REFUGEE WOMEN’S TECHNOLOGY ECOSYSTEMS

Stacey Wedlake
Digital Inclusion Research Forum
October 12, 2023
RESEARCH TEAM

Maria Garrido
Principal Research Scientist, UW

Stacey Wedlake
Research Scientist, UW

Katya Yefimova
PhD Candidate, UW

Negin Dahya
Assistant Professor, University of Toronto

Maleeha Iqbal
PhD Student, University of Toronto
“Refugee” is a legal term
Determines types of services (and funding are available to them)
But also carries structural and cultural implications
BROAD DEFINITION OF TECHNOLOGY
What is the socio-technical landscape refugee women navigate during their resettlement in the United States?

How do women interact with and learn to use technology in their daily lives?

What types of social and technical opportunities and challenges surface for refugee women in relation to technology access and education?
DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Data was collected in three consecutive phases

> desk research (2018);
> semi-structured interviews with 21 organizations that serve refugees (26 people) (2019);
> 6 focus group discussions and 3 interviews with 22 refugee women (2019).
Refugee women’s everyday socio-technical ecosystems.

Types of learning:
> Self learning
> Family and community support
> Formal learning
RESETTLEMENT ECOSYSTEM

- ESL, digital literacy, vocational training, etc.
- Government benefits & services
- Mandatory health screenings, vaccinations
- Initial employment-related activities: job search & application
**RESETTLEMENT LEARNING TYPES**

- ESL, digital literacy, vocational training, etc.
- Government benefits & services
- Mandatory health screenings, vaccinations
- Initial employment-related activities: job search & application

Formal education, and ad-hoc support from RSOs
PUBLIC LIFE ECOSYSTEM

- Banking
- Interacting with teachers & schools
- Customer service
- Healthcare
- Transportation & driving
- Ongoing employment-related activities
PUBLIC LIFE LEARNING TYPES

- Banking
- Interacting with teachers & schools
- Customer service
- Healthcare
- Transportation & driving
- Ongoing employment-related activities

Social learning, community learning & support
HOME & COMMUNITY ECOSYSTEM

- Home appliances
- Leisure & social activities
- Online shopping
- Day-to-day schooling support & activities
HOME AND COMMUNITY LEARNING TYPES

- Home appliances
- Leisure & social activities
- Online shopping
- Day-to-day schooling support & activities

Self-learning, trial and error
CONCLUSION

- Home appliances
- Leisure & social activities
- Online shopping
- Day-to-day schooling support & activities

**Self-learning, trial and error**

**Home & Community**

- ESL, digital literacy, vocational training, etc.
- Government benefits & services
- Mandatory health screenings, vaccinations
- Initial employment-related activities: job search & application

- Banking
- Interacting with teachers & schools
- Customer service
- Healthcare
- Transportation & driving
- Ongoing employment-related activities

**Public Life**

**Resettlement**

- Banking
- Interacting with teachers & schools
- Customer service
- Healthcare
- Transportation & driving
- Ongoing employment-related activities

**Social learning, community learning & support**

**Formal education, and ad-hoc support from RSOs**
Thank you

Read the paper! It’s open access. 😊

Stacey Wedlake
staceyaw@uw.edu
@staceyaw.bsky.social