

## TREO

Technology, Research, Education, Opinion

### Digital Technologies and Migration:

Reducing Inequalities or Creating New Ones?

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Digital technologies have been implicated in recent discussions around migration and development, especially in relation to their potential to address inequalities and create new ones [1]. This study, part of a £20 million, five-year UK-government funded research hub on South-South migration [[mideq.org](http://mideq.org)], focuses on the nexus between digital technologies, inequality and development from the perspective of migrants, initially across four migration corridors: Nepal-Malaysia, Haiti-Brazil, Ethiopia-South Africa and Ghana-China [<https://ict4d.org.uk/technology-inequality-and-migration/>]. A critical element of our work involves the co-design and crafting, with migrants, of digital interventions that can help reduce inequality in the migration context. The objective of this TREO talk is to seek opportunities for collaboration to extend the work of the hub beyond the confines of the current project. Our focus is on migration between countries of the “global South”, often ignored but characterized by some of the biggest migration flows in the world. Here, there is evidence that migration can lead to development outcomes for migrants and their communities of origin while also creating new inequalities in both origin and host communities. Digital technologies are increasingly playing a key role in the migration journey from migrant decision making, orientation and route planning to eventual integration into host communities and bonding with those left behind [2]. However, the use of digital technologies in such contexts harbours opportunities not only for good but also for harm. While such technologies have helped create new ‘connected’ migrants [3], the structural inequalities in migration contexts mean that access and use is always socially contingent [4] often leading to new inequalities. Our research addresses the following questions: (1) How and why do migrants and their families, intermediaries and employers in the migration context use varying types of digital technologies? (2) How do migrants understand notions of inequality, and what would their priorities be for using digital technologies to reduce these inequalities? (3) How can we work with migrants and developers to shape digital technologies, thereby reducing inequalities associated with migration? This research and practice will contribute to the growing body of IS research that examines the role of digital technologies in addressing inequality and social inclusion and making ‘the world a better place’ [5].

### References

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