CAPSTONE PROJECT: UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL IN COLLABORATION WITH SOPHIA HOUSING ON FAMILY HOMELESSNESS AND TRAUMA

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Abstract

Homelessness is a global epidemic, which varies in nature and characteristics among both developed and developing countries. According to a recent report from the United Nations Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, an estimated 1.8 billion people lack proper housing.[1] This research article examines the evolution of global family homelessness critically and holistically, evaluating the causes and experiences of homeless families in three countries: Greece, the U.S. and India.

A home provides roots, identity, and a sense of belonging. The experience of being homeless takes all these away. Trauma, substance abuse and violence are factors that traditionally result in homelessness. Recent studies have shown that shortages of affordable housing, increasing migration and socio-economic crises have resulted to an increase in family homelessness.[2] The issue of homelessness has transformed from being an individualized to a familial experience during the first two decades of the 21st century. Family homelessness has been induced by the global financial crisis and the aftermath of austerity measures imposed in the large cities in Europe and the United States. Numbers increased following the housing crisis of 2008 in the United States and the Eurozone Crisis in Europe. In the United States, homeless families make up nearly 33% of the homeless population. Data from Europe indicates homeless families in France make up the 29% of homeless population and 38% in Ireland.[3] In India, family homelessness is the result of the rapid population growth, urbanization and the inherent caste system. Families placed in the lower ranks of the caste system experience horrific living and housing conditions.

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[1] Human Rights Council Resolution 40/61, Access to justice for the right to housing, A/HRC/40/61 (15 January 2019).

[2] Global Homelessness Statistics.

[3] Yaouanq, F. and Duee, M. (2014) Les sans-domicile en 2012: une grande diversité de situations [The Homeless in 2012: Broad Diversity of Situations], in: F. Yaouancq and M. Duée, *France, Portrait social*, Edition 2014, INSEE.

It should be noted that family homelessness is strongly associated with women or/and single mothers. Domestic violence is a major factor for family homelessness, and is overwhelmingly experienced by women.[4] In the United States, it was reported in 2016 that on a single night over 70,000 women and children fled domestic violence to find refuge in emergency shelters.[5] The relationship breakup within a household is a major cause for family homelessness, with many women having to choose between abuse or a life on the streets. This research will focus on how a new policy approach should be implemented both from governmental and non-governmental perspectives and how UNANIMA International should work with public and private sectors to eradicate family homelessness and trauma.

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[4] Shelters to Shutters.

[5] *Ibid.*

What is Family Homelessness?

Homelessness is a worldwide systemic issue. Family homelessness exposes multiple generations to the chronic issues of poverty and homelessness. Family homelessness is defined as families; such as both single parents and coupled parents with dependent children living in public spaces or in inadequate housing. Inadequate housing is defined as emergency accommodation, including temporary accommodation, homeless hostels, women's shelters, refugee accommodation and institutions, such as health or penal institutions without the provision of housing facilities. Family homelessness includes individuals living temporarily in conventional housing with friends and family due to lack of affordable or adequate housing.

Definitions of Family Homelessness in Greece, the U.S. & India

Greece: Family Homelessness in Greece as defined by FEANTSA

Family Homelessness in Greece as defined by The European Federation of National Organizations working with the Homeless (FEANTSA), is divided into four ETHOS[6] categories. The categories include *roofless* families, i.e. people living in the street who don't have access to any sort of housing; *houseless* families, people living temporarily in housing facilities; *insecure*, people living in insecure housing conditions and are experiencing housing exclusion or domestic violence and families living in *inadequate* housing, conditions such as trailers, institutions, camps and inappropriate buildings.[7] Note that findings by Greek national experts have suggested the

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[6] ETHOS: European Typology on Homelessness and housing exclusion
[7] ETHOS: European Typology for the lack of roof and exclusion from housing, Greece.

existence of both visible and invisible homelessness in Greece in the aftermath of the Eurozone Crisis in 2013.

Visible homelessness can be found on the first two categories of ETHOS; *roofless and houseless*. It concerns people who appear to be homeless by sleeping in public places and people living in temporary housing shelters. **Invisible homelessness** concerns the last two ETHOS categories of *insecure and inadequate housing*. Invisible homelessness involves people living in inadequate public institutions such as mental health and childcare institutions as well as people living in insecure housing circumstances, who escape the streets and shelters through family help or people who experience insecure living conditions, such as domestic violence. According to Greek policy experts, family homelessness in Greece is thought to fall mainly within the last category. In 2017 it was estimated that 14% of the population in Athens, approximately 514,000 people, were living in invisible and *insecure* homelessness.[8]

United States: Conflicting Federal Definitions of Family Homelessness

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) considers any child or youth who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence to be homeless.[9] In essence, ED's definition, beyond traditional definition of homelessness, includes types of unstable housing not traditionally understood by the public to be forms of homelessness. These precarious situations include living "doubled up" — a term used to describe desperate families share a small and affordable space, staying in motels or hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations, and abandoning in hospitals or awaiting placement in foster care due to the

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[8] V.P. Arapoglou, K. Gounis, Contested Landscapes of Poverty and Homelessness in Southern Europe: Reflections from Athens, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, 70.

[9] U.S. Department of Education.

temporary nature of these situations. Migratory children are also considered homeless if living under any of these circumstances. Programs administered by the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, Justice, and Agriculture all use definitions similar to that of ED.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which funds most emergency housing services, uses a much narrower definition than ED and other federal agencies. While HUD considers families residing in homeless shelters or in places not meant for human habitation to be unconditionally homeless, its definition of homelessness for families in "doubled up" or hotel/motel situations is more limited. Families living "doubled up" or staying in hotels and motels are eligible for HUD-funded emergency housing and related services only if they are losing their primary nighttime residences within 14 days. Exceptions are made for families in these living arrangements if they have moved twice; did not hold a lease within the last 60 days; and have either chronic disabilities or physical or mental conditions, substance addiction, histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse, a disabled child, or two or more severe barriers to employment.[10]

These complicated differences in definitions among U.S. federal agencies create logistical and bureaucratic challenges in providing services to the most vulnerable children and families.[11]

India: Homelessness as defined by Census 2011

As defined by the Indian Government (Census India[12]), family homelessness is referred to 'Houseless Households' which means Households who do not live in buildings or census houses but live in the open on roadside, pavements, in Hume pipes, under flyovers and staircases, or in the open in places

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[10] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
[11] American Almanac of Family Homelessness 2015.
[12] Census India

of worship, mandaps, railway platforms, etc. are treated as Houseless Households.

Aashray Adhikar Abhiyan[13] defines a homeless person as [one] who has no place to call a home in the city. By home is meant a place which not only provides a shelter but takes care of one's health, social, cultural and economic needs. Home provides a holistic care and security. This tends to emphasize the lack of the components of a broad image of home which makes it a much more inclusive definition than that used by the India Government.

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[13] Aashray Adhikar Abhiyan is not a government organization.

The Characteristics of Family Homelessness

Greece

Family homelessness is an emerging crisis in Greece. Contrary to general patterns in the European Union, lone adults age 18-44 in Greece are more likely to experience homelessness than families with children.[14] Families who experience homelessness face the risk of extreme poverty and social exclusion due to the economic collapse of the country. Shelters are more willing to host family units as opposed to lone adults, therefore families are mostly guaranteed different types of temporary housing.[15] Two types of familial homelessness exist within Greece:: a) single mothers with two dependent children on social benefits after long-term unemployment, who are widowed or have been divorced or have experienced domestic abuse; and b) families comprised of both parents and dependent children, who lost their low-income jobs after the aftermath of the economic crisis.[16] Emergency social and housing services are available to families in both situations; however, parents with dependent children who face substance or mental problems are not qualified for the same service. This contributes to a greater issue of informal homelessness that cannot be traced by the government or by social services. Homelessness in Greece is underreported, negatively affecting the response to this crisis.

United States of America

One third of all homeless people in the U.S. are comprised of families with children.[17] In 2018, nearly 60,000 families in the U.S. did not have overnight housing.[18] Over half of all homeless Americans

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[14] European Parliament, Unemployment and Poverty: Greece and Other (Post-)Program Countries.
[15] National Coalition for the Homeless
[16] European Observatory on Homelessness, Family Homelessness in Europe, 64.
[17] USHUD, "The 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress," 2018, 34.
[18] NAEH, "Family Homelessness in the United States: A State-by-State Snapshot," National Alliance to End Homelessness. February 20, 2018.

are below the age of 18.[19] The vast majority of homeless families are African American or Hispanic.[20] Statewide, rates of family homelessness are highest in Washington D.C., Massachusetts, New York, and Hawaii.[21]

By Household Type and Sheltered Status, 2018

People in Families, Sheltered — 30%

Individuals, Sheltered — 35%

65% Sheltered

People in Families, Unsheltered — 3%
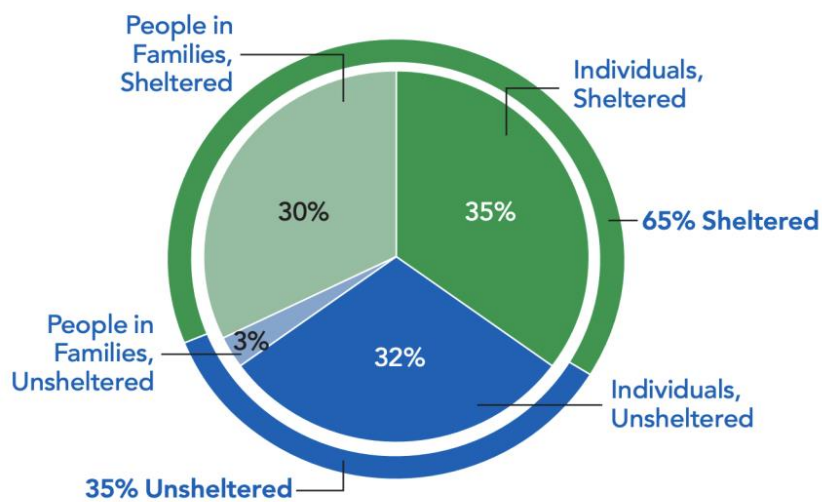
32%

Individuals, Unsheltered

35% Unsheltered

Figure 1: USHUD, "The 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress," 2018

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[19] USICH, "Homelessness in America: Focus on Families with Children."
[20] *Ibid.*
[21] NAEH, "Family Homelessness in the United States."

Estimates of Family Homelessness by State, 2018
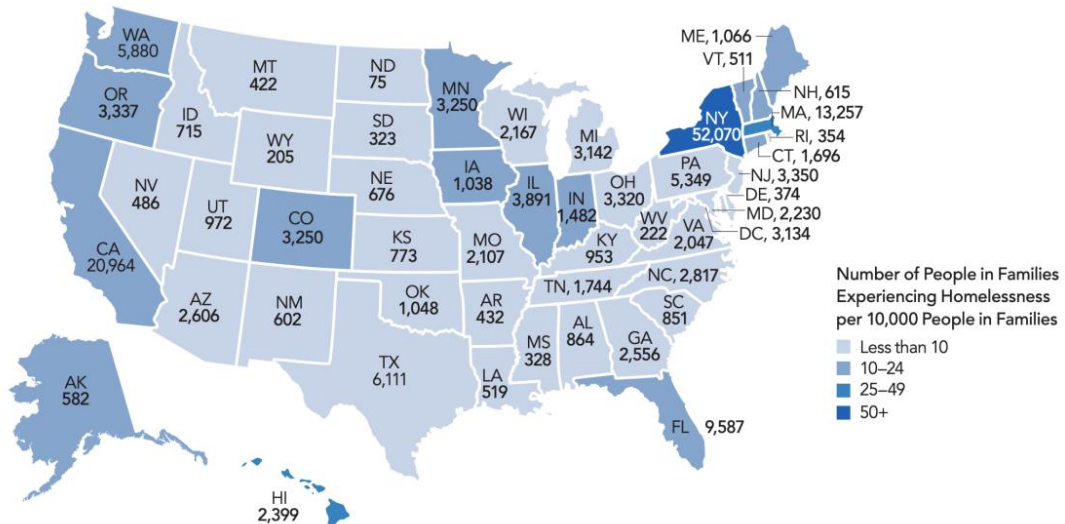
Figure 2: USHUD, "The 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress," 2018

The U.S. has higher rates of family homelessness than any other developed nations in the world.[22]

Economic factors of family homelessness are well-documented; the majority of family homelessness

disproportionately affects single mothers with one or more children—most commonly two—without any

additional support (in terms of economic means, resources such as housing, food, or interpersonal

relationship).[23] The racial component of family homelessness in the United States is critical. Although

government-sanctioned racial and ethnic discrimination may be a relic of the past, minority groups are still

overrepresented in shelters when compared to white families due to prejudice and substantial access barriers

to decent employment, education, health care, and housing. The nature and expression of bias vary by racial

and ethnic group, but the effects are similar; generational poverty, high unemployment, low educational

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[22] Doorways, "The Facts About Family Homelessness," Doorways for Women and Families.

[23] *Ibid.*

attainment and earned income, considerable gaps in wealth accumulation, and homelessness.[24]

India

As per Census survey 2011, there are 1.82 million homeless people in India, which is a definite underestimation when the problem of homelessness is far more proliferated and dire. India has a very high number of homeless children in the world, but no official data exists on their exact numbers or adequate schemes to respond to their special needs.

The problem of homelessness in India is very different in Urban and Rural areas. Around 32 percent of the population lives in urban areas, of which 26 percent lives below official poverty line. **Poverty Line** is an economic benchmark used by the government of India to indicate economic disadvantage and to identify individuals and households in need of government assistance and aid. It is determined using various parameters which vary from state to state and within states. In India, 40 percent of the population does not have do not have proper housing (Banerjee- Guha, n.d.). Rural areas of India experience 'hidden homelessness', which is people tending to try to cope the problem of homelessness through temporary arrangements that render homelessness more hidden.[25] From 2001 to 2011, families without homes increased 37 percent in cities, fell 26 percent in villages. [26]

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[24] American Almanac of Family Homelessness 2015.
[25] UNCHS 2000
[26] The Indian Express, "From 2001 to 2011, families without homes increased 37% in cities, fell 26% in villages."
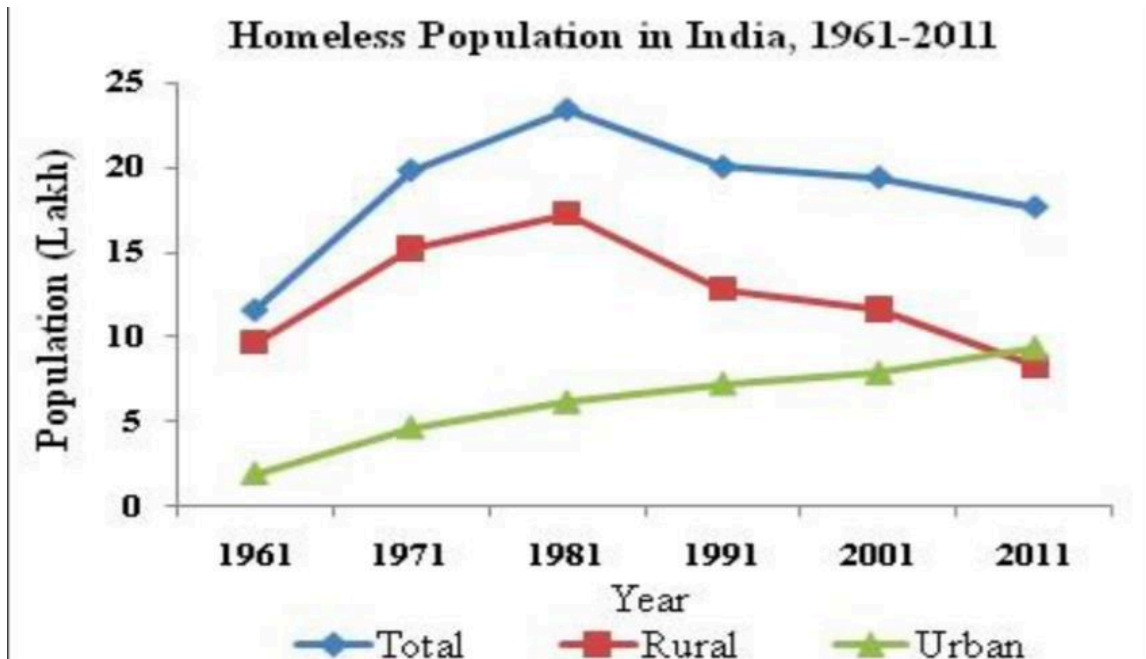
Figure 1-Homeless Population in India

In the figure above (Figure 1) it can be seen that there is a direct correlation between rural and urban homelessness, as the decreasing trend of the former is in conjunction with an increasing trend of urban household homelessness.

Root Causes of Family Homelessness

The causes of homelessness are rooted in different factors, depending on social and geographical means.

Greece

In Greece, family homelessness has a direct relationship with poverty and is a consequence of the multiple rounds of austerity measures, that have been imposed on Greece since 2010 to counter the Greek government-debt crisis.[27] The rapid collapse of the Greek economy after 2010 brought up the inherent shortcomings and inadequacies of the Greek social welfare system. After 9 years the country lacks the ability to combat this challenge due to the longevity of the crisis, the rising migration problem and the social and demographic changes of the 21st century.

Shortcomings of the Familistic Welfare Capitalist System

Greeks living in risk of poverty or social exclusion made up more than 36 percent of the population in 2014.[28] It is important to assess the causal mechanisms that result in homelessness and identify which of them are *necessary* or *contingent. Necessary*, i.e. rooting to the structural causes of family homelessness such as the Greek welfare system and *contingent*, i.e. resulting after emerging social factors and affect negatively a certain group of the population.[29] The structural factors increasing family homelessness in Greece are rooted to the inadequacies in Familistic Welfare Capitalism, a concept created in the late 1990s by the Italian academic, Maurizio Ferrera.[30] Familistic Welfare Capitalism describes the Southern European Model of Welfare which can be traced in Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece; the countries that were

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[27] S. Erlanger, "Europe Looks at the I.M.F. With Unease as Greece Struggles", The New York Times, 24 March, 2010.

[28] European Parliament, Unemployment and Poverty: Greece and Other (Post-)Programme Countries.

[29] S. Fitzpatrick, "Explaining Homelessness: a Critical Realist Perspective", *Housing, Theory and Society,* 22:1, 2005, 14.

[30] M. Ferrera, "The 'Southern Model' of Welfare in Social Europe", *Journal of European Social Policy,* 1992.

devastated by the Eurozone Crisis in 2008. The study of the European welfare systems was developed following the end of World War I & II and the Great Depression. The best known study was Gøsta Esping-Andersen's *Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*.[31]

Esping-Andersen famously divided the social welfare systems in Europe into three categories:

1. Liberal/Anglo-Saxon Model

2. Continental (Bismarckian)/ Corporatist Model

3. Social-Democratic/ Scandinavian Model [32]

Until the 1990s, these three models were used to describe social welfare systems in Europe. The Southern European and Eastern European countries were placed in the Corporatist Model. This Model has as a main characteristic the preservation of the status and benefits of workers such as pensions and employment.[33] However, the historical weakness of the state framework in Southern Europe led to the study of the fourth model referred to currently by academics as the *Familistic Welfare Capitalism System*.

This model of national political economy places the family as the key provider of welfare and the main agent in the socio-economic and political reproduction of the country.[34] Familialism is an ideology that puts priority to family, i.e. families taking responsibility for their members rather than the government or social programs. The structural deficiencies of this type of social welfare were profound following the debt crisis. The pre-dominant neoliberal rationale of the 21st century, which reduces government spending and increases the role of the private sector in the society and economy,[35] imposed severe constraints to policy makers in Greece who still struggle between anti-poverty policies and providing sustainable solutions for economic growth. Homeless single-parent families, especially single mothers, can be used as

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[31] G. Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism,* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990.

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] I. Begg, F. Mushövel, R. Niblett, "The Welfare State in Europe: Visions for Reform", *Chatham House,* September 2015.

[34] T. Papadopoulos, A. Roumpakis, "Familistic welfare capitalism in crisis: social reproduction and anti-social policy in Greece", *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy,* 29:3, 2013, 204-224.

[35] World Health Organization, "Neoliberal Ideas", 2014.
https://web.archive.org/web/20040806144320/http://www.who.int/trade/glossary/story067/en/

an example to highlight the deficiencies and problems of familistic welfare capitalism. Field research in Greece indicates that many single mothers with dependent children end up for long periods of time in shelters with the government aid of 40 Euros per month because they can no longer receive economic help from relatives or friends.[36] It reveals the inherent inadequacies of social protection in cases where family support is absent or, due to the economic crisis, the family no longer capable of helping its members. Shelters are insufficiently equipped of providing long-term economic and social support for homeless families, especially without adequate government assistance.

Migration Crisis

The migration crisis had a pivotal role in the increase of homeless families in Greece. The UN Refugee Agency announced that more than 1.5 million refugees and migrants arrived in Greece between 2014 and 2017.[37] When the refugee crisis began, Greece was considered a transit country, allowing the government to avoid providing long-term services for the social protection of refugees. Following the closing of the Balkan border and the shortcomings of the EU-Turkey deal, the influx of refugees rose in 2017, allowing the development of the Greek Asylum Service to determine which people are qualified for asylum in Greece.[38] As of 2018, Greece's migrant and refugee population was 76,000, with 14,600 residing on the islands and 61,400 in the mainland.[39] The increased flow of refugee families and the lengthy duration of the Asylum process resulted in the rise of family homelessness within the refugee population, adding to the number of family homelessness in Greece. A large percentage of refugees are stranded on the Greek islands, residing in camps which were built for temporary circumstances; however, the number of refugee homeless people is only documented once the asylum application is successful[40], excluding many

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[36] N. Kourachanis, "Forms of Social Exclusion in Familistic Welfare Capitalism: Family Homelessness in Athens", *Journal of Social Research and Policy,* 8(2), 2019.

[37] UNHCR, "Greece Data", 2018. https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/69017

[38] Asylum Service, "Statistics of Asylum Service (to 31.03.2018)", Athens, 2018.

[39] UNHCR, "Greece Data", 2018. https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/69017

[40] Greek Council on Refugees, "Housing: Greece", 2019.
https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/greece/content-international-protection/housing

undocumented homeless refugees from the count.

Roma

The perseverance of the Greek culture and tradition by the Greek society, has resulted in the marginalization and stigmatization of the estimated 265,000 Roma who live in Greece[41]. The Romani people originate from Northern India and have been around the Balkan region since the 15th century.[42] During the historical evolution of their communities, the Roma have adopted ways of life and traditions which differ from the manners and customs of Greece, but which they themselves regard as crucial to their collective identity and a source of pride for their people.[43] T h e   n o m a d i c   l i f e   a n d traditions have resulted to increasing prejudice and hatred in Greece, despite the fact that most of the Romani traditions are disappearing. The Romani communities in Greece face several problems including high rates of child labor and abuse, low school attendance, police discrimination and drug trafficking due to the neglect of the state.[44] The most serious issue is housing, since many Roma still live in tents on properties they do not own, making them subject to eviction.[45]

Social/Demographic Changes

Globalization has brought many social and demographic changes to Europe. Greece has traditionally experienced less social parity than Northern Europe and the United States. Homogeneity and orthodoxy are maintained because of the dominant Greek culture and the Greek Orthodox religion. Since 2007, a high proportion of divorces involving families with 1-2 children reached almost 65 percent of households.[46] Only 5 percent of children with divorced parents resulted in re-established families with two parents.[47] Still, in 2017, female headship with children under 15 accounted for 5 percent , and only 7 percent

[41] Minority Rights Group International-Greece-Roma.

[42] European Journal of Human Genetics, "*Origins, admixture and founder lineages in European Roma*", 24(6): 937–943, 2016. 10.1038/ejhg.2015.201

[43] National Commission on Human Rights, "The State of Roma in Greece", 2007.

[44] Minority Rights Group International-Greece-Roma.

[45] *Ibid.*

[46] OECD, Families are Changing, 2011.

[47] *Ibid.*

of Greek households were led by single mothers.[48] After thousands of people lost their jobs in the debt-crisis, single mothers were exposed to the difficult circumstances as they became unable to house themselves independently from a man due to their weak economic position. According to an OECD Report, Greece has one of the highest proportions of female participation in engineering degrees; however, less than 50% of engineering graduates are female, because older female workers have relatively low average education levels[49], proving the inequality in employment and earnings for men and women still persists. In 2010, the gender pay gap was at 15.0 percent[50] and segregation in education and in the labor market was one of the prominent reasons since payable sectors and occupations were overrepresented by men[51] where lower wages occupations were predominantly carried out by women.

United States of America

Various socioeconomic factors have created a spike in family homelessness and chronic familial lack of shelter in the United States for decades. Low availability of affordable housing is one major component of the issue.[52] Wages are flat or decreasing, while average commodity prices are on the rise.[53] Over a quarter of all single-parent households do not earn enough to be considered above the poverty line.[54] Meanwhile, government support has decreased, with requirements for eligibility for aid programs becoming more stringent, disqualifying many families.[55] Without enough social programs to address this issue, families end up on the streets and are exposed to elements dangerous to their health (i.e. sickness from

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[48] M. J. Carlson, "Families Unequal: Socioeconomic Gradients in Family Patterns across the United States and Europe" in *Unequal Family Lives* (eds.) Naomi R. Cahn, Laurie Fields DeRose, W. Bradford Wilcox, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

[49] OECD, Families are Changing, 2011.

[50] European Commission, "The Gender Pay Gap Situation in the EU - Greece", 2015. https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/equal-pay/gender-pay-gap-situation-eu_en

[51] Ibid.

[52] NCH, "Family Homelessness," National Coalition for the Homeless.

[53] *Ibid.*

[54] *Ibid.*

[55] *Ibid.*

exposure to the elements, issues of cleanliness, exposure to drugs, exposure to dangerous people on the streets, exposure to accident, exposure to assault or rape, etc.). Most U.S. cities have also reported the connection between domestic abuse and homelessness, demonstrating that mothers often leave an abusive spouse to protect their children but end up economically devastated and homeless.[56] Over 90 percent of homeless families noted that abuse had contributed to their homelessness.[57] A clear pattern of impact emerges with children and single parents that make up many homeless families. Physical abuse leads to homelessness, denoting a need to address this core issue. Economic inequity and problems with employment or income are at the root of this crisis.

India

Homelessness in India is a result of rapid population growth, imbalanced urbanization, industrialization, and migration towards cities for employment and livelihood, which has forced the impecunious population to live in inadequate conditions or dilapidated facilities.

Urbanization

Lack of employment, low return on agriculture and stagnancy of development in rural areas in India has led to a mass migration of people to urban areas in search of employment, stability and better facilities. Many programs and policies by the Indian Government for rural development failed due to high corruption and poor micro management of these policy initiatives.

Displacement

Almost 70 percent of the rural population still depends on the primary sector for employment. but many families have lost their landed properties due compulsory land acquisitions by the government for development projects like building of dams, roads, etc. In recent years there has been a shift in the nature

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[56] *Ibid.*
[57] *Ibid.*

of available jobs in India, the heavy industry and manufacturing (jobs that require high school education or less) have been replaced tertiary sector jobs (jobs that require more specialized knowledge and higher education).

Other social problems leading to homelessness

Indian society is divided on the basis of caste and creed and people get displaced due to exclusion from the society for belonging to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe(SCST), and in many Hindu majority areas, the facilities and opportunities available for Muslims and Christians are low, forcing them to either migrate or to live in poor conditions.

Current policy response and strategies

Greece

Government Response

In July 2018, the Greek parliament passed a new bill forwarded by the Ministry of Labor, called the "National Strategic Plan for Homelessness". The aim of this bill was to create a comprehensive strategy to combat homelessness between 2018-2021.

The three-year national strategic plan to combat homelessness 2018-2021 includes:

1. Individuals living on the street;

2. Individuals who have lived in structures of transitional hospitality for an extended period of time;

3. Individuals living in inappropriate housing conditions;

4. Individuals with a high living cost.[58]

The objectives are:

Presenting the phenomenon in a scientific, valid and uniform manner.

Codifying the existing legislation and elaborating proposals for the improvement of the institutional framework.

Establishing an inter-ministerial body that will draft the homeless policy, within the Government Social Policy Council under the Vice-Presidency. The Ministries of Labor, Home Affairs, Health, Migration Policy, Economy and Finance will take part.

Establishing a permanent digital monitoring mechanism for homelessness operating within the framework of the National Mechanism for Social Inclusion and Cohesion, aiming at the interconnection and co-ordination of all actors working for the homeless.

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[58] Greek National Strategic Plan for Homelessness, 2019-2021.

Creating indicators to monitor the phenomenon and setting quantitative reduction targets annually.[59]

The program currently targets:

Families and persons hosted in transit hospitalization homes;

Families and individuals registered by the social services of the municipalities as homeless people living on the street or in inappropriate accommodation (caravans, cars, improvised constructions, shacks, containers, housing unsuitable for housing on the basis of applicable legislation);

Women hosted in women hostels for victims of violence;

People housed in children's protection structures, who have reached the age of 18 and are not studying or have access to a home.

The objectives of the program are the direct transition to autonomous living habits through the provision of housing and social care services and reintegration successfully back in the society through the use of counselling services. The program will include an estimated 600 people for up to eighteen months and the 20 percent of adult beneficiaries will be included in the pillar of reintegration to labor.[60]

Roma

In January 2018, a meeting of representatives of the European Economic Area (EEA), the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, the Roma organizations as well as social partners took place at the Ministry of Labor to discuss the implementation of the "Integration and Empowerment of the Roma" Program. This program is co-funded by EEA funds and the Public Investment Program and aims for the development of organized relocation sites and the creation of a group of experts to support institutions and beneficiaries

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[59] Ministry of Labor, "National Strategic Plan for the Homeless", December 2018.
[60] *Ibid.*

implementing interventions for the social inclusion of the Roma.[61] Under the agreement that was signed between the donor countries of the EEA and the Greek State, a total financial support of €7 million is anticipated, of which €5 million comes from EEA funds and €2 million from the national public investment program.[62] The program's central focus is the social protection of all Roma children. Hence, an important policy initiative is the "My School" program[63] that ensures all Roma children are enrolled to primary and secondary public education.

UNHCR, ESTIA and Refugees

UNHCR runs the EU-Funded ESTIA Accommodation program in cooperation with the Greek Government, municipalities and NGOs.[64] The program is temporarily managed by UNHCR and the EU until the Greek government can maintain the funds and allocation of resources for the accommodation of refugees. Since November 2015, 57,583 individuals have benefitted from the accommodation scheme. Around 22,000 people were accommodated as of the end of March 2019, where more than 6,500 of whom are recognized refugees and 48 percent of which are children.[65] Majority of accommodated individuals are families, with an average family size of five people. More than one in five residents have at least one child, that makes them eligible for the accommodation scheme. The three most common vulnerabilities are:

- Serious Medical Conditions—12 percent

- Women at risk—3 percent

- Single parent—3 percent

At the end of March 2019, UNHCR implemented the accommodation initiatives through twenty-three partnerships with thirteen national and international NGOs and ten municipalities. In total, partners managed by UNHCR provided 100 percent of the accommodation places in Greece.

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[61] Ministry of Labor, "Program for the Integration and Empowerment of the Roma."

[62] *Ibid.*

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] UNHCR, "Greece Data", 2018. https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/69017

[65] *Ibid.*

Accommodation for asylum seekers and recognized refugees is provided in 14 cities in mainland and 6 islands. Over half, 57% of the accommodation places are in Athens, 37% in the rest of mainland, and 6% on the islands.

Kilkis
660

Thessaloniki 3,860

Katerini
655

Ioannina
1,484

Trikala
430

Larissa
410

Karditsa
300

Volos
12

Livadia
480

Athens
14,627

Tripoli
302

Lesvos
702

Chios
278

Samos
252

Leros
116

Kos
189

Rhodes
44

Chania
158

Irakleio
686

Siteia
154

Total beneficiaries

57,583

In total, since November 2015, 57,583 individuals have benefitted from the accommodation scheme.
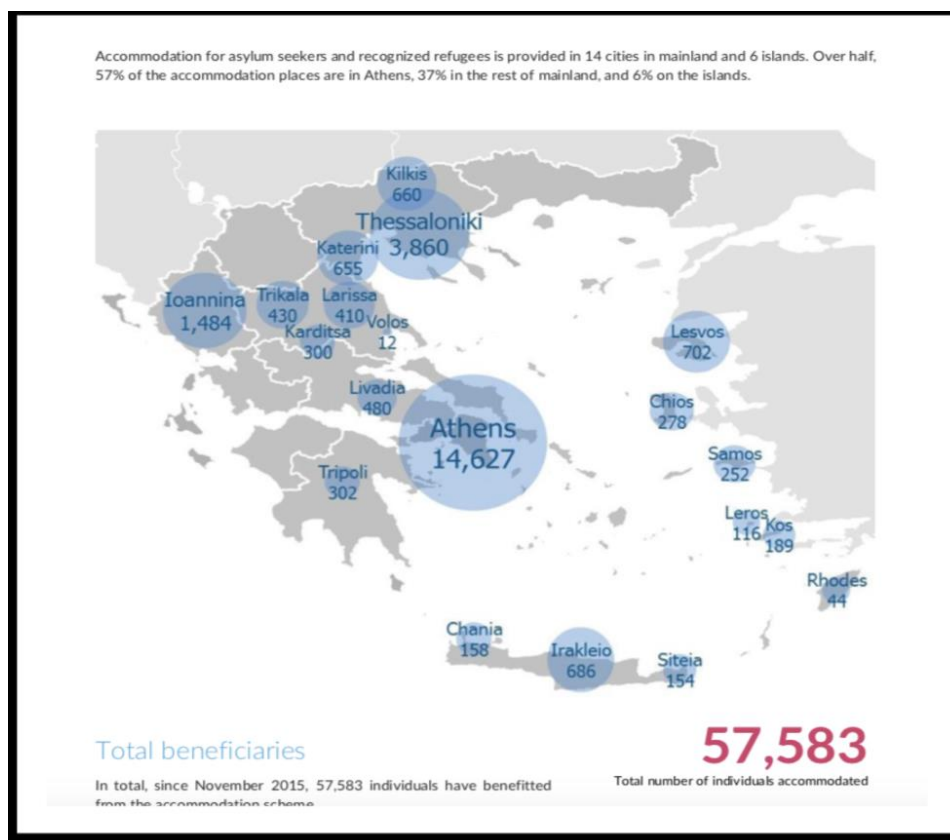
Total number of individuals accommodated

Figure 1: UNHCR Greece, March 2019

NGO Response

Non-Governmental Organizations in Greece are essential for both government and non-governmental response regarding family homelessness. Organizations include PRAKSIS, Programs of Development Social Support & Medical Cooperation; Schedia, improving the living conditions of marginalized social groups and defending children's and women's rights; and the Society of Social Psychiatry & Mental Health**.** These NGOs provide high quality psychiatric and psychological support services to combat trauma. The non-profit institutions that have successfully established a safe space for social support during a time when the Greek government could not respond efficiently to the growing problem of family homelessness. These institutions are collaborating through *The Greek Network for the Right to Housing 2010*; a network established by twenty NGOs and civil society organizations to promote

and support the right to housing for everyone; regardless of social status, ethnicity or religion.[66] The support of the European Union and external/private funds to create programs has been successful in putting pressure for the drafting of government plans to combat family homelessness.

Inadequacies of data collection and implementation of the housing services

Greece's inability to respond to the homeless crisis during the economic collapse has resulted in inadequacies of data collection and implementation of the planned housing services. The most recent official data issued by Greece was in 2009, citing the number of homeless people in Greece at 21,216. [67] Greek professors and policy experts have tried to estimate an accurate number following qualitative research methods, with some of them suggesting that in 2017 the number was around 514,000 people.[68] The unavailability of official data proves the need for a new strategy for collecting data in order to respond more efficiently to the issue.

In May of 2018 a pilot program was created by the University of Panteion in Athens The pilot program only included people living on the streets in seven boroughs across Greece, calculating the total number of homeless people are 1,645.[69] The pilot could be used and developed to include more spaces and shelters throughout the country in order to acquire more accurate numbers. Within the data collection system, a separate column for families should be incorporated in order to materialize the kind of help needed to combat both family homelessness and lone adult homelessness.

The bureaucratic government application procedures for social housing negatively affect the families in hostels and temporary housing. Social workers are reportedly inefficient in advancing the applications, resulting in further delays in the transition to permanent housing. [70] There are many

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[66] The Greek Network for the Right to Roof and the Residence.

[67] OECD, "Estimated number of homeless people, 2015 or latest year available.", 2015.

[68] V.P. Arapoglou, K. Gounis, Contested Landscapes of Poverty and Homelessness in Southern Europe: Reflections from Athens, *Palgrave Macmillan*, 2017, 70.

[69] Ministry of Labor Official Report: Initial results of a pilot census on the number of homeless people in the streets and shelters in the municipalities of: Athens, Thessaloniki, Piraeus, Heraklion, Nea Ionia, Ioannina and Trikala, May 2018.

[70] FEANTSA, Family Homelessness in Europe, EOH Comparative Studies on Homelessness, Brussels - December 2017.

uncertainties when calculating the number of beneficiaries among homeless families, such as if all the dependent children of the families should be included in the benefits. When providing an additional subsidy to the recipient families, the number of children are not taken into account.[71] The same amount of subsidy was given to families with one child as to families with multiple children. The children were counted as beneficiaries per action plan, although they themselves did not receive a subsidy.

Representatives from NGOs and national experts on family homelessness have supported the work done by shelters and reception centers in the mainland as well as the reception centers for refugees in the islands; however, they emphasize that every action plan thus far has been implemented as an ad-hoc measure for anti-crisis response. The new plans that are going to be supported by the Greek government should be used systematically for long-term purposes and ensure that the people qualified for these services are sponsored and slowly transition to independent housing.

United States of America

In the United States, the federal government has focused its energy and funding on chronically homeless adults since 2004. A ten-year examination of this approach reveals flawed economic logic, a failure to "end" chronic homelessness, and a paradigm that might actually sustain chronic homelessness into the future as it relegates homeless families with children and youth to the end of the queue in the nation's plan to end homelessness. In 2016, HUD's budget called for focused effort on family homelessness. This came in the form of an $11 billion request for mandatory funding over ten years for housing assistance—mostly Housing Choice Vouchers, plus new funding for rapid re-housing—for families who meet HUD's limited definition of homelessness. It therefore excludes over 80 percent of the homeless children and youth who are identified by public schools and early care programs under ED's

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[71] FEANTSA, Homelessness in Greece, 2017.

inclusive definition, but who do not meet HUD's definition.[72] [73]

"Doubling up" after leaving a shelter, therefore, becomes a common occurrence, but is not a sustainable solution to family homelessness.[74] "Doubling up" is defined as living with friends or relatives, packing as many people as possible into a single rented unit to save money. This leads to issues of unsustainable housing for all parties involved.[75] "Doubling up" brings about public health concerns, issues of privacy, increased substance abuse or domestic violence. Domestic violence creates additional safety concerns which make the existing economic issues all the more destructive for families and single parents who neither make enough income to house their children or make just enough money to qualify for federal aid.[76] Therefore, homeless families in the United States face a variety of chronic issues. First, the issue of abuse and income disparity lead to problems securing housing. Second, children are exposed to poor development in physical and mental health. Third, parents are then placed in a difficult position; do they work a low paying job for money, or do they stop working in order to qualify for government resources and possibly earn more? Single parents in homeless families are put in this precarious position which leads to intergenerational poverty and homelessness. They can neither support themselves and their family, but also must be careful not to make *too much* income and become disqualified from social aid.

A majority of homeless families live in a chronic cycle of transitional housing or total unsheltered homelessness.[77] Families who are able to get temporary shelters are disproportionately represented in emergency housing services, demonstrating that the system temporarily provides housing but leads to chronic homelessness.[78] By examining the number of long-term homeless families (under 100,000) compared to those temporarily left without a home (almost half a million), it is evident that the system primarily considers short-term solutions that do not provide a sustainable means of gaining shelter for

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[72] U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, Investing in the End of Homelessness: The President's 2017 Budget, February 2016.

[73] U.S. Department of Education, "ED Data Express."

[74] USICH, "Homelessness in America."

[75] *Ibid.*

[76] USICH, "Homelessness in America."

[77] USICH, "Homelessness in America."

[78] *Ibid.*

impoverished homeless families.

Family homelessness is more than a housing problem, but a complex problem caused by deep poverty and exacerbated by a lack of education, a lack of childcare, a lack of employment options, and a severe shortage of affordable housing. It will not be easily remedied by the provision of short or longer-term housing assistance as HUD proposed and requires comprehensive targeted help.

Data Collection Shortfalls

Information on the demographic characteristic of family homelessness in the U.S. comes primarily from data obtained by HUD's Point-in-Time (PIT) counts, Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), and ED's annual federal data summary of its Education for Homeless Children and Youth report.

HUD conducts two separate counts of the number of families who access shelters, both of which should be interpreted with caution when evaluating family homelessness in the United States. For PIT numbers, communities across the country conduct one-day "point-in-time" counts of the number of sheltered (conducted annually) and unsheltered (required every other year) persons during the last ten days in January. While it is relatively straightforward to count those living in a shelter, the process of determining the number of unsheltered persons has several limitations which can lead to erroneous counts and underestimates. These difficulties range from the unknown locations at which unsheltered families may congregate, to inclement winter weather that inhibits volunteers' ability to identify and count persons living in places not meant for human habitation. Local changes in methodology pose yet another issue.[79]

HUD also estimates the total number of homeless families who access shelters over the course of one fiscal year based on a sample of communities. By collecting data annually rather than on a single day, the chance of random fluctuations due to changes in the number of sheltered beds, the length of stay in shelter, and the occupancy rate, among other factors, is reduced, although not eliminated. This data is also limited in its applicability since HUD restricts its definition of homelessness to only those families living

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[79] *Ibid.*

in sheltered or unsheltered situations.[80] As discussed in the previous section, data collected by ED also includes students living "doubled up" with another household or in hotels and motels, which accounted for the vast majority of homeless families.

India

The Government of India has taken some initiatives to eradicate the problem of family homelessness like The National Urban Housing and Habitat Policy 2007, advocates public-private partnership for providing affordable housing for all and specifically to the urban poor. The policy focuses on multiple stakeholders like the private sector, cooperatives, industrial sector and institutional sector (employee housing) to meet the housing needs. It has been estimated that in 2006-07, the housing shortage in India was 24.7 million, of which 99 percent belonged to Lower Income Groups (LWS).

Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) is the major policy initiative towards the problem by emphasizing on increased supply of land through increased incentive for higher Floor Space Index and Transfer of Development Right (TDR). JNNURM has two subparts to address housing needs of the urban poor which are BSUP (Basic Services to the Urban Poor), in 63 Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission Program (JNNURM) Cities and IHSDP (Integrated Housing and Slum Development Program) in rest of the cities.

To mitigate the problem of family homelessness in rural areas schemes like Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) which was launched as a sub- scheme of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Program (RLEGP), have been launched, the main objective of these programs are to give free housing units to the people belonging to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe and to the free bonded laborers living below poverty line[81]. In 2010, the Supreme Court of India ordered that one homeless shelter to be constructed per 100,000

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[80] *Ibid.*
[81] Homeless in India.

people in the population. In 2013, the National Urban Livelihoods Mission – Scheme of Shelters for Urban Homeless (NULM–SUH) converted this order into a policy initiative and set standards for shelters and facilities for the homeless. It provides separate shelters for men, women, families, older persons without care, persons with mental illness, and recovering patients and their families. Still homeless shelters in most cities are insufficient and inadequate. Most of the shelters are poorly constructed, lack basic amenities, storage space, and facilities for cooking and food distribution. Though NULM–SUH proposes a standard of 50 square feet per person, in most homeless shelters, each person is provided about 15 square feet only, which is inadequate to live with dignity. Implementation of the scheme is weak and varies across states.

Good Practices

In Greece, organizations have taken on the primary role of providing assistance and education to homeless families and individuals. *SolidarityNow* is a non-governmental organization established in 2014, committed to improve vulnerable people's lives.[82] Through funds from the European Union and the Open Society Foundations, *SolidarityNo*w established three reception centers between 2014 and 2016. The centers provide services to Greek homeless families & individuals, refugees and migrants.[83] The services include psychological counselling, legal counselling, job orientation workshops and employment skills trainings. The center successfully empowers people to know their rights and realize their potential for long-term economic well-being in cooperation with NGOs and government bodies.

Legal assistance centers have been successful actors in helping vulnerable groups of people across the country with proper legal representation. The Legal Aid Centers in Athens, Thessaloniki and Patras, offer free legal counseling to Greeks who might be substance users, ex-prisoners, migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors and victims of trafficking and are uninsured.[84] The legal services are provided in the form of consultations or interventions and offer proper recommendations to vulnerable groups, helping to ensure their legal rights in housing and social integration. The Legal Centre Lesbos, a team of lawyers and interpreters from around the world, work in solidarity with the refugees in the island of Lesvos[85] to speed up the paperwork process and safeguard the refugee protection.

Trauma-informed services are fundamental in combating family homelessness. Residential houses and semi-autonomous protected apartments are operated in the areas of Attica, Fokida, Lamia and Evros, to accommodate people who are mentally ill and facilitate their social integration[86]. In Fokida, the Day

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[82] SolidarityNow Greece.
[83] *Ibid.*
[84] PRAKSIS, Legal Aid Centers (Athens - Thessaloniki - Patras).
[85] Legal Center Lesbos.
[86] Society of Social Psychiatry & Mental Health

Center for children and adolescents provides help for prevention of mental health problems and eliminates social exclusion.[87] Psychological counselling is key to combat trauma and mental health, hence many people are benefiting from these practices. Another important measure is the hostels of short term hospitality for women by the National Center of Social Solidarity. These hostels offer emergency temporary shelter for vulnerable groups, such as female victims of domestic violence, exploitation, trafficking as well as adults in a state of extraordinary social need.[88] In 2018, the shelters in Athens received 56 women and 39 children, all of which departed within a few weeks.[89] The existence of these shelters provides a safe space for women and children but they are only equipped with emergency response tools, proving the urgency of acquiring staff and services that can help women and children transit steadily to independent housing.

United States of America: Public Libraries & Trauma-Informed Model

In the United States, libraries have become a critical resource in the education of the homeless and a tool to help connect the homeless to helpful resources.[90] Publics libraries in many states give those without a home somewhere to go and apply for jobs, learn important skills, and become integrated into communal environments. Reports show that libraries have a direct impact in solving homelessness, as roughly "40% of homeless people manage to change their status largely due to information accessibility" which is facilitated by library institutions.[91] Libraries give homeless children an additional opportunity to learn and connect outside of a school environment. Many public libraries in the U.S. are working closely with social workers to provide thoughtful, trauma-informed care to those who are experiencing adverse life challenges

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87 *Ibid.*
88 National Center of Social Solidarity, Emergency Response to Homelessness
89 *Ibid.*
90 *Ibid.*
91 *Ibid.*

such as homelessness, substance abuse, trauma and mental health crises. Additional funding is required to train librarians and facilities to specifically accommodate homeless and impoverished populations.[92]

Service providers of family homelessness like public libraries in the U.S. try to emphasize a trauma-informed approach. Homelessness is an inherently traumatic event.[93] Trauma-informed care focuses on approaching this trauma from a long-term perspective and resolving chronic issues that lead to familial homelessness.[94] Just as homelessness becomes chronic based on recurring systemic issues, trauma from homelessness is also a self-propagating system that increases chance of additional trauma and victimhood.[95] By focusing on healing these traumas, resources can work to mitigate this chronic condition based in socioeconomic inequity. Viewing homeless families as traumatized victims of circumstance and clients full of potential is crucial to changing the conversation and approach to their various economic, health, and social issues. Service providers try to consider the multi-tiered issues that the experience of homelessness creates in children and adults.[96] Violence at the hands of a family member, substance abuse, and simply growing up in poverty all scar the members of a homeless family.[97] Without mental health practices and understanding the stress of trauma, children who have experienced trauma will not heal and may carry them into adulthood.

Good policies and practices responding to homelessness need to specify triggers of trauma, teach patients how to deal with trauma through healthy practices, and facilitate help in a wide variety of life needs, from employment and health to social communities.[98] There is thereby a consensus that each system aiding homeless families in their experiences should revolve around trauma-informed systems of approach.[99]

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[92] *Ibid.*

[93] Hopper, Elizabeth K., Ellen L. Bassuk, and Jeffrey Olivet, "Shelter from the Storm: Trauma-Informed Care in Homelessness Services Settings," *The Open Health Services and Policy Journal* 3, no. 2 (2010): 80.

[94] *Ibid.*

[95] *Ibid.*

[96] Kilmer, Ryan P., James R. Cook, Cindy Crusto, Katherine P. Strater, and Mason G. Haber, "Understanding the Ecology and Development of Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 82, no. 3 (2012): 389.

[97] *Ibid.*

[98] Guarino, Kathleen Guarino, and Carmela J. DeCandia, *Journal of Child and Youth Care Work*, 2015, 7-8.

[99] *Ibid*.

Children who have experienced homelessness must have professional help in addressing, responding to, treating, and resolving traumas from the experience of homelessness.

Public libraries, as a good example, use trauma-informed care as the basis for their interactions with customers. Librarians view homelessness as a systematic issue as opposed to an individual issue and use a compassionate approach to treat customers regardless of housing circumstance and try to avoid re-traumatizing. They pay close attention to language and labels when working with customers experiencing life challenges. Specifically, they use terms such as "people experiencing homelessness" or" having an experience of being homeless" rather than a blanket statement of "homeless", denoting that they believe the homeless experience do not define people; people define their experience. They also conclude from their frontline experience that the best approach to serving this population is to address behaviors in the facilities and create welcoming spaces, which delivers message of respect and creates sense of safety, trust and belongingness.[100]

Overall, specific approaches in the trauma-informed model focus on five crucial aspects of processing ramifications from childhood and familial homelessness. Safety is crucial to first begin unpacking the triggers and traumatic experiences of victims of homelessness.[101] Transparency and trustworthiness creates an added safety within practice, allowing victims to speak their mind and process their instinctive reactions as opposed to hiding and protecting themselves in the context of care.[102] Since homelessness is an abject form of poverty, respect and value for victims is also paramount, especially allowing them to exercise autonomy and make their own choices.[103] Collaboration between service providers and clients is a central part of the healing process, as it removes hierarchy and instruction, instead focusing on remedying the trauma of the victim.[104] Trauma-informed practices must empower clients to become self-assured, creating tools that will last them throughout life and outside the context of trauma-

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[100] American Libraries, "Letter from Public Library Directors and Social Workers."
[101] DHS, "Trauma-Informed Care - Principles," Wisconsin Department of Health Services, July 06, 2018, accessed April 18, 2019.
[102] *Ibid.*
[103] *Ibid.*
[104] *Ibid.*

informed practices.[105] An ecological approach to these trauma-informed facets of an experience will help clients to heal and become autonomous. By dealing with all issues as opposed to isolating and thus only confronting one small aspect of homelessness, clients can understand and manage the varying hurdles of overcoming trauma.

India

There have been considerable efforts by governmental and non-governmental organizations to assist the problem of homelessness in the country which can further be continued and improved.

Governmental Services

The Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) had implemented a policy for the homeless known as the *Night Shelters for Urban Shelterless, applicable to urban areas* from 1988 to 1989[106]. It gave 20,000 rupees a year to homeless shelters, 50 percent of the amount was paid by the government and the rest of the 50 percent was paid by loans from HUDCO or sponsors. In 1992, the Ministry of Urban Development renamed the policy to *Shelter and Sanitation Facilities for Footpath Dwellers in Urban Areas*. This policy provided a sense of security to homeless families and individuals by providing stable income and a shelter.

According to the Commissioners of the Supreme Court, a shelter is a covered space where homeless people can feel safe and secure, and is accessible by anyone and it should be able to provide protection from the environment, safety and security, a place to keep belongings, and a place to drink water and use sanitary bathrooms. To improve infrastructures in slums, the Supreme court mandated a new mission known as the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. This stated that for cities of over 500,000 in population size, shelters must contain good water, toilets, baths, cooling, heating,

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[105] *Ibid.*

[106] Commissioners of the Supreme Court, "Shelters for the Urban Homeless."

ventilation, lights, emergency lights, fire safety, recreation spaces, TVs, first aid, shelter from mosquitoes and rodents, beds, kitchens and utensils, counseling, childcare facilities, and transport for emergencies[107].

Non-Governmental Services

Drop in centers have been setup for helping families of children and women[108]. In developed cities of India, Non-Governmental Organizations are involved with these centers like Uday, Humana, Salaam Balak Trust(SBT). SBT runs four homeless shelters open 24 hours a day for around 220 children at a time. This organization has helped 3,500 street children, these shelters offer free clothing, food, education, health and mental health services. Such centers provide support systems to children and women. Children who often do not get supported by their families due to poverty, drug abuse, etc; they in these centers learn good morals and habits, including reduced drug use and hygiene. Additionally, they are taught how to utilize their skills to create a business.

The state of Tamil Nadu, the government has allocated a budget to establish 200 Amma Unavagam, which means "Mother Restaurant" in Tamil. The community kitchens provide the urban poor — many of whom are homeless — with cheap, hygienic and nutritious meals at subsidized rates of Rs 1 for breakfast and Rs 5 for lunch. Every day, these kitchens feed 100,000 of Chennai's daily wage laborers, migrants, unorganized workers and homeless residents. The kitchens not only act as health food sources but also provide employment for the 16 women in charge of each Amma Unavagam. Originally from slum-based self-help groups, these women now earn Rs 300 ($4.54 U.S.) a day, running and maintaining the popular restaurants. The heavily subsidized model is one that Delhi is considering replicating.[109]

The shelters are predominantly male only, women only, or for children — not accessible to families who wanted to be together. This resulted in the opening of 30 new shelters for families in Delhi. Unlike

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107 Supreme Court. Permanent shelters for urban homeless populations: the national report on homelessness.
108 The impact of drop-in centres on the health of street boys in New Delhi: An interpretive descriptive study.
109 Next City, "The World's Most Ambitious Housing Goal Is Riding on India."

Mumbai, Delhi now has 34 family shelters, one unique shelter for lactating mothers and 257 general night shelters

SECTION: 4

International Laws, Sustainable Development Goals & Family Homelessness

Greece

Family is key to achieving progress and development in post-austerity Greece. Familialism is a principle at the core of Greek politics and society. Achieving social progress is correlated to family security. International legislation can benefit the Greek policies and strategies on family homelessness. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the European Union Commission Recommendation of 2013 and the recently adopted United Nations General Assembly Resolution *A/HRC/40/61*, adopted in March 2019 by the Human Rights Council for *access to justice for the right housing* can be used to reduce homelessness and ensure housing protection.

The agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as defined by the United Nations, is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity.[110] People and families are needed to achieve sustainable development. The SDGs that are directly related to family homelessness in Greece are 1: No Poverty, 2: Zero Hunger, 3: Good Health and Well-Being, 4: Quality Education, 5: Gender Equality, 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, 10: Reduced Inequalities, 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and 17: Partnerships. These SDGs should be approached both from the international spectrum, such the United Nations institutions and transnational NGOs, but from the national level as well. SDG 17 was introduced in order to promote the importance of partnerships in achieving regional and global problems like homelessness. Governments, NGOs and civil society organizations must work together in order to achieve the SDGs. In Greece, there is a lack of strong institutions for the

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[110] Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

achievement of sustainable cities and economic growth. Long-term unemployment results to unsustainable economic growth, hindering the institutional work for the SDGs.

The SDGs can be pursued by formalizing the resolutions on adequate housing and the European Commission Recommendation on childcare housing support.[111] According to the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, the right to housing should be implemented in domestic law to include obligations of progressive realization.[112] In Greece the 'Katseli Law' has provided protection for indebted households from evictions related to foreclosure of their primary residence since 2010. Tightening to the law in 2015 set income limits on the protection provided.[113] A recent amendment to the Katseli Law in February 2019 could revitalized the protection services. The European Committee on Social Rights has addressed the right to housing of the Traveler and Roma communities, which constitute a large number of homeless people, including unaccompanied children. The European Federation of National Organizations working with the Homeless (FEANTSA) has also introduced the Housing and Reintegration Program in 2015 prioritizing homeless families threatened with eviction by providing financial support, and covering the costs of rented accommodation for a year. [114]

Despite this, data on families is lacking, therefore the government and stakeholders should be reminded by the United Nations that data collection and research on family issues is fundamentally important for the implementation of family-oriented policies in order to benefit all sectors of economy and society.

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[111] See Annex 1

[112] Human Rights Council Resolution 40/61, *Access to justice for the right to housing,* A/HRC/40/61 (15 January 2019)

[113] FEANTSA, 44. https://www.feantsaresearch.org/download/feantsa-studies_07_web3386127540064828685.pdf

[114] *Ibid.*

SDGs seek to help those left behind by society, in both local and global contexts.[115] Addressing systemic local issues and discovering specific approaches to family homelessness will inevitably lead to blueprints for relieving these issues elsewhere in the world. An integrated approach to address homelessness in the U.S. builds on and furthers an agenda of global prosperity and health for all mankind.[116] "Ending poverty in all its forms everywhere" is SDG 1, which directly relates to all of the aforementioned chronic issues of family homelessness.[117] A primary SDG is healthcare, which is a parallel baseline to the issue of family homelessness.[118] Without healthcare and abundant health for humanity, we cannot have a sustainable society for generations to come.[119] Homeless families, especially the children of single parents, are at risk in terms of their physical and mental health. Thus, this issue returns to the need to address family homelessness through a broad range of services in the U.S. and beyond. Inadequate shelter makes it nearly impossible for families not to experience heightened stress, poor diet, proper rest, and privacy, all contributing to an unhealthy lifestyle among many other detrimental factors.

In the U.S., life expectancy has a direct correlation to economic opportunity with huge disparities between populations.[120] The economy determines access to healthcare, making the current capitalistic system a major issue in accomplishing SDG 1. For example, in "St. Louis, Missouri, residents of one mostly white suburb have a life expectancy greater than 91 years, while those who live in a mostly black suburb have a life expectancy of 56 years," demonstrating the intersectionality of healthcare and housing issues, even beyond family homelessness.[121] Housing, education and employment are all inherently connected to

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[115] Friedman, Eric A., "SDG SERIES: National Health Equity Strategies to Implement the Global Promise of SDGs," Health and Human Rights Journal, October 06, 2015.

[116] *Ibid.*

[117] Bunic, Sanja, "Libraries Contribute to a Sustainable Future Supporting People Experiencing Homelessness," *Columbus IFLA*, June 1, 2016, 1.

[118] Friedman, Eric A., "SDG SERIES."

[119] *Ibid.*

[120] *Ibid.*

[121] Friedman, Eric A., "SDG SERIES."

the health of individuals that SDGs must consider. Ultimately, without an all-encompassing approach, these systemic issues will not be solved in the U.S. or anywhere else. Allocating housing is a first concern for the frameworks of SDGs, because without sustainable and stable housing, no other social progress can occur thereafter.[122]Housing is the prerequisite to addressing these other major social issues. Yet healthcare must also become accessible to all, and not only those with economic means.

Access to childcare is another central component of this issue.[123] If there are stable and safe provisions for children that are federally funded, then single parents can focus on their own career and locating stable housing without worrying additionally about taking care of their children in unsafe environments.[124] How U.S. states frame this issue is also crucial; only a handful of states actually budget and plan for the issue of chronic family homelessness.[125] Homeless children are not accounted for in the general conception of homelessness in the U.S. as far as state budgeting and legislation is concerned.[126] Adding co-pays and scheduling issues to the mix makes it increasingly difficult for single parents to provide secure and affordable childcare.[127] Children are still sheltered more often than adults form economic issues; parents fight hard to create housing opportunities for children even if they are not sheltered themselves.[128] But the disruption and constant state of insecure housing nonetheless creates issues that persist over generations. Homelessness is a central issue in terms of this global umbrella of issues. Homelessness is an abject form of poverty, as it makes the potential of establishing stability impossible *until* housing is secured in a sustainable manner.[129] Thus, homelessness must be a central concern of accomplishing SDGs.

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[122] *Ibid.*

[123] ICPH, "Meeting the Child Care Needs of Homeless Families," Institute for Children, Poverty & Homelessness, August 1, 2014.

[124] *Ibid.*

[125] *Ibid.*

[126] *Ibid.*

[127] *Ibid.*

[128] USHUD, "The 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress," 2018, 34.

[129] Bunic, Sanja, "Libraries."

The apex policy making institution of India: Niti Aayog has created SDG India Index to oversee India's progress towards achievement of SDG 2030. The following are the goals that are connected to area of research and India's progress towards them:

SDG:1-No Poverty

India is implementing a comprehensive development strategy to end poverty in all its forms. The strategy is focused on economic growth, supporting poverty alleviation programs, providing employment, strengthening employment opportunities and improving access to the disadvantaged and vulnerable sections of the population. This is supported by providing institutional platforms, technology support and financial assistance.

According to the Tendulkar Committee estimates, in 2011-12, 21.9 percent of the total population was below the poverty line. Important well targeted policy initiatives have been taken to eradicate poverty like *Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Generation Act*(MNREGA)*, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jan Dhan Yojana*(PMJJDY) and *Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana* of *Pradhan Mantri National Rural and Urban Livelihood Mission.*

SDG:2-Zero Hunger

India's Goal for 2030 is to end hunger and malnutrition by ensuring that quality food is accessible to all, to meet their nutritional needs for a healthy life, it requires ensuring equitable access to nutritious food by all, improving sanitation and hygiene, and reducing vulnerability to shocks and disasters.

Food security and nutrition pose a challenge in India because of a number of factors such as inadequate access to food, structural and social inequalities, lack of water and sanitation facilities and illiteracy. The National Food Security Act, 2013, which mandates provision of food grains to nearly 75 percent of the population in rural areas and 50 percent of the population in urban areas at affordable prices at targeted Public Distribution System. Under the *Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS),* supplementary nutrition is provided to pregnant women, lactating mothers and children below 6 years of

age. The recently launched *Poshan Abhiyaan* or the National Nutrition Mission support sustainable food production systems and also ensure proper functioning of food commodity markets. Initiatives like *Mid-Day Meal* have been taken to reduce malnutrition among school children, thereby encouraging enrolment in schools.

SDG:6-Clean Water and Sanitation

As per 2011 Census data, 85.5 percent of the total Indian population has access to safe drinking water whereas only 30.8 percent of the households in rural areas have toilet facilities. The Government of India has taken well directed policy initiatives to provide safe drinking water and access to sanitation to all habitations by 2022. National initiatives like the *Swachh Bharat* Mission, National Rural Drinking Water Program and National Mission for Clean Ganga - *Namami Gange* have provided the necessary thrust to India's commitment on providing universal access to clean water and sanitation to all. As a result of the *Swachh Bharat* Mission, 96 percent of the targeted household toilets have been constructed and 390,000 villages across India have been verified to be open defecation free.[130]

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[130] Niti Aayog Report on UN-SDG.

SECTION: 5

Policy Recommendations

Greece

The policy recommendations for UNANIMA in Greece should be a model for the rest of the southern European countries, since the structural causes of family homelessness are very similar across the region. Following the deficiencies in the familistic welfare capitalist system, UNANIMA should focus on ensuring that family homelessness becomes formal, meaning that those families who rely on relatives for support and/or are subjects to domestic abuse are able to come forward and find support from local services. These services could be implemented by UNANIMA and promoted within the United Nations System as part of partnerships with solidarity centers in Greece, for women and children. UNANIMA should ensure that family homelessness as a result of poor mental health and substance abuse is addressed in the local level and housing services are provided, especially to dependent children and women. The already established connection with the Society of Social Psychiatry & Mental Health in Greece could pave the way for a more active participation of UNANIMA in decision-planning and implementation of housing strategies in Greece.

UNANIMA could collaborate with United Nations agencies and the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing and implement a capacity building grant from the United Nations, providing specific assistance for proper data collection and services that are exclusively addressed to families who experience homelessness. This grant can be part of the SDGs implementation on both the regional and domestic level. A regional grant for Southern European countries can be used to build a network of services directly addressed to the means of families in the region. The grant can also assist domestically the Greek government by inducing funds for the incorporation of a separate scheme to combat family homelessness within the new National Strategic Plan. The new data collection method should include and prioritize the

number of families falling in the homeless population. The services should be formed in four types: the first type is the stage of prevention policies, the second is the stage of implementing emergency services, the third type is policies for transitional shelter and the fourth type concerns housing and social inclusion.

It is important for UNANIMA and partners in New York and Europe to regulate the services bi-annually; i.e. ensuring the developments in the policies and strategies are followed according to the plans set and also guarantee the money is used accordingly. A partnership with civil society organizations and local NGOs is fundamental to put pressure on the government both internally and externally. UNANIMA could also advocate for a Celebrity Ambassador for homelessness. The UN advocacy platforms often include notable representatives from the music or film industries, who can attract the attention of people around the world. The introduction of a Celebrity Ambassador who would tour the countries, meet with homeless and promote the issue globally could benefit the effort of combating homelessness and raising funds by contributors.

Social media means could be used to advocate for homelessness. Media networks such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram are used particularly by the youth population in Greece. Greek celebrities can create a hashtag in order to raise awareness and help in the promotion of local events to raise funds. Once the issue attracts public attention, a more consistent active pursue for the issue will be implemented in a national level. UNANIMA should advocate for a multi-stakeholder approach for a proper response to family homelessness.

United States of America

In terms of SDG implementation, interventions must occur not only through expanding housing options, budget and implementation. [131] UNANIMA should also focus on ensuring that the chronic intersections of abuse, homelessness, and traumatic poverty are addressed at the source, as opposed to the temporary solution of homeless shelters. Housing, services especially including mental and physical

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[131] Baldari, Cara, "Family Homelessness: More than Just an Issue of Housing Affordability," First Focus, November 2, 2016.

healthcare, educational and employment systems must all work together to confront this issue around the U.S. and globally.[132] Otherwise, stability will not be possible, as short-term solutions only temporarily alleviate symptoms as opposed to addressing root causes.

UNANIMA could work with other NGOs and federal governments to promote homelessness preventive and supportive services, identification and outreach efforts, and policy formation that is consistent, inclusive, culturally sensitive and informed of the inequalities leading to greater vulnerability for each racial or ethnic minority group. This requires a consistent and inclusive definition of homeless among government agencies.

UNANIMA could advice government to continue creating widely available temporary housing, which will first give a baseline of support and stability to homeless families. The U.S. could create temporary housing shelters for all homeless families for up to 6 months. Simultaneously, healthcare and childcare must also become consolidated to serve these marginalized populations. Access to healthcare can help single mothers deal with healing domestic abuse trauma, preventing potential substance abuse, and any other chronic issue that directly impacts their health and future. Childcare will take care of the children during the time that the single parent takes classes, secure employment, and meet with health counseling services.

A long-term solution to this issue is also to focus on developing *affordable* long-term housing. If temporary housing is available for 6 months with these crucial services provided, then single parents will have enough time to deal with their chronic issues and find work. However, if there is no housing available for a reasonable price, this social initiative will be for void. Job placement and affordable long-term rentals must be at the fore of this agenda to end chronic familial homelessness.

UNANIMA could partner with public libraries to promote the implementation of communal centers, based on libraries systems that can serve as hubs of communal support, education, caretaking, and resource accumulation. Education for the children of previously homeless families will also be a major

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[132] *Ibid.*

factor in this initiative. Establishing strong schools, library systems, and childcare services will all guarantee that children can leave the trauma of being homeless behind and lean into their bright future of education and employment. The comprehensive approach can help end the cyclical nature of poverty and familial homelessness.

As this paper demonstrates, only a comprehensive approach can actually deal with these interrelated issues. For example, if healthcare alone is addressed, this will be beneficial for society at large, yet would only be another temporary solution to chronic family homelessness. This initiative will combine childcare, healthcare, temporary free or subsidized housing leading to sustainable long-term affordable housing, job placement, education, and communal library involvement as a means of creating a powerful system that pulls entire generations out of family homelessness. UNANIMA should employ a multi-stakeholder approach to help address this chronic issue.

India

Some of the recommendations for UNANIMA to tackle the problem of family homelessness in India can be [133] investing and creating a proper definition for 'affordable housing' to low-income populations and lobbying by partnering with other Non-Governmental Organizations for targeted policies to meet the housing shortage through the provision of adequate social/ public/low-cost housing. UNANIMA should explore and address structural causes of homelessness/landlessness in urban/rural areas should be addressed and aim for creation of adequate shelters, short-stay homes, and recovery facilities for the homeless, especially women, children, and older persons.

With homelessness come trauma, and to counter that UNANIMA should partner with NGOs which work at a local level to identify people going through such ordeal and ensure proper allocation of houses to homeless families and persons with mental illness at risk of homelessness. For ensuring success of these plans it is important to make sure the root cause of these problems is also tackled simultaneously

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[133] The Human Rights to Adequate Housing and Land in India: Report to the United Nations Human Rights Council for India's Third Universal Periodic Review

like repeal of all anti-begging laws, prevention and investigation of deaths due to homelessness, conduction of human rights impact assessments for all projects before their finalization.

Family homelessness is also due to displacement caused by compulsory land acquisition, UNANIMA could ensure the free and prior informed consent of displaced people, proper collection and publish disaggregated data on displacement and compulsory land acquisitions and implementation of international human rights standards in all resettlement sites, and shelter homes and recognition of community rights over land and prevent land alienation/displacement. Restoration of land to released bonded laborers.

Along with family homelessness, homeless women and children are increasing in number as well and in response to that UNANIMA should run programs to create awareness for protection and implementation of women's rights to housing/land/property/inheritance. Promotion of awareness on, and ensure adequate implementation of, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 and the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act 2005.

To eradicate homelessness from India by 2030 there should be an expansion of the "Housing for all" scheme to realize the right to adequate housing for vulnerable people, UNANIMA can form targeted and implementable policies on a local level by partnering with local municipalities and NGOs by micro management to ensure women's equal participation in the workforce and generate employment opportunities for women in rural areas.

Conclusions

Family homelessness is the result of various global issues, including social structure, refugee migration, underemployment, abuse, and lack of affordable housing. There is no one-size-fits-all solution for different societies. It is evident that family homelessness is an interconnected issue which requires efforts form multi-stakeholders. Solutions created for a single aspect of family homelessness will only lead to a temporary resolution as opposed to a sustainable development of lasting prosperity and security. Addressing trauma in either children or parents will help them short-term, but if homeless families are continually exposed to these sources of trauma, then these temporary solutions are essentially pointless. By creating childcare and healthcare services, families can first and foremost be taken care of in terms of health necessities, while freeing up single parents to increase their position in the job market. Temporary and long-term housing developments can make the tangible issue of shelter accessible to all. Job placement and education of children can be realized through adding communal centers, building on the model of current libraries, in which education and connection can make a better future possible for all. Through a comprehensive approach, some root causes of family homelessness can be addressed, leading to prosperity, safety, and security for future generations.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

of 20 February 2013

Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage

(2013/112/EU)

2.2.   Access to affordable quality services

Provide children with a safe, adequate housing and living environment — Allow children to live and grow up in a safe, healthy and child-friendly environment that supports their development and learning needs:

·   Make it possible for families with children to live in affordable, quality housing (including social housing), address situations of exposure to environmental hazards, overcrowding and energy poverty;

·   Support families and children at risk of homelessness by avoiding evictions, unnecessary moves, separation from families as well as providing temporary shelter and long-term housing solutions;

·   Pay attention to children's best interests in local planning; avoid 'ghettoization' and segregation by promoting a social mix in housing as well as adequate access to public transport;

·   Reduce children's harmful exposure to a deteriorating living and social environment to prevent them from falling victim to violence and abuse.