

Building capacity and engaging policy makers in Ghana

CASE STUDY



AUTHOR

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The MIDEQ project in Ghana is being implemented by researchers at the University of Ghana's [Centre for Migration Studies](#) (CMS) which is a regional leader in teaching and research related to migration. Prior to the MIDEQ project, CMS implemented various projects, including the DFID-funded 'Migrating Out of Poverty Project' (2011-2018) and a number of migration policy development initiatives, which provided CMS with the opportunity to influence migration policy development in Ghana. The MIDEQ project has provided CMS with an opportunity to continue building the evidence base to inform policy development in Ghana and to bring together researchers to address migration issues in West Africa more generally. A full draft of an edited volume entitled *Migration in West Africa* has recently been submitted to Springer. The volume, edited by MIDEQ Co-Director Professor Teye, includes contributions from seven MIDEQ Hub researchers based in Ghana and elsewhere.

Consistent with MIDEQ's Theory of Change, the impact pathways for MIDEQ's work in Ghana include: contribution to knowledge production and capacity building; changing narratives on migration; and development of policies and initiatives to improve the lives of migrants, their families and communities. MIDEQ has strengthened the capacity of CMS researchers to employ multidisciplinary approaches to generate data. While CMS is an interdisciplinary centre, the MIDEQ project and another UKRI-funded project - the GCRF CUSP network led by MIDEQ co-director Professor Alison Phipps – have enhanced the Centre's capacity to use creative arts methodologies to generate data on migration. CMS now works with NOYAM, a dance group based in Ghana, to use creative arts methodologies to generate migration data and disseminate findings. To ensure that more researchers are able to use creative arts methods, the MIDEQ project team has planned a training workshop for 20 University of Ghana based researchers and selected PhD students on arts-based techniques of data collection and policy engagement.

The MIDEQ project has enabled CMS to generate rich data on migration along the China-Ghana corridor. The Ghana team has completed the Hub-wide survey with 1,268 Chinese migrants in Ghana. This is the first time a large survey has been conducted with Chinese migrants in Ghana. The team has also conducted qualitative interviews with 80 Chinese migrants and 32 Ghanaians who have returned from China.

The MIDEQ project is benefiting researchers, government ministries and agencies, migrants and nationals in Ghana in two main ways: firstly, by building capacity and knowledge on South-South migration and new methodological approaches; secondly, by directly engaging policy makers in Ghana and beyond in the findings of MIDEQ's research. As outlined above, researchers and students are benefiting through the capacity building on creative arts methodologies and policy

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engagement activities. The MIDEQ Hub has also contributed to enhancing capacity of the Ghana team in the development of Theory of Change (ToC) and policy engagement activities. The MIDEQ Ghana team plans to organise two days training workshop for 15 University of Ghana based researchers on developing a ToC. CMS is also leading capacity building programmes with policy makers and public officials in order to influence policy development and bring about policy changes. While CMS has a long history of collaborating with ministries and international organizations, conceptual insights and findings from the MIDEQ project have been used to develop new training materials. These training programs include: an IOM-funded workshop on how to incorporate migration into development planning for planners at district assemblies and ministries (attended by over 50 participants); Training workshops organised for African government officials in a number of countries and attended by over 100 participants; and GIZ-funded training on mainstreaming gender into migration policy in Ghana in 2021 (attended by 150 participants).

MIDEQ Ghana team members serve on a number of international migration management advisory boards and even at this early stage in the project's life have been able to use the findings from the MIDEQ project to influence migration governance. For instance, Professor Joseph Teye and Professor Mariama Awumbila have taken part in the population and development expert group meetings organised by the UN and take part in high level Africa and EU migration governance discussions (e.g. RABAT process) and most of the high-level regional migration governance discussions organised by ECOWAS and AU. Since 2020, Professor Awumbila has been the Chairperson of the National Technical Committee with a core mandate of recommending modalities for the establishment of Ghana National Migration Commission (GNMC), with Professor Teye as a member. The Ghana National Migration Commission (GNMC), when established, will serve as the main institutional framework for the implementation of Ghana's National Migration Policy. Both have drawn on the conceptual framing and findings of the MIDEQ Hub to draw attention to the link between South-South migration and inequality. Professor Mariama Awumbila is a member of the International Union for the Scientific Study on Population (IUSSP) Scientific Panel on International Migration: strengthening the Knowledge Base (2018 to 2021), which is making a case for a World Migration Survey. Professor Awumbila has drawn on the conceptual underpinnings of MIDEQ as well as her participation in previous Migrating Out of Poverty (MOOP) project to draw attention to the importance of generating comprehensive and comparative information on south-south migration flows particularly in the African context. Dr Mary Setrana has been contracted to provide technical assistance, under the AU Technical Assistance Facility on Migration Governance, to assess the status of the migration governance regime of AU member states/RECs. Conceptual insights from MIDEQ were relied upon for this assessment, which is being used to make recommendations for members states to manage migration successfully.

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The findings of MIDEQ research are also being used to develop migration policies and annual work plans in Ghana. For instance, Professor Teye, was contracted by IOM and the National Development Planning Commission of Ghana to develop a toolkit for incorporating migration into development planning. Based on this toolkit, training workshops were organised for planning officials. Additionally, based on the insights from the MIDEQ research project, inequalities associated with migration have been discussed in the National Labour Migration Policy of Ghana which was drafted by Professor Teye and approved by the Ghanaian government in 2020. Professor Teye subsequently used the policy to train over 50 officials from 34 Ministries and agencies on how to incorporate migration issues into the development of annual working plans in Ghana. MIDEQ research findings are also being incorporated into the diaspora engagement policy which is currently being drafted by CMS researchers. Additionally, as part of the recent training on how to incorporate gender into migration policy, which was facilitated by Dr Setrana, findings from MIDEQ WP1 (gender) were used to guide each stakeholder to develop strategies to be implemented to improve the livelihoods of migrants and their families. Beyond Ghana, insights from the MIDEQ project are being relied upon by Professor Teye and Dr Setrana to support the drafting of national migration policies in Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Zambia and National Labour migration policy in Malawi.

Findings from the MIDEQ project are also being used to change narratives on South-South migration and inequality in Ghana and Africa more generally. For instance, based on the findings of the Ghana team's MIDEQ research which highlights both the inequalities associated with Chinese migrants' activities and their positive contributions in Ghana, CMS is working with the Media Network on Migration (MENOM Foundation), an association established as part of the Migrating out of Poverty project (MOOP), to change the negative media narratives which tend to portray migrants from the Global South as being responsible for crimes and economic challenges in Ghana. CMS has also been working with media outlets (TV and radio stations) to organize talk shows to highlight the contributions of migrants and emphasize actions to be taken by stakeholders to reduce inequalities associated with migration and how to maximize the developmental impacts of South-South migration. The MIDEQ team in Ghana plans to work with the media to develop documentaries to change narratives on South-South migration and inequality. Additionally, CMS plans to work with NOYAM to use artistic performances to change narratives on migration and promote peaceful co-existence between migrants and nationals.

Issues of gender equality are a focus of the work undertaken by CMS which is responsible for delivery of WP1 in the China-Ghana corridor. This is reflected in a blog unpacking the invisible representation of women. In addition, all of the research undertaken in relation to the other themes incorporate gender issues and seek to

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reduce gendered inequalities. Concern for gender equality is also reflected in the gender distribution of staff and in the careful selection of the beneficiaries of training programmes to fairly represent both gender groups. For example, 70% of the participants of a recent ICMPD funded training facilitated by Dr Mary Setrana on migration and gender were women.

FURTHER RESOURCES

[National Labour Migration Policy of Ghana, 2020](#)

[Toolkit for Integrating Migration Into District & Sector Medium-Term Development Plans, 2020](#)

[The growing Ghana-China migration flows: consequences for Ghana's development and migrant household wellbeing](#)

[China-Ghana migration corridor: unpacking the invisible representation of women](#)



Cover image

UNCTAD/TrainForTrade Port Management Programme: Training of Trainers Workshop. Photo by UNCTAD/Flickr. CC BY-SA 2.0.

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