

Summaries of funded Impact Initiatives

Supporting migrants as knowledge producers

Lead: Ethiopian Institute of Peace

Impact Pathway (ToC) – Changing narratives, Building capacity

(August 2022 – September 2022)

Academic and policy studies and responses to migration have been dominated by scholarship produced in the Global North, raising questions as to whose knowledge is, and should be, involved in understanding the nature and future of migration.

The MIDEQ team in Ethiopia is publishing an autobiography written by a Hadiya returnee migrant during their detention in Tanzania and organising book launch sessions with the local community. Supporting migrants' own knowledge production in the Global South helps challenge the secular framework that reflects a Western epistemology. It provides important insights into how concepts and frameworks that are at the core of 'international' humanitarian debates are conceived of, negotiated, and enacted in Southern contexts. Creating a space for migrants to contribute to knowledge production based on a lived experience contributes to decolonising knowledge production in the field of migration. The book will launch in high schools in the Hadiya Zone, at Wachemo University and Migration Studies and Entrepreneurship Centre (WMSEC), helping to create better awareness and a more nuanced narratives on migration.

Justice: a migrating dance

Lead: University of Glasgow, Coventry University

Impact Pathway (ToC) – Changing narratives

(April 2022 – March 2023)

This initiative forms a partnership between MIDEQ's access to justice and arts, creative resistance and wellbeing thematic areas, the Centre for Migration Studies at the University of Ghana, CUSP Network Plus and Noyam Institute for African Dance.

The work takes data and insights from MIDEQ's access to justice and the arts, creative resistance, and wellbeing work to create a dance piece. The piece presents and represents injustice/justice/voice to tell the story of a different 'look and feel' of justice in different contexts within the Global South. It is clear from research undertaken so far that dominant concepts of rights and justice are Eurocentric in their

articulation and framing as manifested in different MIDEQ contexts. To change the narrative about justice and how it is experienced, the dance piece, musical compositions, films directed by Noyam young people and set/costume design in textile will use data and objects from MIDEQ countries, framed through the question of the look and feel of justice for migrants themselves.

A little bit like home: Nepali migrant workers place-making in Malaysia

Lead: Monash University Malaysia

Impact Pathway (ToC) – Changing narratives

(December 2022 – October 2023)

Malaysia has been a popular choice for Nepali migrant workers according to data recorded by the Nepali government since 2008. In 2020, it is estimated that there were 240,000 Nepali workers out of 1.4 to 2 million documented foreign migrant workers in Malaysia and 73% of them are concentrated in the manufacturing sector. Despite their sizeable presence, little is known about their lives beyond the stereotype of a foreign worker entrenched in dangerous, dirty, and difficult jobs.

This project challenges dominant public perceptions of Nepali migrant workers through a set of artistic community engagement activities to highlight their experiences with direct involvement of the Nepali migrant worker community. The MIDEQ Malaysia team is producing video outputs with Nepali migrants for dissemination in a community-building event. The team is also running workshop sessions with community leaders to understand needs and interests of Nepali migrants and organising skills building sessions for migrants with focus on the creative arts. The aim is to promote long-term connections and exchange between the MIDEQ researchers, Nepali community leaders, artist-facilitators, and the Nepali migrant community.

Orientation to left behind wives and children of labour migrants

Lead: Nepal Institute for Social and Environmental Research (NISER)

Impact Pathway (ToC) – Changing narratives, Improving migrant lives

(March 2022 – July 2023)

Due to rules of the destination country, labour migrants from Nepal cannot take their family members with them. Over the years, there have been growing problems associated with migration including: sexual and psychosocial violence experienced by the wives of migrants; moral policing and negative community narratives regarding

wives who are left behind in Nepal; and the disintegration of the family.

Additionally, there have been issues related to fraudulent use of remittances by non-family members, children dropping out of education, entering early marriage and drug addiction. A root cause of these problems is the lack of preparation and family discussions on how to manage a household, children, and remittances after the migration of a family member.

This project aims to translate and tailor a previously trialled pre-employment orientation module for the Abu Dhabi dialogue corridor countries for wives and children of current migrants. It builds on MIDEQ's research and provides an opportunity to extend some of NISER's existing work into new areas (wives and children in migrant households). NISER is working with support and collaboration of local organisations working with migrants, their family members, migrant returnees, local tech organisations/companies and digital literacy trainers.

Chinese gold miners in Ghana: book publication

Lead: China Agricultural University

Impact Pathway (ToC) – Changing narratives

(May 2022 – March 2023)

The China team is writing and publishing a book in Chinese, exploring the daily life of Chinese gold miners in Ghana. The book aims to define and redefine the narratives of South-South migration by telling the stories and experience of Chinese migrants. It also serves as a platform for gold miners to share their experience as migrant workers which will help academia better understand Chinese migrants.

The book will present a new concept/theory that can further explain South-South migration and Chinese international migration. Doing so helps reshape the lives of migrants by understanding the social inequalities brought by South-South migration. The long-term goal is to influence policymakers into taking a humanised approach when reviewing policies on South-South migration. The book written by MIDEQ's China team aims to generate more dialogue in traditional and non-traditional forms of media, local, international, and government organisations.

China-Ghana migration corridor: photo exhibition

Lead: China Agricultural University

*Impact Pathway (ToC) – Changing narratives
(October 2022 – November 2022)*

The China team is organising a photo exhibition to display professional images from the China-Ghana migration corridor and personal photographs from migrants to explore the diverse patterns and implications of migration, inequality, and development.

By developing new centres of knowledge and ways of understanding the needs of migrants and their distinct subgroups, the exhibit will serve as an avenue for learning about migration. The photo exhibition also opens possibilities for exchange and training, utilising modern technologies to form inclusive citizen networks and foster transnational solidarity in the fight to ensure migrants are aware of and have access to their rights. The supplementary narratives will document the history of arrival, integration, and mobility, finding one's place and political engagement, participation, and self-reflection, to raise awareness of human stories behind migration. The exhibit can provide stakeholders with significant resources to understand South- South migration and the narratives it entails.

Unpacking journeys: Nepali migrant workers in Malaysia

Lead: Monash University Malaysia

*Impact Pathway (ToC) – Changing narratives
(June 2023 – December 2023)*

Unpacking Journeys: Nepali Migrant Workers in Malaysia is an immersive exhibition that seeks to critically decipher, understand and empathise with the perceptions, decisions made, and lived experiences of Nepali migrant workers in Malaysia. This exhibition, being held at Monash University Malaysia, simulates the journeying of Nepali migrants coming from different parts of their country into Malaysia for work.

The exhibition provides contours of migrant living and working conditions as well as their long distance social relations with families back home. Through this activity, key findings of the Nepal-Malaysia Corridor are translated into an accessible, engaging and relatable format for a wider audience. The activity contributes to providing a humane and human rights perspective of the migration journeys and experiences of Nepali migrant workers and their households.

Key stakeholders like various migrant intermediaries and migrant worker civil society groups are invited to share knowledge and interact with Nepali migrants at the event.

In addition to the exhibition, existing research data is being transformed and re-presented as photographs, infographics, voice narrations, short video clips, digital comics, podcasts and more. After the exhibit is over, select outputs will be archived in an open source platform for wider and longer use.