The effects of technology on migration and integration:

What do we know about migrants' perspectives?

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Technology as a game changer

- Digital technology is fundamentally reshaping economies, social interactions and collective security

- The Fourth Industrial Revolution[1]
  - Velocity
  - Breadth and depth
  - Systems impact

- ICT impacting all areas of society

  e.g. financial sector, political/governance, health sector, communications, transportation, services, socialization…

    …and migration

[1] Schwab, 2017.

Disclaimer: Views expressed are the presenter's and do not necessarily reflect those of IOM

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Migrants include...

258 million international migrants, or just 3.4% of global population (UN DESA, 2017)
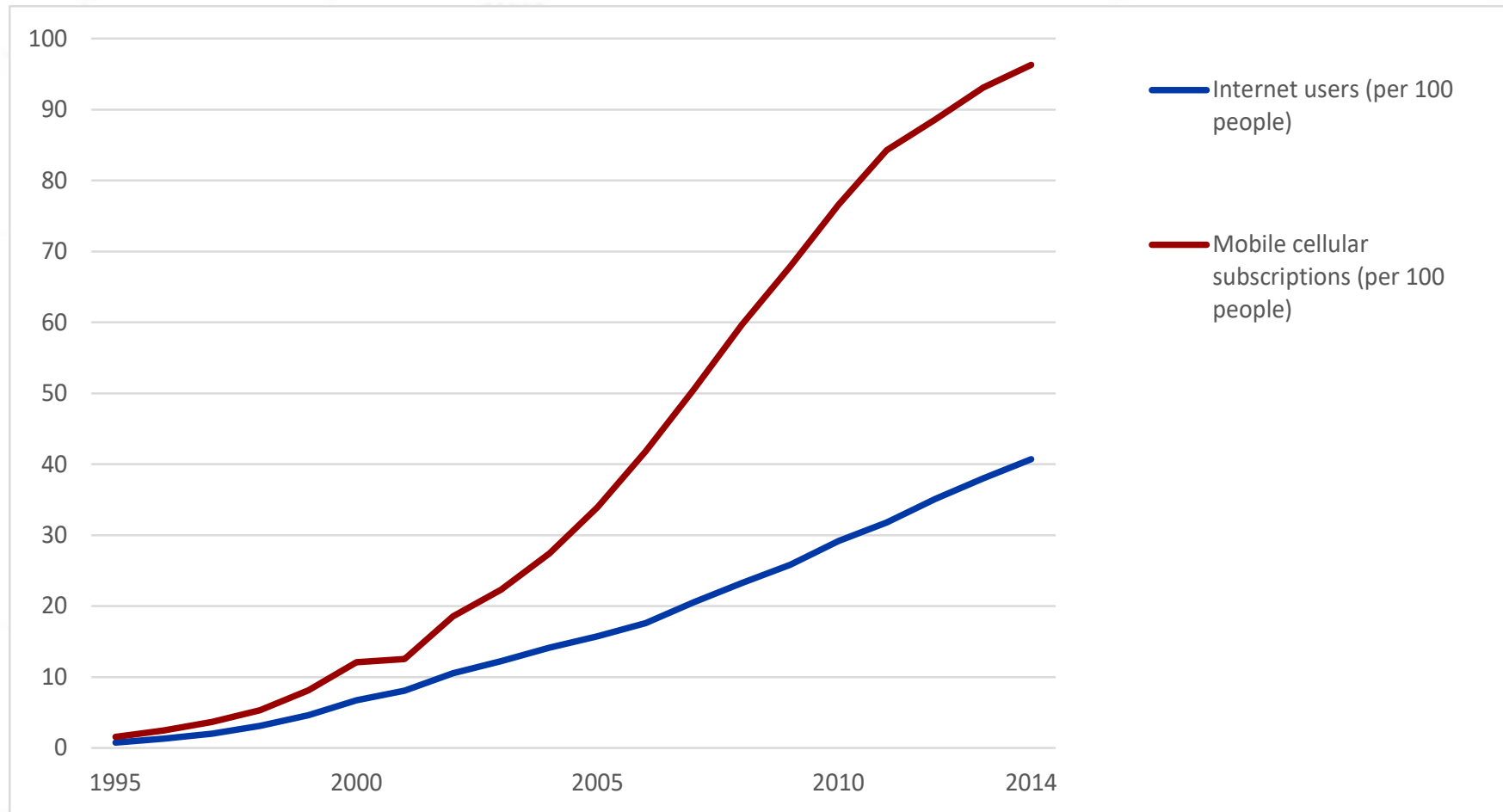
- Includes all foreign born regardless of demography, policy category or immigration status

740 million internal migrants (UNDP, 2009); **41 million IDPs** (IDMC, 2019)

Higher concentrations of migrants in some regions/countries

- traditional "immigration" countries (e.g. Canada, Australia, US, NZ)
- traditional "guest worker" countries (e.g. UAE, Qatar, KSA)
- Refugee/displacement countries (e.g. currently Syria, Turkey, Afghanistan, Uganda)

Global internet and mobile telephone access, 1995 to 2014

Legend:
- Internet users (per 100 people)
- Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people)

Source: ITU data; graph from IOM *World Migration Report 2018*, p. 153

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Migration & technology overview

- Technology increasingly used throughout the 'migration cycle'

- Key areas:
  - Migrant decision making and preparation
  - The act of migrating: the 'appification' of migration and mobility
  - Border management technology
  - Integration, reintegration and migrants' (digital) (virtual) (transnational) identities
  - Migration, technology and public debates
  - Analysing migration dynamics: technology in migration research and analysis

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"Migrant tech"
What it means....

1. Migrants' use of technology

2. Technology developed by migrants to support others navigate migration and integration processes

Can also encompass migrants working in the tech sector

Photo: themepap

"Migrant tech"
...why it matters

Important because:

- empowers those who are exploited/abused (or at risk of)
- expands access to migrant services (e.g. legal advice)
- supports protection of migrants throughout the cycle
- migrant voices can be heard
- points to gaps, weaknesses and problems in systems
- can improve quality of services/experiences for migrants and non-migrants

Sources: UNU, 2018; UNESCO, 2019.

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Migrant decision-making & ICT

- Growing body of academic and applied research[1]
    - Builds on 'decision making' literature
    - Focus on irregular migration and migrant smuggling
    - Role of non-state actors' / online interactions with migrants
    - Information 'campaigns'/social media in origin and transit
    - Demographic aspects (age and gender)

- Key findings
    - ICT increasingly prevalent, although access uneven
    - Trust in information/content (close friends, family, ethnic group highest)
    - Can compound social pressures to migrate

Examples: Crawley & Hagen-Zanker, 2018; Jayasuriya, McAuliffe & Iqbal, 2016; Mbaye, 2017; Maroufof, 2017; Triandafyllidou, 2017

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Appification of migration

- Real-time information available on personal devices

- Fundamentally changing migrants' navigation of systems/processes

- Recent events have brought the issue into sharp relief
  - Displacement from Venezuela
  - Migrant 'caravans' through Central America
  - Mass movement to and through Europe in 2015/2016

Photo: IOM

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Tech & integration

Tech is becoming pivotal in successful integration. Migrants use tech to:

- Reconnect and maintain sociocultural networks back home;

- Familiarize themselves with and adjust to new environments;

- Explore information and provide various support services;

- Retrieve health information;

- Enhance children's education;

- Entertain people in their leisure time.

What Motivates Immigrants for ICT Adoption and Use?: A Systematic Review of the 21st Century Literature (2001-2017)
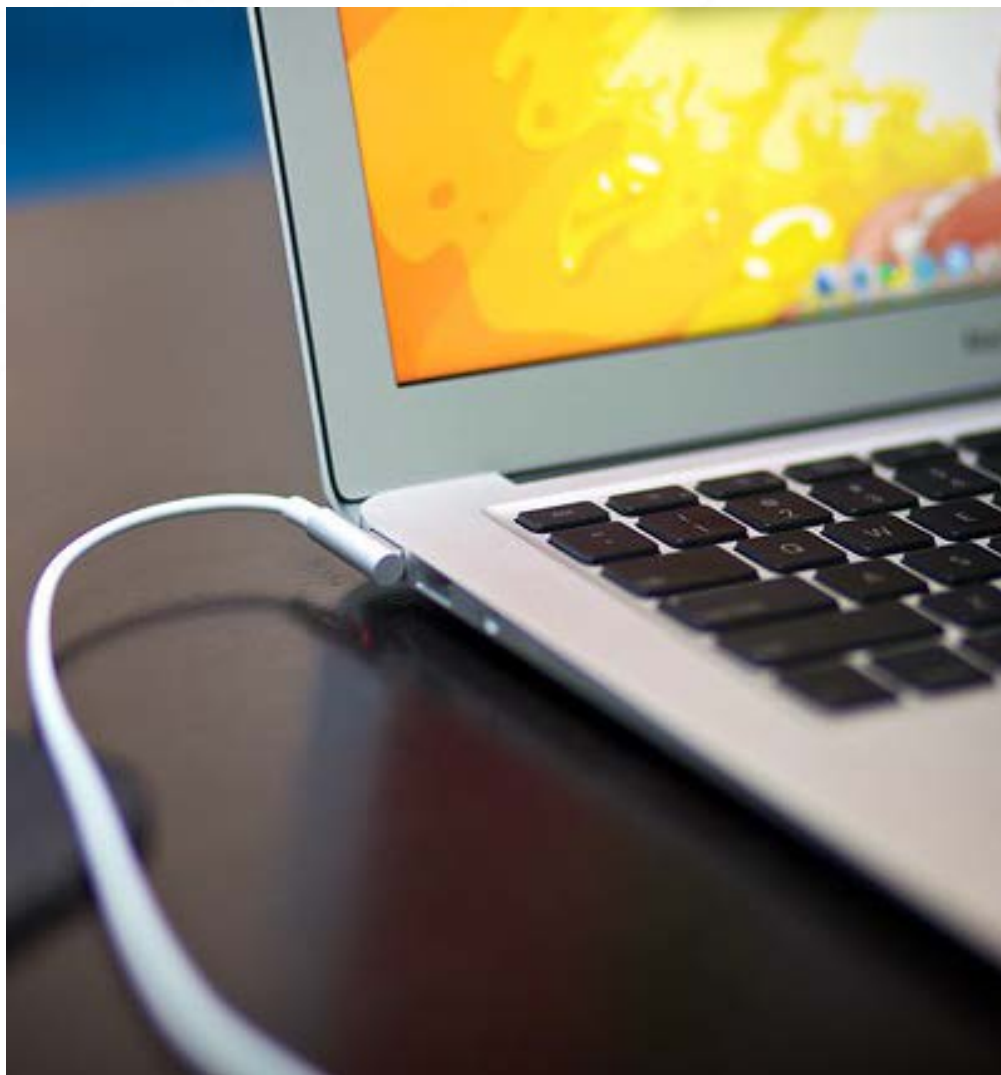by Bhanu Bhakta Acharya, University of Ottawa

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Tech & transnational families

- Mobile money apps to remit

- Skype and WhatsApp parenting

- Social change
  - feminization of migration
  - family decision-making
  - children left behind
  - children as household providers
  - split families

Sources: Beazley, 2017; Hoang, 2019; Khoo, Platt and Yeoh, 2017; Lam, 2019.

Photo: Travis Isaacs

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Key issues for migrants

- Empowerment and self-agency
- Social connections – home, transit, destination
- Economic advancement – households/communities

- Quality of information/advice
- Risk & unsafe journeys
- (Mis)trusted sources
- Personal data
- Access to ICT

Photo: K.C. Wong

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Key issues for policy and practice

- Migrant vulnerability and exploitation / Safety from persecution

- Irregular migration and border management / Unsafe migration (abuse, migrant deaths)

- Regulation / 'fake news' and 'disinformation'

- Tailoring information and services / competition for talent