

Ghana

Co-Investigator

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Research Context

While Chinese migration to Ghana dates back to the colonial era, it increased in the 1960s when the two countries established formal diplomatic relations. The early Chinese migrants in Ghana were largely single men who worked in Chinese owned factories. Since the year 2000, the volume of migrants flow from China to Ghana has increased tremendously partly as a result of increase in the volume of Chinese trade and investment in Ghana and other African countries. China is currently among the top 10 major sources of investments in Ghana. As in other African countries, most of the earlier Chinese migrants in Ghana were either highly-skilled or low-skilled single men who have migrated to Ghana to work for Chinese firms involved in the construction of roads, buildings, hydropower plants, railroad and telecommunications networks. The migration of these persons is directly linked to formal sector government-to-government large -scale projects. In recent years, however, a significant proportion of the Chinese migrants in Ghana are working in various sectors of the informal economy, including trade, mining, agriculture and hospitality. While a majority of Chinese migrants in Ghana are still young single men, female Chinese citizens are also increasingly migrating to Ghana as spouses of male migrants or as independent migrants who work primarily in the hospitality industry and trade sector.

On the other hand, although there is scarce data on mobility patterns from Ghana to China, there is enough evidence to suggest that a large number of Ghanaians and other Africans have been migrating to China for the purpose of trade, tour and studies. Since the 1990s, in particular, many Ghanaian traders have been moving to China although some of them do not stay long enough to be categorised as migrants. The Ghanaian migrants in China mostly stay in Guangzhou and Yiwu for business and trade, while others engage in informal menial jobs.

While the increased flows of Chinese migrants into Africa have become the focus of academic and policy discussions in recent years, the inequalities and developmental impacts associated with migrants and resource flows between China and Africa are quite poorly understood. As part of the South-South Migration, Inequality and Development Hub, this research will take the China-Ghana corridor as a case study to explore how migration between Ghana and China is influenced by inequalities and how it contributes positively or negatively to inequalities and development at both the migrants' origin and destination.

Work Packages

WP1: Gender and inequality

WP3: Poverty and income inequalities

WP6: Resource flows: finance, trade and knowledge

Research Questions

1. How do gender and gender inequalities influence and change migration opportunities and outcomes along the China-Ghana migration corridor?(WP1)
2. What are the effects of gender inequalities on access to rights and resources among Chinese migrants in Ghana and Ghanaian migrants in China and their families left behind? (WP1)
3. In what ways do the consequences of migration along the China-Ghana corridor influence the gender inequalities economically, socially and ideologically in both China and Ghana? (WP1)
4. What are the gendered networks among Chinese migrants in Ghana and how do they work in migrants' daily life differentially? (WP1)
5. To what extent is mobility along the Ghana-China corridor shaped by and shaping inequality between Ghana and China? (WP3)
6. To what extent and in what ways do poverty and income inequalities create and constrain opportunities for migration from China/Ghana to the other country? (WP3)
7. To what extent does access to migration in China/Ghana change inequality in the areas of origin? (WP3)
8. What are the effects of settlement of Chinese migrants on inequality in destination areas in Ghana? (WP3)
9. What are the positive and negative economic and social impacts of Chinese migrants in Ghana and Ghanaian migrants in China? (WP6)
10. What is the nature and level of the flow of goods, skills and services between China and Ghana? (WP6)
11. What accounts for the changes in the nature and level of resource flows (i.e. investments, remittances, skills) between China and Ghana? (WP6)
12. What are the impacts of resource flows on inequality and socio-economic development in Ghana and China? (WP6)

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