MIGRATION AND INEQUALITY IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH
Evidence from the MIDEQ Hub

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Report team and Acknowledgements

Contents

List of Acronyms

A2J	Access to justice
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex
MIDEQ	Migration for Development and Equality
MJI	Migrant Justice Institute
NGO	Non-governmental organization
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WHO	World Health Organization

Preface

Barely a day goes by when the "problem" of migration is not in the news. This story of migration is often dominated by the views, interests and policy imperatives of the Global North, even though at least a third of all international migration takes place between countries of the Global South. It focuses on issues of security and border controls, ignoring the structural inequalities that drive people to move and the ways in which migration can both support the lives and livelihoods of migrants and their families and contribute to delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This report highlights the findings of the Migration for Development and Equality (MIDEQ) Hub, which has been working with researchers in the United Kingdom and across the Global South to better understand the relationships between migration, inequality and development in the context of South-South migration.

Organized around seven themes of core interest to migration policy makers and decision takers—gender, children, decision making, intermediaries, resource flows, access to justice and digital technologies—the report lays out new data and evidence that challenges the ways in which Global North concepts have been applied to Global South processes and socio-economic structures, identifying differences and similarities in migration experiences and opportunities, as well as the myriad challenges that migration can, and often does, bring.

The MIDEQ Hub's research is truly interdisciplinary, drawing on academics employing a wide range of approaches—from quantitative surveys to creative artistic methodologies—and engaging with migrant and community organizations, government officials and local stakeholders across six migration "corridors" that link migrants' countries of origin and destination: Burkina Faso – Côte d'Ivoire; China – Ghana; Egypt – Jordan; Ethiopia – South Africa; Haiti – Brazil; and Nepal – Malaysia. By focusing on South-South migration, the Hub also challenges the mainstream view that migrants necessarily move from poor countries in the Global South to rich countries in the Global North.

MIDEQ's research and policy analysis is highly relevant for a wide global audience struggling to find solutions to the growing challenges of migration and the growing inequalities of which migration is often a symptom—but can also potentially be a cure. As we strive to maximize the benefits of migration—for migrants and their families as well as the communities to which they move—this report offers new ideas and thinking for those working toward a world in which there is equality, sustainability and justice.

Heaven Crawley
Director, MIDEQ Hub

Introducing the Work of the MIDEQ Hub

This report highlights the work of the Migration for Development and Equality Hub—otherwise known as MIDEQ—which unpacks the complex and multi-dimensional relationships between migration, development and inequality in the context of the Global South. Working with nearly 100 researchers in 12 countries in the Global South, the MIDEQ Hub directly addresses knowledge gaps,[1] decentring or decolonizing the production of knowledge about migration and its consequences away from the Global North with the aim of ensuring that policy makers, programme specialists and donors have the understanding and evidence they need to harness the development potential of migration for individuals, households, communities and the countries of the Global South. It also delivers a range of impact interventions, 33 in total, which build on the findings of the research and are designed to amplify current research and generate additional impacts aligned to the Hub's overarching Theory of Change.

MIDEQ's research takes place across six migration "corridors" that link migrants' countries of origin and destination: Burkina Faso — Côte d'Ivoire; China — Ghana; Egypt — Jordan; Ethiopia – South Africa; Haiti – Brazil; and Nepal — Malaysia. The term "corridor" is used as a framing device and metaphor to understand the movement of people, goods, money, knowledge and skills, as well as social and cultural ideas and relationships between two places, defined as countries of origin and destination, with multi-layered sociocultural, economic, political and historical dynamics that transcend national borders (see MIDEQ migration corridors, pg. viii).

We recognize that corridors can imply a singular movement or relationship between two places, when in fact all countries have multiple corridors linking them to many other countries in different ways. We also recognize that corridors between countries do not have an obvious "beginning" or "end." Internal migration, for example within China, may feed into international migration, or people may migrate to multiple countries in succession before returning to their country of origin, such as the migration of Haitians from Brazil to Chile and subsequently to the United States.[2]

Nonetheless, the focus on corridors reflects a subtle but important conceptual, discursive and methodological shift that allows us to unsettle prevailing assumptions about migration. It represents a deliberate counter to the tendency of much migration research to focus in on processes and outcomes in individual countries rather than the dynamic relationships within and between them. It allows researchers to place complexity and flexibility at the core of our theoretical, methodological and operational approach. It enables researchers to analytically compare experiences, processes and outcomes; drill down into complex, sometimes contradictory and even counterintuitive relationships; better understand the developmental "ripple-effects" of South-South migration in both countries of origin and destination; and develop theoretical and empirical understandings of the relationships between migration, inequality and development that are more widely applicable. Our focus on corridors offers the opportunity for a fundamentally new approach to the intractable global challenge of migration, mired as it is in simplistic and outdated terms of push-pull factors. Furthermore, it invites the development of new, related metaphors that allow for a deeper understanding of how different configurations of migration shape and are shaped by inequality at every level.

MIDEQ's research across the corridors is organized around a number of cross-cutting themes and approaches: axes of inequality, including gender, childhood

and income; migration processes and outcomes including decision making, intermediaries and resource flows; impact interventions which aim to reduce migration-related inequalities, including through political mobilization, access to justice and the use of digital technologies. The project structure maximizes opportunities for comparative research within and between the corridors. It also provides opportunities for co-development and co-learning. The MIDEQ team come from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds including geography, anthropology, development studies, economics, political science, linguistics, digital technology, sociology and social policy. MIDEQ's research draws on a range of qualitative, quantitative and visual data methods including:

- *A synthesis and comparative analysis* of existing data and literature relating to migration, multidimensional inequalities and development indicators within and across the corridors and in relation to the Hub's cross-cutting themes;

- *Survey data* gathered from migrant households and returnees in countries of origin, migrants in countries of destination, businesses and community organizations/ leaders;

- *Semi-structured interviews, conversations, ethnographic tracing and social network analysis* undertaken with migrants, migration intermediaries and stakeholders, including international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community organizations, lawyers, activists and policy makers; and

- *Visual/creative forms of knowledge production* (music, theatre, poetry, dance, animation) within the 12 countries and across the corridors.

Endnotes

[1] PositiveNegatives and MIDEQ 2021.
[2] Cela and Marcelin 2021.
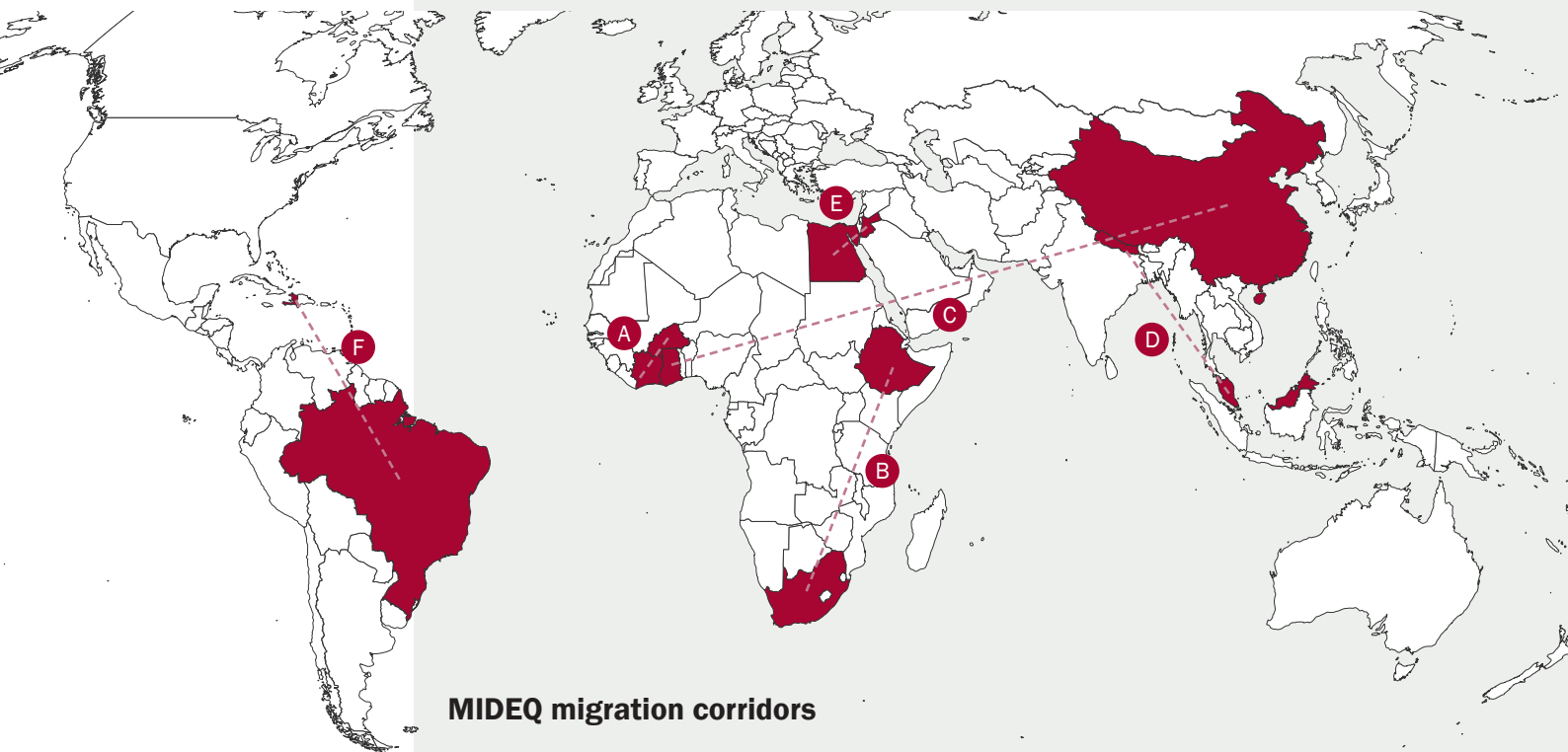
MIDEQ migration corridors

MIDEQ explores South-South migration in six migration "corridors" that link migrants' countries of origin and destination:

Ⓐ Burkina Faso – Côte d'Ivoire
Ⓑ Ethiopia – South Africa
Ⓒ China – Ghana
Ⓓ Nepal – Malaysia
Ⓔ Egypt – Jordan
Ⓕ Haiti – Brazil

Within MIDEQ, corridors are used as a framing device and metaphor to understand the movement of people, goods, money, knowledge and skills between two places with socio-cultural, economic, political and historical dynamics that transcend national borders. This approach enables us to examine the relationships within and between countries, countering the focus of much migration research on processes and outcomes in individual countries. The six corridors were selected because they enabled us to unpack the concept of South-South migration by examining how migration processes and outcomes, as well as migrants' experiences and opportunities, are impacted by different histories of migration and policy approaches, as well as broader socio-economic, demographic, political and policy configurations.

Ⓐ Burkina Faso – Côte d'Ivoire

Migration within the Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire corridor can be traced back to French colonial policy, which developed the Burkinabè territory as a labour reservoir.[1] Six decades after independence, Côte d'Ivoire remains the second-largest migration flow in Africa, after South Africa, and by far the most important destination for migrants from Burkina Faso.[2] This migration is facilitated by free movement in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region, short distances and low costs. Most Burkinabè migrate to Côte d'Ivoire for work, principally in the cocoa plantations and in the fishing and mining industries. Child labour and trafficking are common. Income inequalities are a strong driver of migration in this corridor and a third of households receive remittances. Despite this, Burkina Faso remains one of the world's poorest countries with evidence that migration is widening the gap between migrant and non-migrant households.[3] Movements from Côte d'Ivoire include Burkinabè returning to Burkina Faso who are a potential resource for development,[4] as well as Ivoirians engaging in trade.

Ⓑ Ethiopia – South Africa

As one of the strongest economies on the continent, South Africa is a major destination country for migrants within Africa, with an estimated three million migrants in 2020.[5] Migration from Ethiopia to South Africa started in the 1990s and increased in the 2000s, with the country becoming the major destination for Ethiopians migrating to other countries in the Global South. Today, an estimated 250,000 Ethiopians live in South Africa, making them one on the most significant migrant populations. Migration from Ethiopia is fuelled by political and economic factors, as well as an overarching spiritual frame of reference, especially in the south of the country, which represents migration as an enactment

of a divine script and a prophecy fulfilled.[6] In the absence of a bilateral labour migration agreement between the two countries, most Ethiopians undertake long and risky journeys to South Africa by foot, on buses, trucks, trains and boats, crossing multiple borders.[7] Violence and deaths on the journey are well documented.[8] Once Ethiopians arrive in South Africa, they typically become caught in an asylum system that limits their rights and opportunities and often leaves them, and their children, undocumented.[9]

C China – Ghana

An increasing number of Chinese migrants travel to various countries in Africa, including Ghana, to work in commerce (trading), infrastructure development (construction), mining, hospitality and agriculture. Since the 1990s, an increasing—if substantially smaller—number of Africans, including Ghanaians, have also migrated to China for the purpose of education, trade and tourism. While data is scare, it seems that Ghanaian migrants in China mostly stay in the cities of Guangzhou and Yiwu for business and trade. Ghanaians have also migrated to China to pursue opportunities for education. Migration flows from China to Ghana are driven by inequalities between the two countries: As Ghana does not have adequate fiscal resources, it relies on conditional loans and grants from the government of China for infrastructure development, which call for the services of Chinese firms and expatriates.[10] Many of the Chinese who migrate to Ghana are highly educated, recruited via government-licensed private employment agencies or through government-to-government arrangements.[11] While the scale of migration between China and Ghana is relatively small in terms of absolute numbers, its development impacts are potentially significant due to high levels of Chinese investment in infrastructure projects and private business.[12]

D Nepal – Malaysia

Like many countries in South-East Asia, Malaysia has been heavily dependent on unskilled and temporarily contracted migrant workers to fulfil labour gaps in the country.[13] Malaysia has been one of the top destinations for Nepali workers since 2008, with the Nepali mission in Malaysia reporting around 500,000 Nepali living in the country in 2019. The vast majority are men, and most are employed in the manufacturing sector. Poverty, lack of employment and political instability are considered key drivers of migration from Nepal, with remittances becoming a primary source of income for many households and a lucrative business for recruitment agencies. Nepali migrant workers sent home USD 8.1 billion in 2018, making the country the 19th biggest beneficiary of funds sent by migrants around the world.[14] However, the high fees that Nepalis have to pay to recruiters, combined with low pay and poor living and working conditions, limit the development potential of these remittances.[15] These factors were aggravated by the Covid-19 pandemic,[16] which also impacted the wives of migrants who stay back in Nepal.[17]

E Egypt – Jordan

Migration has long played a significant role in the political, economic and social spheres in Egypt, and Jordan hosts the largest number of Egyptian labour migrants, second only to Saudi Arabia. There are widely varying estimates regarding the number of Egyptians working in Jordan, estimated to be between 636,000 and 1,150,000 people, mainly men, working predominantly in low-paid jobs in agriculture, construction and services. Migration is associated with a lack of decent job opportunities in Egypt and the aspirations of Egyptian migrant workers to improve the economic situation of their household and secure access to education for their children.[18] The choice of Jordan as a destination country reflects linguistic, cultural and geographical proximity and the opportunities to earn higher wages and send back remittances. However, most Egyptian migrant workers rely on intermediaries to secure work permissions and contracts in Jordan, often paying significant, and illegal, fees to intermediaries. They also face poor working conditions, particularly in the agricultural sector, poor living conditions, confiscation of their passports by their employers, low salaries, salary retention, the inability to change employers and constraints on family reunification.[19]

F Haiti – Brazil

Haiti is a country of net emigration, with more than 1.2 million Haitians estimated to be living outside the country in 2015, representing over 11 percent of the population.[20] Outward migration is a symptom of Haiti's unending crises and broken social contract between the people and the state, rooted in international involvement in Haitian politics and society crises and compounded natural and manmade disasters.[21] Following the 2010 Haiti earthquake, and fuelled by an economic boom and the need for labour as the host of the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Summer Olympic Games, Brazil became a primary South American destination for Haitians. While its attractiveness has waned more recently due to the lack of opportunities for employment and family reunion, as well as xenophobia and racism, Brazil remains a focal point for (re)settlement and circulation within the region and an important transit point to other nations deemed more economically advantageous, including Chile, French Guiana, Ecuador, Colombia, Argentina and Mexico. As of 2020, the Haitian population living in Brazil was estimated to be around 143,000.[22] Following a significant recent political change in Brazil, there are new efforts to secure rights and access to justice for Haitian migrants and to maximize on the development potential that Haitian migration brings.[23]

Endnotes

1. Bonayi and Soumahoro 2023.
2. Africa Center for Strategic Studies 2023; Setrana and Yaro 2023.
3. Bonayi and Soumahoro 2023.
4. OECD 2017.
5. Africa Center for Strategic Studies 2023.
6. Feyissa et al. 2023.
7. Feyissa 2022.
8. Estifanos and Freeman 2022.
9. Netshikulwe et al. 2022.
10. Teye et al. 2023.
11. Teye et al. 2022.
12. Teye et al. 2022.
13. ILO 2021.
14. ILO 2021.
15. ILO 2021.
16. PositiveNegatives and MIDEQ 2022; Wahab and Hamidi 2022.
17. Ghimire et al. 2022.
18. Crawley et al. 2023.
19. Ajarmeh et al. 2023.
20. OECD and INURED 2017.
21. Marcelin and Cela 2023.
22. Crawley 2023.
23. Crawley 2023; Marcelin and Cela 2023; Martins de Araújo et al. 2023; Melino and Desrosiers 2023; PositiveNegatives and MIDEQ 2023.

Key messages

1 **Structural inequalities shape migration patterns and processes, as well as the potential for South-South migration to contribute to development and delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals.** These inequalities are intersectional, meaning that systems of inequality based on gender, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, class and other forms of disadvantage and discrimination "intersect" to create unique dynamics and effects.

2 **The Covid-19 pandemic amplified and deepened existing inequalities, including those associated with migration.** Inequalities are also exacerbated by conflict and political instability, as well as the pressures on agricultural productivity and livelihoods as a result of climate change and natural disasters. These crises are often overlapping and interconnected.

3 **Migration can reduce intersectional inequalities** through the redistribution of resources at the household level, but it can also increase inequalities as a result of significant resource transfer to migrant households relative to non-migrant households and changing patterns of work, social organization and investment.

4 **Migration is a multidimensional process associated with the two-way transfer of knowledge, skills, language, culture, food, spirituality and other less tangible and understood resources and outcomes.** These neglected dimensions of migration need to be moved to the centre of our understanding of migration in the Global South.

5 **Migration should be part of a whole-of-government approach**, one which includes policies related to access to labour and financial markets, social protection, and agricultural and urban development, among others. It is important that migration is not approached as separate or distinct from broader processes of socio-economic and political development and transformation.

6 **Access to rights, justice and documentation in receiving countries is central to achieving better migration outcomes.** If governments want to harness the benefits of migration for development, then providing access to justice, and in particular documentation for migrants and their families, including children born abroad, is a key policy priority.

7 **Political, media and policy narratives are critical in shaping both the experiences of migrants and outcomes of migratory processes.** Negative migration narratives limit the development potential of South-South migration. They also undermine human potential due to the stigma, discrimination, racism and marginalizing practices with which they are associated.

8 **In migration research, flexible participatory approaches are key**, especially when working with populations and contexts rendered fragile by violence, emergencies and political instability. Migrants and migrant communities must be engaged in research processes and supported to mobilize around the findings.

9 **Migration governance at all levels needs to address inequalities and promote human rights for all**. Migrants and their families need to be part of decision-making processes that concern them and are entitled to the respect, protection and full enjoyment of their human rights, regardless of their migration status.

CHAPTER 1

Migration, Inequality and Development in the Global South

Introduction

The issue

Migration is a highly contested political issue in many countries. Dominant global and national political, policy and media narratives about migration and migrants are often negative, lacking in nuance, unevidenced and exclusive of migrant voices. They often highlight the challenges associated with migration rather than the benefits that it can potentially bring. These narratives reflect and reinforce racism, xenophobia and intersecting forms of discrimination and have harmful consequences for migrants, who may already find themselves in precarious situations.

This problem arises in part from a lack of knowledge about the distribution of costs and benefits of migration, and its complex relationships with inequality.[1] If migration is to benefit everyone, a better understanding is needed of the structural inequalities—including those related to poverty, gender and race—that drive migration and limit its potential to contribute to personal, societal and global development. Moreover, because most research focuses on migration from the Global South to the Global North, migration dynamics *between* Global South countries have been largely neglected, both at the intra and interregional levels.

This report aims to contribute innovative and interdisciplinary analysis and data to fill these knowledge gaps and to shift narratives. Based on findings from the MIDEQ project (see Introducing the work of the MIDEQ Hub, pg. vi), it addresses the neglected issue of migration and inequality to identify policy recommendations that help to distribute the benefits of migration more equally, while also seeking to avoid further burdening the most marginalized migrants, who bear the brunt of costs and risks associated with migration.

Highlighting the structural inequalities with which migration is often associated is necessary to understand contemporary patterns of international migration and their interconnected consequences at individual, household, community, national and global levels. It also helps us to build a new narrative on migration—one that focuses on migrants' rights and capabilities, utilizes interdisciplinary, intersectional and power-centred approaches, and centres human rights for all.

The scale and importance of South-South migration

Although research has focused on movements from the Global South to the Global North, South-South migration constitutes a significant and growing share of international migration.[2] From 1990, South-South migration was the largest form of international migration, only overtaken by South-North migration in 2005. Since that time, it has increased proportionately, and was once again larger than South-North migration in 2020.[3] Indeed, in some regions, almost all migration is to a neighbouring country in the Global South. The absence of documentation and formal regulation of flows means that estimations of South-South migration are probably far lower than the reality.

The number of people migrating between the countries of the Global South is also increasing in absolute terms.[4] For example, African countries hosted 24.7 million migrants in 2017, up from 19.3 million in 1990, a 28 percent increase.[5] Despite perceptions to the contrary, more than 80 percent of African migrants do not leave the continent.[6] Conditions are ripe for this to continue given current trends, including a steep rise in the number of African youth, rapid urbanization, increased women's participation in labour markets and increasing border controls in the Global North. Within the Global South, intraregional migration in Asia, especially that which relates to migration from slower- to faster-growing developing countries, is most significant. It is estimated that 87 percent of the 21 million migrants who entered Asian countries between 1990 and 2013 originated from other Asian countries.[7]

The relationships between migration, development and inequality

The scale of South-South migration raises the important question of how to maximize its contribution to development and ensure that migration reduces rather than increases inequality. There is growing interest in the extent and ways in which migration can contribute to positive development outcomes and delivery of the SDGs (see box 1.1).[8]

Nonetheless, there remains limited analysis of the relationships between South-

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Box 1.1 Migration, sustainable development and global governance[a]

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development identifies migration as a key development issue, recognizing its potential to make positive contributions as well as some of the challenges it raises (in particular regarding forced displacement and human trafficking). It includes several explicit targets on migration, for example, target 10.7 to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility and to implement planned and well-managed migration policies. Six other SDGs have targets that aim to improve migration outcomes, for example, protecting the rights of migrant workers, especially women (target 8.8), and reducing remittance transfer costs (target 10.c). The relationship between the SDGs and migration is a two-way one: migration can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, while achieving the Goals will also improve outcomes of migration. Migration as a transnational issue requires regional and global governance frameworks: international human rights and labour protection standards have been set up to protect migrants and grant them equal rights with citizens, constituting the foundation of a human rights-based approach to migration. However, implementation and ratification are lagging: instead, approaches focusing on the management of migration in line with development and security interests of sending and receiving countries are shaping migration policies to a large extent.[b] The most recent efforts to improve the situation of migrants and refugees globally followed from the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants by the UN General Assembly in September 2016. Two global compacts were adopted in 2018: the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and the Global Compact on Refugees. The GCM, the first intergovernmentally negotiated migration agreement, is a non-binding document which aims to promote international cooperation on migration, in line with SDG 10.7. Every four years, starting in 2022, the International Migration Review Forum will be the platform to share progress on the implementation of the compact, with preceding regional processes feeding into it.

[a] UNRISD 2022; [b] Hujo 2019.

South migration and inequality. While migration and inequality have been studied extensively as separate theoretical and conceptual domains, few have theorized the direct links between them.[9] Moreover, where inequality is considered, there is a tendency to focus on income inequalities to the exclusion of all others.[10] Indeed, the majority of studies on inequality are based on analysis at the individual level, often focusing on remittances and generally using income as the measurement parameter. There is a neglect of broader structural inequalities that limit possibilities and opportunities and place some population groups in precarious conditions while allowing others to maintain privileges that provide greater access to social, financial and administrative services and, therefore, greater social and geographical mobility.

As noted by Black et al. (2006), international migration is a powerful symbol of global inequality, whether in terms of wages, labour-market opportunities or lifestyles. And the potential for migration to reduce inequality and contribute to development is neither straightforward nor inevitable. Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, not everyone has access to the benefits of migration. The ability to migrate, and the conditions under which migration takes place, often reflect and reinforce existing spatial, structural and social inequalities, including those related to gender, nationality, race, ethnicity, age and income. As many of the chapters in this report show, inequalities are often intersectional, leading to entrenched forms of discrimination and disadvantage. These inequalities determine who is and is not able to migrate and under what conditions, as well as where people move to and the rights and the resources that they are able to access. And they mean that migration can both increase and reduce inequality. For example, income inequalities in countries of origin can be expected to increase with international migration, particularly for

the most marginalized groups in society, for example, women. This is because the poorest of the poor seldom have the means to migrate.[11] At the same time, research has found that remittances lower inequality, and that they become more pro-poor over time as migration opportunities become more widespread.[12]

Secondly, increased barriers to migration, irregular and precarious migration, poor labour conditions, and a lack of rights for migrants and their families, all of which are interlinked, can reinforce inequalities or create new ones. In other words, vulnerability and violence is not inherent to migration but is also created (or allowed) by states, for example, by refusing or failing to provide access to legal status and documentation, by failing to provide access to safe and legal migration routes, or by choosing not to effectively regulate employers and businesses who exploit migrant workers. Disjointed and top-down policy and legal frameworks can also serve to dehumanize migrants by focusing on economic outcomes to the neglect of human experiences and well-being.

Thirdly, the countries of the Global South are locked into unequal relations with the Global North because of colonialism and their incorporation into systems of asymmetric power relations in global governance and global markets, the latter characterized by unequal exchange.[13] The "advanced economies" of the Global North rely on a large net appropriation of resources and labour from the Global South, extracted through induced price differentials in international trade. Recent research by Hickel et al. (2023) reveals that, when measured in Northern prices, the drain amounted to USD 10.8 trillion in 2015, and USD 242 trillion over the period from 1990 to 2015, a significant windfall for the North, equivalent to a quarter of Northern GDP and similar to the windfall that was derived from colonial forms of appropriation. Unequal exchange is a major driver of underdevelopment and

Box 1.2 MIDEQ Methodological Approach

Migration research is heavily skewed towards the Global North, where existing research is largely designed and led. Governments and international organizations also increasingly fund work by researchers in the Global North to inform global policy development. By contrast, MIDEQ mobilizes resources for partners in the Global South to define their own research questions and generate their own knowledge—producing robust, comparative, widely accessible evidence on South-South migration, inequality and development, and engaging national and regional partners on key policy issues. MIDEQ's research and the findings presented in this report draw on a range of qualitative, quantitative and visual data methods, including:

- A synthesis and comparative analysis of existing data and literature relating to migration, multidimensional inequalities and development indicators within and across the corridors and in relation to the Hub's cross-cutting themes;
- Semi-structured interviews, conversations, ethnographic tracing, surveys and social network analysis undertaken with around migrants, migration intermediaries and stakeholders including international organizations, NGOs, community organizations, lawyers, activists and policy makers;
- Visual/creative forms of knowledge production (music, theatre, poetry, dance, animation) within the 12 countries and across the corridors; and
- Survey data gathered from migrant household heads and migrants in countries of origin and destination.

The **MIDEQ survey data** presented in this report is based on descriptive, exploratory analysis. Data from Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire and Brazil have been weighted. In origin countries (Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire), respondents were household heads; in destination countries (Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Brazil), they were individual migrants. As respondents were selected based on their connections to the linked country in the migration corridor, findings should not be considered representative of all migrants.

global inequality, which limits the potential contribution of migration to development.

The depth and extent of the inequalities facing migrants globally was revealed by the Covid-19 pandemic.[14] Covid-19 was not the "great equalizer" some claimed, but rather served as an amplifier of existing inequalities, including those associated with migration.[15] The pandemic severely disrupted access to the opportunities associated with migration, undermining the potential developmental benefits and creating new challenges for policy. MIDEQ survey data show, for example, that remittances declined drastically: while before the Covid-19 pandemic, 77 percent of households in Haiti with migrants living in Brazil were receiving between USD 50-300 per month, they were no longer receiving remittances or receiving less as a result of the pandemic, while in Burkina Faso remittances from Côte d'Ivoire were negatively impacted by the pandemic for 65 percent of households (see box 1.2).

Looking ahead

Migration is not only a cross-cutting issue in the SDGs but is also a global trend and a historical feature of human behaviour that has become closely connected with inequality and multiple crises. It goes beyond economic processes and involves knowledge, skills, language, culture, food, spirituality and other less tangible and understood resources and outcomes. It is part of broader processes of socio-economic and political development and transformation. Key challenges to address include how to integrate migrants into national social contracts by granting them access to decent work, services and participation; how to shift global, regional and national migration governance toward a human rights-based approach; and how to change negative migration narratives. This report provides a snapshot of the rich analysis and data produced by MIDEQ researchers across the world, opening new perspectives and methodologies, highlighting aspects of migration processes that have been neglected or remained invisible, and formulating policy recommendations that have the potential to lead to better social and economic outcomes for migrants, their families and communities, and the countries that benefit from their work and resources.

Endnotes

1   Crawley and Teye 2023; Casentini et al. 2023.
2   Hujo and Piper 2010; Campillo-Carrete 2013; Melde et al. 2014; Gagnon 2018; UN DESA 2020; Leal and Harder 2021.
3   Schewel and Debray 2023.
4   Nawyn 2016.
5   Gagnon 2018.
6   IOM 2020.
7   Adil Khan and Hossain 2017.
8   Ratha et al. 2013; Hujo forthcoming.
9   Bastia 2013; Muyonga et al. 2020.
10   Palmary 2020.
11   McKenzie 2017.
12   Kóczán and Loyola 2018.
13   Emmanuel 1972.
14   PositiveNegatives and MIDEQ 2022.
15   Crawley 2020; Wahab 2021: Positive-Negatives and MIDEQ 2022; UNRISD 2022.

CHAPTER 2

An Intersectional Perspective on Migration and Gendered Inequalities

Introduction

The links between gender and migration are well understood, with extensive research since the 1980s on the highly gendered nature of migration drivers, dynamics and impacts associated with processes of societal transformation.[1] The role of gender norms in shaping migratory decisions on who stays, who moves and how resources are allocated is also increasingly well researched.[2] However, far less attention has been paid to intersectional approaches and the comparative dynamics of gendered processes and outcomes in the context of South-South migration.

MIDEQ challenges this research and policy bias toward destination countries in the Global North by examining countries of origin and destination within the Global South and the gendered transnational social fields that span them. This includes the gendered social, business and political networks within which South-South migrants are embedded. Moving beyond a focus on domestic work and care work, which characterizes the majority of research on gender and migration, MIDEQ's research also explores overlooked sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture and mining in which there are highly gendered patterns of migrant employment. Finally, we have analysed gaps and opportunities within the policy and legal frameworks that underpin the global governance of gendered migration in the Global South.

Research questions

- How do gender relations influence migration flows at different levels of analysis?

- What are the consequences of migration for gender inequalities at origin and in destination countries?

- How does the function of social networks, and access to these networks, differ between men and women?

Our approach

MIDEQ's work on gender and migration focuses on intersectional inequalities. Intersectionality highlights the way that race, gender and other socially constructed characteristics such as age, class and sexuality interact with each other to produce specific forms of oppression and discrimination. Drawing on the pioneering work of Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) and others in exploring the double discrimination experienced by Black women in the United States, as well as longer histories of intersectional thinking within feminist movements in the Global South,[3] intersectional approaches are increasingly common in migration research,[4] although their uptake in the literature on South-South migration is patchy.[5] MIDEQ's research shows how migrants' experiences are shaped by specific racialized and gendered inequalities and that these take distinctive forms in and across different regions of the Global South.

Findings

Intersectional inequalities shape migration experiences in Brazil and Malaysia

Haitian migrants moving to Brazil and other destinations in Latin America face greater hostility and xenophobia than other migrant populations because of linguistic and cultural differences, but also racial hierarchies associated with slave plantation societies in the Americas.[6] As a result, despite MIDEQ's data showing that Haitian migrants have relatively high educational attainment, this does not lead to skilled employment outcomes in Brazil.[7] Further, Haitian women tend to rely on male counterparts to plan and facilitate their journeys: according to MIDEQ survey data, more than half of Haitian women migrants in Brazil said that they had migrated because of family/friends or for marriage. Meanwhile, women who choose to migrate autonomously are

often viewed with disdain and suspicion. There are indeed significant differences in attitudes toward the migration of men and women in the Haiti-Brazil corridor revealed by the survey data. In Haiti, nearly three quarters (71 percent) think that it is good that men migrate to Brazil compared to half (50 percent) who think it is good that women migrate. Just 4 percent of respondents said it is bad for men to migrate compared to 13 percent for women (see box 1.2).

Nepali women who choose to migrate face similar challenges as a result of social norms that stigmatize women migrants and paternalistic legal restrictions the government has placed on women's international mobility.[8] These perceptions persist when women return to Nepal, where they face social stigma and perceptions of "impurity" that may undermine relationships and reintegration into communities (although these attitudes vary substantially between different ethnic groups). Nonetheless, migrant women who took part in the research often reflected positively on how they were also subverting stereotypes about women through taking on a traditionally "male" breadwinning role.

Mixed migration outcomes for women: Empowerment, vulnerability and double burdens

Outcomes for female and male migrants across the MIDEQ country corridors were often mixed, with migration contributing to the empowerment of individuals—particularly compared to those who do not migrate—but also creating new challenges and exacerbating existing gendered vulnerabilities. Across most MIDEQ country corridors, women are a small minority of migrants and in many cases migrant men—often from the same communities—and male family members at origin are able to exert greater social control throughout these women's migration journeys.

Figure 2.1 Reasons why Nepali migrant workers choose to work in Malaysia

SET UP A SMALL GROCERY STORE/ RESTAURANT

PURCHASE LAND

PROVIDE BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR CHILDREN AND WIVES

BUILD A HOUSE

ACCUMULATE SAVINGS

ESCAPE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

PROVIDE THEIR CHILDREN WITH A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE WITH THE HOPES THAT THEY WILL BECOME PROFESSIONALS

WIDOWED/ DIVORCED/ SEPARATED/ FIRST DAUGHTER

Common motivations for male Nepali migrant workers

Common motivations for female Nepali migrant workers

Credit: Adapted from Sarah Ahmad, Floatingdesigner.com

This limits the extent to which migration is genuinely "empowering" for migrant women. And it is only exacerbated by, for example, the temporary labour migration regimes in countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) regional block, like Malaysia, which dictate that all migrants must return to their countries of origin sooner or later.[9] Such policies shape the motivations for migration, which are themselves gendered (see figure 2.1), and limit the range of possibilities for migrant women and men when making choices about their social and economic futures. Similarly, in the Brazilian context, government labour market data highlights the disparate outcomes for Haitian women, who record higher levels of unemployment and lower pay than their male counterparts,[10] illustrating the gender-based path dependency that begins in Haiti and persists in the host country.[11]

These ambivalent and highly gendered outcomes also characterize the experiences of the families of migrants who stay back in countries of origin. For example, in China, the wives of Chinese migrants working in mining in Ghana benefit economically from the income sent home by their husbands and are empowered to make decisions about the spending of remittances within the household. However, women also expressed concern over the double burden they experience in taking care of their families, including caring for children, while also having to carry out traditionally "male" responsibilities in the absence of their husbands.

Gendered social networks shape migration opportunities and outcomes

Social networks are crucial for migration decision making and outcomes, but the types of networks migrants have access to differ between men and women (see chapter 4). Chinese miners in Ghana are mostly from particular regions and towns in China. Underpinning their migration journeys are established social networks that determine the choice of destination and structure the opportunities and outcomes they experience. These networks are themselves highly gendered.

In Ghana, a growing number of Chinese migrants are in romantic relationships with Ghanaian nationals. These relationships play an important role in helping migrants navigate administrative and bureaucratic obstacles to their business activities.[12] These relationships are more common among Chinese men than women, but in both cases involve disparities in age, income and education status between the Chinese and Ghanaian partners. For their part, the Ghanaian wives and husbands often spoke positively about these relationships, but also expressed concerns regarding the acceptability of these relationships to their own families and to the families of their partners in China.

Nepali women heading to Malaysia had more limited migration networks than their male counterparts and thus more restricted information about the opportunities and obstacles they were likely to face. Once in the country, it also makes it more challenging for them to change employers because this generally requires the assistance of networks of friends and family in Malaysia.

Extending a gendered analysis to "non-traditional" employment sectors

Non-traditional employment sectors are often missed in studies that focus on gender—or specifically on migrant women—which tend to concentrate on care and domestic work. In Malaysia, 95 percent of female migrants work within factories. Existing research in the Global South on these sectors has focused primarily on internal migrants, for example, those working in the garment industry, while studies of women who migrate internationally, particularly in Asia, have focused on domestic work.[13] MIDEQ's findings from the Nepal-Malaysia corridor suggest that international migrants face particular gendered vulnerabilities when working in industrial jobs. Female migrants are at greater risk of unfair wage deductions and most reside in dormitory accommodation outside of Kuala Lumpur, limiting their ability to move freely and to engage in social or communal activities outside of work. While male Nepalis are more often employed in the service sector or as security guards, those working in factories often handle raw materials rather than end products, exposing them to particularly harsh working conditions.

In Ghana, Chinese women are involved in businesses such as wholesale or retail trade and accommodation and food services. However, a minority are also engaged in mining activities and not only in the low-status roles traditionally occupied by women—such as panning, transporting ore and washing—but also in leadership roles. Similarly, some Ghanaian wives of Chinese migrants have mobilized their networks and utilized their husband's higher incomes to legally acquire mining concessions.[14] While some women have privileged positions in the mining sector, many more male and female Ghanaian workers continue to suffer from poor pay and hazardous working conditions in the sector. In seeking to address these issues, gender responsive policies should better reflect these complex gendered dynamics of both privilege and disadvantage or vulnerability.

While many Haitian female migrants in Brazil have been relegated to domestic

work due to socio-racial hierarchies, some resist by engaging in small business and petty commerce consistent with women's economic practices in Haiti.[15] Indeed, domestic and care work does not predominate across the three main corridors where MIDEQ has focused on gender inequalities (Haiti-Brazil, Ghana-China, Nepal-Malaysia). While female migrants may be in a minority within these migration flows, it highlights a challenge for migration policy and governance focused on the Global South to adequately account for the complexities of gendered migration flows, including where women represent a small but nonetheless significant and, in some cases, growing minority of migrants.[16]

Gender and global migration governance

Currently, global policy lags behind the reality of sectoral diversity that characterizes some female migration flows in the Global South. The most substantive global frameworks focus on domestic workers, through the Domestic Workers Convention (2011) of the International Labour Organization (ILO), and, to a certain extent, gendered experiences of health professionals and care workers through the Code of Conduct on Ethical Recruitment of the World Health Organization (WHO). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the GCM contain important aspirations to advance "gender-responsive approaches" to migration governance throughout the Global North and South. However, in practice, there is substantial variation in how these aspirations have been embedded in regional and national policies across Latin America, Africa and Asia.[17]

The ASEAN bloc has a relatively developed landscape of policies and programmes on gender and migration, in part because of the role played by civil society, trade unions and actors such as the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

(UNESCAP). However, national policies and bilateral agreements often remain gender blind or even gender-restrictive in practice. For example, the bilateral agreement between Nepal and Malaysia does nothing to safeguard the rights of migrant women. In combination with Nepal's restrictive policies on migration for domestic work, this places female migrants in a highly vulnerable situation, often compelling women to reach destination countries through informal channels via countries like India and Myanmar. Further, as is also the case with Africa, policies in Asia concerning inter-continental flows are primarily focused on Arab states and often fail to address gender directly, reflecting wider discriminatory gender norms within Gulf countries. In contrast, in Latin America, the policy agenda is primarily centred around intra-continental flows, which have increased considerably over the last two decades as a result of large-scale displacement (notably following the 2010 Haitian earthquake and the 6.4 million Venezuelan migrants displaced within the region), with a greater, albeit patchy, focus on rights-based agendas and sub-regional free movement agreements.[18]

Returnee women discussing migration experiences.

Photo: NISER.

Recommendations

Overarching

- Combine top-down action driven by global agendas such as the GCM, alongside bottom-up action from feminist movements, migrant rights organizations and trade unions to improve migration outcomes for all in a South-South context.

- Conduct gendered analyses with an intersectional approach on existing and emerging obstacles to achieving equality and socio-economic mobility for migrant women and men in order to design better policies and legal frameworks.

- Ensure that these intersectional analyses account for privilege as well as vulnerability.

For governments

- Place greater focus on labour market and social integration for migrant women, as well as men, including support for migrant women to improve their access to information and training at origin and destination.

- Pay attention to gendered inequalities in countries of origin, including the "double burden" of care and livelihood responsibilities faced by many migrants' wives or other family members who stay back, and explore potential ways to support them.

- Reform paternalistic, gender-restrictive policies at national, bilateral or regional levels that curtail women's freedom to migrate and to make their own employment decisions.

For international organizations, civil society organisations (CSOs) and researchers

- Forge links with broader societal movements to address gender discrimination and racial bias in the workplace and society more broadly.

- Focus on ensuring that the Global Compact's "gender-responsive approach" is reflected in national, regional and interregional policies within and between Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Endnotes

1   Bastia and Haagsman 2020.
2   Mora and Piper 2021.
3   Bastia et al. 2023.
4   Bastia 2014.
5   Izaguirre and Walsham 2020.
6   Joseph and Louis 2022; INURED forthcoming; OECD and INURED 2017; INURED 2020.
7   OBMigra 2020.
8   Shivakoti et al. 2021.
9   Oberoi and Sheill 2023.
10   INURED 2020.
11   Marcelin and Cela 2023; Marcelin and Cela 2017.
12   Setrana and Awumbila forthcoming.
13   Parreñas 2021; Constable 2020.
14   Setrana 2023.
15   INURED forthcoming.
16   INURED forthcoming.
17   Walsham 2022.
18   Selee et al. 2023.

Still from the short *Unstoppable Beat.*

Photo: PositiveNegatives and MIDEQ.

CHAPTER 3

Childhood Inequalities and Migration

Introduction

Today, 50 million children are migrants, moving alone or accompanied by their parents, guardians, friends or siblings.[1] In 2019, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimated that 12 percent of the total migrant stock was composed of child migrants.[2] The number of child migrants has risen steadily since 2000, with a higher trend in low- and middle-income countries, and a global increase in children migrating unaccompanied by guardians. Estimates for the number of children who stay back when a parent or caregiver migrates, are harder to come by but is likely in the tens of millions as well.[3] There are no specific statistics on the number of children involved in South-South migration. However, given the overall increases, with the current estimates placing South-South migrants at 38 percent of the total stock of global migrants, the number of children in these movements has likely also increased.[4]

South-South migration affects these children in diverse ways.[5] Abroad, they may be able to access better opportunities but also often face increased challenges in accessing services. Stay-back children can suffer from a care deficit and psychosocial problems.[6] However, they can also benefit from migration, such as through using remittances to fund education. Through such disparate impacts, migration can produce as well as mitigate inequalities affecting children, which may leave them more or less vulnerable. Often these experiences vary depending on gender and age.

MIDEQ's research on childhood inequalities examines the range of children's experiences of migration between countries of the Global South. Our research demonstrates the need to adapt policies and programmes to different concepts of childhood, which vary across contexts, while maintaining a rights-based

Research questions

- How do inequalities develop through childhood in relation to migration?

- What are the impacts of migration (both positive and negative) on the human potential of children?

- How do children influence migration decision making and outcomes?

- What is the role of understandings of "childhood" on migration decision making, journeys and outcomes?

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approach that recognizes the need to support and protect children at every step in their journey and experience. Such an approach would allow policy makers to fully grasp and respond to children's needs in South-South migration.

Our approach

Using a rights-based, participatory approach, MIDEQ's research examines the range of children's experiences in South-South migration to gather a more holistic understanding of associated risks and benefits. Our approach to data collection and analysis was grounded in children's, young migrants', and adults' lived experiences of South-South migration, learning from their testimonies across three corridors in Africa and the Middle East. The experiences recorded in these contexts do not conform to a single conceptualization of childhood in migration, and highlight the need for adapted and context-specific interventions.

The findings are based on qualitative interviews with children, adults and caregivers linked across several MIDEQ countries, namely Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia and South Africa, Egypt and Jordan, and Nepal. MIDEQ survey data with adults responding about children in their care and those who stayed back was available only for Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire.

Findings

Rethinking "left behind" children

Research in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Nepal and Egypt challenges the idea that children who do not migrate with a parent or caregiver are "left behind." Evidence from MIDEQ finds that this term misrepresents the experiences of children and their households, as well as how they engage with migration. In response, MIDEQ has introduced the term children who stay back.[7] This reflected several key findings emerging from the research, such as:

- *Children who stay back are not passive in the migration process.* MIDEQ research found that children who stay back, particularly those who are older, express agency by influencing their parents' migration decisions, assuming parental roles in their parents' absence, and making sense of their parents' migration decision making (see box 3.1).

Box 3.1 Contesting notions of abandonment in Egypt

Faced with numerous legal obstacles, Egyptian parents who migrate to Jordan are often unable to frequently visit Egypt or pursue family reunification processes. Despite this, parental migration does not equate to child abandonment. The data show that Egyptian migrants in Jordan maintain constant communication with their family, send remittances to provide for their children who stay back, and the parents' aspirations often centre on their families.[a] Some also said that returning to their children and family is their most important future aspiration. As one father stated: "All I want is to return and settle back in Egypt surrounded by my children and to make a living."

The research documented the commitment of Egyptian migrant workers to their children who stay back, as well as the economic benefits of migration. For example, migration allows migrants to send remittances, which improves the economic situation of the household and pays for private education and medication for the children who stay back. In addition, Egyptian migrants in Jordan maintain constant communication with their children. As a result, children who stay back do not view themselves as abandoned, but rather as benefitting from migration: "I would choose for [my father] to travel in order for him to work and fulfil his dreams and see what he wants to become and get us what we want."

Despite these benefits, children who stay back are not equally able to cope with their parents' absence. Age plays a role. As one respondent explained: "Children are children. They are young and don't know what life needs or how much it costs. Like other children, [my children] want their father to be around. My kids ask [me], 'Why don't you come back?'"

[a] Ajarmeh et al. 2023.

Ethiopian children at a community centre in Gqeberha (formerly known as Port Elizabeth) in South Africa.

Photo: Heaven Crawley.

• *Parent and caregiver migrants actively pre-empt a disruption of care in their absence.* MIDEQ research in Burkina Faso documented how parents and caregivers planned and relied upon wider kin networks to facilitate a continuum of care. Further, MIDEQ research in Egypt found that migrants maintain their parental presence remotely, providing for their children from abroad through regular phone calls and via remittances.

Children are, and view themselves as being, active participants in migration

While children's ability to act is restricted according to factors such as age and gender, children often find ways, despite these restrictions, to shape their own and their households' migration experiences.

• *Children who stay back engage with the impacts of migration to varying degrees.* For example, MIDEQ research in Nepal documents how older adolescent children begin thinking they should substitute the migrant father by earning for the family.[8]

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MIDEQ researchers in Ethiopia found that children who stay back see the benefits of their parents' migration and thus later seek out migration themselves.[9]

- *Child migrants can drive change in their lives and households.* MIDEQ researchers in Burkina Faso and Ethiopia who interviewed children from 10 years and above found that child migrants express agency.[10] In Burkina Faso, older children themselves decide to migrate to Côte d'Ivoire to alleviate some of the economic pressures on the household by sending remittances. It is not uncommon for child migrants to use their own savings or a recruiter to migrate. As one facilitator stated: "It is the children who come to see me most of the time."

- *Children in South-South migration nuance Global North understandings of children.* MIDEQ research in Egypt, Nepal and South Africa documents how children willingly took on new responsibilities in their households, which at times were a source of empowerment. MIDEQ research in Burkina Faso also documents how child migrants often view themselves as resilient, even when faced with exploitation: "Even if you're mistreated…you won't be afraid to [still] work. … If you think about [the exploitation], you know it's not right. But for a better future, you work."

The MIDEQ findings demonstrate that interventions need to identify when migration can hinder the rights of children—whether child migrants or those who stay—and further support the evidence base to strengthen actors' capacity and capabilities to protect and assist them throughout their migration experience.[11]

Migration can increase childhood-related inequalities

While MIDEQ research found that children in South-South migration can shape their lives and even benefit from migration, migration can also often exacerbate childhood related inequalities. MIDEQ research has highlighted the structural inequalities and subsequent rights violations common in South-South migration.

- *Taking decisions under restrictive conditions leads children to choose between bad and worse.* MIDEQ research in Côte d'Ivoire documents how female labour migrants from Burkina Faso are at times forced to engage in sex work and short-term marriage contracts at mining sites. Such human rights violations document how children and adults in South-South migration, especially girls and women, are often faced with difficult choices. In Burkina Faso, MIDEQ research demonstrates that children seek out smugglers when migrating unaccompanied, leading to instances of trafficking and exploitation (see chapter 5).

- *Structural barriers prevent children from benefitting fully from migration.* MIDEQ researchers in South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire found child migrants face documentation challenges which exacerbate inequalities (see chapter 7).[12] In South Africa, despite children of Ethiopian parents taking on new roles and responsibilities within the household, improper documentation undermines children's potential in South African society, restricting educational, and later employment opportunities. Further, MIDEQ research in Ethiopia documents how children who stay back encounter discriminatory school environments, with such prejudice discouraging their educational aspirations and attainment.[13]

Recommendations

Overarching

- Conduct research to identify when South-South migration hinders the rights of children—whether those who migrate or those who stay back—and further support the evidence base to strengthen actors' capacity and capabilities to protect and assist them throughout their migration experience.

- Ground programmes and policy approaches to children and migration in the Global South in local realities while also meeting minimum international legal standards.

For governments

- Include children who stay back and their larger kin network in their countries of origin in national and local policies and programmes on migration.

- Facilitate transnational parenting for primary caregivers who migrate (rather than discouraging migration), such as through the proliferation of parenting apps, like those which enable parents abroad to communicate with their children's schools more easily.

- Train governments to implement child-sensitive anti-trafficking laws and policies and shift the focus away from criminalization to ensure that migrant children are treated as children first, on par with national children in the countries, with access to a continuity of care and social services.

For international organizations, CSOs and researchers

- Strengthen inter-agency coordination among international and national organizations along with civil society organizations to ensure a continuum of care and access to rights for children.

- Strengthen national and sub-national planning to include child migrants and children who stay back through better coordination mechanisms.

- Build on community dialogues to educate communities on the needs of children and reduce stigma around child migrants and children who stay back.

- Promote community participation in service mapping and child protection service provision to counter the stigma faced by children.

- Work together to strengthen assessments for more adapted child protection services delivered through networks of community-based organizations, NGOs and government actors, with regular mapping of needs and services available to child migrants and those who stay back.

Endnotes

1 UNICEF 2023.
2 IOM 2021.
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4 World Bank 2016.
5 PositiveNegatives and MIDEQ 2023a.
6 Crawley et al. 2023.
7 Crawley et al. 2023.
8 PositiveNegatives and MIDEQ 2023a.
9 Zeleke et al. 2020.
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11 Samuel Hall/Save the Children 2022.
12 Dabiré and Soumahoro n.d.
13 Nyamnjoh et al. 2023.

Photo: Ravi Sharma
(Public domain via
Unsplash).

Understanding the Subjective Factors Shaping Migration Decision Making

Research questions

- What are the subjective and intangible factors that shape migrant decision making?

- Can development and policy interventions by donors and national policy makers influence migrant decision making about moving/not moving, how to migrate and where to go?

- How do migrant journeys and experiences shape migrant decision making, including the ways in which access to rights, jobs and services, social networks and "luck" (good or bad) shape the decision to stay, move on or return?

Introduction

Migration researchers and policy makers have typically focused on the rational and tangible side of migration decision making. The tendency has been to either conceptualize migration as a rational cost/benefit calculation approach, or frame migrants as victims of socio-economic inequalities within their wider environment.[1] As a result, what we know about migration decision making is skewed in favour of tangible factors, while we know far less about the subjective and intangible determinants of migration decisions (see figure 4.1).

Although subjective factors have been side-lined, recent research has demonstrated that they do, in fact, matter throughout the migration trajectory. The difficulty is that it is often hard to disentangle these subjective factors both from each other and from tangible elements. Imagination, for instance, consists of visualizing one's future life, in a new location, but also involves financial considerations, for instance, around employment opportunities and income.

MIDEQ's research on decision making aims to better understand the factors that shape migrant decision making and, in particular, the role of subjective and less easily measured factors. This is key to more effective migration policies that positively influence migrants' decisions and lead to greater prosperity for migrants, countries of origin and countries of destination.

Our approach

As migrant decision making is not straightforward, the MIDEQ Hub's work explores the process in its messy entirety, focusing on the sociopsychological, subjective, emotional, cognitive and behavioural aspects of decision making. This underlines the people-centred approach of the Hub. Migrant decision making generally refers to whether individuals decide to stay or migrate, or migrate again if they have previously migrated and returned; the migration mode (pathways, facilitators, routes); and the factors shaping migration destination preferences.

The research explores how macro and meso environments interact with personal, subjective and intangible preferences and perceptions. For example, how do perceptions of risk, religious beliefs, ideas of masculinity, aspirations of the future, stories or rumours about migration, rites of passage, or expectations of family support influence decisions. Rather than focus on general "drivers," the research examines specific incentives that people face and their agency in making decisions.

Figure 4.1 A framework of migration decision making and its subjective and objective influences
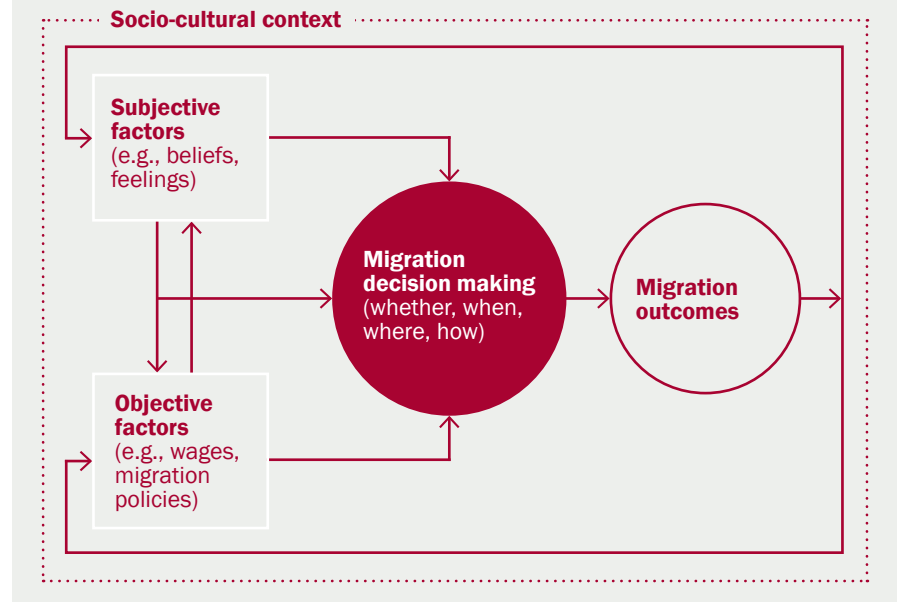
Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Based on a review of studies conducted in middle- and low-income countries, MIDEQ researchers have identified four categories of subjective factors that influence migration decision making: imagination, personality traits, emotions and feelings, and beliefs and values.[2] For instance, being more risk tolerant (personality trait), feeling jealous of others who have migrated (emotion), and strong fatalist beliefs (religion) are likely to result in stronger migration aspirations and can outweigh economic considerations.

Box 4.1 The role of spirituality in Hadiya migration to South Africa

The majority of Ethiopian migrants in South Africa originate from the Hadiya Administrative Zone in southern Ethiopia. Most are evangelical Christians and religion features prominently in various stages of their decision-making process. Key for the migration corridor's formation is a prophecy delivered by Pastor Youngren, a Canadian Pastor who came to Hosanna, Hadiya's capital, in 2001. The pastor claimed to have come with a vision of God opening a southern route for the Hadiya through which they will go and bring back prosperity to Hosanna. Although he did not specify South Africa as the destination of the "southern route," the Hadiya interpreted it as such. The prophecy was seen as God's answer to the Hadiya elders' prayers to help them overcome the social and economic deprivations they were facing at the time. This prophecy has since informed many Hadiyas' decision to migrate and was often given as a specific reason in the life stories collected for this study, indicating how belief shapes decision making. Religious people also find moral strength and perseverance in their beliefs, which makes them arguably better placed to cope with the adversity experienced during migration, especially in the context of a perilous journey from Ethiopia to South Africa that involves the crossing of borders of as many as six countries. Among prospective migrants, praying instils "confidence without caution," which simultaneously shapes aspiration and builds migratory agency. The Hadiya retrospectively view the large numbers of their community members migrating to South Africa, as well as the (mainly economic) success of Hadiya migrants despite multiple obstacles and the consequent economic transformation of Hadiya through remittances, as an indication that the prophecy has been fulfilled.

Findings

Subjective and intangible factors are important

As noted above, migration decision making is often explained in economic terms. While economic factors certainly play an important role in why people migrate, and sometimes in terms of where to, the fixation on economic factors means non-economic factors have been neglected. For example, MIDEQ's research in Ethiopia shows that spirituality has shaped the significant movement of Ethiopians from the south of the country to South Africa and is just as important a determinant as the economic drivers (see box 4.1).[3]

Perceptions of inequalities and discrimination matter

At its core, migration results from inequalities: people move because, for example, they believe they will have better economic opportunities, more freedom, safety or better access to education elsewhere. However, it is not just quantifiable inequalities—for example, the gap between the wealth of the rich and poor, wage differentials, etc.—that shape migration decision making, but also subjectively felt inequalities and discriminations. More specifically, sometimes it is the perception of inequalities, rather than objective differentials, that initiates (or prevents) migration. For instance, feelings of isolation, discrimination and stigma due to sexual orientation have contributed to the migration of LGBTQI+ Puerto Ricans.[4] Awareness of the effects of subjectively felt inequalities—like feelings of discrimination or social exclusion—is critical because it might explain unexpected migration patterns or seemingly irrational migration decisions. For instance, MIDEQ's research shows that when perceptions of discrimination are rife, return or onwards migration becomes a more valuable option, even when the economic benefits to be gained in the host country remain high (see box 4.2).[5]

Influencing migration decision making requires engaging migrants

Politicians and policy makers often hope to influence migration decision making by putting in place information campaigns, migration policies or other policies, such as creating employment opportunities in countries of origin, that aim to address the drivers of migration. The effectiveness of such policies in influencing migration decision making remains, however, contested and unclear. In Haiti, for example, two thirds of respondents (66 percent) to the MIDEQ survey said that family and friends provided the most important information that helped them migrate to Brazil. In Burkina Faso, more than half (53 percent) said that family and friends provided information that influenced the decision to migrate to Côte d'Ivoire. There were no respondents in either country who said that international organizations or government informed the decision to migrate (see box 1.2).

MIDEQ's research shows that this is partly because of an implementation gap[6] but also because of how people engage with these policies.[7] It also highlights the need to consider migrants' awareness, perceptions and reactions to such policies. A policy can fail to reach its intended outcomes as a result of miscommunication to or misinterpretation/misunderstanding by the intended beneficiary group.

MIDEQ's work in Nepal, for example, highlights how national and/or local schemes aimed at tackling the underlying drivers of migration by creating economic opportunities for potential migrants can be ineffective, and can unintendedly push individuals in the direction of re-migration (see box 4.3). When the overall business environment is not conducive, these kinds of schemes will not address the lack of livelihood opportunities, even if they are designed with the local context in mind.

Box 4.2 How racial discrimination in Brazil affects decisions about onward migration

Haitian migration to Brazil has been increasing steadily over the last 15 years. Although 90 percent of the Haitian population is of African descent, migrants who were interviewed by MIDEQ researchers in Brazil were not conscious of racism in Brazil when they made the decision to migrate to the country. On the contrary, they imagined Brazil to be an ethnically diverse country and did not anticipate that they would have any issues in this regard. The story of one respondent, Viviane, exemplifies this experience. Viviane arrived in Brazil in 2014, when she was 17 years old. She explained that she imagined Brazil to be a wonderful country where she could fulfil her plan to study medicine. Unfortunately, the reality of living in Brazil did not match her expectation, as what she earns does not allow her to complete her studies. She also experienced racism and discrimination. Describing the advantages and disadvantages of living in Brazil, Viviane said: "At the time I arrived, employment was more accessible, which is a difficult thing in Haiti. [However,] the disadvantage is prejudice." Viviane and others highlighted the everyday prejudices experienced by migrants in Brazil and the ways in which racism affects their already precarious living conditions. For instance, many of the respondents commented that fewer jobs are offered to Black migrants, and that people look at them with suspicion or make racist remarks. The prejudice and racism against Black people that Viviane encountered in Brazil drove her to imagine migrating to another country away from Brazil.

Box 4.3 The interaction between a livelihood programme and return migration decision making in Nepal

Nepal is one of the largest migrant-sending countries in the world, with over 80 percent of Nepalis working abroad residing in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and Malaysia.[a] Mr SK, interviewed by MIDEQ researchers, returned to Nepal after working in Saudi Arabia for 11 years because he was longing to be back with his family and because he had heard of a new Nepali programme that would enable him to expand the business his wife had started.

While he was away, his wife had used the savings from his remittances to start a goat farm. Mr SK's wife had told him about a government and private bank partnership programme providing loans via a small farmers' cooperative. Mr SK had felt confident that the loan, topped up with his savings, would allow his family to expand their business. His wife applied for the loan since the loans were only given to the largely female members of the cooperative. Mr SK also bought and built the necessary infrastructures to expand the goat farm. The MIDEQ team met Mr SK twice between 2021 and 2022. In the first year, he was very hopeful and energetic, while when they met him again in late 2022, he was already doubting his decision to return to Nepal. He explained that profits were low due to high risks (such as the feed for the goats not being available year-round), high input costs (such as high price of feed that had to be imported from India when it was not locally available) and low returns (for example, due to the market price of goats, high input costs and other business risks). Mr SK felt desperate not only because he had spent his youth working abroad and far from his family, but also because the expectations raised by getting access to the government scheme had not borne out, given the much more challenging context than expected.

[a] MoLESS 2022.

Woman grazing her goat while taking care of her children in Nepal.

Photo: International Food Policy Research Institute (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0).

Recommendations

Overarching
- Base policies, legal frameworks and interventions on understanding the specific migrant decision-making processes present in particular contexts, including subjective and contextual factors.

For governments
- Ensure policy coherence by engaging all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and departments and ministries across government, from local to national entities.

- Consider "migration-relevant" policies across a range of sectors and apply a "whole of government" and "whole of society" approach, as called for in the GCM.

- Anticipate that migration policies do not automatically result in desired outcomes if migrants' are not aware of them or understandings of and potential reactions to the policies are not taken into account.

- Base policies aiming to influence migration decisions on participatory research with migrants to verify assumptions of policies.

- Tailor policies to migrants' specific circumstances, aspirations and needs to make them relevant to migrant decision making.

For international organizations, CSOs and researchers
- Continue to build the evidence base on the subjective and less well-known factors underlying migration decision making and mobilize funding for this work.

- Engage migrants meaningfully in research and interventions to improve the understanding of migration decision making in specific contexts.

Endnotes

1 de Haas 2021.
2 Hagen-Zanker et al. 2023.
3 Feyissa 2022.
4 Asencio and Acosta 2009.
5 Hagen-Zanker et al. 2023.
6 Hennessey and Hagen-Zanker 2021.
7 Hagen-Zanker and Mallett 2023.

Day off for migrant domestic workers.

Photo: Rex Pe (CC BY 2.0 via Flickr).

CHAPTER 5

Migrants, Intermediaries and Inequalities in the Global South

Introduction

In migration research, insufficient attention has been paid to the involvement of intermediaries in either reducing or reinforcing socioeconomic inequalities. Intermediaries that facilitate migration range from formal recruitment and travel agencies to informal brokers, friends, family and neighbours. They are described in many different ways depending on who is speaking and the context and types of migration flows.[1] Various terms used, with both positive and negative connotations, include *dalals* (South Asia), *gatos* (Brazil), *raketè* (Haiti), *coyotes* (Mexico), *delaloch* (Eritrea), *muharrib* and *hajj* (Syria), and *dokimen* (West Africa). Consequently, it is easier to define and categorize intermediaries less by who they are than by the diverse activities they conduct to facilitate migration (see figure 5.1). Intermediary services are offered and

used over the world and are not unique to migrants in the Global South, although this is our focus in MIDEQ research.

Policy makers are increasingly interested in intermediaries because, today, most South-South migration is mediated.[2] Furthermore, some intermediaries facilitate irregular migration,[3] while others are implicated in the exploitation of migrants, including human trafficking.[4] Using the services of intermediaries implies costs for migrants and their families and can result in debt traps that drive up the overall costs of migration.[5] Intermediaries can also reinforce classed, racialized and gendered inequalities (see chapter 2).[6] Effective regulation of intermediaries can contribute to improved governance of migration, which is reflected in several objectives of the Global Compact on Migration. However, the relationship

Research questions

- Who or what mediates migration and why does this vary between different national contexts?

- How do intermediaries facilitate migration?

- How do migrants' actions, choices and decisions impact on intermediary practices?

- Which policies—and configuration of policies— impact on intermediary practices, and what is the relationship between intermediaries and the state?

- How does migration (inter)mediation impact inequalities?

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Figure 5.1 Typical activities of intermediaries

Providing advice and information		Connecting to jobs, services and housing
Transporting, guiding, driving, travel	Mediated migration	"Document dispatch" (passports, birth and education certificates, visas, work permits, settlement status)

Activities might be conducted before someone leaves home, during the journey and in migrants' new home(s)

⟶ Source: Authors' own elaboration.

of intermediaries to migration and to migrants is often poorly understood. The creative, adaptive and at times illicit aspects of their work are difficult to capture through survey instruments. Researching intermediaries requires the cultivation of deep, trusting relationships with migrants, their families and intermediaries themselves, which is commonly associated with qualitative approaches. MIDEQ research aims to unpack the complexities of intermediary roles and the relationships between intermediaries and migrant families, including to better marshal evidence to inform policy makers.

Our approach

MIDEQ research on intermediaries examines the multi-faceted relationships between migrants' engagement with intermediaries and social and economic inequalities. Our approach draws on existing research that views intermediaries as "mediators" and "brokers" of migration.[7] Our overarching aim is to explore the differences their activities make to migrants' lives and the "what," "why" and "how" of what they do. Through qualitative and quantitative data collection in the 12 MIDEQ countries, we comparatively analyse the complexity of intermediary practices, including through migrants' own perspectives. This chapter draws in particular on findings from three MIDEQ countries: Nepal, Ethiopia and Haiti.

Findings

Migrants often have close social bonds with intermediaries in their communities

In contrast to some policy narratives that depict intermediaries as primarily exploitative,[8] MIDEQ's research found that migrants often trust intermediaries who are from their own communities and social networks.[9] For example, the Hadiya of southern Ethiopia view intermediaries from their own community as "shepherds" guiding migrants on dangerous journeys into the "promised land" (South Africa). Migrants affectionately refer to them as "door openers"[10] or "Moses," a religious discourse situated within the broader spirituality that undergirds Hadiya migration to South Africa.[11] A female intermediary based in a Kenyan border town was referred to in interviews with MIDEQ researchers as the "matron of migrants," providing shelter, meals and a place of worship to those in transit.

MIDEQ research in Ethiopia, Nepal and Haiti (see box 5.1 and 5.2) found that people approached intermediaries for all sorts of everyday assistance, not only migration, including for help accessing banking services, education or to get married. The practice of engaging with intermediaries is not unusual in these contexts, which means that people intending to migrate also expect to pay an intermediary as part of their migration

project, including for advice on where to go and how to get there.

In some places, the close community ties between intermediaries and migrants last even after migrants are settled in their new homes and serve as a source of protection for migrants. For instance, MIDEQ research in Nepal shows that the local intermediaries are often migrants' and their families' first point of contact if any problems arise in the destination country. Furthermore, because of the strength of these relationships, intermediaries in Nepal shared that they felt an ongoing sense of responsibility toward their "clients."[12]

Intermediaries can help migrants overcome inequalities but some exploit migrants' vulnerabilities that result from pre-existing inequalities

MIDEQ research found that while some migrants experienced exploitation perpetrated by some intermediaries, intermediary practices can also help migrants overcome some structural inequalities. This includes inequalities relating to income, gender, race and social class.[13]

Firstly, intermediaries helped migrants in Haiti, Nepal and Ethiopia find economic opportunities abroad. Without intermediaries' assistance, many people in these countries simply could not migrate and improve their economic status. Oftentimes, migrants and intermediaries alike viewed their roles as "agents of development." For instance, in southern Ethiopia, Hadiya intermediaries are credited with economically transforming the region as those they help migrate contribute to the region's development through remittances and other forms of investment (see chapter 6).

Secondly, intermediaries helped migrants overcome bureaucratic inequalities, a form of inequality which to date is significantly under-recognized in the literature. In

Nepal and Haiti, accessing the identity documents needed to migrate regularly is a time-consuming, inefficient and uncertain process. Required documents include birth certificates, passports, and may also include certified qualifications and medical records. However, more affluent and well-connected individuals can obtain these documents through their personal networks, often without paying a fee for service. On the other hand, those who lack formal education, digital access and powerful connections need to pay intermediaries to access the same identity documents, meaning that the poorest pay more (see box 5.1).

Thirdly, MIDEQ's research also found that migrants who are least likely to be granted visas for migration through regular channels, especially those in Ethiopia and Haiti,[14] are those who are most likely to need the assistance of intermediaries. For instance, Hadiya Ethiopians who migrate overland to South Africa to escape poverty at home require the assistance of multiple intermediaries to cross as many as nine countries, many of which are dangerous. On the other hand, those who are able to easily access a visa—of those who are richer or who have powerful connections—can simply fly without paying for the assistance of intermediaries. For those who cannot access visas, intermediaries, often migrants themselves, advise on the safest routes and serve as guides, also providing lodging in transit and contacts in South Africa. However, in certain countries along the route, intermediary practices have become more exploitative in recent years. Routes are now more securitized as some transit states robustly enforce their border controls and detain migrants travelling irregularly (see box 5.2). Some intermediaries take advantage of this and profit from the increased border security and policing arrangements. Migrants tended to refer to these intermediaries as traffickers.

Box 5.2 Intermediaries in southern Ethiopia[a]

The Hadiya are a historically marginalized ethnic and religious minority located in the southern-most region of Ethiopia. In recent years, migration to South Africa for economic opportunities has gained traction and the Hadiya now constitute the majority of Ethiopian migrants there. Intermediaries are credited with transforming southern Ethiopia, as the migrants they serve contribute to the region's economic development through remittances and various forms of investment.

However, intermediary practices beyond the Ethiopian border have changed in recent times. Returned Hadiya migrants interviewed by MIDEQ researchers referred to a "deportation business" in which intermediaries (more akin to "human traffickers") negotiate the release and repatriation of migrants to Ethiopia for a fee of USD 1,500. Sometimes, interviewees alleged to MIDEQ researchers, this is in collaboration with public officials and personnel from international organizations based in those countries, although MIDEQ did not conduct research to validate this.

[a] Feyissa 2022.

Intermediary practices are often informal which sometimes makes their activities illegal

In the above examples, we have not distinguished between legal and illegal intermediary activities. This is because MIDEQ research explored migrants' own perspectives with the aim of better understanding intermediary practices. We found that migrants themselves often do not know if the intermediaries they engage with are breaching any laws or regulations. Their priority is to find an intermediary who can help them migrate, including to apply for identity documents, and they therefore approach the people and networks they feel most safe with for pursuing their objective.

However, this can be in contrast to how states view intermediaries. For instance, in Ethiopia, whereas the Hadiya people regard intermediaries who help them migrate to South Africa in positive terms, Ethiopian law defines them as "smugglers" as the migration is often irregular (Proclamation No. 1178/2020). In Haiti, the lines demarcating (in)formality and (il)legality are often blurred as intermediaries may be public employees leveraging access to state resources to offer parallel, expedited services to their clientele, as expressed in this quote of an interview with MIDEQ researchers:

> "This lady who works at Immigration in Port-au-Prince is also a raketè. She gives potential migrants documents for travel, specifically passports, in a relatively short time. The clients served by [her] team are privileged over those who go through the [regular] process."

On the other hand, in Nepal, migrants tend to view legal intermediaries as exploitative and expensive, preferring instead to approach informal (potentially illegal) local agents who they trust (see box 5.3).

MIDEQ analysis concludes that, given the complexity of intermediation, it is more appropriate to discuss a "spectrum of legality" in relation to intermediaries, the services they provide and the migration they facilitate. Examples we found in our research range, from informal intermediaries, some of whom are also employees of the state (Haiti), to those offering clandestine services for irregular migration (Ethiopia), to legal recruitment agencies who nevertheless work with informal (illegal) intermediaries (Nepal).

Box 5.3 Intermediaries in Nepal

In Nepal, local intermediaries act as a one-stop-shop, helping people who wish to migrate to prepare and collate the many documents required by Nepal's Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security to migrate through regular channels. Migration for foreign employment has become a major source of income for Nepal as migrant workers send around USD 4 billion home every year, comprising 23 percent of Nepal's GDP in 2022.[a] The state requires migrants to use licensed recruitment agencies locally known as "manpower" to find jobs in the destination country, process visas, work permits and employment contracts. However, recruitment agencies are heavily securitized and largely located in the capital city. Potential migrants face challenges, including those related to costs and access, to approach them directly. Consequently, they are dependent on local informal agents (who operate without being registered as per the law in Nepal and so are potentially "illegal") to represent their interests with agencies in the capital. Migrants use these informal agents because they view them as more approachable and trustworthy than licensed manpower agencies. Informal agents help migrants access the multiple documents required to apply for a visa and work permit, including applying for a passport, the criminal records police report, medical certificate and pre-departure training certificate, which entitle migrants to move through regular channels.

[a] Ghimire and Samuels 2019; World Bank 2023.

Recommendations

Overarching

- Promote a better understanding of the global and structural inequalities that underpin why migrants engage with intermediaries—including those associated with the ability to access visas and freedom to travel—to better surface the systemic issues generating migrant vulnerability to exploitative intermediary practices.

- Conduct and support research that draws on migrants' own perspectives about intermediary practices to develop a more nuanced understanding of the complex phenomenon of migration inter-mediation to inform policies, legal frameworks and service provision.

- Initiate or support the creation of accountability, anti-corruption and safeguarding mechanisms related to migration intermediation in order to protect migrants' human rights and access to justice.

For governments, donors and international organizations

- Invest in strengthening state capacity to improve basic identity documentation and other services to all citizens on a non-discriminatory basis.

- Establish state-sanctioned migration brokers in contexts in which they do not exist and provide periodic trainings on changing migration laws and policies.

- Where registered/licensed migration brokers exist, make sure that they are free and accessible for potential migrants across the country and regulatory frameworks are consistent with international standards and adapted to local contexts.

For private sector

- Comply with international standards and national law regarding protection of migrants, including on access to grievance mechanisms and transparency.

- Represent and safeguard the interests and well-being of migrant clients during service provision and in negotiations with governments.

- Establish codes of conduct and ethical guidelines adapted to local contexts and consistent with international standards/guidance.

- Disseminate good practices in the sector and combat exploitative and unethical behaviours.

Endnotes

[1] Jones and Sha 2021.

[2] Alpes 2017; ILO 2017; Deshingkar 2019.

[3] IOM 2016.

[4] ILO 2015.

[5] Jones et al. 2023.

[6] Jones 2021.

[7] Alpes 2017; Deshingkar 2019; Jones 2021.

[8] For example, ILO 2015 and IOM 2016.

[9] See Sha 2021 for a literature review.

[10] Adugna et al. 2019.

[11] Feyissa 2022.

[12] Kunwar 2020.

[13] Jones et al. 2023; Jones 2021.

[14] Henley and Partners 2023.

CHAPTER 6

Harnessing Money and Knowledge Flows from Migration for Development

Research analyses

- Resource flows between countries of destination and origin, including their composition, size and transmission mechanisms

- Enterprises in countries of destination and of origin with migrants and/or returnees acting as owners, managers, financiers or promoters

- The mechanisms and impact of business, professional and technical knowledge and skills flows between destination and origin countries

Introduction

Migration is associated with a range of resource flows that impact on development and equality outcomes. As migrants move from their country of origin, they take resources such as knowledge and finance with them. From the country of residence, they return other resources, including finance (remittances and diaspora investment), trade in goods and services, and knowledge (skills and business capabilities). These flows affect the economic well-being not only of the migrants and their families, but also the wider society in both origin and destination countries, including economic opportunities and income and wealth inequalities. While research and policy attention on remittances has grown

significantly, there has been insufficient focus on migrants as owners, managers and financiers of business enterprises in either origin or destination countries. There has also been limited analysis of the significance of migration-linked knowledge flows between destination and origin countries, especially when both countries are in the Global South.

MIDEQ's work on the theme of resource flows in South-South migration contexts has focused largely on financial and knowledge flows. In this chapter, we look at remittances, formal and informal, received by migrant households in Burkina Faso and Ethiopia and at Ethiopian migrant entrepreneurship in South Africa and Ethiopia.

Our approach

The MIDEQ research on resource flows is framed around two connected focuses.[1] The first is on actual flows of finance between countries of origin and destination. The second is on actors sending or receiving resources, including migrant-linked households, businesses and collective organizations, as well as public and private organizations enabling, managing or regulating these flows, such as government agencies or commercial banks. The research argues that while remittances are important, examining diaspora investment and the transfer of knowledge and skills reveals that the potential contribution of migrants and diasporas to development could be greatly enhanced.

Findings

High transfer costs reduce formal remittances

South-South migration represents at least a third of international migration. However, in 2021, only about 17 percent of total formal remittances received by Global South countries was sent from elsewhere in the Global South. Almost all Global South inflows are to middle-income countries, but of low-income countries' small share of 3.7 percent, just over half comes from other Global South countries.[2] Remittances contribute to the well-being of migrant households in countries of origin, as shown by MIDEQ research in the Burkina Faso-Côte d'Ivoire corridor[3] and in the Haiti-Brazil corridor,[4] where financial support from migrants abroad has enabled recipient households to better cope with the adverse economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In Burkina Faso, MIDEQ obtained data from La Poste Burkina, the national postal organization, which offers formal remittance transfer services such as MoneyGram or Western Union, as well as regular postal mandates.[5] Although La Poste inflows capture only a fraction of

Figure 6.1 Formal remittance inflows in Burkina Faso, January 2019 to December 2020

CFA billion

Legend:
— Africa
— United States
— Europe

Source: Authors elaboration based on data provided by LaPoste Burkina Faso.
Note: Over 2019-2020, USD 1 = CFA 580 approximately, so CFA 1.00 billion = USD 1.724 million approximately.
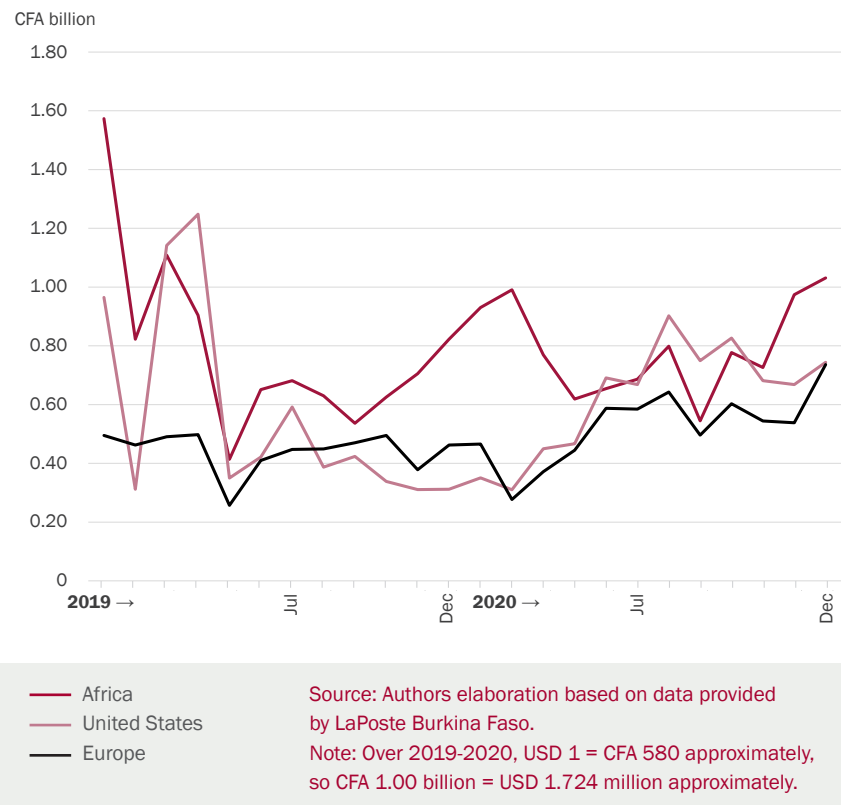
Figure 6.2 Formal remittance inflows from Burkina Faso's neighbours, January 2019 to December 2020

CFA million

Legend:
— Benin
— Côte d'Ivoire
— Mali
— Niger
— Togo

Source: Authors elaboration based on data provided by LaPoste Burkina Faso.
Note: Over 2019-2020, USD 1 = CFA 580 approximately, so CFA 1.00 billion = USD 1.724 million approximately.
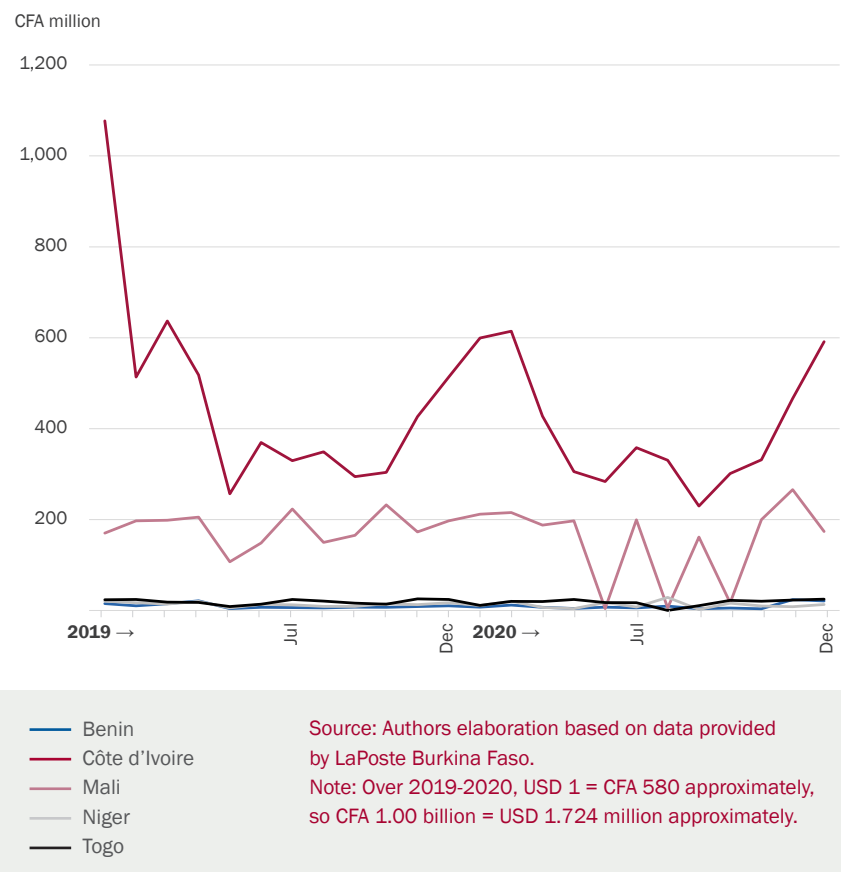
total remittances to Burkina Faso, they give some insight into the remittance patterns in a Global South country.

As shown in Figure 6.1, remittances to Burkina Faso from other African countries often exceeded that from countries of the Global North. In 2020, remittances from Africa accounted for 39.3 percent of the total, while those from Europe accounted for 25.1 percent (France: 13.4 percent; Italy: 7.0 percent) and from the United States 29.7 percent.

As Figure 6.2 shows, most of the remittances came from neighbouring West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) countries. Côte d'Ivoire provided 23.2 percent of total remittances to Burkina Faso and has most Burkinabè migrants, totalling 61 percent.[6]

Remitters across the world, particularly in the Global South, use informal channels like hawala which are not captured by official monetary statistics. One reason is the high cost of formal transfers between Global South countries, reaching up to 22.4 percent in the case of transfers from Angola to Namibia.[7] SDG target 10.c—reduce remittance transaction costs to below 3 percent by 2030—has made some difference, lowering costs in some corridors, for example Ghana to Nigeria,[8] but more needs to be done.

Cross-border money transfers by mobile phone operators like M-Pesa in East Africa, and Orange and Moov in West Africa, have much lower transfer costs. In Kenya, mobile remittances averaged 1.93 percent between 2010 and 2014, compared with 19 percent for bank transfers.[9] Mobile money remittances are secure and rapid, but remain a small share of formal remittance sending channels, less than 3 percent of all global remittances and less than 1 percent in sub-Saharan Africa.[10]

Informal remittances are linked to irregular migrant status at destination and restrictive policies at home

Migrant remitters also use informal channels because they lack access to the formal financial system, as shown in another MIDEQ corridor, Ethiopia-South Africa. The Ethiopian government estimates that over three million Ethiopians reside abroad. Their remittances are crucial for Ethiopia's development, accounting for 7.4 percent of GDP, and providing more foreign currency than exports.[11] In 2021/2022, Ethiopia received USD 4.2 billion in remittances, one of the top three recipient countries in sub-Saharan Africa.[12]

Formal remittances to Ethiopia are well below potential, as informal channels are very common, totalling around 78 percent of total remittances from the Gulf region and South Africa.[13] Ethiopian migrants in South Africa, most of them from the Hadiya Zone (province) in Southern Ethiopia, use the *hawala* system based on trust between remittance senders, receivers and intermediaries.[14] Estimates for informal remittances are always uncertain but annual inflows to Hadiya are considerable: a close observer interviewed by MIDEQ researchers estimated that ETB 320 million (nearly USD 6 million) was received by a single hawala agent—or "hawalander"—in Hosanna, Hadiya's largest town, in three months during 2020. There are at least 15 hawalanders in Hosanna alone.

Ethiopian migrants in South Africa use informal channels because their immigration status remains "irregular." Without a South African national identity document, they cannot open ordinary deposit accounts at South African banks. Even those with a South African national identity document fear engaging with South African financial institutions. This adds to migrants' precarity and insecurity, reflecting South Africa's growing

xenophobic sentiment[15] and rampant crime. Ethiopian migrants store their cash at home or in their shops, making them vulnerable to robbery. Migrants in South Africa and returnees have pleaded with the Ethiopian government to open a branch of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia in South Africa, notwithstanding Ethiopia's closed-door policy for foreign investment by its banks.

Ethiopia's tightly controlled official foreign exchange market means that the parallel informal currency market offers a higher exchange rate, in 2023 nearly 100 percent (before fees). Structural problems in Ethiopia's economy mean an acute foreign currency shortage. Many importers use the parallel market to source foreign exchange, raising the parallel rate.

The hawala system is a moral economy resting on reputational risk and social accountability. But it is fragile: traders may default on payments, they may go bankrupt, and may be raided by police or government officials, with confiscated money often pocketed rather than going to public coffers.

MIDEQ's research suggests that the Ethiopian government is ambivalent about hawala. On one hand, the economy obtains foreign currency from informal remittances, without which Ethiopia's import sector might collapse. On the other hand, the government wants remittance senders to use formal channels so the forex is accessible. Despite this, hawala will remain the main Ethiopia-South Africa channel while Ethiopia's foreign exchange rate gap persists and while migrants' official status in South Africa remains precarious. A bilateral labour agreement between Ethiopia and South Africa would help regularize migration, while financial sector liberalization in Ethiopia would allow cross-border bank investment and redirect remittances to formal channels.

Knowledge flows linked to migrant entrepreneurship provide opportunities and could benefit from a more stable environment

MIDEQ research has also examined knowledge flows linked to migrant entrepreneurship. Notwithstanding their precarious existence, many Ethiopian migrants in South Africa have achieved significant wealth, as shown by the substantial inflow of remittances to Hadiya. MIDEQ researchers in South Africa and Ethiopia have interviewed over 75 migrants and returnees. Most arrived as young men with, at best, some high school education and no prior business training or experience. Almost all have spent much of their time in South Africa as retail entrepreneurs, selling groceries and household items to poor and working class South Africans in cities and small towns. Many started as peddlers taking goods door-to-door, often as employees of other Ethiopians of longer standing as migrants. Those who are successful move to run small general stores of their own or as employees of other migrants, and the few who succeed in this second stage go on to own several stores employing larger numbers of people from Ethiopia or other migrant communities like Malawi or Zimbabwe.

Entry into the retail goods market has been a common immigrant route over many decades, in South Africa (where other migrants communities such as Somalians have followed the same path), in other parts of Africa, and in Global North countries like the United States and Canada. Compared with other economic sectors, entering retail has important advantages for immigrants: both capital and knowledge required for entry is relatively low. The country-of-origin community provides a ready-made network for new arrivals to access relevant knowledge and financial flows, playing an essential supportive role by providing employment, loans and, crucially, business market information relating to purchase

and resale of products. Language is a lower barrier in retail, and like most immigrants everywhere, Ethiopians in South Africa are willing to work very hard and forgo personal comforts.

As noted above, the lack of physical security (due to xenophobia and criminality), and of legal status and bank accounts, faced by Ethiopian migrants in South Africa are major problems. But they nonetheless compare the relative lack of rules and bureaucracy in South Africa favourably with the business environment in Ethiopia. For example, recovery from a business disaster such as robbery or bankruptcy is easier in South Africa as there are more opportunities. What matters for success in South Africa is one's ideas, not one's capital, as one migrant interviewed in South Africa suggested. For a returnee interviewed in Hosanna, "there is discrimination and violence in South Africa but still you can succeed and improve your condition of life. We go there empty handed and come back not only with money but also with the knowledge and skills. Above all, we feel now good about ourselves."[16]

Recommendations

Overarching

- Provide an enabling environment of security and equal opportunity in host countries to harness money and knowledge flows for development and migrant well-being. This includes addressing racism, xenophobia and violent crime affecting migrants in local communities, as well as ensuring that migrants can access the formal financial system.

For governments

- Address the legal status of immigrants in destination countries and provide them with necessary documentation for accessing financial and public services.

- Encourage domestic banks and other service providers in destination countries to support migrant customers, including through appropriate regulation.

- Support diaspora communities by establishing bilateral labour agreements in migration corridors.

- Consider liberalizing banking and investment regulations in countries of origin to allow more diaspora investment by migrants.

For private sector

- Examine the cost and risk systems in financial institutions to improve both access and fees for migrants' and returnees' remittances and diaspora investments.

For governments and private sector

- Expand the ability of mobile phone operators to play a greater role in transferring remittances cross-border and to induce more migrants to use the system by addressing regulatory barriers.

For researchers

- Produce more data and analysis of resource flows and their impact on inequality, development and migrant opportunities in countries of origin and destination.

Endnotes

1 For more on these flows and on migrant trade, see Asiedu et al. 2023.
2 Ratha et al. 2022.
3 Tapsoba 2021.
4 Cela et al. 2022.
5 BCEAO 2013.
6 CNR 2022.
7 World Bank 2019
8 World Bank n.d.
9 Muguna 2018.
10 GSMA cited in Gelb forthcoming.
11 New Business Ethiopia 2022.
12 World Bank/KNOMAD n.d.
13 Isaacs 2017.
14 Buencamino and Gorbunov 2002.
15 The Economist 2022.
16 Feyissa 2022:9.

Nepali migrant in Malaysia works during a public holiday.

Photo: Sidney Chan.

CHAPTER 7

Ensuring Access to Justice for Migrants in the Global South

Introduction

Access to justice (A2J) globally is highly unequal, with reports estimating that over two-thirds of the world's population, an estimated 5.1 billion people, lack meaningful access to justice.[1] This problem, dubbed the "global justice gap", does not affect everyone equally.[2] MIDEQ's A2J research has shown that migrants are much more likely to be in conditions of extreme injustice and to be formally or practically excluded from the protections that the law provides. Most notably, migrants are often excluded or fearful of addressing injustices through state-led justice or administrative pathways which dominate current A2J initiatives and policy responses. This situation flows from a variety of factors, including: a lack of legal identity and documentation; discriminatory legislation; informal working arrangements; a lack of institutional support; and temporary or limited time spent in a particular place. Language issues and a lack of access to information means that migrants may not be aware of their rights, even where they exist.

MIDEQ's research and impact initiatives on A2J aim to better understand both the availability of, and access to, rights for migrants, situating these opportunities within broader political and policy approaches to migration and citizenship. Conceptually, we explore how A2J has been defined, both in general terms and specifically in relation to the circumstances of international migrants. Our research in the Global South shows that the predominant understanding of A2J often fails to reflect the justice needs of many migrant communities. Based on evidence of migrants' lived experiences, we propose a rethinking of access to justice in ways that could shrink the justice gap for those that may lack meaningful A2J, including migrants.

Research questions

- How does the concept of access to justice, predominantly understood, reflect migrants' justice-seeking experiences?

- What formal and informal mechanisms exist for migrants to access justice/rights in MIDEQ countries? Are migrants able to access these mechanisms in practice? How effective are they?

- In what ways do these mechanisms reflect broader political and policy approaches to rights for citizens/non-citizens and national/regional migration narratives?

- What role is or could be played by governments, non-governmental and civil society organizations in ensuring migrants' access to justice? How can international organizations best support this work?

Our approach

Working within a human rights and social justice framework, MIDEQ's work explores the ways in which A2J can reduce migration-related inequalities. Our approach, findings and impact interventions on A2J are based largely on interview data from various MIDEQ countries, including Brazil, South Africa and Nepal, and a comprehensive literature review. Our discussion paper on rethinking A2J for migrants in the Global South uses migrants' experiences of injustices (in countries of origin, transit and destination) as a starting point.[3] It highlights three key shortcomings of the concept of A2J as predominantly understood and applied in research, policies and interventions aimed at improving A2J for migrants in the Global South.

(i) The top-down predominant understanding of A2J is shaped mainly by Western or Eurocentric views and concepts. In this sense, A2J is commonly associated with legal and judicial processes and outcomes.[4] However, for many communities in the Global South, including most migrants, notably those with irregular status or a lack of documentation, such processes are neither easily accessible nor available.[5]

(ii) Most research and policy interventions focus on the formal and procedural aspects of access to justice, ignoring other avenues of justice used by those excluded from formal justice mechanisms, for example, community-based support or customary justice systems.

(iii) Focusing only on procedural issues can serve to depoliticize A2J by detracting from more substantive aspects of justice, and intersectional inequalities associated with race, gender, nationality, and social and economic status, as revealed in MIDEQ research in various countries.[6]

Findings

Lack of safe and legal pathways

Research along the Haiti-Brazil[7] and Ethiopia-South Africa[8] corridors found that many migrants in the Global South are compelled to migrate through unsafe and irregular pathways, which further exposes them to human rights violations and exploitation (see chapter 5). Migrants opt for this route due to varying factors, including administrative and bureaucratic impediments, lack of reliable information and a lack of safe and legal pathways to seek work or protection.

Access to information

The lack of reliable information or access thereto is common within migration contexts, however there is a specific lack of information on A2J for those who experience injustices and rights violations across countries of origin, transit and destination. Challenges in accessing information about rights exist for migrants, members of their families that stay back and equally disadvantaged citizens in communities where migrants live.

Access to documentation

The incapacity of state institutions to issue or renew the necessary permits and identity documents to migrants puts them at risk of deportation and/or detention and excludes them from accessing basic public services and rights. It also puts them at risk of additional human rights violations. This lack of documentation is particularly acute for children born in countries of destination: it deprives them of basic rights and services and heightens their risk of statelessness. MIDEQ has identified potential solutions to address the issues facing Ethiopian migrant communities in South Africa using a new approach called justice chain analysis (see box 7.1). These include:

• Removing barriers to children's birth registration;

• Allowing children to make an application for asylum in their own right;

- Ensuring that immigration laws and regulations align with international human rights standards and commitments with regard to children; and
- Supporting community mobilization and legal empowerment initiatives to ensure that migrants are aware of their rights and are able to access them.

Exclusion of migrants from social services

Migrants working in the informal sector or as casual workers are often excluded from social services. This can be because the relevant law does not extend to migrants working in the informal economy such as in South Africa, or because employers exploit a legal loophole by employing migrant workers on a casual basis, as is the case in Brazil. Exclusion of migrants from social services undermines access to basic rights, such as social security, health and education.

Exploitation and wage theft

Many migrant workers experience exploitation and wage theft from employers in destination countries, including throughout the Global South. In most cases, multiple systemic barriers make it difficult for workers to avoid or leave exploitative situations or to seek redress through administrative or judicial

Mural at the Scalabrini Centre which works with refugees and asylum seekers in Cape Town.

Photo: Heaven Crawley.

procedures when they occur. While most MIDEQ survey respondents in some form of employment in Ghana and Brazil reported being paid the amount agreed, this was not the case in Côte d'Ivoire where 13 percent of male migrants and 29 percent of female migrants reported being paid less than agreed. Despite this, 94 percent of these men and 91 percent of women have never sought legal advice or support or tried to complain about their work or pay. The main reason given by women for not complaining was not wanting to lose their job, followed by not knowing where to go. Among men this was the third most important reason (after no need/no problems to complain about, followed by didn't know where to go).

Box 7.1 Pathways to justice for undocumented Ethiopian children in South Africa[a]

Drawing on the findings of MIDEQ research in South Africa, the project has piloted a new approach called justice chain analysis. The approach allows for a more holistic understanding of justice problems, their nature and the context-specific strategies that might be able to address them. MIDEQ's research in South Africa found that the A2J challenges faced by migrants were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to the closure of the Home Affairs offices and the transfer of permit issuance online. With very little knowledge of computer and English language challenges, few migrants were able to renew or apply for permits, which meant that they became irregular and undocumented. Children born in South Africa to parents with refugee status face additional documentation issues: all they have as proof of their birth is a document issued by the hospital or an informal birth certificate issued by Home Affairs, which is not recognized by schools, creating difficulties in securing access to education, even though this is available under South African law. The pilot also identified a risk of these children becoming stateless because under South African law they could lose their right to protection if they seek identity documents from the Ethiopian government via the embassy. The findings of the pilot will inform the proposals to support community mobilization of the Ethiopian community in the Eastern and Western Cape and to link the community with organizations who can support legal empowerment. They will also be used to engage South African policy makers and officials in improving access to justice for migrants, including children.

[a] Research undertaken by Heaven Crawley, John Doughty, Henrietta Nyamnjoh and Azwi Netshikulwe.

Box 7.2 Using the creative arts to understand the meaning of justice[a]

MIDEQ's A2J researchers worked with artists from the arts, creative resistance and well-being team at the University of Glasgow and the Noyam African Dance Institute in Ghana to devise a process for understanding "access" and "justice" in the context of social, cultural and legal systems in the Global South[b] The final 45-minute production, *Dami, Mini Kuraa Ji Dami?* ("Justice, What in This World is Justice?"), was showcased at the University of Ghana with a cast of more than 30 musicians and dancers. It combined music, dance and movement, textile and costume to tell a multi-layered story of migration, injustice and the pursuit of justice. Using the metaphor of a calabash (a gourd often used for drinking) as a vessel for justice, the performance illustrated multiple pathways to seeking justice, including mediation, care, pacification, reflection, negotiation and more. The work took into consideration the opportunities that exist within multiple traditional languages for contextualizing understandings and practices that can lead to improved justice outcomes and experiences. Additionally, the process helped participants to understand how they can effect change within their communities using their artistic skills. This process of linguistic excavation of meaning and what it reveals promotes a new understanding for artists and academics around the use of artistic research. Artistic process and methodologies also incorporate employability skills training and development.

[a] Led by Gameli Todzro and Naa Densua Todzro; [b] Tordzro 2023.

A scene depicting reconciliation in a music and dance performance on migration and justice by the Noyam African Dance Institute. Photo: Gameli Tordzro.

MIDEQ's work with the Migrant Justice Institute (MJI) aims to strengthen civil society's capacity to drive systemic reforms that improve migrant workers' access to justice for wage theft in national contexts. MIDEQ has published a research and policy brief with MJI which sets out best practice models that governments should consider implementing,[9] with discussion of current global examples of promising laws and policies intended to achieve these goals, including:

- Visa portability for exploited migrant workers to bring claims and find a new sponsor;
- Short-term visas with work rights to pursue wage claims at the end of a migrant worker's stay;
- Deferral of removal (with work rights) for undocumented workers who pursue labour claims; and
- Visas for victims of trafficking and criminal wage theft and exploitation to pursue civil labour claims.

Changing narratives through creativity and artistic processes

Through creative collaborations within MIDEQ, we are creating new narratives on issues of justice for migrants in the Global South. Using an approach which focuses on arts for analysis, and on process rather than just the final product, this work aims to broaden the conceptualization and understanding of justice across the contexts within which MIDEQ partners work (see box 7.2).

Recommendations

Overarching

- Guide A2J policy interventions by definitions and understandings of the injustices that migrants face gathered through empirical research and engagement with migrants.

- Expand understandings of justice mechanisms beyond formal processes to include other mechanisms that are more practical, accessible and relevant for the community.

- Build solidarity among different or similarly affected groups to minimize the possibility that justice interventions exacerbate existing social divisions, or even create new ones.

For governments

- Provide identification and other documents, including official birth certificates, to migrants and their families as an important first step in reducing the global justice gap and promoting access to justice for all (SDG 16).

- Provide training and guidance to public service providers to ensure they are familiar with the identification documents issued to migrants so as not to deny them due services.

- Provide comprehensive information on migration and rights including information on where/how to seek redress when migrants or their family members in origin, transit or destination countries feel their rights have been violated.

- Provide information to migrants on services and social protection to which they are entitled in a language that they understand.

- Implement policies that protect migrants against wage theft and enable them to pursue wage claims at the end of their stay.

For international organizations, CSOs and researchers

- View and represent migrants as right holders and not merely as units of labour, with the benefits of migration presented only in economic or monetary terms.

- Include migrants' voices and perspectives in activities that involve them wherever possible and appropriate.

- Embrace arts-based communication products and processes as effective tools to involve migrants in the telling of their own narratives and sharing their experiences, as well as to engage a broader audience.

Endnotes

[1] Chapman et al. 2021.
[2] Chamness Long and Ponce 2019:27.
[3] Nalule et al. 2023.
[4] Francioni 2007.
[5] Martins de Araújo et al. 2023
[6] de Souza e Silva 2022; Izaguirre et al. 2021; Garba 2020; Nathan 2020; Marcelin and Cela 2022.
[7] INURED 2020; Melino and Desrosiers 2023; PositiveNegatives and MIDEQ 2023b.
[8] Feyissa 2022.
[9] Farbenblum et al. 2023.
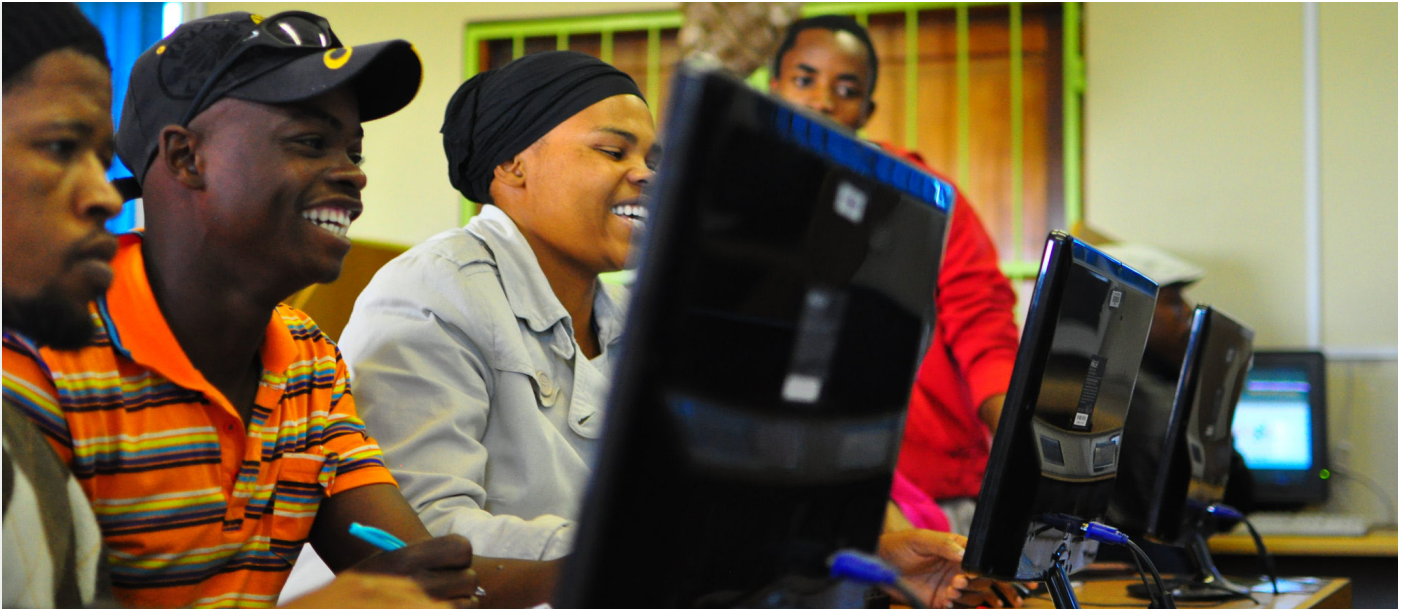
Youth technology training in South Africa.

Photo: Beyond Access (CC BY-SA 2.0 via Flickr).

CHAPTER 8

Rethinking Digital Tech Policy for (and with) Migrants

Research questions

- How and why do migrants and their families currently use varying types of digital technologies?

- How do they understand notions of inequality, and what are their priorities for using digital technologies to reduce these inequalities?

- How can we work together to implement such uses of digital technologies, thereby reducing inequalities associated with migration?

Introduction

Digital technologies have transformed the lives of people across the world. Two-thirds of the world's population in 2022 were using the Internet and three-quarters of those aged 10 or more owned a mobile phone.[1] However, huge digital divides continue to exist between rich and poor countries and for specific social groups such as rural populations and women.[2] In the last decade, digital technologies have been increasingly promoted as a potential positive driver of development by international agencies, civil society organizations and donors. This also applies to the field of migration, with numerous policies and interventions advocating the creation of apps and other digital tech solutions designed to support migrants, such as the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) MigApp, the International Committee of the Red Cross' (ICRC) RedSafe and the Asia Foundation's Safe Migration App (*Shuvayatra*). Frequently, however, such interventions

do not help migrants in the ways intended by those designing and promoting them. This is mainly because migrants prefer to gain information through sources that they already use and trust.[3] Moreover, insufficient attention has been paid at the policy level to the need to mitigate the potential harms of digital tech, so that their benefits can be better achieved.[4]

MIDEQ's research and impact initiatives on digital technologies and migration focus on leveraging these technologies to address the inequalities associated with migration in three ways: first, learning from migrants in our research contexts about the ways in which they use digital technologies; second, exploring with them how they understand notions of inequality within the migration process, and how they think technologies might be able to reduce them; and finally, working with migrants and digital developers in our research and practice contexts to develop digital interventions that can help reduce such inequalities.

Our approach

MIDEQ's research relating to digital technologies, inequality and migration uses a range of methods, including digital surveys in Brazil, Ghana, Haiti, Malaysia, Nepal and South Africa in different languages, interviews with migrants, migrant family members and focus groups, and co-designed workshops. Our approach to research and practice on digital technologies is based on the following key principles:[5]

- There is nothing inherently good about digital technologies. They can be used for good and for harmful purposes.
- Digital development interventions are very often technologically deterministic and have unintended social consequences.
- Meaningful user-engagement in the context of use is not inevitable. We must consciously strive for it.
- Our emphasis is on working *with migrants*, not *for* them (or *"on"* them).[6]

Our extensive digital surveys and interviews in Nepal, Malaysia, Ghana, South Africa, Haiti and Brazil highlight that the widely prevalent approach to digital interventions aimed at vulnerable migrants often privileges technology over the user and the user context. As a result of this key shortcoming, the "appification" of migration has achieved little of value for vulnerable migrants who are often either unaware of the existence of customized migrant apps or choose to ignore them for reasons such as lack of trust, limited awareness and digital illiteracy.[7]

Digital policies and interventions therefore need to pay particular attention to context and the characteristics of the migrant group using digital technologies. Our focus is on how the poorest and most marginalized migrants can benefit from,

rather than experience harm through, the use of digital tech, for example through harassment, abuse, online fraud and surveillance.[8]

Findings

Basic digital literacy skills are often lacking

Our surveys of migrants and family members have shown that their use of digital technologies increases dramatically through the migration journey—only 46.4 percent (Nepal) and 33.7 percent (South Africa) had used digital tech daily before migrating, whereas 85.4 percent (Nepal) and 89.1 percent (South Africa) used them daily while in the migration destinations. However, many migrants have limited knowledge in how to use the full potential of their mobile phones.[9] In South Africa for instance, around 60 percent of the survey respondents expressed what migrants would like to do with the technology, and almost all of the suggestions were already possible.[10]

Digital technologies pose significant risks

It is clear from MIDEQ's research that digital technology is not always a force for good. Both the literature and our research highlight the risk of surveillance at the macro state level and even more so at the micro familial level. Women in particular feel overwhelmed by the possibility of control and abuse through digital tech. In South Africa, our survey respondents admitted to disliking the use of digital tech due to the risk of harassment.[11] During interviews and focus groups most women expressed concerns regarding their children's access to the Internet and very few were aware of ways and means of mitigating digital risks for minors and for themselves. Nepali migrant women in Malaysia expressed concerns around familial surveillance while Ghanaian migrants in China worried about persistent state surveillance.

Box 8.1 Digital literacy and online organizing among Ethiopian women in South Africa[a]

Intersecting inequalities related to class and gender are manifested in the digital divide between migrant groups. Among Ethiopian migrants in South Africa, many women are relegated to the home and often depend on their husbands for everything from access to food to renewing their immigration documents and making calls. As part of MIDEQ interventions in South Africa we are providing literacy and digital training targeted at women in Hermanus and Port Elizabeth, respectively. Women who can safely access information and communication technologies are able to organize themselves in virtual groups, explore learning and business opportunities and find ways to obtain documentation by themselves. Through their organizing they can create a support and solidarity network that pushes back against the exclusions and isolation of their domesticity, one that is only punctuated by Sunday church service.

[a] Research done by Faisal Garba and Akosua Darkwah and the MIDEQ South Africa team.

Customized "migrant apps" are often not wanted, needed or used

Migrants tend to use various apps in different ways at specific stages of their migration journeys, however, MIDEQ's research has found that few migrants make use of apps designed explicitly for them, instead relying on standard apps such as Facebook and YouTube, or messaging apps such as WhatsApp. In Malaysia, 97.3 percent of the respondents replied "no" when asked if they had ever used an app specifically designed for migrants.[12] In Nepal and South Africa, 8.7 percent and 3.7 percent respectively replied "yes" to the same question. However, none of the apps mentioned were designed specifically for migrants. Similarly, in Brazil, all of the apps mentioned by respondents as being "migrant apps" were generic ones.[13] These apps enable migrants to communicate with their families and friends, gain information relevant to their needs, ask questions when they require help, and gain skills that they might need.

Inequalities in access to, and use of, digital technologies persist

Despite migration increasing the use of digital technologies, some inequalities persist (see box 8.1). According to the MIDEQ survey, in Ghana, virtually all male (99 percent) and female migrants (98 percent) from China have access to a functioning smartphone with which they can access the internet. This is also the case in Brazil, where 96 percent of Haitian men and 98 percent of Haitian women have access to a smartphone. The situation is very different in Côte d'Ivoire where less than half of Burkinabè men (52 percent) and only a third of Burkinabè women (34 percent) have access to a functioning smartphone that can access the internet.

Nepali migrants in Malaysia who do not use digital technologies said they found digital solutions to be difficult to use (34.5 percent) and cited their inability to read or write (27.6 percent) as limiting their use.[14] Non-users in Nepal also responded along

similar lines,[15] while in Brazil and South Africa, respondents also mentioned the high costs of digital devices and mobile data. Poorer migrants are often unable to afford access to bandwidth-heavy apps or websites that may contain valuable information.

MIDEQ's digital interventions

The above findings and our digital intervention work with migrants in the context of the MIDEQ project has reinforced our view that the involvement of migrants and their representative organizations is central to the success of any digital interventions that seek to support migrants. The slogan "Nothing about us without us", widely used by disability groups, is equally pertinent in the migration context. Our approach, therefore, involves the co-design of digital interventions with migrants, migrant organizations and tech developers. We found that simple but high-quality portals that collate links to trusted resources pertinent to the many different stages and experiences of migration, including information about official requirements, legal systems and cultural norms in host countries, safety, getting help in specific circumstances, and how to ensure safe transmission of remittances can be valuable for migrants. This is the aim of MIDEQ's digital interventions in Nepal (see box 8.2).

Our work with migrants in South Africa to create videos offering advice for their fellow migrants provides an example of the ways in which digital technologies can serve as a powerful means to influence change (see box 8.3).

Box 8.2 Developing training and information resources with migrants in Nepal

The MIDEQ digital technologies team's work in Nepal highlights the widespread lack of awareness of policies and practices that could help migrants benefit from the use of digital tech while mitigating its potential harms. MIDEQ researchers have facilitated the development of a digital preparedness training programme at the recommendation of migrant organizations working in Nepal. The training emphasizes the safe, wise and secure use of digital tech by migrants and their family members. It consists of resources and guidance on how to use digital tech that draws on existing good practices globally and is available in the six main Nepali languages and English. These are all available under a Creative Commons license (BY-SA) so that anyone can freely use and develop them further to train migrants. Initial feedback from migrant organizations further highlighted the need for an even simpler digital literacy programme for those with little or no exposure to digital technologies. Alongside the digital preparedness training programme, MIDEQ researchers are also co-designing an information portal for Nepali migrants that brings together the highly fragmented information that they are expected to access or might find beneficial from public and civil society organizations to guide them through their migration journey.

Migrant organizations and tech developers developing novel training and information resources in Nepal.
Photo: Tim Unwin

Box 8.3 Training migrants to create and share advice in South Africa

The MIDEQ digital technologies team worked with migrants, civil society organizations and academics to design an intervention that enables migrants living in South Africa to share knowledge and learn from their lived experience through the making of high-quality videos.[a] After initial workshops in Johannesburg and Cape Town on online safety and security, participants learned how to make videos. While storytelling and storyboarding represent the essence of a video, the right use of different shooting methods, sound, editing and lighting techniques are important to increase their appeal. Participants learned about these techniques while creating good-quality videos using free software and inexpensive smart-phones. The videos help share knowledge, provide visibility to migrants' experiences and create new opportunities to interact with and support each other. The workshops also covered topics related to leveraging digital technologies for entrepreneurship, social mobilization and community networking to increase potential benefits for each participant and to gain a collective voice. The use of multiple languages helps validate the authenticity of the issues and supports the building of trust between community members (watch what migrants thought about the training).

[a] Lorini et al. 2023.
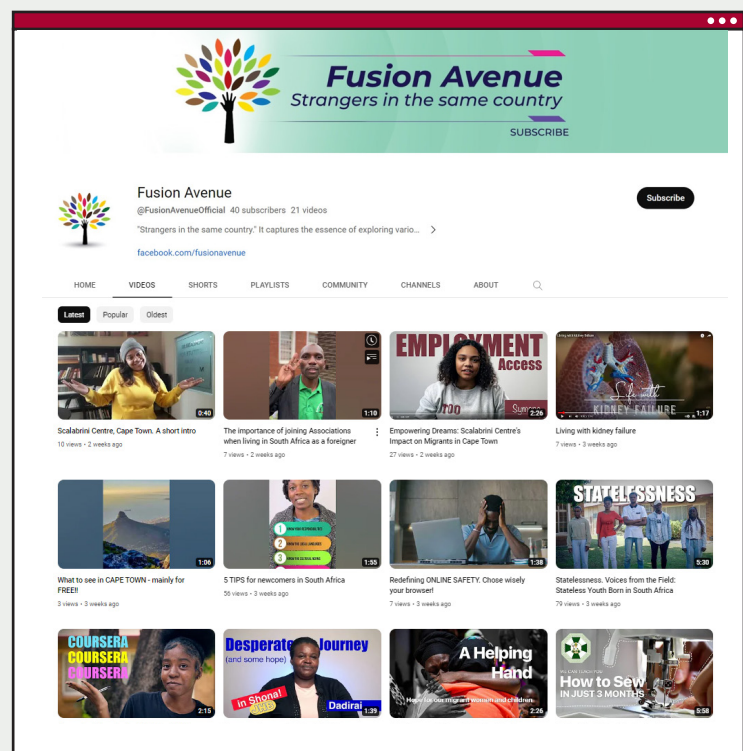
The YouTube Channel created by migrants in South Africa through the support of MIDEQ.

Recommendations

Overarching

- Take account of migrants' contexts, build on existing technologies and apps used by migrants, include migrants in the design of policies and technologies, and ensure digital skills for all.

- Engage in cross-sector efforts to design and share evidence of good practices and templates (international organizations), incorporate these into national programmes in context-sensitive ways (governments), and assist with design and implementation in local contexts (civil society organizations and companies).

For governments

- Pay attention to context and structural inequalities such as gender, and enable migrants to benefit from tech in the digital contexts in which they find themselves, conveying migrant-focused information through the apps and media that migrants already use, rather than creating new ones.

- Develop policies to enable tailored resources to be made accessible for poor migrants, who might be illiterate or only understand their local language.

- Mitigate the potential harms of digital tech by ensuring that migrants, especially those from marginalized groups, have appropriate skills and understanding to be able to use digital technologies safely, wisely and securely.

- Include modules in national training strategies on the safe, wise and secure use of digital tech in a cost-effective way, targeted at both migrants and their families.

For international organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector

- Support the design of templates of basic content for digital literacy courses based on good practices that could be adapted and localized in specific contexts.

- Adapt some of the training materials that private sector companies already provide and make them freely available to migrants.

- Engage with migrants to ensure that their experiences are fully represented in the development of policies and interventions relating to digital tech, both in origin and destination countries.

Endnotes

1   ITU 2022.
2   UNRISD 2022: chapter 1.
3   See also Harindranath et al. 2023; Unwin et al., 2021a,b; Unwin et al. 2022a,b.
4   Unwin et al. 2021c.
5   Harindranath 2019.
6   Unwin 2019.
7   Harindranath 2020.
8   For a list of useful literature relating to the use of digital tech by migrants in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and South America upon which this chapter also draws, see https://ict4d.org.uk/technology-inequality-and-migration/litrev/.
9   Unwin et al. 2023.
10 Unwin et al. 2022a.
11 Unwin et al. 2022a.
12 Unwin et al. 2021b.
13 Unwin et al. 2022b.
14 Unwin et al. 2021b.
15 Unwin et al. 2021a.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
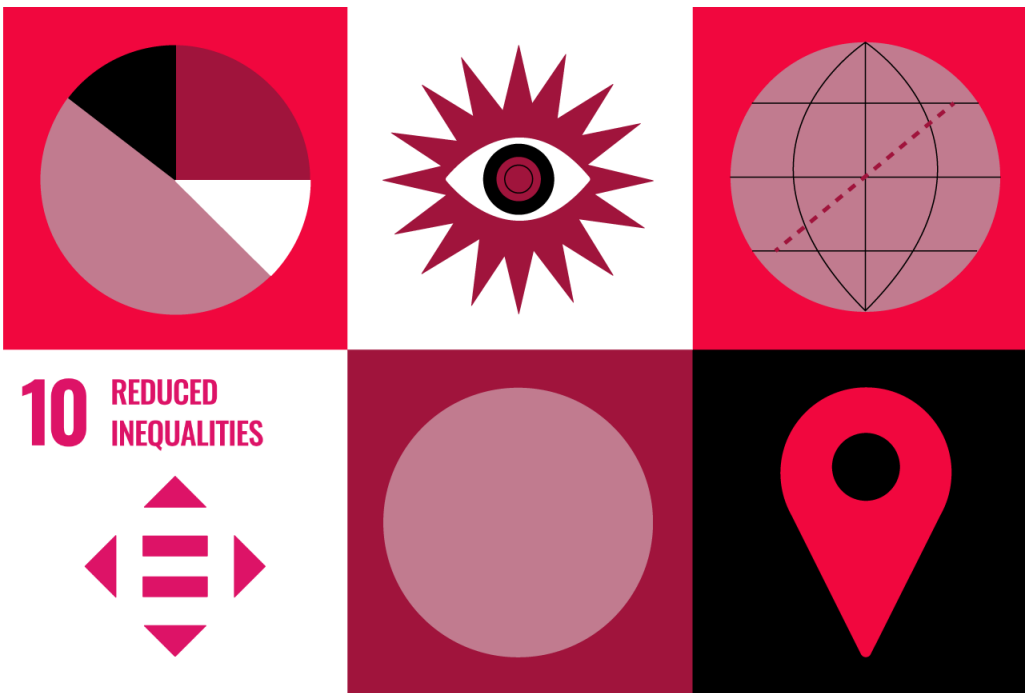
CHAPTER 9

Harnessing the Potential of Migration for Development and Equality

Conclusion

Shifting how we think about migration

Recent decades have seen significant changes in the scale, diversity and direction of international migration flows for work, education, family reunion and safety. Increasingly, migration has been recognized as not only an economic process but also one with significant social, political, cultural and technological dimensions. Migration has wide-ranging implications for development, most notably through its potential to reduce poverty and income inequalities by opening up employment opportunities

and through disrupting inequalities associated with unequal social structures, including those based on gender, race and age.[1] Migration can contribute to positive development outcomes, as emphasized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and it can be "a cornerstone of development, prosperity, and progress."[2] Remittance flows have far exceeded official development assistance and are approaching the level of foreign direct investment, constituting important supplements to migrants' household income, often used to invest in better nutrition, education and health while also contributing to the economy in countries

of origin.[3] Migrant workers constitute an important share of the workforce in many destination countries while also acting as entrepreneurs and business actors, building connections across migration corridors. Diaspora communities have evolved into important transnational development actors.[4] Finally, migration is one way of adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change,[5] a driver of migration that is likely to increase significantly in coming decades.

That said, migration is also associated with considerable risks, hardships, inequalities and vulnerabilities, as the experiences and data collected by MIDEQ researchers in the 12 corridor countries demonstrate. The current context of multiple crises, inflationary pressures, fiscal and debt constraints, rising inequalities, polarization and geopolitical tensions constitute a difficult environment for the expansion of social and political rights to migrants. The hardships that migrants have to confront are often related to existing vulnerabilities associated with structural inequalities and poverty, which tended to worsen during the Covid-19 pandemic, and include a lack of resources, networks, knowledge or skills. These hardships are also often associated with the exploitative practices of employers and companies and can be made worse by restrictive and discriminatory government policies and practices, as well as social norms. The risks, hardships, inequalities and vulnerabilities are also exacerbated by negative migration narratives that limit the mobility of particular groups such as women, or fuel anti-migrant sentiments and stigma. Misconceived policies and interventions for migrants and their families that are not tailored to their specific needs nor recognize their agency in the design and implementation process further compound the difficulties.

In this challenging post-pandemic environment,[6] with progress toward the SDGs lagging, it is imperative to overcome these constraints, mitigate risks and

harness the positive potential of migration. Within dominant migration research and policy making, there is a tendency to focus on the challenges associated with migration. Instead of focusing on what governments and populations in the Global South lack vis-à-vis the development processes,[7] we should focus instead on identifying the resources that migrants have available to them to shape their futures, for example, by creating solidarity networks among themselves and with local groups which are able to work toward collective action to address common inequalities and social injustices.[8]

This report set out to achieve several objectives: a) to convey evidence-based recommendations for policy and decision makers, but also for civil society actors, private sector actors and international organizations, based on unprecedented research collaboration and engagement of Global South scholars, b) to encourage those who communicate about migrants, and migration, in particular policy makers and representatives from international agencies, researchers, civil society actors, journalists and influencers, and teachers and educators, to disseminate a nuanced narrative on migration where migrants and their aspirations, contributions and potential take centre stage, c) to shift dominant concepts and approaches away from the Global North to the Global South, amplifying Southern debates, questions and research agendas that have global relevance for knowledge production, and d) to connect actors across the globe to build powerful alliances for change, starting at the grassroots level and reaching global policy processes.

The following summary of key conclusions and policy recommendations is intended to inform a transformative agenda for action for South-South migration, one that addresses the root causes of structural inequalities and creates a positive context for migrants to thrive.

Pathways for change: Key findings and recommendations

Improving migration outcomes for migrants, their families and communities, and the countries they come from and move to, requires a sustained effort involving both top-down action driven by global agendas such as the SDGs and the GCM, alongside bottom-up action from feminist movements, migrants-rights organizations, community organizations, trade unions and faith groups, to name just a few.

The chapters in this report have identified recommendations to improve the gendered outcomes of migration, protect and empower children who migrate or stay back, positively support migrants' decision making, improve the service provisioning of intermediaries, facilitate resource flows associated with migration, guarantee access to justice for all migrants at all stages of the migration process, and provide migrants and their families with digital technologies that serve them best.

Improving gendered outcomes of South-South migration

Based on an intersectional approach, MIDEQ research on migration and gendered inequalities in South-South migration finds that gender is an important determinant of the motivation to migrate or stay, of how social networks are mobilized and created, in which sectors and under which conditions migrants are employed, and how they engage with intermediaries and digital technologies. Women tend to face more restrictive government policies and social norms undermining their agency to take decisions around migration while increasing the risks associated with migration. Women staying back have mixed experiences of empowerment on the one hand versus increased workloads, responsibilities and stigma on the other hand. These gendered inequalities often intersect with other

inequalities based on, for example, income, nationality and age. In a South-South migration context, women are increasingly seeking employment opportunities in non-traditional sectors beyond care and domestic work, while they are also venturing into business activities, for example in trade, services or mining. The research also shows that global migration governance falls short of guaranteeing gender equality in practice, albeit with variations depending on regional context. Based on the evidence, policy recommen- dations suggest improving labour market conditions, legal protections and access to information and training, supporting family members staying back, reforming paternalistic and gender-restrictive policies, making global migration governance more gender-responsive, and consistently applying an intersectional gender lens in migration research and policy.

Supporting children who migrate and those who stay back

Migration profoundly affects the lives of children, both those who move and those who do not. Children who migrate with their families tend to benefit from better economic opportunities, but they also encounter obstacles in accessing public services depending on their resident status and available documentation. Children who stay back can suffer from care deficits, psychosocial problems and stigma, but they benefit from remittances to fund education or health expenditures and may experience positive impacts on their livelihoods. MIDEQ research on children and migration shows that children in migration contexts demonstrate considerable agency and are not "left behind," while parents aim to ensure a continuum of care through the wider kin network and remote parenting using digital tech and remittances. Research findings also show considerable risks and human rights violations for children in a migration context, in particular for independent child migrants or in cases of exploitation or trafficking. Based on

the evidence, it is recommended to tailor policies and interventions to local contexts while meeting minimum international legal standards for child protection, guarantee a continuity of care and access to social services for children in countries of origin or destination, increase awareness and state capacity vis-a-vis the needs and rights of children in migration contexts, and strengthen collaboration with migrant families and their communities.

Understanding the subjective determinants of migration decision making

Assumptions about the factors influencing migrant decision making often underpin policy responses to migration. Under-standing actual migration behaviours requires moving beyond economic motives such as work or business opportunities, and migration policies that aim to encourage or restrain movements, taking into account intangible or subjective factors such as aspirations, beliefs or feelings. MIDEQ research shows that intangible factors such as religious beliefs as well as perceptions of inequalities and discrimination, for example gender-based or racial discrimination, determine decisions to move, stay or move onwards. The research further demonstrates that policies need to be designed and implemented in close collaboration with intended beneficiaries, as they might be ineffective if migrants are not aware of them, if they engage with them in unforeseen ways or if contextual factors change. The research evidence supports recommendations to base policies, legal frameworks and interventions on understanding the specific migrant decision-making processes present in particular contexts, including subjective and contextual factors; verify assumptions and anticipate unintended reactions to policies that aim to influence migrant decision making by including subjective migration motives; and strengthen meaningful engagement with migrants in research and interventions to better take account of the factors influencing migrant decision making.

Toward a nuanced and context-specific perspective on migration intermediaries

Migration intermediaries shape migration experiences and outcomes, from directing people to specific destinations and into specific jobs and sectors, to influencing how people migrate and shaping living and working conditions in host countries. Intermediaries offer a range of services aimed at facilitating migration, including provisioning travel documents, searching for employment and organizing transportation and accommodation. Often, intermediaries are informal brokers and can have close social bonds with migrants in their communities, such that the distinction between formal/informal as well as legal/illegal intermediation activity is blurred. Intermediaries help migrants overcome inequalities, but they can also exploit migrants' vulnerabilities, expose them to risks or drive up the costs of migration. MIDEQ research suggests that a better understanding of why migrants engage with intermediaries is needed, focusing on structural inequalities. Based on the findings, it is recommended that governments offer migrants free intermediation services tailored to their needs while protecting their rights and access to justice, and strengthen both state capacity and accountability in facilitating migration as well as good practices and ethical behaviour of private intermediaries.

Promoting remittances and migrant entrepreneurship

Resource flows between migrants, their families and wider communities include money (remittances, diaspora investment), trade (goods, services) and knowledge (technology, skills, business capabilities). These flows directly impact income and wealth inequalities, consumption and investment behaviour, and the potential for employment and economic growth in both origin and destination countries. MIDEQ research demonstrates that high transfer costs, despite some improve-ments, continue to reduce formal

remittances in South-South migration contexts. It further finds that informal remittances tend to be linked to irregular migrant status in destination countries and restrictive policies in countries of origin. Regarding knowledge flows linked to migrant entrepreneurship, research findings identify a lack of physical security, legal status and bank accounts as well as unfavourable business climates in countries of origin as obstacles. Policy recommendations emerging from the research focus on providing security and equal opportunity in host countries to harness money and knowledge flows for development and migrant well-being. This includes addressing racism, xenophobia and violent crime affecting migrants in local communities, as well as ensuring that migrants have necessary documentation to access the formal financial system, labour markets and public services. There is also a need for the private sector to improve access, expand technologies and reduce fees related to remittances and diaspora investments, and for countries of origin to improve regulation and policies to facilitate resource flows.

Ensuring access to justice for migrants in the Global South

Migrants are more likely to experience conditions of extreme injustice and to be formally or practically excluded from the protections of law, which reflects a lack of legal identity and documentation, discriminatory legislation, informal working arrangements, lack of institutional support, limited time spent in a destination, as well as language problems and lack of access to information. MIDEQ research provides evidence that safe and legal pathways for migration are often lacking, information on access to justice is scarce or inaccessible, access to documentation such as permits and identity documents is associated with multiple barriers, and exclusion of migrants from social services a common challenge. Migrant workers also face exploitation and wage theft, which is more acute for female

migrants. The recommendations emerging from the research suggest the need to include justice mechanisms that are more practical, accessible and relevant for the community. They also emphasize building solidarity among groups to minimize social divisions, providing identification and necessary documents as well as access to information, improving policies that protect migrants against rights violations, and including migrant voices and perspectives, also through arts-based tools.

Harnessing the benefits of digital technologies for migrants

MIDEQ research shows that 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 connecting with those staying back. However, basic digital literacy skills are often lacking, while inequalities—including gendered ones—in access to and use of digital technologies persist. Digital technologies also pose significant risks for individual migrants using them, for example control by family members or state surveillance. Research also found that customized migrant apps are often not wanted, needed or used, as migrants prefer to communicate and access information through generic apps. To harness the benefits of digital technologies for migrants, the evidence underpins recommendations to take account of migrants' contexts, build on existing technologies and apps used by migrants, include migrants in the design of policies and technologies, and ensure digital skills for all. It is further recommended to engage in cross-sector efforts to design and share evidence of good practices and templates, incorporate these into national programmes, and collaborate with civil society and digital tech companies who can assist with design and implementation in local contexts.

Overarching conclusions and recommendations

The research from the MIDEQ project synthesized in this report points to the following conclusions:
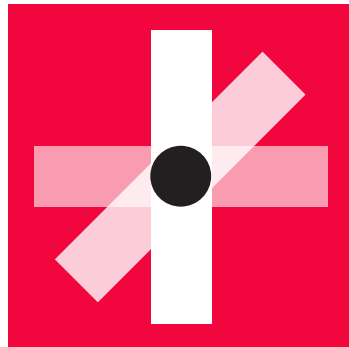
Structural and intersecting inequalities shape migration patterns and outcomes

Structural inequalities shape migration patterns and processes as well as the potential for South-South migration to contribute to development and delivery of the SDGs. These inequalities are intersectional, meaning that systems of inequality based on gender, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, class and other forms of disadvantage and discrimination "intersect" to create unique dynamics and effects, as MIDEQ research on gendered and racialized outcomes of South-South migration demonstrates. The impact of migration on inequality is not straightforward: migration can reduce intersectional inequalities through the redistribution of resources at the household level, but it can also reproduce, increase or create new inequalities as a result of significant resource transfers to migrant households relative to non-migrant households, through increasing the workload on family members staying back, and, in general, by means of changing patterns of work, social organization and investment.
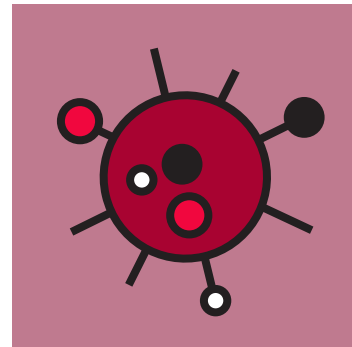
Crises amplify the inequalities experienced by migrants

The Covid-19 pandemic amplified and deepened existing inequalities, including those associated with migration. Migrants and their family members staying back suffered the impacts of declining work and business opportunities, lack of access to social services and reduced remittance flows. Inequalities tend to rise during crises and are also exacerbated by conflict and political instability as well as the pressures on agricultural productivity and livelihoods as a result of climate change and natural disasters. These crises are often overlapping and interconnected.
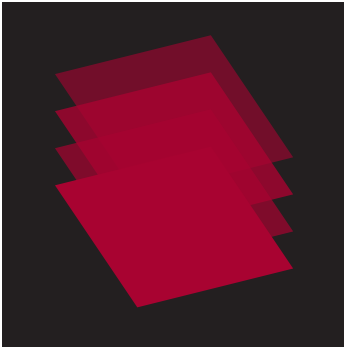
Migration has multiple dimensions

Migration is not just an economic process. It is also associated with the two-way transfer of knowledge, skills, language, culture, food, spirituality and other less tangible and understood outcomes, as evidenced by MIDEQ research on migrant investment and entrepreneurial activities, the subjective and intangible factors driving migrant decision making, migrants' complex relationships with intermediaries, and the ways migrants harness digital technologies for various purposes, from connecting and caring for family staying behind, to fostering economic opportunities in host countries, to creating social networks. These processes and resources need to be moved to the centre of our understanding of migration in the Global South.
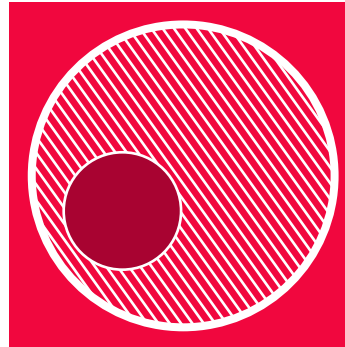
The broader context matters

Migration research and policy has tended to focus on migration processes and outcomes without taking sufficient account of the broader socioeconomic and political development and transformation within which the movement of people is embedded. Migration is a cross-cutting issue in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the relationship between the SDGs and migration can be mutually reinforcing: migration can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, while achieving the goals will also improve outcomes of migration. To harness the benefits of migration for sustainable development and the well-being of migrants, migration should be part of a whole-of-government approach, one which includes policies related to access to labour and financial markets, social protection and social services, and agricultural and urban development policies, among others.
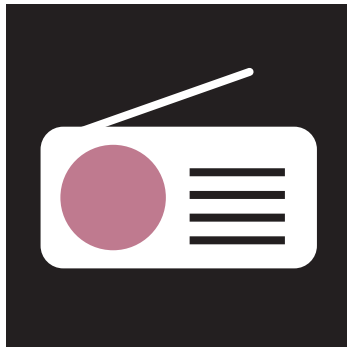
Migration narratives shape policies and outcomes

Political, media and policy narratives are critical in shaping both the experiences of migrants and outcomes of migratory processes. Negative migration narratives limit the development potential of South-South migration. They often pave the way for restrictive or discriminatory practices of governments and employers. They also undermine human potential due to the stigma, discrimination, racism and marginalizing practices with which they are associated. This is clearly evidenced by MIDEQ research in different corridors. Research shows that negative narratives often reflect intersecting inequalities and are particularly dangerous for unskilled or irregular migrants, with racial or ethnic discrimination in host countries adding to negative experiences migrants are exposed to.
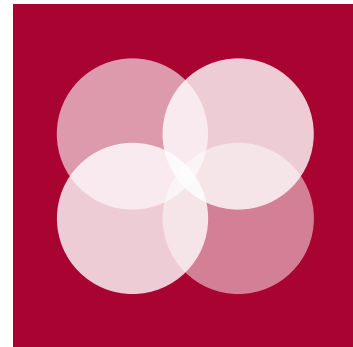
Migration research needs to become decentred, decolonized and interdisciplinary, applying diverse, flexible and participatory methods

MIDEQ has mobilized resources for partners in the Global South to define their own research questions and generate their own knowledge, producing robust, comparative, widely accessible evidence on South-South migration, inequality and development, and engaging national and regional partners on key policy issues. It is important that future research draws on a wide array of academic disciplines applying a range of qualitative and quantitative data methods, including creative and artistic forms of knowledge production, opening new forms of understanding, engaging and communicating about migration and migrants' lived experiences.

The findings of MIDEQ's research further highlight the importance of flexible participatory approaches in times of crisis, especially when working with populations and contexts rendered fragile by violence, emergencies such as the Covid-19 pandemic and political instability. Migrants and migrant communities must be involved in the research process and supported to mobilize around the findings.

Endnotes

1   Crawley et al. 2022.
2   IOM 2023:6.
3   Ratha et al. 2021.
4   Faist 2008.
5   Black et al. 2011.
6   UNRISD 2022.
7   de Souza e Silva 2021.
8   Awumbila et al. 2023.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Migration governance needs to address inequalities and promote human rights for all

Important global agendas such as the SDGs and the GCM need to pay more attention to the particular contexts of South-South migration and specific migrant sub-groups who are rendered vulnerable because of a combination of disadvantages related to poverty, gender, sexual orientation, age, race/ethnicity, religion, health status, education and legal status, and because of inequalities in the right to move. Regional governance is of particular importance in South-South contexts and existing agreements and policy frameworks need to be reformed and implemented to facilitate intra and interregional migration, promote gender equality and safeguard the rights of children. Migrants and their families need to be part of decision-making processes that concern them and are entitled to the respect, protection and full enjoyment of their human rights, regardless of their migration status.

Looking forward

The world is at crossroads and the coming years will be decisive for achieving the ambitious goals governments have committed to as signatories of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement, and the Global Compacts for Migration and on Refugees. The MIDEQ Hub contributes evidence and policy guidance to make sure that the many contributions of migrants for sustainable development are fully recognized and supported and that inequalities which undermine this potential are addressed. The findings from the thematic chapters in this report and the overarching lessons from the MIDEQ Hub suggest a clear agenda for action: adopt new perspectives and approaches in migration research and policy; involve migrants and their families in policy and project design; protect migrants'rights and provide access to justice, services and resources; improve migration governance and strengthen state capacity; change negative migration narratives; and build broad alliances for change.

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MIGRATION AND INEQUALITY IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH
Evidence from the MIDEQ Hub

This report highlights the work of the Migration for Development and Equality (MIDEQ) Hub, which unpacks the complex and multi-dimensional relationships between migration, development and inequality in the context of the Global South. It presents findings from six migration "corridors" that link migrants' countries of origin and destination: Burkina Faso – Côte d'Ivoire; China – Ghana; Egypt – Jordan; Ethiopia – South Africa; Haiti – Brazil; and Nepal – Malaysia.

Organized around seven themes of core interest to migration policy makers and decision takers—gender, children, decision making, intermediaries, resource flows, access to justice and digital technologies—the report lays out new data and evidence that challenges the ways in which Global North concepts have been applied to Global South processes and socio-economic structures, identifying differences and similarities in migration experiences and opportunities, as well as the myriad challenges that migration can, and often does, bring. Its aim is to ensure that policy makers, programme specialists and donors have the understanding and evidence they need to harness the development potential of migration for individuals, households, communities and the countries of the Global South.

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MIDEQ
Migration For Development & Equality

www.unrisd.org
info.unrisd@un.org

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