

# ***Mega Trends and Families: The Impact of Demographic Shifts, International Migration and Urbanization, Climate Change, and Technological Transformations***

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# MEGA-TRENDS: CRITICAL TO SOCIETAL FUNCTIONING

- Demographic change
- International migration and urbanization
- Climate change
- Technological change
- Covid-19 & its impact on families:
  - Need for intimate supports & security
  - Source of stress and tension
  - Need for "more family" not "less family": "the projected erosion of the family is problematic and possibly invalid....Studies of family values and attitudes show a surprising degree of preference stability..." (Esping-Andersen & Billari, 2015, p. 3).

# DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE: HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

- Households composed of a couple with children account for approximately 38.4 percent
- Extended families, 26.6 percent
- Lone-partner households = 7.5 percent
  - Headed by women – 84.3 percent
  - Vulnerable to poverty; stigma; discrimination
- Age of marriage is rising with the exception of Sub-Saharan African and Central and South Asia
  - Child marriage continues as a problem
  - 21 percent of girls are married before the age of 18 & 5 percent before the age of 15

# DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE: CHOOSING A SPOUSE

Globally: parental  
control is lessening

Partner choice based  
on “love”

Cohabitation

Divorce – going down in the  
US and parts of Europe; going  
up in non-Western areas

- Statistics do not tell the whole story
- South Asia: divorce has doubled  
over 20 years however only 1.1  
percent of women are divorced

# DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE: FERTILITY



Global fertility rate has fallen from 3.2 births per woman in 1990 to 2.5 in 2019 and is expected to decrease even more to 2.2 in 2050 (UN Population, 2019)



UN (2019) prediction: Population is projected to increase from 7.8 billion in 2020 to 8.5 billion in 2030, and to 9.7 billion in 2050



Sub-Saharan Africa population is expected to double by 2050



Oceania excluding Australia/New Zealand and North Africa and Western Asia are expected to grow by about 56% and 46% respectively

# DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE: AGING



Life expectancy at birth has increased from 64.2 years in 1990 to 72.6 years in 2020 and is expected to increase further to 77.1 years in 2050.



United Nations predictions by 2050, one in six people in the world will be above the age 65 (16%), up from one in 11 in 2019 (9%) (UN Population, 2019)



143 million individuals 80 years or over is expected to triple, from 143 million in 2019 to 426 million in 2050 (UN Population, 2019).

# DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES: SOCIETAL & FAMILY EFFECTS

Decrease in support ratios disastrous for many societies

- Places enormous strains on the labor market
- Increases care responsibilities for families and social protection plans

Families investing more resources in children

- Private intergenerational transfers of resources
- Formal educational and care systems growing in importance
- Intergenerational bonds & conflicts

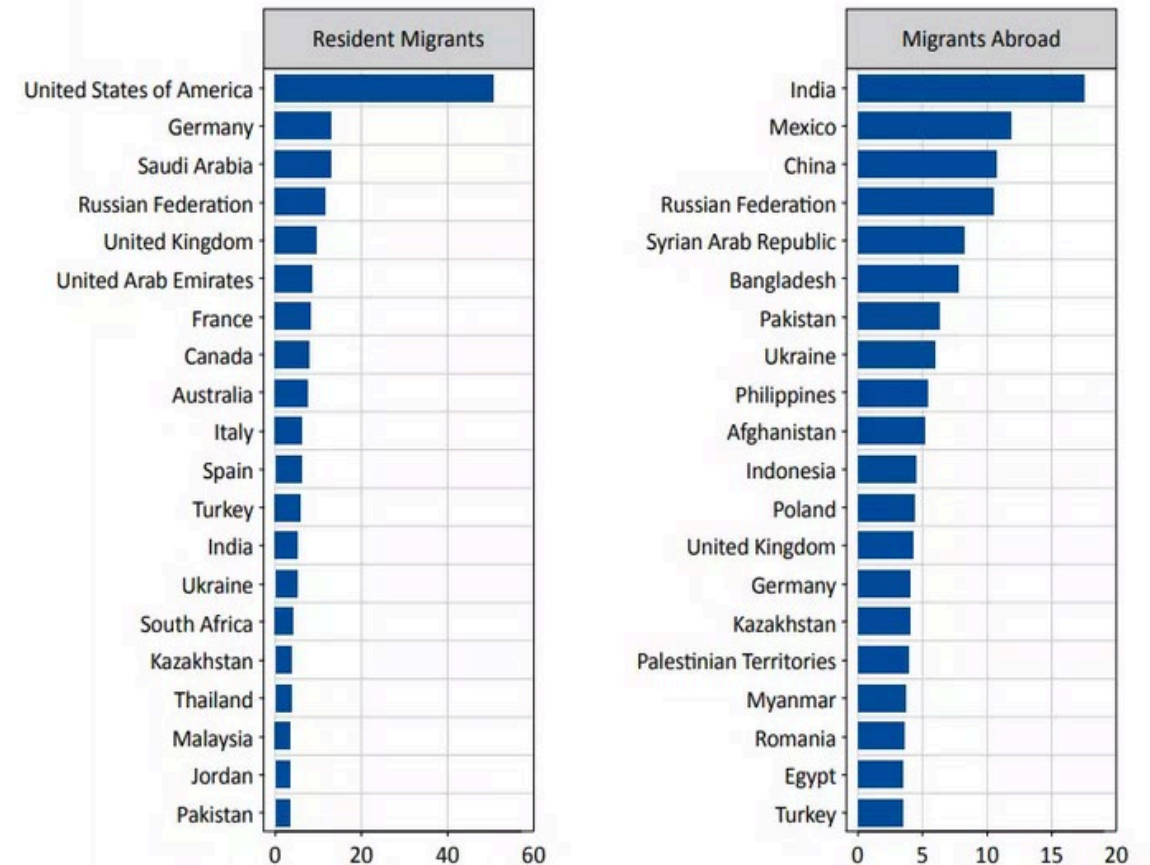
Care variations

- China: left-behind children & elderly
- Multi-generational housing
- Multi-cultural aging

# INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND URBANIZATION

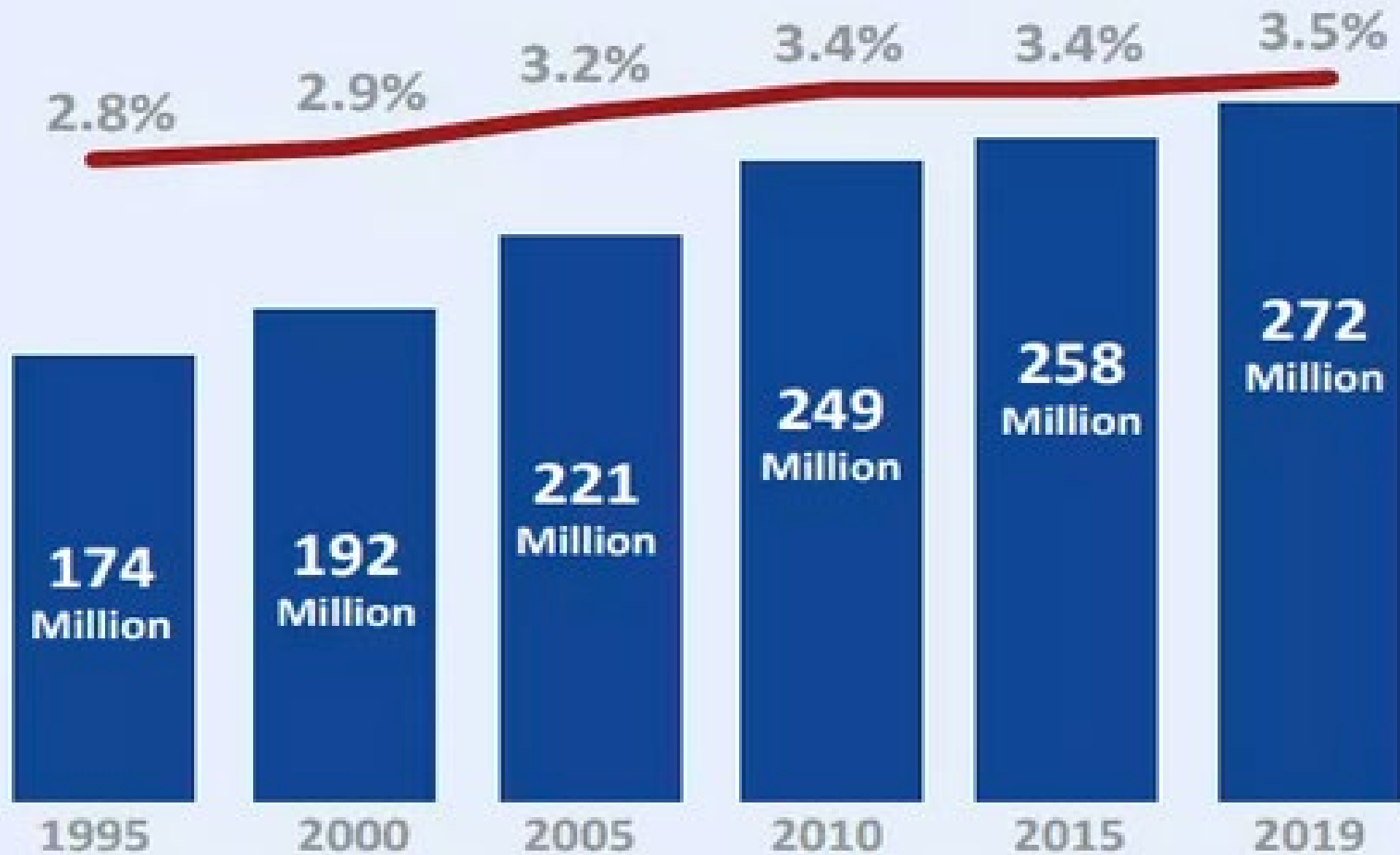
- Approximately 272 million individuals, or 3.5 percent of the world population were living outside of their native countries as of 2020 (IOM, 2020a).
- United States currently has the highest actual number of immigrants. There are currently 50.7 million foreign born individuals in the United States, constituting about 13.6 percent of the population (UN, 2020).
- Germany – 12.65 million migrants
- Russia – 11.6 million
- Saudi Arabia, France, Canada, Australia, India & Pakistan – 4 -7 million

Figure 3. Top 20 destinations (left) and origins (right) of international migrants in 2019 (millions)



Source: UN DESA, 2019a (accessed 18 September 2019).







# MIGRATION & FAMILY LIFE



Push – pull  
factors:

Economics,  
violence &  
conflict, climate  
change  
Remittances



Retaining cultural and  
familial ties



Gendered  
effects

Changing roles  
Re-evaluation of  
marital &  
parenting  
satisfaction  
Violence

# URBANIZATION



3.5 billion people live in urban areas today

Urban populations are expected to increase by 1.5 billion over the next 20 years

358 “million cities” with one million or more people, and 27 “mega-cities” of ten million or more

95 percent of this urban expansion will take place in developing countries (UNDP, 2018)

# MULTI-DIMENSIONAL URBANIZATION

## West:

- Unmarried; couples without children / "Kiddie deserts"
- Economic and social consequences

## Non-Western:

- Urban margins: populated by migrants from rural areas
- Poor; children; elderly – disadvantaged to be far from locus of power

## Gender Issues:

- Domestic workers; service sector jobs; trafficking of women; marriage brides
- Harassment in public places
- Transnational motherhood
- Risks associated with migration

# CLIMATE CHANGE



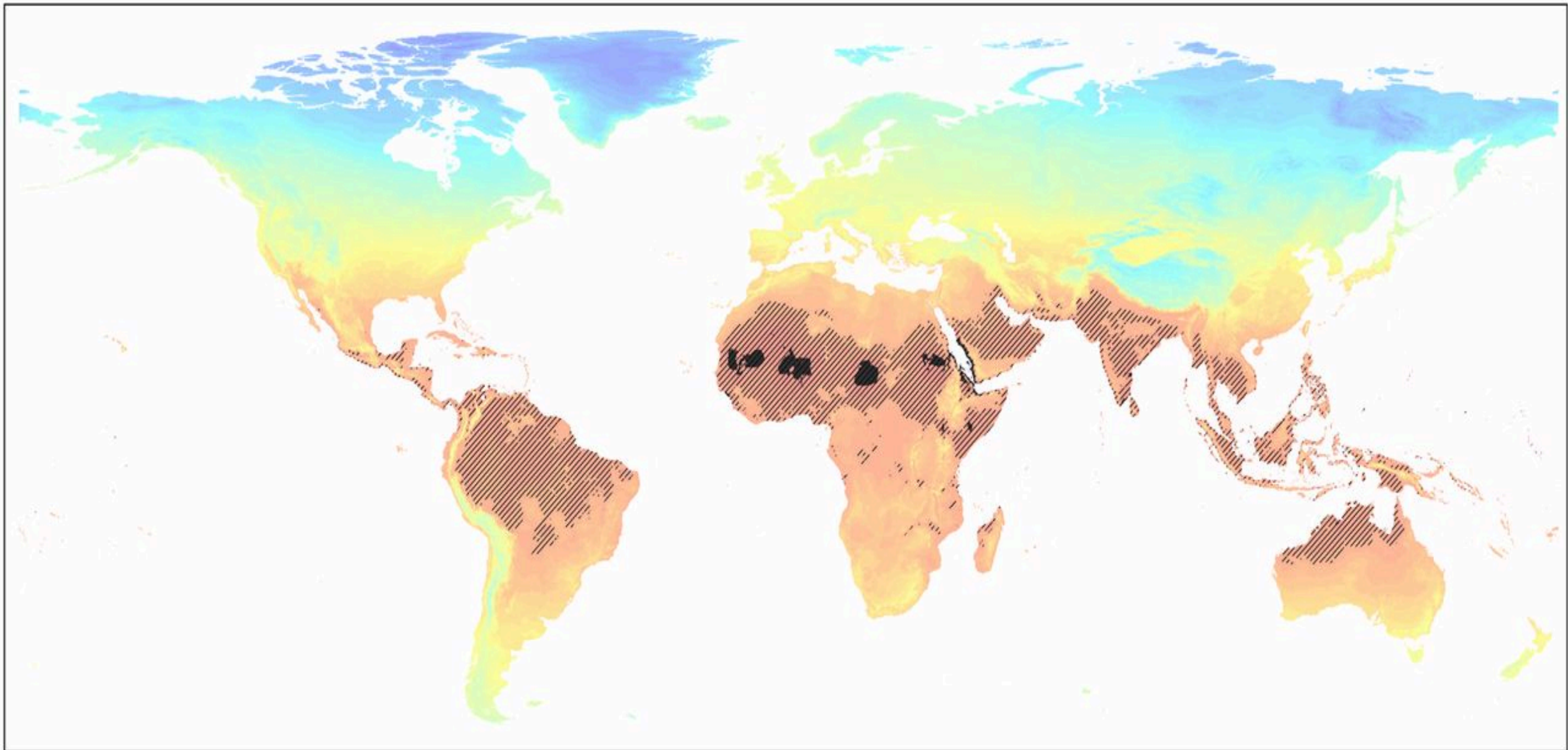
The temperature niche for humans is going to become hotter in the next fifty years - more than it has over the last 6000 years



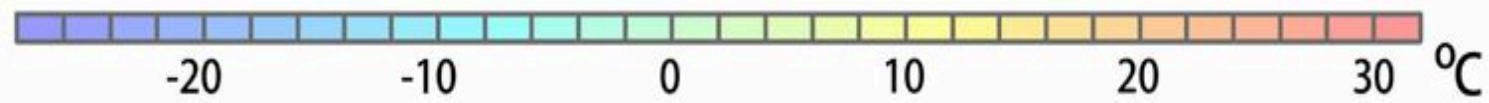
One third of all people on earth will experience the extreme heat that is currently only found on 0.8% of the earth's land, much of which is in the Sahara



Hotter, longer dry seasons in combination with shorter wet seasons: Example: already a problem for coffee farmers in Central America

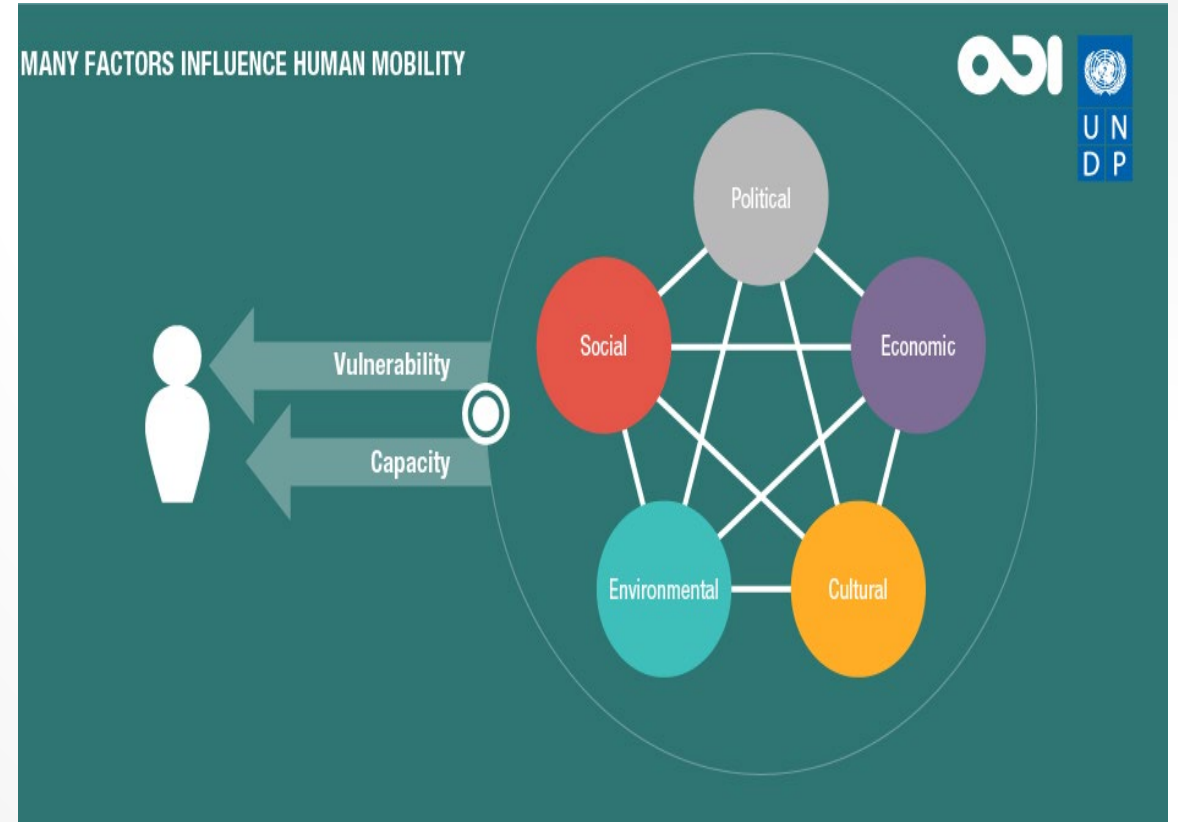


Mean annual temperature



# CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION

- Relationship complex
  - Food insecurity
  - Moving does not necessarily lead to better outcomes
  - Loss of social support networks
  - Volatile precarious livelihoods in urban areas
- Not always able to create new identities / ostracized
- Gender issues:
  - Child marriage to preserve resources
  - Sexual violence in shelters
  - Gender roles in flux





# TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATIONS: MEDICAL TECHNOLOGIES

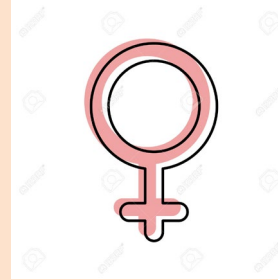
## Extending the life span:

- Better diets, living conditions, and medical care, today's elderly adults can expect to live much longer, healthier lives than past generations
- New pharmaceuticals and vaccines, the emergence of regenerative medicine that provides replacement or repair of tissues, and the advances in screenings and management of diseases are all contributing to the healthier aging

## Bean pole families

- Bonding
- Intergenerational conflict
- Care combined with divorce and re-marriage = obligations?

# TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATIONS: ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES



Women have had to bear the physical and medical burdens of infertility, and the subsequent social consequences for their relationships and family life: Non-Western societies especially



Economic and social class divides

Elites vs  
“Reproducers”  
Fertility tourism



New forms of middle-age

# TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATIONS: COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES



Revolutionized learning, work, social life, and family relationships within and between families



“Digital solidarity”



Increased connectedness, intergenerational relationships; finding romantic partners



Families with members with a disability:

Assistive technologies  
Informational websites, social networks, blogs  
Virtual communities to share resources

# TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATIONS: COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

- Covid-19
- Remote work:
  - Work issues brought into the home; pressure to be on devices; emotional exhaustion
- Remote learning
  - Boundaries between school home, community replaced by fluid flows of information: no more formal vs informal learning
  - Changing identity formation and the life course
- Personal attention will become the providence of the wealthy



# ENSURING THAT THE SDG'S ARE MET

A systemic perspective that highlights how various factors and trends intersect and interact with one another is key to creating appropriate responses.



Strengthening family supports leads to improvements in the social and economic capital of individuals and concurrently, the well-being of communities and societies



Coordinated responses in order to reach the most vulnerable, individuals world-wide and assist them in realizing their rights, capabilities, and full potential as individuals and communities.

THANK YOU 😊