

Côte d'Ivoire

Co-Investigator

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Research Context

From a South-South migration perspective, more than 90% of international migrants in Côte d'Ivoire are nationals of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with, for historical reasons, a predominance of Burkinabés: 56%, representing about 15% of the country's total population (Konan, 2012). Indeed, the available literature on the general situation of development indicators related to migration characterizes the Burkina-Côte d'Ivoire corridor as a corridor with a strong prevalence of inequalities in terms of interactions (economic, social, political, cultural, technological, etc.) between countries of origin and host countries. At the level of Cote d'Ivoire as a host country, we note in **the migration and income inequality** (poverty) relationship that the economic crisis of the 1980s and 1994, accentuated by the military-political crises of the 2000s and 2011, considerably increased the poverty rate among rural and urban households. Poverty thus experienced a trend increase from 10.0% in 1985 to 36.8% in 1995 and 33.6% in 1998 before rising to 38.4% in 2002 and 48.9% in 2008. The poverty rate rose from 49% in 2002 to 62.45% in 2008 in rural areas against 24.5% and 29.45% over the same period in urban areas (PRSP, 2009). The corollary of this situation is the upheaval in social relations between Burkinabe migrants and their Ivorian guardians, which is reflected in forms of stigmatisation and exclusion based on devaluing perceptions of this category of actors. They are blamed for the economic recession, the fragile security situation, the scarcity of goods and services and the erosion of national unity and social peace (Maribet, 2009).

This literature focuses on the analysis of the presence of migrants in the reception areas in connection with the increasing social precariousness of households. This theoretical postulate limits the capacity of migrants to become involved in the local development of the reception area. It tends to overlook their involvement in the process of wealth creation by presenting them as actors who inhibit local development due to land saturation, recurrent land conflicts, the transfer of remittances to the country of origin and the monopolization of assets and property. With regard to **remittances**, a development indicator closely linked to that of poverty, work on the Burkina Faso-Côte d'Ivoire corridor reveals that it is the corridor of low-income countries. Better still, the remittance corridor between Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso is the most important in sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for 87% of the volume of remittances compared to 6% by Ghana, 4% by other African countries and

(3%) by European countries (World Bank, 2015). Trade between Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso is growing strongly. The overall volume of these exchanges increased from CFAF 256 billion in 2013 to CFAF 348 billion in 2018, i.e. an increase of about 36% over this period. Apart from financial flows relating to transfers, other flows such as exchanges of goods and services and knowledge (technologies, skills, trade capacities, etc...) in which migrants participate, are also important on the Côte d'Ivoire-Burkina Faso corridor. However, the direct description of the impacts of the flow of resources between migrants and their families/communities on income and wealth inequalities, on consumption and investment behaviour and on the potential for employment and economic growth, and then on institutional change (financial regulation) in the countries of origin and destination remain rather poorly known. Also, the nature of the flow remains undefined and the analysis of formal and informal value chains, channels and networks, intermediary organizations and businesses owned or managed by migrants allowing for flows and transaction costs has not yet reached its peak. It should also be noted that research on non-financial transfers (culture, arts, scientific exchanges) remains poorly known or poorly evaluated.

On the subject of **childhood-related inequalities and migration** between the two countries (child labour), in Côte d'Ivoire, the 2008 Household Living Standards Survey (HLS) showed that 1237,911 children are affected by child labour to be abolished, i.e. almost seven out of ten economically employed children and one out of five children aged between 5 and 17 years old. The distribution of these economically active children by sector of activity shows that child labour to be abolished in Côte d'Ivoire is concentrated primarily in agriculture (71.7%) and secondarily in services (23.8%), while industry remains fairly marginal (4.5%) (NSI, 2010, ILO and IPEC, 2015). However, all the work and reports consulted did not specifically address child labour in relation to migration within the Côte d'Ivoire-Burkina Faso corridor. Indeed, the description of abuses and vulnerabilities, the experiences of children who migrate with their families, those born to migrants in destination countries and, in particular, those who are "left behind" are less elucidated. For this reason, in this study we decided to go beyond the traditional view of the phenomenon, which very often consists of listing explanatory factors to see the trajectory of these children, their working conditions, their implications in plantations and other areas of activity. A distinction must be made here between work that is part of family production and child labour used as cheap labour. At the same time, however, we must look for social, cultural, economic and political mechanisms to promote South-South migration in order to reduce the inequalities observed among this social category.

However, all the analyses so far mentioned present two invariants. First, the links between migrants and natives are approached from a conflicting perspective, so that the real weight of migrants in the production of wealth in the host areas is not perceived. Second, the literature focuses more on the effects of emigration and remittances in the country of origin than on immigration itself in terms of poverty and income, remittances and child labour (Zongo 2003; OECD/ILO Report 2018). Consequently, there is still insufficient knowledge about the socio-economic contribution of immigration to Côte d'Ivoire and its effects on productivity and fiscal

balance. This state of affairs accentuates inequalities in both macro (between corridors) and micro (between migrants and indigenous communities) interactions. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that certain social situations by their occurrence modify or even disrupt all spheres of life in society. They may be natural, political or health disasters. Thus, in the international context in general and in Côte d'Ivoire in particular, the case of the **Covid-19 pandemic is legion**. This health crisis is not only testing the different health systems because of the speed of contagion and the high number of deaths, but the different measures, mechanisms and practices for managing the disease have led to a transformation of the norms, perceptions, policies, social relations and the stakes of the actors in the country. It is therefore a question of its influence on the process of social and regional integration, against the backdrop of our focus on South-South migration and its various associated issues (poverty, child labour and resource transfers). For example, the fear of contagion that creates mistrust in relations between migrants and natives, among natives themselves and among migrants themselves, and the closure of businesses and trade that reduces income, increases poverty, promotes child labour and reduces remittances. It is on the strength of these observations that the MIDEQ proposes to address the complex and as yet insoluble problem of South-South migration (SSM) in order to reduce - rather than increase - inequalities related to gender, age and income. In doing so, it contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs), in particular SDGs 1, 5, 8 and 10. This crossroads of research on migration in collaboration with the IGDP focuses its research in Côte d'Ivoire on the issues below.

Work packages

WP2: Inequalities related to childhood

WP3: Poverty and income inequalities

WP6: Resource flows: finance, trade and knowledge

Research Questions

1. How does migration interact with pre- and in-migration inequalities (poverty and income, remittances, child labour) so as to impact the development of the receiving area? In other words, how does South-South migration reduce (earlier than it increases) inequalities? (**Main question**)
2. How does migration affect children who migrate and those who are left behind? How does migration expose child labour and what are its forms of expression in Côte d'Ivoire?
3. What is the contribution of migratory capital to wealth creation in host regions? In other words, what is the impact of professional or labour migration on local development and regions of origin? How does the financial situation interact with the migration (before and after) of households and individuals?

4. How are remittances, resources or knowledge sent or transmitted, received and used by households and individuals? How can migration, remittances, resources, knowledge reduce or intensify inequalities? In other words, how can the transfer of remittances, resources and knowledge be made a sustainable tool for reducing inequalities and thus a development tool for the host and destination countries of Burkinabe migrants?
5. How does the Covid-19 pandemic accentuate inequalities? What forms of inequality does it engender? What is the influence of this disease on the trafficking of children from Burkina Faso? In the face of the disease, in what types of activities do children find themselves in a child labour situation? How have vigilances been reformed or not during a pandemic?
6. Impact of the Covid-19 crisis on poverty among vulnerable people, understood here as people working in and/or living in the informal sector. Many people live from day to day in the activities they used to carry out. If these activities become impossible, how will these people experience the situation? Impact of the Covid-19 health crisis on the activities of entrepreneurs (those of returning migrants as well as others)? What are the resilience strategies of actors to reduce income inequalities?

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