



Our 2020 Policy Vision: Mend the Gaps

Federal policies enacted since 1980 have exacerbated vast economic and social divides in our country. These divides are eroding the very fabric of our society. Enlivened by Pope Francis's challenge, NETWORK renews its more than 40-year commitment to create an economy and a society of inclusion.

Through 2020, NETWORK will focus on promoting policies that mend the gaps and bridge the divides in our country, with a special focus on the policies that disproportionately impact women and people of color.

Mending the Wealth and Income Gap

Three sets of policies can help mend the U.S. income and wealth gap:

- ✓ **Tax Justice:** Tax policy changes are made to reduce the income gap, especially the racial/ethnic and gender wealth gaps.
Examples of Success: The Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit are expanded. Tax reform closes loopholes so corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share.
- ✓ **Living Wages:** National legislation moves from adjusting a minimum wage to creating a living wage.
Examples of success: Significant minimum wage increases are enacted federally and indexed for cost of living. Living wages are calculated and implemented.
- ✓ **Family-Friendly Workplaces:** The needs of women and families are integrated into federal workplace policies.
Example of success: Legislation advances pro-family policies, such as paid leave, and paycheck fairness for women.

Mending the Access Gaps

Economic disparity has created perilous gaps in access to four key areas that burden daily lives and livelihoods:

- ✓ **Access to Democracy:** No individual or community of color is disenfranchised by federal policy.
Examples of success: The Voting Rights Act is fully restored and strengthened. The census is fully funded and responsibly executed resulting in congressional districts that are fairly and accurately drawn.
- ✓ **Access to Healthcare:** Racial and economic disparities in healthcare are eliminated.
Examples of success: The Affordable Care Act is fully funded, implemented, and expanded. Quality affordable healthcare is accessible to all.
- ✓ **Access to Citizenship:** Immigrants are welcomed into the country.
Examples of success: A clear pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants is created. A 21st-century immigration policy is enacted that repairs the current outdated law.
- ✓ **Access to Housing:** Everyone has access to safe, affordable housing.
Examples of success: The National Housing Trust Fund is fully funded and housing vouchers fully restored and expanded. The U.S. enacts a just and inclusive federal housing policy.

While working to mend the gaps, NETWORK will continue its advocacy to ensure that current, successful federal programs are protected and enhanced so as not to increase the current divides.

January 2016