the solutions that are most culturally adaptable, cost-effective, and holis-

tically designed, the Housing First and permanent, supported housing models must once again be mentioned. Each of these are aligned with the paradigm shift UNANIMA International so vehemently advocates for: recognize and treat homelessness as what it is - a human rights and civil rights issue. Bringing this all back to the topic of families, we see the intergenerational and pervasive negative effects of human rights violations particularly for marginalized groups within their local, national and even international contexts, manifesting through Family Homelessness, displacement and trauma. Though terrible already, these effects are not siloed. They reach beyond the family unit to the community, to the nation, to our global society.

We need political will in order to end Family Homelessness, and harnessing this towards the 2030 Agenda is one area where advocacy and policy can focus productively. Whoever is reading this, will you affirm and renew your commitment to the agenda? UNANIMA International presents here an invitation: join us in ending Family Homelessness! We reiterate gratitude to all of our research partners and all people with lived experience of homelessness and housing insecurity, whose resilience inspires us and whose expertise guides us. To end with, a quote from a UNANIMA International interview with Marietta L. Latonio, RSM social worker from the Philippines, "the implementation of the SDGs can be done through recognizing dignity in every person."

Recommendations

The address and prevention of Family Homelessness is critically important to UNANIMA International. In response to the interlinkages between sustainable development, human rights, and Family Homelessness presented, we give the following recommendations:

- **We encourage** Member States to fully recognise the commitments they have made to date through the 2030 Agenda, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Convention on the Right of the Child among other United Nations Documents and actively work towards achieving them;
- **We encourage** implementation of the New Urban Agenda using a Human Rights-Based Approach;
- **We encourage** Nation States to address the nature of family homelessness i.e. specifically policies that meet the unique needs of women and children, through gender sensitive policies and resource allocation;
- **We encourage** Nation States to implement Housing Led Initiatives;
- **We encourage** Nation States to Provide Adequate Housing with Support Services for families to address the trauma of homelessness in an effort to break the cycle of generational homelessness;
- **We encourage** Nation States to Expand local government support for the development of affordable family-sized housing;
- **We encourage** Nation States to Implementation of Social Protection policies and programs, specifically ones that ensure access to housing and support systems. Such policies and programs enable Women, Children and the family to break the poverty cycle/ reduce inequalities;
- **We encourage** Nation States to push for government policies that finance, promote and invest in civil society and private sector partnerships with organisations who are currently servicing the needs of the Homeless population;
- **We encourage** Nation States to make policy changes to secure flexible funding for implementation of recommendations;
- **We encourage** Nation States to actively collect disaggregated data on Homelessness, specifically in relation to Family homelessness, women and children.

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