

## PLACE AND MOBILITY

Place and mobility integrate the social and spatial dimensions of the environment that we live in and move between. As increasing numbers of people around the world are moving, both within national borders and internationally, a secure place for people on the move is essential, underscoring the importance of planning for rapidly growing cities that can integrate and support rural-urban migrants as well as the urban poor. Yet, the scale of the human population living day-to-day without a safe or reliable home underscores the urgency of enhanced global attention to human security. A secure place is essential for human development, as human security – that is, freedom from hunger, fear, violence and discrimination – is a pre-condition for the development of children, and the creative growth of all persons.

### Household Composition

- There is a rise in the number of single person households in almost every region except Africa. Several converging social trends such as the rise in age at marriage, rates of divorce and proportions of persons who never marry, along with medical innovations, have led to increases in the number of one-person households throughout the world.
- Females are more likely than males to live in one-person households in Europe and other developed countries, but the reverse is true in countries from Africa, or Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Women form the majority of persons living in one-person households among older persons and among the widowed.
- Men constitute the majority of persons living alone who were never married.
- One-person households composed of young adults are more common in urban areas; while older one-person households are more common in rural than in urban areas in the majority of countries.
- Latin America and the Caribbean have the highest prevalence with single parents with children, and almost all countries in the region saw an increase over the last twenty years. The majority of these households are headed by women, and children in them may more often experience economic poverty and limited access to basic services of education and health.
- The mean age at marriage for women and men has increased in both more developed and less developed regions for the past 50 years, but more in the former.
- Trends of women age 45-49 who have never married over the past 40 years suggest a persistent rise across a majority of countries of Europe, Africa, Oceania and the Americas.
- Only in Asia is there a uniformly sustained low rate of never married middle-aged women.

- The proportion of persons divorced or separated is evident in all regions to varying degrees, though particularly in developed countries as well as India and China.
- The proportion of women and men aged 45-49 who are currently divorced or separated is highest in European and other high-income countries, and has increased the most in the past 20 years.
- These changes in household composition must be recognized and accounted for since they alter how we ensure adequate, secure housing, the well-being of households and children, family support, long-term care for the elderly, social protection and sustainable consumption and energy use.

### Internal Migration and Urbanization

- Urban areas are expected to absorb all population growth over the next 40 years, making urbanization the most urgent internal migration trend.
- In 2008, for the first time, more than half of the world's population became urban. And the trend continues: the world's urban areas (towns and cities) are currently growing by more than 1.3 million each week.
- Between 1990 and 2010, 90 per cent of the growth in urban population occurred in developing countries.
- Most of the population growth anticipated in urban areas will be concentrated in the cities and towns of developing countries, with Asia projected to see its urban population increase by 1.4 billion, Africa by 900 million, and Latin America and the Caribbean by 200 million by 2050.
- Meanwhile, the world rural population is projected to start decreasing in about a decade, with an expected 300 million fewer rural inhabitants in 2050 than today.
- In 2011, 23 urban agglomerations qualified as megacities, being home to at least 10 million inhabitants, and accounted for a small but increasing proportion of the world urban population: 9.9 per cent in 2011, and an expected 13.6 per cent in 2025. 51 per cent still live in cities or towns with fewer than half a million inhabitants.
- According to the Global Survey, most governments prioritize the quality of life in urban centers.
- Three of four governments have placed the highest priority on decentralization in response to urbanization over the past five years.
- Towns and cities are responsible for over 80 per cent of GNP worldwide.
- While in some countries urban poverty is growing, particularly with the arrival of migrants from rural areas, rural poverty remains universally higher.
- The total estimated number of global slum dwellers has risen from over 650 million in 1990 to about 820 million in 2010. Almost 62 per cent of the urban population in sub-Saharan Africa lived in housing designated as slums in 2010, the highest of any region in the world by a large margin.
- The most significant policy challenge in the context of urbanization is not to change its trajectory, but to identify ways to extend the full set of potential

benefits of urban life to all current and future urban residents, and to do so in ways that can also link urban-rural development.

### International migration

- The total estimated number of international migrants in the world has increased from 154 million in 1990 to 232 million in 2013, and it is expected to rise. However, international migration as a proportion of global population has almost remained unchanged (2.9 per cent in 1990; 3.2 per cent in 2013).
- International migration flows have become increasingly diversified over the past 20 years. In 2013, there was as much international migration between developing countries (82.3 million) as there was from developing to developed countries (81.9 million); many countries are at the same time points of origin, destination, and transit.
- In 2010, of the 43 countries hosting at least one million immigrants, 24 were the place of origin for more than one million emigrants. Countries such as Mexico, China, India and the Russian Federation emerging as important places of origin and destination.
- Approximately half of all international migrants are women (48 per cent) – 52 per cent in developed countries and 43 per cent in developing countries. Since women often live longer than men, they tend to be overrepresented among older migrants. Migration is a key enabler for social and economic development in countries of origin and destination: financial transfers in the form of remittances, sent by migrants to their home countries and networks, often exceed foreign direct investment flows and totaled US \$401 billion in 2012.
- Migrants are also important for transmitting "social remittances" to their countries of origin, including new ideas, products, information and technology.
- International migration can provide a solution to demographic imbalances: One result of low fertility rates in developed countries is labor shortages at all skill levels, and the need for skilled care for the elderly in aging societies will only increase in coming decades. At the same time, many developing countries still experience a mismatch between the number of young, working-age people and the absorptive capacities of their labor markets.

While many migrants are taking advantage of new opportunities, others, particularly women, are victims of trafficking, exploitation, discrimination and other abuses.

### Insecurity of Place

- A foundational aspect of human security is land and housing security. Vast numbers of people around the world go to sleep every night without a roof or without assurance that they will have one the next day.

- By the end of 2012, 28.8 million people were internally displaced worldwide due to armed conflict, generalized violence or human rights violations, surpassing the prior high in 1994.
- An estimated 32.4 million people were internally displaced in 2012 due to natural disasters such as floods, storms, and earthquakes, nearly all due to climate and weather related events.
- The number of refugees worldwide peaked in 1992 at 17.8 million, and was approximately 15.4 million people in 2012.
- An unknown but large number of people worldwide are homeless. People cycle in and out of housing, and many more people are precariously or inadequately housed, or at imminent risk of becoming homeless.
- According to the Global Survey, 76 per cent of governments have enforced laws to guarantee women's property rights, including right to own, buy, and sell properties or other assets equally with men, yet analysis of data from the OECD Social Institutions and Gender Index shows that, for countries where data are available, women hold just 15 per cent of all land titles.
- Where women are unable to exercise their rights to land, they are at particular risk of eviction following widowhood.
- Given that formal credit relies heavily on collateral, women's reduced access to land limits their access to credit, and resulting economic opportunities.
- Insecurity of place is a threat to dignity, and leads to a disproportionate risk of violence, poverty, and adverse health outcomes.

## Recommendations

- 1. Development efforts must recognize and account for the increasing diversity of households and living arrangements.**
- 2. The world must plan and build sustainable cities.**
- 3. The international community should make migration work for development and ensure rights and security for migrants.**
- 4. Far greater monitoring and policy attention must be given to those without security of place to ensure they are provided with social protection, health services, housing security and ultimately full social integration.**