

Humanising narratives around migration

18 September 2024

18:00 - 21:00

CONCEPT NOTE

The Migration for Equality and Development (MIDEQ) Hub works to advance the understanding and conceptualisation of South-South migration and inequalities and to improve outcomes for migrants and their families. Collectively, we have sought to use opportunities where they exist - and to create space where they do not - to challenge xenophobia and racialised portrayals of South-South migration through humanising migration and migrants.

[PositiveNegatives](#) is a non-profit creative research organisation based at SOAS University of London and has been one of the main creative partners of MIDEQ through the duration of the Hub. PositiveNegatives work collaboratively with research teams to develop engaging and impactful comics, animations and educational resources to reach new audiences and help build a creative legacy from the research findings.

The MIDEQ Hub, with PositiveNegatives, has sought to bridge the gap between academia and the broader public, fostering a more informed and empathetic understanding of migration through five animations that humanise migration experiences; [The Story of Migration](#), [Covid Chronicles](#), [The Boy with More?](#), [Unstoppable Beat](#) and [Our Story of Migration](#).

This film screening, panel discussion and networking event presents an opportunity for us to showcase some of these activities and to discuss important questions about how we effectively challenge migration narratives.

OBJECTIVES

Xenophobic attitudes and racialised portrayals of people who migrate are the dominant narratives in our contemporary media and political landscapes. Migrants are often the first to be targeted and scapegoated by politicians for political reasons. Structural and everyday racism, discrimination and hate speech harm individuals as well as entire communities. At the same time, those who are most affected often have the least power including access to public platforms to effectively challenge them.

This MIDEQ / PositiveNegatives event will explore how artists and advocacy can help shape new narratives around migration; narratives that have been co-produced by people who have migrated and researchers from the Global South. Framing a panel discussion around two animated films, we will explore the artistic and

collaborative approaches that challenge anti-migrant narratives. Panellists will discuss:

- The challenges and opportunities associated with generating new narratives which reflect migrant's agency whilst acknowledging the very real challenges they face on a daily basis
- How to creatively collaborate with migrants, researchers and artists through different mediums - from research and production to dissemination
- Ways of centring migrant experiences and voices, through the use of innovative artistic materials for advocacy campaigns such as Refugee Week.
- Strategies for addressing the challenges of representation when working with a global production team

MIDEQ / PositiveNegatives ANIMATIONS

This event will focus on two films - [Unstoppable Beat](#) and [Our Story of Migration](#). Both animations have been co-produced with MIDEQ country teams and translated into multiple languages.

Our Story of Migration is an eight minute animation that tells four migration stories from Haiti, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Nepal. Using an innovative animation style and personal storytelling, the film highlights often overlooked issues surrounding migration and people's connection to their homeland through music, remittances, food and funeral rights.

Unstoppable Beat is a six minute animation co-produced with MIDEQ's Haiti and Brazil partners. The film focuses on the deeply personal and emotional experience of family reunification from the perspective of a Haitian migrant in Brazil. The film has currently won or been a finalist in 16 international film festivals.

AUDIENCE

We are aiming this event at a general audience along with migrant and civil society organisations, and artists with a practice of co-produced storytelling. We are planning a fascinating discussion followed by a lively Q&A.

PANEL

Chair:

Prof. Heaven Crawley (Director of MIDEQ)

Panellists:

Dr Benjamin Worku-Dix, (Director of PositiveNegatives)

Karrie Fransman (Creative Director, PositiveNegatives)

Nazek Ramadan (Director, Migrant Voices)

Dr Gameli Tordzo, (University of Glasgow)

Lara Deffense (Producer, Refugee Week UK Coordinator, Counterpoints Arts)

FORMAT

This will be a three-hour event at [RichMix, London](#) from 18:00 - 21:00. We will showcase the two films in the auditorium and have an hour panel discussion. This will be followed by a social and networking event in an adjacent room with visual material from the MIDEQ / PositiveNegatives collaboration.