

# GENDER AND MIGRATION IN U.S. PLANNING:

RECOGNIZING  
PROBLEMS  
AND  
IMPROVING  
RESPONSES

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**Session hosted by Planning and Women Division**

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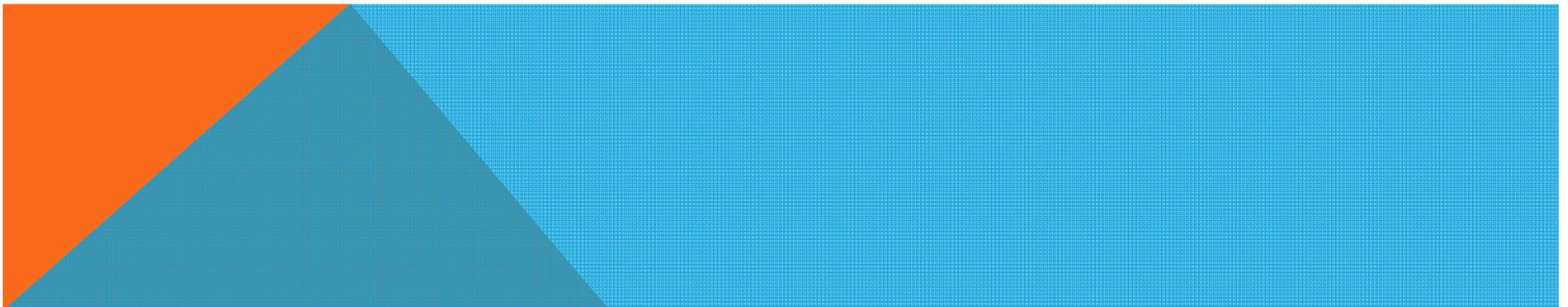
**27 April 2014**



Photo Credit:  
<http://www.migrationinformation.org/usfocus/display.cfm?ID=931>

# GENDER AND MIGRATION

Increasing attention to the topic is due in part to the growing percent of women relative to men migrating across state, regional, and national borders.



# GENDER AND MIGRATION

Yet, since the 1960s,  
the number of foreign-born females of all  
ages  
recorded as living in the United States  
(having entered at any time)  
*has been equal to or slightly greater  
than*  
the number of foreign-born males of all  
ages.\*

\*Migration Policy Institute Data Hub, Washington, DC, 2012 (accessed 24 January 2014)  
<http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/charts/final.malesfemales.shtml>



Photo credit: Jane Henrici, 2000



INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S POLICY RESEARCH

**Fact Sheet**

2016.04.01 August 2011

**Women, Disasters, and Hurricane Katrina**

Major disasters during the last decade have pushed children and communities to consider more closely the disparities among those least when times hit. Research suggests that women often bear the disproportionate responsibility to care for those who are disabled, elderly, or otherwise vulnerable. Women with more mobility and those with greater access to resources. According to reports following disasters occurring outside of the United States, 13 times as many women as men died during the 2005 Indian Ocean tsunami. In 2004, women and children were the most vulnerable during the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. In the weeks and years after the disaster, women and their children were the most vulnerable because of multiple factors. Most importantly, women are more likely to be in poverty. At the time of Hurricane Katrina, 50 percent of women in New Orleans were living below the poverty line compared to 39 percent for men. Poverty makes it difficult to evacuate and to have access to resources for recovery, as survival often means to evacuate. Women interviewed by IWPR for its research study were unable to evacuate and living in the line of Katrina, and the last one, but could not evacuate, were able to get around the city by walking or by bus, when the city shut down the bus system, the

**Increasing Pathways to Legal Status for Immigrant In-Home Care Workers**

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**Organizations Working with Latina Immigrants: Resources and Strategies for Change**

Cynthia Hess-Jane Henrici, and Claudia Williams

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**Gender and Migration Research**

**Improving Career Opportunities for Immigrant Women In-Home Care Workers**

INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S POLICY RESEARCH

By Andrew Chertoff and Paula Romby, Johns Hopkins University; Ronald Angel, University of Texas at Austin; and Jane Henrici, University of Memphis

**Welfare, Children & Families**

Policy Brief 01-3 A THREE-CITY STUDY

**Public Assistance Receipt Among Native-Born Children of Immigrants**

# GENDER AND MIGRATION

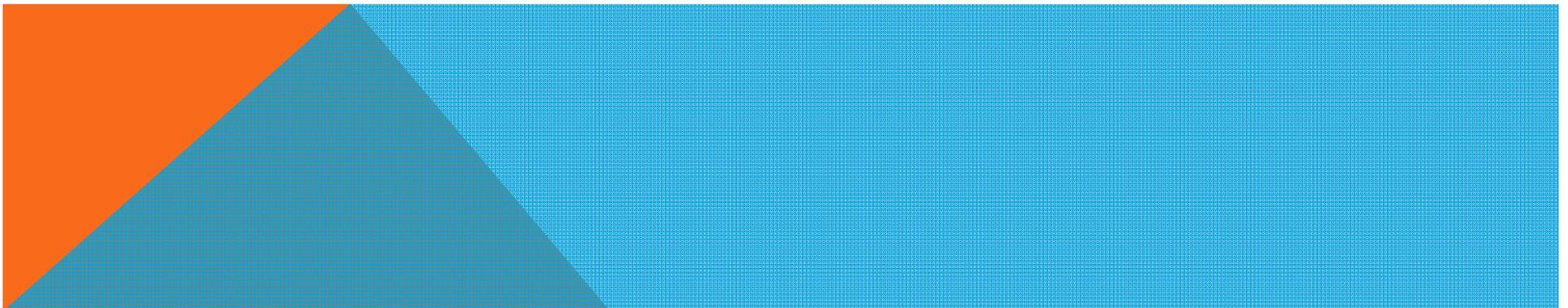
Research finds that both women and men who choose to migrate might do so in order to:

1. further their education,
2. find work to support themselves and their families—wherever they are and however they're related,
3. escape political turmoil,
4. achieve greater social and political independence, and
5. leave a situation of gendered restrictions or of domestic violence

For some women and men, migration is involuntary—through **displacement** or **trafficking**.

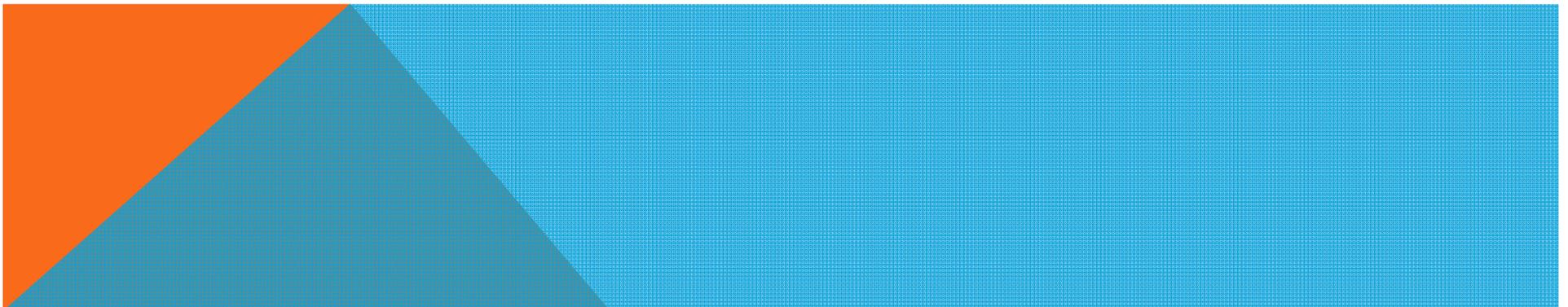
# GENDER AND MIGRATION

- For women who choose to migrate, not all do so to follow men or to have babies in a new home.
- Despite stereotypes, not all immigrant women are mothers.
- However, many women are mothers, and relative to immigrant men disproportionately are the primary caregivers for their family's children and elderly.



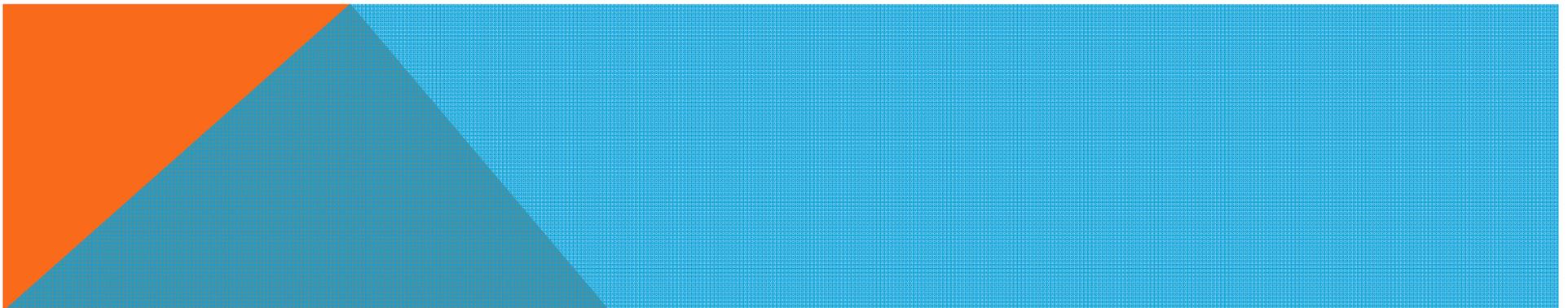
# GENDER AND MIGRATION

- Women report experiences with migration of discrimination, harassment, and violence.
- Men too, and report their experiences include feeling pressures and inabilities to protect women.



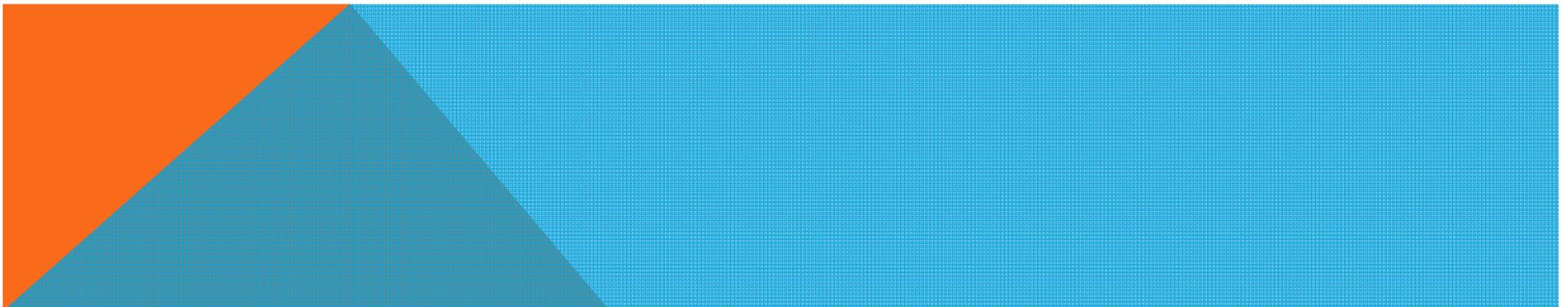
# GENDER AND MIGRATION

- Women reportedly are more likely than men to experience domestic and workplace gender-based or sexual harassment and violence in their new communities and sites.
- Research suggests that men are more likely to be deported than women, because of women's presumed (even where not actual) relatively greater caregiving role.



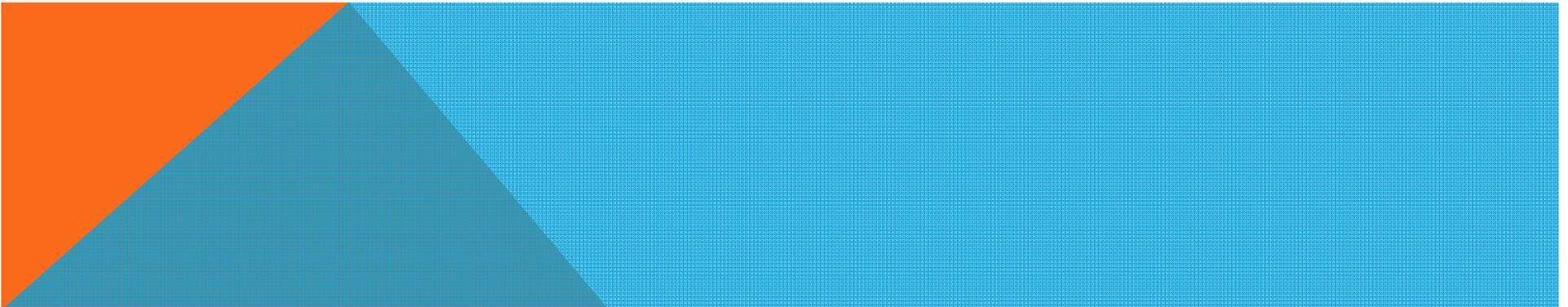
# GENDER, KEY POINTS FOR PLANNERS

- ❑ “Gender” as a concept should be explicitly defined and used throughout all stages of planning
- ❑ Gender refers to societal expectations regarding opportunities, levels of power, and behaviors, or roles, associated with those of different sexes



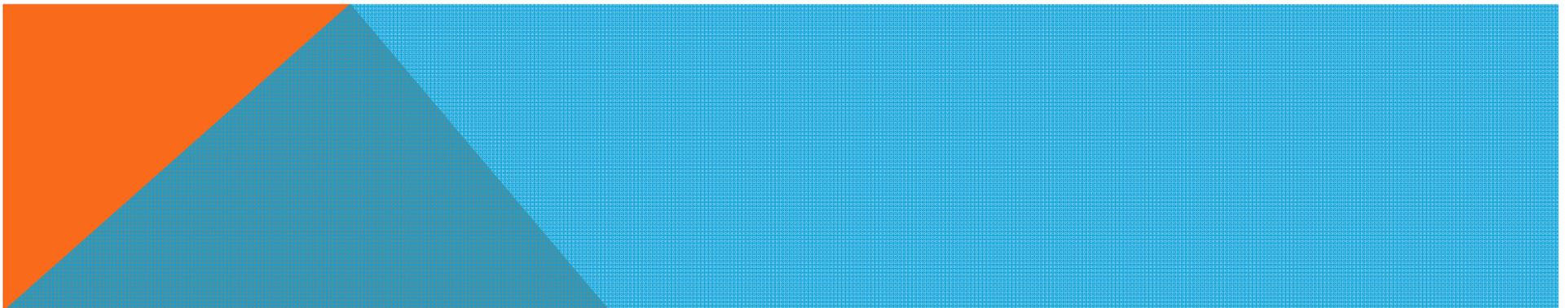
# GENDER, KEY POINTS FOR PLANNERS

- ❑ Specific forms of gender are socially-defined; that is, each society has its own definitions of what constitutes the feminine and the masculine
- ❑ Therefore, gender varies – among societies, generations, and even neighborhoods – and, like any part of culture, might change among individuals and their communities over time
- ❑ Recently, “gender” and “sex” have become conflated in use so that gender categories can include, besides feminine and masculine, women/female and men/male, and “other”



# GENDER, KEY POINTS FOR PLANNERS

- ❑ Just as people  $\neq$  men, gender  $\neq$  women
- ❑ Gender is a useful concept only as long as it can be used to compare the respective opportunities, levels of power, and roles of men with those of women, or among different groups of women and men by race and other characteristics



# GENDER AND MIGRATION IN-DEPTH



Photo Credit:  
<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/german-job-opportunities-for-immigrants-rate-high-in-survey-a-832278.html>

Gender—including among immigrants—*intersects* with other features of identity and possible discrimination, notably:

1. Generation and age;
2. Race or ethnic group and ancestry;
3. National origin and citizenship;
4. Health or mobility and disability status; and
5. Socio-economic class and income level

# ***LOW-INCOME AND LOW ASSET* GENDER AND MIGRATION**

One gender and sex stereotype concerns low-income foreign-born women as mothers who take advantage of U.S. social benefits;

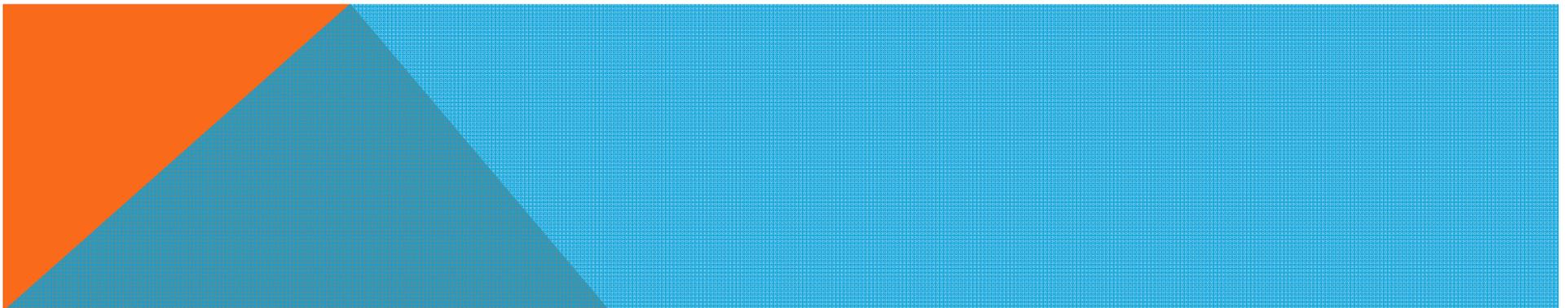
however, even where eligible, and despite safety concerns, many migrants and immigrants have under-used publicly available supports, services, and sites

although this has been changing among native-born children of immigrants in recent years;

at the same time, diverse community members often have conflicting views about what is “fair” or “just” use.

## ***LOW-INCOME AND LOW ASSET GENDER AND MIGRATION***

- Segregation has risen during the last two decades for immigrant communities in the United States.
- Recent research on the topic shows that: Integration levels vary: by **gender**, race, national origin, income & wealth level, *and* occupation, even when controlling for ESOL and other skills
- And, integration levels vary: by rates of affordable housing stock and by levels of public transit



# LOW-INCOME AND LOW ASSET GENDER AND MIGRATION

Not all poorer immigrant women are *residentially* segregated, yet they might be segregated otherwise. In addition, poorer women tend to stay longer in place once migrated/displaced than men:

- one theory says the key factor to these conditions is that the domestic and care work in which many immigrant women are employed is relatively more regular than construction;
- other research suggests a key factor could be, along with discrimination, relatively less mobility (economic, social, **and transportation**) among foreign-born women

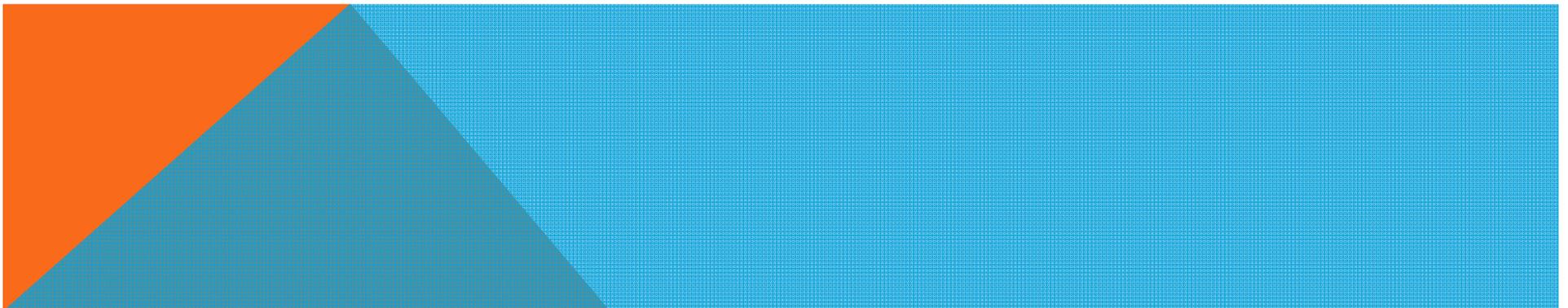


# ***LOW-INCOME AND LOW ASSET* GENDER AND MIGRATION**

IWPR's research found that, even when employed and paid for their labor, foreign-born women:

- typically experience lower wages, higher poverty rates,
- and greater health and safety risks

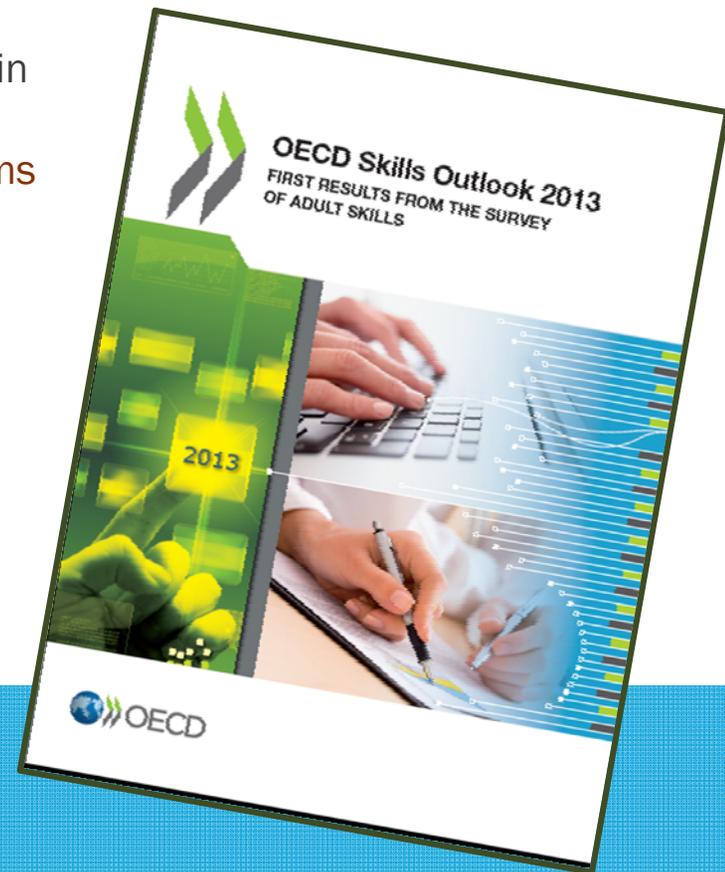
relative to U.S.-born women and to U.S.-born men—and to their male foreign-born counterparts.



# LOW-INCOME AND LOW ASSET GENDER AND MIGRATION

Related to low pay are low skills:

- Recent research shows that foreign-born adults in the United States on average have lower skill preparation than native-born adults; **current forms of integration do not change this**
- Both foreign- and native-born adults need skill development and fare poorly in comparison with those of other nations; the United States shows "below average performance and large social disparities" (p. 30)
- At the same time, sex discrimination continues: gender gaps in employment and wages do not correspond to narrowing skill gaps



# RECOMMENDED PLANNING ESPECIALLY FOR LOW-INCOME FOREIGN-BORN **WOMEN**

Provide **a combination of** accessible, affordable, reliable, and safe:

- ✓ English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classroom sites and/or high-speed internet access for online instruction
- ✓ Workers centers for women as well as men (for sharing information and waiting for day labor employers)
- ✓ Bilingual child care centers located along or in transportation hubs
- ✓ Housing and transportation
- ✓ Educational and job training facilities that partner with employers
- ✓ Relevant and bilingual communication strategies for announcing information about immigrant, worker, and women's rights
- ✓ Methods for women's civic engagement and participation—for example, in planning for neighborhood development

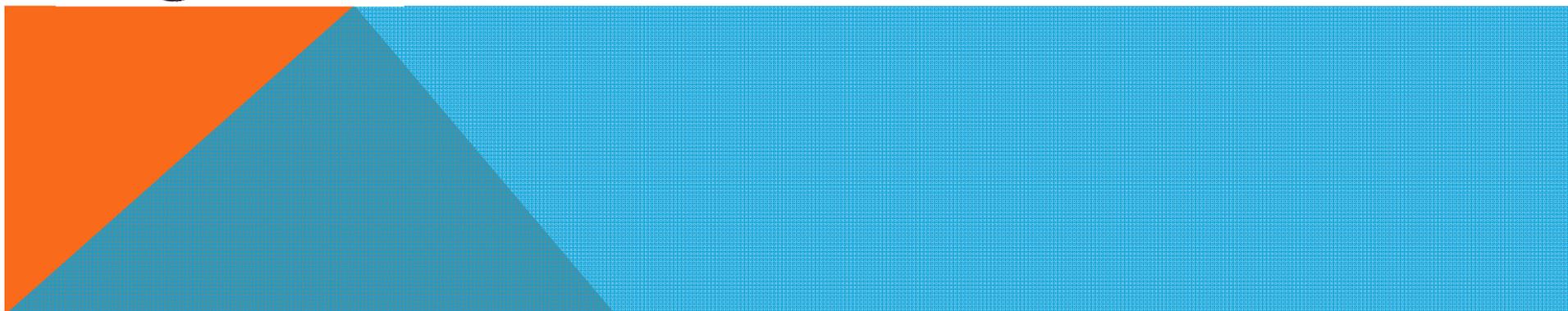
# RECOMMENDED PLANNING ESPECIALLY FOR LOW-INCOME FOREIGN-BORN **WOMEN**



Provide affordable and accessible high-speed internet access for:

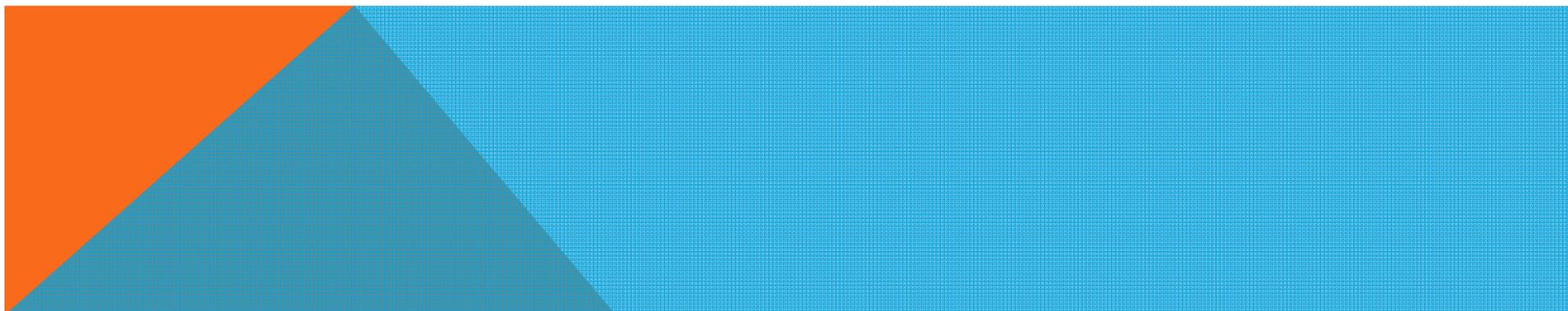
- ✓ Digital record-keeping that can allow signatures and certificates from employers, trainers, and supervisors in order to track labor hours for pay and (future) citizenship

Educational and career information and development including, but not limited to, ESOL



## RECOMMENDED PLANNING ESPECIALLY FOR LOW-INCOME FOREIGN-BORN **WOMEN**

- ✓ Provide facilities, technologies, and access to improve immigrant women's health in preventative and curative, as well as emergency (even disaster), conditions



# RECOMMENDED PLANNING FOR LOW-INCOME FOREIGN-BORN MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN



Photo credit: Jane Henrici,  
2000

- ✓ EVALUATE existing design, to improve connection between planning and training, education, health, and labor among different populations
- ✓ USE an in-depth focus on long-term experiences and conditions among diverse migrant and immigrant women and men, boys and girls—including their descriptions of their experiences
- ✓ AVOID stereotypes and assumptions

**Thank you**  
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