

CMRS joins £20m global research hub aiming to harness benefits of South-South migration

The Center for Migration and Refugee Studies at the American University in Cairo is set to play a key role in a £20 million global research hub – funded through UKRI's Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) and led by Coventry University's Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations (CTPSR) – announced by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) today as part an ambitious new approach to tackle some of the world's most pressing challenges.

The UKRI GCRF South-South Migration, Inequality and Development Hub will see CMRS join forces with universities and organizations from across the world to explore how the movement of people in the Global South is affecting inequality and development in less developed regions. The initiative is thought to be the largest study into global migration undertaken anywhere in the world.

Over the next five years the Hub will work with governments, international agencies, partners and NGOs on the ground in these countries and around the globe to maximize the benefits of South-South migration for development – and to investigate how it contributes to the delivery of UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) such as ending poverty and reducing inequality.

South-South migration is estimated to account for nearly half of all international migration (up to 70% in some places), but its potential benefits have been undermined by limited and unequal access to rights and to the economic and social opportunities that migration can bring.

The Hub will explore South-South migration in six global 'corridors' linking origin and destination countries, focusing in particular on the following routes: Nepal–Malaysia; China–Ghana; Burkina Faso–Cote D'Ivoire; Ethiopia–South Africa; Haiti–Brazil; and Egypt–Jordan.

Professor Heaven Crawley, an expert in international migration at Coventry University, will lead the Hub's network of partners which includes:

- **20 leading universities**, as well as the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), PositiveNegatives, Samuel Hall and @iLabAfrica;
- **Six international organizations** – the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Research Institute For Social Development (UNRISD); and

- **Numerous local organizations** in the 12 countries in which the hub will work: Burkina Faso, Brazil, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, Jordan, Malaysia, Nepal and South Africa.

Professor Andrew Thompson, UKRI champion for international and executive chair of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), said:

“The sheer scale and ambition of these Hubs is what makes them so exciting. They enable us to deliver a coordinated global response with UK researchers working in partnership with researchers, governments, NGOs, community groups and international agencies across developing countries. Each Hub has the potential to transform the quality of life for multitudes throughout the world and safeguard our planet for future generations.”

Professor Ibrahim Awad, Director of CMRS said:

“CMRS is excited to be a member of this truly global Hub aimed at reducing inequality and promoting development through research on international migration. The Egypt-Jordan corridor with which CMRS is concerned is greatly important for labor markets and economic activities in the two countries as well as for migrant workers themselves. Research on the six corridors covered by the project will be mutually beneficial for involved institutions. Advance in the multidisciplinary study of international migration will undoubtedly result from the research to be undertaken by the 20 universities participating in the Hub. CMRS is determined to contribute to this advance.”

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Operating across the whole of the UK with a combined budget of more than £7 billion, UK Research and Innovation brings together the seven Research Councils, Innovate UK and a new organization, Research England.

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The Global Challenges Research Fund supports cutting-edge research and innovation that addresses the global issues faced by developing countries. It harnesses the expertise of the UK's world-leading researchers, focusing on: funding challenge-led disciplinary and interdisciplinary research; strengthening capability for research, innovation and knowledge exchange; and providing an agile response to emergencies where there is an urgent research or on-the-ground need.

It is a £1.5 billion fund which forms part of the UK Government's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment and is overseen by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and delivered through nine delivery partners including UK Research and Innovation, the UK Academies, the UK Space Agency and other funding bodies.