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Urban Migration Trends in the Middle East and North Africa Region and the Challenge of Conflict-Induced Displacement

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INTRODUCTION

Cradle of one of the world's oldest urban civilizations, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is currently home to 357 million people. Its urban population grew four-fold from 1970 to 2010 and is expected to double again by 2050, from 199 million to nearly 400 million.¹ This urbanization has been driven by several factors: economic development; migration from rural areas as endemic water shortages and modernization of the agriculture sector release labour; and, more recently, massive population displacements due to war and turmoil. According to estimates by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in 2010 there were 7.4 million registered refugees in Arab countries, most of them Palestinians, Syrians and Iraqis. However, this number has increased significantly in recent years as a result of the ongoing conflict in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic (hereinafter referred to as Syria).

Intraregional and international population movements are a key characteristic of Arab countries. With the exception of oil-producing nations, local economies have viably created sufficient employment opportunities for the annual numbers of new entrants to the labour force given the age structure of the population. Outmigration has long been the option for young adults, regardless of their educational achievement. Europe and, to a lesser extent, North America have been traditional destinations, particularly for those coming from the Maghreb. Since the oil boom of the early 1970s, Gulf countries have been the prime destination for expatriate workers from the Mashreq; as of mid-2013, these countries hosted 2.4 million Egyptians and another 450,000 from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Jordan and Syria.²

The outbreak of conflict in parts of the Middle East and North Africa since 2011 has turned cities into contentious spaces and primary sites for protests and, in many cases, violence and destruction. The worsening security situation brought about by post-civil war violence in Libya, the war in Syria and Iraq, and the Israel-Palestine conflict has uprooted millions and put enormous pressure on neighbouring countries in the region, as local authorities struggle to absorb refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Most recently, the presence of fighters affiliated with the extremist Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group has resulted in multiple sites of displacement in Iraq and Syria. As of 1 January 2014, two of the world's top five refugee host countries were in the region: Lebanon hosted 856,546 refugees, while Jordan hosted 641,915. Meanwhile, 2.47 million refugees (accounting for 15% of global numbers) came from Syria, making the country the second-largest country of refugee origin.³ The region is also host to the world's longest-running and largest refugee crisis involving Palestinians, who account for 30 per cent of all refugees and whose plight has warranted a dedicated agency, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Other dynamics present in the region have made it increasingly difficult for local authorities to manage the influx of refugee and internally displaced populations. Many local authorities have been overwhelmed by high rates of urbanization; growing youth unemployment; the centralized nature of governance and the challenges brought about by asymmetrical decentralization; the degradation of cultural heritage assets; and a scarcity of water resources exacerbated by climate change. They have been hard-pressed to implement solutions in accordance with national policy responses.

This report traces migration trends in Arab countries by focusing the analysis around four subregions: the Mashreq, the Maghreb, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Southern Tier of Arab states. The Mashreq subregion includes Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan and the Occupied Palestinian Territory

1 World Bank, 2013a.

2 UN DESA, 2013

3 UNCHR, 2014b, 2014f.

and forms the core of the Middle East region. These countries share a historical economic dependence on agriculture and trade, and have firmly entrenched traditions of centralized state bureaucracies. With the exception of Iraq, they have been exporters of both skilled and unskilled labour to oil-rich GCC states as well as to other countries. Their migration patterns have been severely disrupted by ongoing and protracted conflicts in various parts of the region, leading to a significant increase in migrants, IDPs and refugees in larger cities as well as small towns.

The North African countries between the Mediterranean and the Sahara desert, including Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, constitute the Maghreb subregion. Different historical legacies and urban development regulations derived from European codes affect these countries' administrative systems. Tribal cleavages remain strong in Libya, where the 2011 war reversed the country's role as a migrant-receiving destination for foreign labourers coming to work primarily in the oil sector. Following the outbreak of civil war, most fled to neighbouring countries or returned home. Algeria, having endured a long war of liberation from colonial rule and a violent civil conflict, has managed to rebuild on the strength of its oil sector and avoid being drawn into the 2011 turmoil despite the disparities between its urbanized coastal areas and the interior. Lacking oil wealth, Morocco and Tunisia are striving to diversify their economies and develop their tourism sector. Neither country is able at this time to generate enough jobs for their youthful populations, many of whom look to migration to Europe as the choice option to find opportunities.

The GCC countries of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are among the most urbanized in the world. Over 80 per cent of the population lives in cities and towns, where oil wealth is enabling rapid development and urban megaprojects which require imported labour.⁴ GCC countries are the main destinations for workers from developing countries seeking jobs and higher wages, with most expatriate workers today coming from Asia. In sharp contrast, the Southern Tier countries – among which Yemen and Sudan are the largest – are among the poorest in the world. Their recovery from civil turmoil is hindered by continued ethnic and religious conflicts.

The widespread insecurity and conflicts in the region and the rapidly changing situation on the ground has compromised many agencies' ability to gather timely and reliable data on migration in most countries. To illustrate some of the broader trends across the region, this paper relies on the statistical database produced by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)'s Population Division. The data refer to migrant stocks at mid-year (1 July) for the years presented and are calculated for each country based on either empirical data or imputation based on regional models. Empirical estimates of the international migrant stock are obtained from population censuses, while the regional model is used for countries with no data by extrapolating from other countries or a group of countries with the same criterion for counting international migrants. UN DESA country statistics that are based on the model include Algeria, Libya, and Morocco in the Maghreb; Lebanon and Syria in the Mashreq; and the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait in the GCC. Additional primary sources from national statistical bureaus, primarily in the case of the Maghreb and GCC, and UNHCR in the case of the Mashreq and Southern Tier have been used to complement this database.

Few regions have been as affected by migration and remittances as MENA. The massive inflow of capital into real estate throughout the region has filled GCC cities with ambitious megaprojects and new towns, while remittance-funded informal settlements doubled the urbanized area of cities in labour-sending countries of the Mashreq, Maghreb and Southern Tier.

4 World Bank, 2013b.

The wars and turmoil that have shaken the region since 2010 have generated over 2 million refugees, in addition to over 6 million IDPs whose numbers and location shift in response to the changing situation of violence on the ground in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya and Sudan.⁵ The volatile security situation has also led several hundred thousand migrants to seek secure and economically rewarding futures in more-developed countries. Therefore, the population movements generated by civil unrest include a mix of IDPs, refugees and migrants in different proportions according to the degree of violence on the ground and the available means of getting out of the area.

Countries enduring conflicts can hardly control the movement of people within or across their borders. Cities receiving IDPs and refugees look to the national government for policy directives and financial support to cope with the influx of displaced people, many of whom have left most of their belongings behind.

Policies that focus on understanding the important contribution that migrants make to the local economy can best respond to their needs within the means of each receiving country. Lacking resources, municipalities are unable to alleviate the hardships created by civil strife in cities without the support and active intervention of national ministries and specialized agencies. They can hardly be expected to deal with an influx of IDPs and refugees. National authorities who control municipal budgets have to provide municipalities with funds commensurate with the challenges they face and clear policy guidance to enable them to act.

5 UNHCR, 2014b, 2014f.

I. MASHREQ

1.1 Spatial and social fragmentation to cope with turmoil and insecurity

The turmoil that has affected the region since January 2011 has been a critical determinant of people's movement across and out of the region. Migration in Iraq and Syria is characterized by internal population movements that are the result of forced displacement caused by ongoing conflicts in each country, as well as emigration to the Gulf, Europe and the Americas in search of security and economic opportunity. Refugees crossing into Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey are putting significant stress on local authorities and have elicited diverse responses from host countries. Shifts in the direction and flows of migrants in the region are a function of the evolution of the situation on the ground, and these can change rapidly. The influx of refugees through Turkey and Greece to reach the European Union during the summer of 2015 is evidence of the dynamism of migration in the region and rapidly evolving patterns and routes. In 2013, Syria surpassed Colombia as the country with the highest number of IDPs (over 6.5 million). Late that year, hundreds of thousands of families fled fighting between armed militias under the Islamic State banner and the Iraqi security forces, bringing the official UNHCR estimate of Iraq's displaced to nearly 1 million for 2013. Historical cleavages aggravated immediate fear of ethnic and religious violence, and a general feeling of longer-term insecurity among minorities. The post-2010 period has therefore witnessed accelerated outmigration of Christians from Iraq, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria and – to a lesser extent – Egypt. The accession to power of the Muslim Brotherhood from June 2012 to 2013 led to the opening of Egyptian borders with Gaza and Sudan, facilitating the entry of groups affiliated with the Brotherhood at the expense of Christians' feelings of security. The period of time under review here also witnessed accelerated outmigration of Christians from Iraq, namely to Europe and North America. As long as armed conflict in the region continues, these numbers will continue to increase and have a particularly strong impact on the spatial distribution of the population in both cities within countries suffering from conflict, as well as refugee- receiving cities in neighbouring countries.

Urban population

Country	Urban population annual growth rate	Urban population as % of total	GDP/Capita (USD)
Egypt	1.69	43.0	3,314
Iraq	2.66	69.2	6,670
Jordan	2.50	83.2	5,214
Lebanon	1.10	87.5	9,928
Occupied Palestinian Territory	3.28	74.8	2,530 (2012 data)

Source: World Bank, 2013a.

Urbanization trends in the Mashreq vary significantly by country. As of 2013, Egypt remained the least urbanized (43% urban), while nearly 90 per cent of Lebanon's population lives in urban areas. Both countries have relatively low rates of urbanization, whereas the Occupied Palestinian Territory boasts the highest rate in the region, with cities growing at 3.28 per cent annually. Unfortunately, this urbanization has not been accompanied by increased capacity among local authorities to deliver services or the stability necessary for state-building.

1.2 Local authority capacity to deal with forced displacement and protracted conflict

Iraq

Iraq's major cities grew in areas stretching along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, the country's historic transport and economic corridors. Like other Mashreq countries, Iraq exhibits urban primacy, with the capital Baghdad's 6,478,449 inhabitants accounting for over a quarter of the country's total urban population.⁶ Iraq has traditionally been a migrant-receiving country. Fertile agricultural lands, productive oil fields, substantial oil reserves and a medium-size population created employment opportunities in all sectors of the economy for expatriate workers. It was only when wars and turmoil started within its own borders that Iraq experienced an outflow of people and capital seeking more secure locations.

This outflow grew steadily during the past three decades as the situation in the country became increasingly difficult. The demand for workers was filled by migrants from labour-sending Mashreq and Southern Tier countries. Close to 3 million Egyptians worked in Iraq in the early 1980s predominantly in the agricultural sector, but also in services in Baghdad and other cities across Iraq from Mosul to Najaf. The majority of these migrants returned to Egypt precipitously during the 2001 war as it became clear that regime change and civil strife was impending. The 2003 war was followed by mounting turmoil exacerbated by ethnic/religious violence. A broad range of Iraqi groups fled to Jordan and Syria where they settled more or less temporarily in accommodation ranging from apartments in elite areas to rooms in informal settlements according to their financial means. As happens invariably when cities receive a massive influx of people, the impact on housing prices and rent is significant and often affects the ability of lower-income families to secure accommodation or avoid displacement.

Iraq as a destination

Iraq* (2013)	Total 95,780	Iran (15,611) (16.3%)	Occupied Palestinian Territory (14,954) (15.6%)	Egypt (11,544) (12.1%)	Turkey (9,776) (10.2%)	Jordan (8,303) (8.7%)
Iraq (2000)	Total 146,910	Iran (25,182) (17.1%)	Occupied Palestinian Territory (24,124) (16.4%)	Egypt (18,622) (12.7%)	Jordan (13,401) (9.1%)	Syria (8,034) (5.5%)

Note: *Estimates calculated based on foreign citizens and refugees.

Iraq as an origin

Iraq (2013)	Total 2,318,696	Syria (759,225) (32.7%)	Jordan (401,130) (17.3%)	United States (181,590) (7.8%)	Lebanon (148,470) (6.4%)	Sweden (130,449) (5.6%)
Iraq (2000)	Total 1,134,933	Iran (520,830) (45.9%)	United States (96,873) (8.5%)	Israel (75,702) (6.7%)	Germany (58,884) (5.2%)	Jordan (55,942) (4.9%)

Migrant flows between Iraq and Iran can be traced back to historical religious ties among Shia Muslims. These flows were disrupted during the Iraq war, as Iran was eclipsed as a destination for Iraqi migrants and refugees by neighbouring countries such as Syria and Jordan and other refugee-hosting countries such as the United States and Sweden.

6 Republic of Iraq, 2014.

Since the 2011 turmoil engulfed Tunisia, Egypt and Syria, Iraqi migrants have moved to Jordan, predominantly to Greater Amman. Many migrants view their stay in Jordan as temporary, while they wait for an opportunity to migrate to the Gulf or the West or for improved conditions in Iraq that would allow them to return. When explosions and violent incidents started to increase in Lebanon, Iraqis channelled their funds to Jordan, where they are being invested mainly in real estate.

Migratory movements have had and continue to have an impact on the spatial distribution of the population and spatial patterns in urban areas. The continuing war has generated an unprecedented number of IDPs. IOM has previously estimated over 1.814 million IDPs.⁷ Three major waves have been identified that unfolded in 2014: (a) Nearly half a million people were displaced between late December and May, primarily in Anbar province where fighting first broke out; (b) Another half a million were displaced in June and July as the conflict spread to Ninewa with the takeover of Mosul and advancement of Islamic State fighters into central governorates; and (c) Over three quarters of a million have been displaced since August, including cross-border movements of people into Syria from Sinjar.⁸

Baghdad has been the major recipient of IDPs due to its relative proximity to the places of origin of many of those displaced by the armed conflict. At this time, the capital hosts large IDP and returnee populations, the majority of whom live with relatives. Other shelter solutions for the displaced in Baghdad include rental housing, accommodations in informal settlements, camps and shelters in school buildings. While those living in the most vulnerable housing situations have difficulties accessing basic services, the majority (over 75%) of the population are reportedly receiving adequate food aid from civil society groups and access to health care.⁹ Many of the country's other cities attract large numbers of IDP families who contribute to unplanned urbanization. In the Kurdistan Region, Irbil is the most rapidly expanding city in Anbar province. Sixty-six per cent of the displaced population has remained within the province, with Fallujah and Ramadiyah the two fastest-growing urban centres.

Forced displacement disrupts natural urbanization patterns, prompting Iraq to explore how to orient investments towards medium-size cities and to develop satellite cities that can absorb urban expansion in urban centres with spatial growth constraints. Focusing on supplying basic services to rural areas is also seen as a factor that could lessen the disparities between rural and urban areas and eventually slow the rate of urbanization.¹⁰ There are very few instances – and none in the Mashreq – where such programmes have affected rural/urban migration. Rural development policies have to be advocated on their own right and regional and urban development policies can orient flows towards growth nodes where labour opportunities are opening up.

With regard to the displaced, Iraq's country report for the Habitat III Conference states that widening the range of tenure options could potentially facilitate IDP access to land and housing. Indeed, the high price of urban land and building materials constrains the government's capacity to provide Iraqis with land parcels with single family homes as per their traditional preference. The government has also expressed a need for a legal framework that would enable regularization of informal settlements and allow local authorities to stem their formation in fast-growing cities; this framework would provide for appropriate land management and infrastructure programmes and enhanced capacity to deliver affordable parcels of land and housing options.¹¹

7 IOM, 2014b.

8 IDMC, 2014.

9 IOM Iraq, 2014b.

10 IOM Iraq, 2014a, 2014b.

11 Republic of Iraq, 2014.

Occupied Palestinian Territory

The Occupied Palestinian Territory, the nexus of the region's and world's largest refugee crisis, has historically experienced waves of outmigration of its population with successive Arab-Israeli conflicts since 1948 and the annexation and confiscation of Arab land. In August, the Gaza Strip was the site of the latest significant internal population movements as the besieged territory experienced a renewal of violent conflict with Israel, which led to the displacement of an estimated 485,000 people, or 28 per cent of the Gazan population. The majority of the IDPs sought shelter in schools designated by UNRWA as emergency shelters, while others occupied informal shelters set up in mosques, churches and abandoned buildings.

Along with forced displacements, the deterioration of the socioeconomic and security situation at various times has pushed large numbers of primarily young, educated Palestinians to migrate to other parts of the region and the world in search of livelihoods. The diaspora, according to the most recent figures from the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, accounts for over 60 per cent of the Palestinian population, the majority of whom have settled in other Arab countries.¹² Over 1.5 million Palestinians are estimated to be living in the 58 UNRWA-run camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.¹³ Over the years, the population has overflowed the camps' designated boundaries, contributing to the formation of informal settlements. The largest concentrations are in Jordan and Lebanon and they have had a significant impact on urban patterns in these countries and have elicited diverse policy responses from local and national authorities. More recently, however, over 80 per cent of the working age population reported no desire to migrate.¹⁴ This emerging trend is bound to have labour implications since employment-generation has lagged due to the difficult economic situation created by Israeli pre-emption of Palestinian tax receipts, impediment to the movement of people, goods and capital, and the embargo on Gaza.

The Occupied Palestinian Territory does receive some inward population flows, namely from returning refugees. However, lack of employment, turmoil and conflict flare-ups have deterred return. Between 2005 and 2009, approximately 6,000 displacees returned to the Occupied Palestinian Territory.¹⁵ The percentage of returnees has been declining since the 1990s and is likely to have further declined between 2010 and 2014 due to continued Israeli incursions and expropriation of Arab land and property to build new Israeli settlements and a separation wall. Furthermore, Israel's pre-emption of Palestinian tax revenue has constrained the national government's ability to finance services and economic investments. Municipalities have to cope with the challenges they face as best as they can with their own resources.

Syrian Arab Republic

The protracted conflict in Syria has put additional pressure on local communities in surrounding countries that are already host to significant Palestinian refugee populations, in addition to creating the largest population of IDPs in any country. Spatial imbalances in socioeconomic opportunity, lagging development of mineral resources and industries, and droughts and water shortages aggravated by the impacts of climate change triggered significant outmigration from the north-east rural areas to the cities and is viewed as a factor in the 2011 turmoil. While the conflict has affected both rural and urban areas, its most significant consequences have been primarily urban as evidence suggests: field reports indicate

12 State of Palestine, 2010.

13 UNRWA, 2014.

14 Palestinian National Authority, 2010.

15 Ibid.

that displaced populations overwhelmingly seek livelihood opportunities in cities and neighbourhoods where security has been safeguarded or where civil strife has subsided and a degree of stability has been restored. This has led to significant urban growth in the country. Since the eruption of the turmoil in 2011, many middle-class Syrians have migrated to Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt, as well as to the European Union and the Gulf States. However, there are also many families who have chosen to stay behind in Syria. Nearly half of the Syrian population has been forced to leave their homes, at one point or another during this protracted and ongoing conflict. The majority of the internally displaced are not occupying collective centres, but rather seeking accommodation with host families or in public and private buildings. The poorest are in improvised shelters.¹⁶ In addition, essential urban infrastructure such as health facilities, schools and water/sanitation infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed in the fighting. Through Rapid City and Neighbourhood Profiles, UN-Habitat has determined that communities are suffering from diminished supplies of potable water and a heightened risk of disease outbreak as a result of broad service disruption in the major urban centres. Sanitation, in particular, is deficient.

Prior to the conflict, which transformed Syria into a predominantly migrant-sending country, Syrian cities had received significant numbers of refugees, first from the Occupied Palestinian Territory and then from Iraq. The country had also been a destination for expatriate workers from Asia and Africa, primarily the Philippines and Ethiopia, employed mainly in unskilled and domestic positions, as well as for highly skilled workers from other Arab countries. The majority of foreign nationals living in Syria were comprised of other Arab nationals (86.5%) and non-Arab Asians (9.4%) in relatively equal ratios of men and women.¹⁷ Transit migration from Asia to Europe through Syria was also frequent.¹⁸ In terms of emigration, Syrians have large diasporas in Latin America and, to a lesser extent, West Africa, where they have established economically strong and politically potent communities since the latter half of the nineteenth century. Syrian diasporas, along with Lebanese diasporas, can also be found in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly West Africa, where they work in a variety of commercial enterprises. Educated, skilled Syrians have also established significant diasporas in Europe, particularly in France, and in North America. These countries remain the preferred destinations for Syrians and Lebanese migrants today because of the support that they are able to find. Many Syrians also emigrated to the Gulf countries from where remittances became a significant, albeit unstable, factor in the Syrian economy. However, in the post-2001 period, security concerns in Gulf States have led to the replacement of Syrian and other Arab workers with Asians.¹⁹

It is estimated that before the crisis, Lebanon hosted upwards of 300,000 Syrians who had migrated for job opportunities.²⁰ The turmoil that has engulfed the country since 2011 prompted further formal and informal emigration of professionals and skilled workers, who found jobs or established businesses predominantly in Jordan and Lebanon.

Jordan

Data availability on urban migration in Jordan has been limited since the outbreak of conflict in neighbouring Syria. The refugee influx into Jordan has not impacted local authorities to the extent that it has in Lebanon, though in some urban areas, such as Mafraq city, the local population is still outnumbered by refugees

16 UN-Habitat, 2014c.

17 Syrian Arab Republic Office of Prime Minister, 2004.

18 Migration Policy Centre, 2013f.

19 Seeberg and Eyadat, 2013.

20 Syria Needs Analysis Project, 2013.

fleeing the violence in Syria. Living conditions are said to be more difficult outside Jordanian camps than inside; refugees living outside camps are believed to have opted to do so due to political concerns.²¹

Jordan has long been categorized as a sender and a receiver of migrants. Highly skilled Jordanians have historically emigrated to seek employment opportunities in the Gulf countries, Europe and the Americas. Jordan has also been a primary recipient of semi-skilled workers from Egypt, Syria and South-East Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Indonesia. These labour migrants are typically employed in the agricultural, industrial and service sectors; as of the mid-2000s, these workers were taking up over half of the emerging job opportunities, particularly in the country's export zones.²² Recent available figures estimate that there are 1.5 million migrant workers in Jordan, only half of whom are employed legally.²³ Egyptians account for the largest group of expatriate workers. As of early 2013, the Egyptian embassy estimated that there were as many as 800,000 Egyptians working in Jordan, though only 167,000 are known to have registered work permits.²⁴ Jordanian estimates put this figure closer to 500,000.

In 2010, Jordan and Bangladesh signed a memorandum of agreement to enhance cooperation in labour migration and better regulate it.²⁵ As of 2011, 30,000 Bangladeshis worked in Jordan. However, migrant arrivals from Bangladesh declined rapidly towards the end of the same year following labour strikes by garment workers and reports of abuse of domestic workers.

According to UN DESA estimates, over half of Jordanian migrants leave for GCC countries. Only slight increases in migrant numbers from Jordan have been recorded in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, but related figures for the United Arab Emirates nearly tripled. In-migration to Jordan remains dominated by Palestinians, whose numbers increased by 48 per cent. The number of Iraqis in Jordan grew by more than six times, largely as a result of the Iraq War and its aftermath.

Jordan as a destination

Jordan* (2013)	Total 2,925,780	Occupied Palestinian Territory (2,114,224) (72.3%)	Iraq (401,130) (13.7%)	Egypt (276,950) (9.5%)	Syria (57,847) (1.9%)	Bangladesh (10,122) (0%)
Jordan (2000)	Total 1,927,845	Occupied Palestinian Territory (1,429,681) (74.2%)	Egypt (287,677) (14.9%)	Syria (57,684) (3.0%)	Iraq (55,942) (2.9%)	Sri Lanka (15,163) (0.8%)

Note: *Estimates calculated based on foreign citizens and refugees.

Jordan as an origin

Jordan (2013)	Total 639,233	Saudi Arabia (168,827) (26.4%)	United Arab Emirates (141,490) (22.1%)	United States (76,309) (11.9%)	Occupied Palestinian Territory (55,929) (8.7%)	Kuwait (36,242) (5.7%)
Jordan (2000)	Total 395,523	Saudi Arabia (113,857) (28.8%)	Occupied Palestinian Territory (52,798) (13.3%)	United States (50,428) (12.8%)	United Arab Emirates (47,494) (12.0%)	Kuwait (28,888) (7.3%)

21 UCLG MEWA, 2014.

22 Ministry of Labour Jordan, 2006.

23 ILO, 2014.

24 Sanchez, 2013.

25 Palma, 2011.

The 2011 turmoil and militant campaigns by various Islamic jihadist groups brought an influx of Syrians and a significant number of new Iraqi refugees to Jordan, many of whom had to find work to survive and were willing to accept lower wages. Jordan's decision not to allow Syrian refugees, who were pouring in across the border, to settle in Amman and other key cities, but rather to keep them in large camps close to the border for security reasons, tended to minimize their impact on the municipalities with the exception of the north-east towns. It did, however, place the burden of addressing the humanitarian crisis on UNHCR and other UN agencies, as well as international NGOs.²⁶

The sensitivity of the situation was exacerbated by the tense political situation in the whole region and its persistently high youth unemployment. The large inflow of capital mostly from Iraq was reflected in the real estate boom throughout the greater Amman area and the rising cost of land and housing. Prices outstripped the affordability of land to lower-middle income families, while unemployment for young people aged 15-24 hovered between 12 per cent and 14 per cent throughout 2013.²⁷

Lebanon

Lebanon has historically been a country of net outmigration, resulting in a diaspora that outnumbered the national population. Since the disruption caused by the July 2006 war, the Central Administration of Statistics has noted an increase in people's intention to emigrate. The most recent statistics, dating from 2009, noted that 6 per cent of households had at least one member leave Lebanon between 2004 and 2009, citing the search for employment as the primary factor. These migrants were characterized as predominantly single men under the age of 35, of whom 44 per cent held a university degree, suggesting that Lebanon continues to experience a significant 'brain drain' as young educated migrants seek more attractive opportunities abroad. Arab countries were the most popular destination for Lebanese migrants who emigrated between 2005 and 2009 (39%), followed by Europe (20%), America (19%) and Africa (12%).²⁸ Among Arab countries, the Lebanese economy remains the most dependent on remittances, which accounted for 17 per cent of GDP in 2013.²⁹

Lebanon* as a destination

Lebanon (2013)	Total 849,721	Occupied Palestinian Territory (529,341) (62.3%)	Iraq (148,470) (17.5%)	Egypt (102,507) (12.1%)	Syria (21,411) (2.5%)	Sri Lanka (4,025) (0.5%)
Lebanon (2000)	Total 692,913	Occupied Palestinian Territory (467,005) (67.4%)	Egypt (130,459) (18.8%)	Syria (26,159) (3.8%)	Iraq (25,369) (3.7%)	Sri Lanka (6,876) (1.0%)

Note: *Estimates calculated based on foreign born population and refugees.

Lebanon as an origin

Lebanon (2013)	Total 683,061	United States (126,355) (18.5%)	Australia (96,800) (14.2%)	Canada (87,536) (12.8%)	Germany (67,031) (9.8%)	Saudi Arabia (57,098) (8.4%)
Lebanon (2000)	Total 538,904	United States (114,135) (21.2%)	Australia (78,563) (14.6%)	Canada (68,468) (12.7%)	Germany (49,663) (9.2%)	France (41,094) (7.6%)

26 New York Times, 2014.

27 Jordan Times, 2013.

28 Yaacoub and Badre, 2012.

29 World Bank, 2014a.

Lebanon, unlike other countries in the Mashreq, has predominantly sent migrants to more developed countries through historical economic ties and social links to well-established diasporas. This trend has continued through 2013, though Saudi Arabia now also figures as a top destination for Lebanese migrants. As a receiving country, Lebanon is second in the region behind Jordan in welcoming Palestinians. Lebanon also received an influx of migrants and refugees from Iraq during this period. The estimates regarding Syrians in Lebanon do not take into account the recent Syrian crisis, as the most recent numbers put Syrian refugees in Lebanon at over 1.1 million.

Meanwhile, many lower-skilled migrants are immigrating to Lebanon. In 2011, 184,960 work permits were issued, with over half of those granted to Asians who work mostly in domestic occupations. In addition to increasing numbers of migrants from Asia, since the mid-1990s the proportion of work permits issued to (non-Arab) African nationals has steadily risen; in 2011, this was estimated at nearly 30 per cent. While left uncounted, Syrians are recognized as representing a significant source of foreign labour in Lebanon.³⁰ Estimates put the number of domestic workers in the country at between 150,000 and 200,000 people. In 2011 and 2012, the greatest number of work permits were issued and renewed to domestic workers from Ethiopia, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.³¹

Since the outbreak of the Syrian conflict, however, Lebanon has become host to over one million Syrian refugees, in addition to the 455,000 registered Palestinian refugees who live in one of the country's 12 UNRWA camps. UNHCR's Global Trends Report for 2013 estimates that there are 178 refugees in Lebanon per 1,000 people, the highest proportion in the world. Lebanon's urban development challenges date back to the civil war in the mid-1970s and were aggravated by the 1982 and 2006 Israeli invasions. The recent influx of refugees from Syria has created huge demand for services that municipalities are ill-equipped to handle. The need for infrastructure and affordable shelter production, in line with the magnitude of the problem created by waves of displaced persons, is putting pressure on the authorities and humanitarian organizations to develop housing options capable of accommodating refugees with diverse longer-term prospects regarding their future. It is also stressing local housing markets and creating tensions with local populations that can lead to the eviction of renters and the proliferation of informal settlements with inadequate services.

The outbreak of the 2011 conflict has also led to significant flows of returnees, predominantly Lebanese who had been living in Syria. Poorer, lower-skilled returnees compete with refugees for the same limited opportunities. Shelter solutions and employment opportunities for these returnees mirror those for Syrians, with 92 per cent renting accommodation and a quarter of all households reporting that no member has found employment since coming back. The majority of the returnees report their intention to return to Syria, rather than resettle in Lebanon.³²

Egypt

For the last six decades, Egypt has been a major labour-sending country. Egyptians have migrated primarily to oil-producing GCC states, Libya and Iraq, as these countries embarked on large-scale development projects. Other countries hosting Egyptian populations include Jordan, the United States and the United Kingdom.³³ While migrants to Jordan are mostly lower-skilled workers employed in service occupations, the bulk of migrants to the West are professionals.

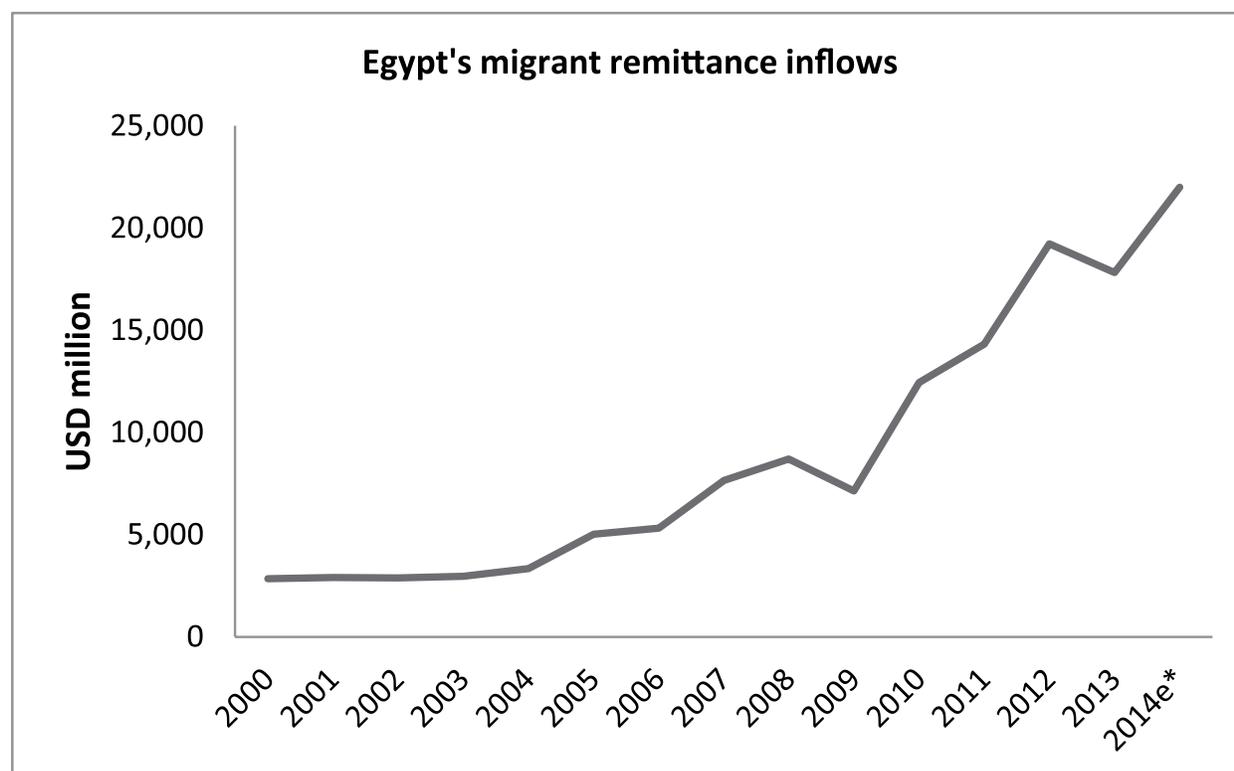
30 Migration Policy Centre, 2013d.

31 Lebanon Ministry of Labour, 2012.

32 IOM, 2014b.

33 Migration Policy Centre, 2013c.

Egypt is the greatest recipient of remittances in the region. Since 2010, there has been a sharp increase in the amount of remittances to the country, compared with the first decade of the 2000s. Preliminary estimates from the Egyptian Central Bank put the 2014 figure at over USD 20 billion, making Egypt the sixth-largest remittance recipient in the world (after India, China, the Philippines, Mexico and France).^{34,35} Greater Cairo is home to over 23 per cent of the Egyptian population and 57 per cent of the country's manufacturing activities. This makes the region the most attractive location to invest remittances, primarily in land and housing in planned new towns and informal urban extensions where real estate values are appreciating at very high rates.³⁶



Source: World Bank, 2014a and National Bank of Egypt.

Note: *Estimates from the National Bank of Egypt.

In times of instability and violence in the region, Egypt receives some inflows of migrants and refugees, though their stay is mostly viewed as temporary. Thousands more have used Egypt as a transit country en route to other countries in the Mediterranean. Egypt has equally been receiving increasing numbers of migrants and refugees from Sudan and Southern Tier African countries who seek employment, education or opportunities to transit through to reach Europe. During the war and subsequent turmoil in Libya, Egypt received large numbers of refugees, which included third-country nationals as well as returning Egyptians. During the tenure of the Muslim Brotherhood from June 2012 to July 2013, the opening of the borders with Gaza and Sudan allowed the entry of affiliated groups which were resented by large segments of the population. Since the beginning of the civil strife in Syria, middle-income Syrians have been coming to Egypt. As of November 2014, their numbers stood at about 140,000; the majority of Syrian refugees are in Cairo, where many have friends and relatives due to long-standing links between the two countries.³⁷

34 World Bank, 2014a.

35 Ahram Online, 2014.

36 Serageldin, 2012.

37 UNHCR, 2013a.

1.3 Shelter solutions for refugees and IDPs, efforts at temporary accommodation, resettlement and different viewpoints regarding return to places of origin

Dealing with forced migration caused by conflict in the Mashreq countries in recent years is viewed as a political crisis and a humanitarian effort in which local authorities are mostly left out of decision-making and action planning. Furthermore, whereas wealthier residents of host cities tend to benefit from the refugee presence as landlords and small business owners, the urban poor are often adversely affected as demand from refugees drives up costs in housing markets already experiencing severe shortages. In addition, refugees undercut employment opportunities for locals by accepting lower wages and add to crowding at health and education facilities to which they can gain access.

The crisis has equally led to the phenomenon of returnees, of foreign nationals living or established in countries experiencing turmoil return to their own country or other neighbouring countries; this has been the case with Lebanese settled in Syria and Egyptians working in Libya. Upon their return, these individuals often experience a lower quality of life than in their host countries, due to a lack of employment opportunities which drove them to emigrate in the first place.

The rapid evolution of the situation on the ground in Syria has made it difficult to monitor the patterns of movement of people within the country and the changes to the urban environment in the cities. However, different missions to Syria have begun to report on the living conditions of the displaced and their host communities in some cities within the country and in border towns in neighbouring countries.

Before 2011, Aleppo was home to a quarter of Syria's urban population, making it the largest city in the country and one of the most attractive destinations for rural migrants. Over half of Aleppo's residents were displaced when turmoil reached the city in late 2012, though estimates report that 48 per cent of those displaced moved to other neighbourhoods in the city, largely following a trend of moving westward to more secure areas.³⁸ Many IDPs from other parts of the country also sought shelter in Aleppo with relatives and social connections there. The conflict's impact on service provision in the eastern and western sides of the city varies considerably, particularly in the sectors of health, education and waste collection. The eastern side is close to the industrial zone of Sheikh Najjar and houses the majority of Aleppo's informal settlements; this part of the city has sustained much of the damage during the ongoing war. Public provision of services is severely lacking and is instead covered by different actors including charities, NGOs and unregistered centres that provide first aid and health care. Mosques and private homes are delivering education, while neighbourhood committees are largely responsible for waste collection. The multiplicity of actors dealing with specific urgencies is unavoidable, given the street battles and insecurity as different factions seek to keep or take control of different neighbourhoods in the city. The housing stock has suffered extensive damage and 52 per cent of the units are no longer in use. Damage has been particularly concentrated in informal settlements, which accounted for 45 per cent of the housing stock before the crisis.³⁹ Nonetheless, informal construction in the more secure western neighbourhoods is accommodating a growing number of displacees from other parts of Aleppo and neighbouring towns and villages.

Shelter solutions for the waves of displaced populations vary across Syrian cities and different areas of each city. Profiles carried out by UN-Habitat in selected Syrian cities in 2014 point to a great majority of IDPs relying on relatives, friends and building owners who allow IDPs to settle in vacant units or units they themselves have abandoned. Hosting is the preferred shelter solution sought by IDPs in Aleppo, Dara'a and Homs for both economic and security reasons. Households that are hosted by relatives

38 UN-Habitat, 2014a.

39 Ibid.

generally see this as a temporary solution before finding other accommodation in the future. As much as 82 per cent of IDPs in Lattakia, a secure city, are renting their dwellings. Rising rents in sought-after neighbourhoods in each city have also led to collective renting, whereby multiple households will rent one apartment. However, collective shelters account for no more than 10 per cent of IDPs in any of the cities surveyed.⁴⁰ In Homs, heavily damaged housing and a high rate of outmigration with a fairly limited number of returnees to date has resulted in collective shelters remaining a more common shelter solution for those displaced within the city. Other shelter solutions adopted by Syrian IDPs in urban areas are similar to those adopted by Lebanese displacees during the many conflicts that the country has endured since the mid-1970s, namely the occupation of unfinished or partially damaged buildings, squatting in empty but functional housing units, sheltering in low-income or informal neighbourhoods where the informal economy can provide a basic income. A large majority of the agreements made by those who abandon or rent their housing to occupants are unofficial or undocumented, raising concerns about potential future tenancy disputes and lengthy litigation.

Renting or being hosted in a house or apartment constitutes the most common shelter solution for Syrian migrants and refugees in Lebanon, as well as in urban areas across Jordanian governorates, with cities in Amman, Irbid and Zarqa governorates facing the greatest housing pressures.⁴¹ Informal settlements in Lebanon currently accommodate an estimated 193,000 refugees.⁴² While 20 per cent of refugees in Jordan live in the camps of Za'atari, Marjeep al-Fahood, Cyber City and Al-Azraq, the remainder live predominantly in poorer urban areas in the northern part of the country. The responses to the challenges faced by Lebanese and Jordanian authorities are discussed in more detail below.

1.4 Responses of Jordan and Lebanon to the influx of refugees from Iraq and Syria

Syria has historically had strong emigration ties to Jordan and Lebanon, which since the outbreak of the civil war are also hosting large numbers of Syrian refugees. As of mid-November 2014, Lebanon was hosting 1,140,120 individuals, while the most recent figures for Jordan was 618,420 individuals.⁴³ However, Lebanon and Jordan have adopted very different policies towards the influx of refugees into their territories. Approaches fall within a spectrum: from short-term, emergency actions that assume the return of refugees to their place of origin within a reasonable time frame to long-term strategies that integrate refugees and address their needs as a vulnerable population within a host community. Lebanon's decision not to set up camps has left NGOs to undertake a great majority of emergency planning, while host communities benefit from programmes to increase their capacity in a broader, development approach.⁴⁴

Lebanon hosts the largest number of refugees in relation to its national population, with 178 refugees for every 1,000 inhabitants.⁴⁵ Renting or being hosted constitutes the most common shelter solution for refugees. The Government of Lebanon estimates that one million refugees live in 1,000 of the country's municipalities, directly impacting one quarter of the Lebanese population.⁴⁶ In some smaller towns, refugees actually outnumber local inhabitants; Saadnayel, for example, has a population of 15,000 and hosts approximately 18,000 refugees.⁴⁷ Informal settlements currently accommodate an estimated 193,000 refugees.⁴⁸ Service provision in many of these towns cannot keep up with the scattered, peri-

40 UN-Habitat, 2014b.

41 UNHCR, 2014e.

42 UNHCR, 2014g.

43 UNHCR, 2014f.

44 Mackreath, 2014.

45 UNHCR, 2014h.

46 Mercy Corps Lebanon, 2014.

47 UCLG MEWA, 2014.

48 UNHCR, 2014g.

urban settlement patterns. Water supply networks, electricity grids and sanitation do not reach many of the areas where refugees are located. Financial constraints have severely impacted the ability of municipalities to cope with Syrian refugee populations, despite the support of the national government in providing shelter in public buildings and private accommodation. Furthermore, until the 2014 Regional Response Plan (RPP6), local authorities were largely excluded from the budget planning and capital investment programming process. The 2014 plan incorporates support to local authorities as a key new measure in an effort to build host community resilience, maintain social cohesion in a politically sensitive situation and ensure institutional capacity to register children and new births, so that they may gain access to services and avoid becoming stateless.⁴⁹ Should service needs continue to go unmet and socioeconomic conditions worsen, host communities can change their attitude towards Syrian refugees, which could adversely impact the political, economic and social fabric of cities.

Jordan's response contrasts with the situation and challenges in Lebanon. The complex history of Jordan as a primary receiving country for Palestinians since the 1948 war, as well as the government's assessment regarding the burden of Iraqi refugees in urban areas, has elicited a policy response that attempts to keep refugee populations separate from the general population and away from key cities. This separation most often manifests in refugee camps run by the government and the United Nations. Jordan particularly pushed for a UN emergency solution that established camps when it felt that the international aid it was receiving was insufficient to meet the costs it had been incurring in accommodating the influx of Syrian refugees. The Minister of the Interior stated in 2013 that the aid received did not even cover 30 per cent of the costs of the response.⁵⁰ Because of the country's history, approaches that include refugee accommodation linked to host cities' urban growth and economic development are met with scepticism and sometimes hostility.

The growing population of Za'atari camp outside of Mafraq city now makes this camp the country's fourth-largest settlement.⁵¹ Despite local perceptions of economic and security threats, the majority of Syrian refugees in Jordan live in urban areas in the north-east of the country near the Syrian border, with some also settling in the urban and peri-urban areas of Amman and Zarqa. Those settling in and around Mafraq city are mostly from Dara'a, with some refugees from Homs as well. Though conditions in refugee camps have been described as exposing refugees to health risks and violence, some assessments in Jordan have pointed to worse living conditions for those outside of the camps, where it is sometimes difficult to procure adequate foodstuffs, sleeping materials and, in the winter, heating fuel.⁵²

Jordanian property owners and businesses benefit from the presence of these urban-dwelling refugees, often charging exorbitant rents in a high-demand housing market. A 2013 assessment of the shelter context for refugees in Mafraq governorate revealed that 86 per cent lived in a house or apartment with average rents in urban areas around JOD 136 (USD 190).⁵³ As population influxes add additional strain to already-stretched resources and services, the poorest host populations become more vulnerable to losing access to affordable housing. Water shortages are becoming more frequent with the additional demand on a chronically scarce supply. In Mafraq, water shortages had quadrupled by the end of 2013, jeopardizing the sanitation and health of both refugees and host communities and causing rising social tension and even urban conflict.⁵⁴

49 UNHCR, 2014b.

50 Jordan Times, 2013.

51 Seeley, 2013.

52 UCLG MEWA, 2014.

53 UNICEF, UNHCR and REACH, 2013.

54 Ministry of Water and Irrigation, 2013.

In both Lebanon and Jordan, municipalities wield limited administrative autonomy and are fiscally weak due to their reliance on central government transfers. Despite these constraints, they are often the first administrative point of contact for refugees and a key purveyor of services. Economic precarity of host populations is also an issue in both countries as Syrians are willing to work for cheaper wages than young Jordanians. Collaborations between NGOs, international agencies, and Jordanian and Lebanese governments that provide technical support and financial resources are badly needed to increase the urban resilience of cities and towns.

II. MAGHREB

In 2013, between 60 per cent and 80 per cent of the population of the four countries constituting the Maghreb subregion was urban. Libya has the highest percentage of its population living in cities, while Morocco has the smallest relative urban population (59%).⁵⁵

In spite of major development efforts, unemployment rates in the region vary between 9 per cent and 15 per cent, with urban unemployment and that of young adults considerably higher. Between 2000 and 2013, Algeria managed to lower its unemployment rate to 9.8 per cent. In Libya, after a steady decline for most of the 2000s, the unemployment rate increased by nearly 1 percentage point from 2011 to 2012.⁵⁶ Morocco's rate has hovered at about 9 per cent for the past four years, though urban unemployment has remained significantly higher and rose throughout 2013.⁵⁷ Tunisia's overall rate has been on the decline, but remains the highest in North Africa as of the first trimester of 2014 (15.2%).⁵⁸ These high unemployment rates in the Maghreb are a strong push factor for outmigration from North Africa to Europe and other parts of the world. These relatively high unemployment rates have resulted in the intensification of a long tradition of outmigration of young people, particularly university graduates, to destinations in Europe and elsewhere. The total number of migrants from the Maghreb grew from 3.58 million in 2000 to 5.46 million in 2013.⁵⁹ As Europe's economies continue to experience low rates of growth and restrict migratory flows, including for high-skilled workers, governments in the Maghreb will face additional difficulties absorbing their young workers who would otherwise have migrated to Europe.

2.1 Established diasporas in Europe; the changing patterns of migration since the European financial crisis; Europe as an intermediate destination and a gateway to opportunities to migrate to North America

Migration has long been at the forefront of the geopolitical relationship between the Maghreb and Europe – the primary receiver of migrants from the North African region. Colonial legacies, economic interdependencies and proximity have led to the establishment of several large North African diasporas in Europe whose remittances have made significant contributions to local development in their countries of origin. According to UN DESA, the number of migrants from the region grew by 32 per cent from 3.58 million in mid-2000 to 4.72 million in mid-2013; 88 per cent of Maghrebi emigrants go to five European countries: France, Spain, Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom. Table 1 below shows the top five migratory destinations for the Maghreb countries.

Ongoing and often acute internal political tensions and conflicts have been a major factor influencing recent migration dynamics in North Africa, as elsewhere in the Middle East. Nearly nine months after the outbreak of civil war in Libya in 2011, 768,372 migrants had fled Libya for Tunisia, Egypt, Niger, Chad, Italy, Algeria, Sudan and Malta (in that order of magnitude).⁶⁰ Approximately 67,076 Libyan nationals and foreigners living in Libya fled the country during this time as well.⁶¹ While international organizations are facilitating the repatriation of non-Libyans, many third-country nationals are staying in the countries to which they immediately fled. One of the more protracted conflicts in the region between the Western Sahara Polisario Front and Morocco has generated an estimated 90,000 Sahrawi refugees living in camps in Tindouf, in south-west Algeria, who remain dependent on humanitarian assistance.⁶²

55 World Bank, 2013a

56 World Bank, 2014b.

57 Haut Commissariat au Plan, 2014.

58 Institut National de la Statistique - Tunisie, 2014.

59 UN DESA, 2013.

60 IOM, 2011a, 2011b.

61 Migration Policy Centre, 2013a.

62 UNHCR, 2014c.

Table 1: Principal destinations for Maghreb migrants, mid-2013

Country of origin	Total migrants	Top five countries of destination (no. and % of migrants)				
Algeria	1,716,202	France (1,406,845) (82%)	Spain (60,110) (4%)	Italy (24,601) (1%)	United Kingdom (20,889) (1%)	Germany (13,406) (1%)
Libya	142,192	Italy (38,548) (27%)	United Kingdom (20,069) (14%)	Viet Nam (11,278) (8%)	North America (4,938) (3%)	France (2,311) (2%)
Morocco	2,854,502	France (911,046) (32%)	Spain (745,674) (26%)	Italy (425,188) (15%)	Germany (93,844) (3%)	United Kingdom (23,080) (1%)
Tunisia	643,612	France (382,129) (59%)	Italy (115,588) (18%)	Germany (26,813) (4%)	GCC (18,839) (3%)	United Kingdom (9,032) (1%)

Europe's recession has had significant impacts, disrupting established patterns for labour migration and decreasing remittances, development assistance and foreign investment to Maghrebi countries. According to the most recent census results released in 2015, 22.4 per cent of internal migrants (inter-governorate) cite employment as their motivation, while employment opportunity is mentioned by 71.6 per cent of Tunisians leaving to international destinations, primarily in Europe. The foreign population residing in Tunisia is composed primarily of Algerian, Libyan, French and Moroccan nationals. The number of French nationals has nearly doubled since 2004, with many French citizens of Tunisian origin returning to the country. Meanwhile, the number of Libyans residing in Tunisia is over five times that of 2004, due to the outbreak of conflict in their country.⁶³

The strength of historic colonial ties, including the second language of preference for university graduates, is clearly reflected in the primary destination for Maghrebi emigrants: France for Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia and Italy for Libya. France is the destination of 82 per cent of the Algerian diaspora, 59 per cent of Tunisia's and 32 per cent of Morocco's. It was the destination of one quarter of emigrants from Tunisia in 2011-2012.⁶⁴ Italy is also becoming a more significant destination for both legal and illegal Tunisian migrants. Emigration in the recent past has been predominantly male and increasingly well-educated as a result of Tunisia's high unemployment rate for university graduates. While France is still the country of choice for Moroccan migrants, Spain and Italy are growing in popularity.

63 Institut National de la Statistique – Tunisie, 2015.

64 Institut National de la Statistique – Tunisie, 2012.

Table 2: Origin of migrants to the Maghreb

Country of origin	Total migrants	Top five countries of origin (no. and % of migrants)				
Algeria	121,674	W. Sahara (45,654) (38%)	Occupied Palestinian Territory (28,309) (11%)	Mashreq (13,083) (5%)	Somalia (9,996) (4%)	Maghreb (3,358) (1%)
Libya	257,731	Occupied Palestinian Territory (94,502) (37%)	Mashreq (53,407) (21%)	Somalia (33,366) (13%)	Yemen (8,803) (3%)	Malaysia (7,666) (3%)
Morocco	24,205	Maghreb (9,290) (38%)	France (3,035) (13%)	Mashreq (1,791) (7%)	Sudan* (1,383) (6%)	Italy (1,116) (5%)
Tunisia	17,959	Maghreb (9,417) (38%)	France (2,204) (12%)	Italy (809) (5%)	Somalia (4,35) (2%)	Sudan* (369) (2%)

Note: *Includes South Sudan.

The oil-producing countries in the Maghreb have long attracted both regional migrants and migrants from Arabic-speaking countries. Two groups stand out as significant minorities in Algeria and Libya: Palestinians and citizens of Mashreq countries, which together account for 49 per cent of Algeria's foreign population and 58 per cent of Libya's. Both groups are long-term residents. Algeria's labour needs have steadily increased over the last decade and nearly tripled between 2011 and 2014.⁶⁵ Foreign resident labourers come from 125 different countries; most are from other Arab countries, as well as sub-Saharan Africa and, increasingly, China.

There are large concentrations of economic migrants from sub-Saharan Africa in Oran and Algiers. Despite the increasing number of migrants from around the world coming to Algeria for work, the country has a negative net migration rate, and has its emigrant population concentrated in France (75% of its emigrant stock in 2012). It is also a refugee host country: in Tindouf, 90,000 Sahrawi refugees who had the conflict between the Western Sahara Polisario Front and Morocco live in abject poverty; 18 per cent of the camp's inhabitants suffer from acute malnutrition.⁶⁶

Table 3: Work permits issued in Algeria for foreign labour

2001	1,100
2007	23,000
2011	50,760
2014	140,00

Source: Di Bartolomeo, Fakhoury and Perrin, 2010; Noredine, 2014.

65 Noredine, 2014.

66 UNHCR, 2014c.

Libya's pan-Africa policy under the regime of Muammar Qaddafi led to an influx of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa to work in Tripoli and Benghazi. Africans from other parts of the continent have also felt the push factors of conflicts, particularly in West Africa and the Horn, and emigrated to Libya. Following the 2011 conflict, many of these migrants fled to surrounding countries. A large majority fled to Tunisia where they constituted 41.93 per cent of arrivals, as well as to Egypt and Algeria. Most fleeing to Chad and Niger were Libyan nationals (98.2% and 94.7% respectively).⁶⁷

Inward migration to the Maghreb has been far more turbulent since 2011 and many of the established migratory trends in the region have been reversed. Unemployment, compounded by internal turmoil, has particularly affected Tunisia; joblessness among the country's educated and skilled labour force peaked in early 2012 at 34.2 per cent and the proportion of migrants with a university degree reached one fifth of all outward migration in 2010.⁶⁸ Additionally, during the 2011 uprising, over 28,000 Tunisians attempted to reach the Italian island of Lampedusa.⁶⁹ From 2009 to 2013, a joint development project under the UN-Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Achievement Fund in the migration-prone governorates of Le Kef, Gafsa and parts of Tunis focused on the following: generating decent job opportunities that are better aligned with the country's labour force skill sets and demography trends; upgrading informal enterprises; and promoting employment and migration support services for lower-skilled workers. The project is considered to have successfully reformed mechanisms for migration and contributed to the economic development of the regions in which it was active.⁷⁰

Outward migration from the Maghreb continues to follow routes paved by colonial linkages, with the majority of regular migrants from Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia residing in France and the majority of Libyan migrants residing in Italy. Spain hosts a significant Moroccan diaspora, which according to Spanish statistics in 2012, was larger than that of France but contributed only a fourth of what France contributes in remittances.⁷¹ The European financial crisis had a massive impact on Spain's unemployment rate. At the beginning of 2008, the unemployment rate was just under 9 per cent; at the beginning of 2014, the rate had soared to over 25 per cent.⁷² As a result, an estimated 800,000 Moroccans, or half of the Moroccan population working in Spain, lost their jobs and many decided to return to Morocco.⁷³ Interestingly, while the number of Moroccans in Spain has declined since the financial crisis, their percentage in relation to other immigrants has increased, indicating that Moroccans are slower to leave Spain than other immigrant groups.

67 IOM, 2011a, 2011b.

68 Ibid.

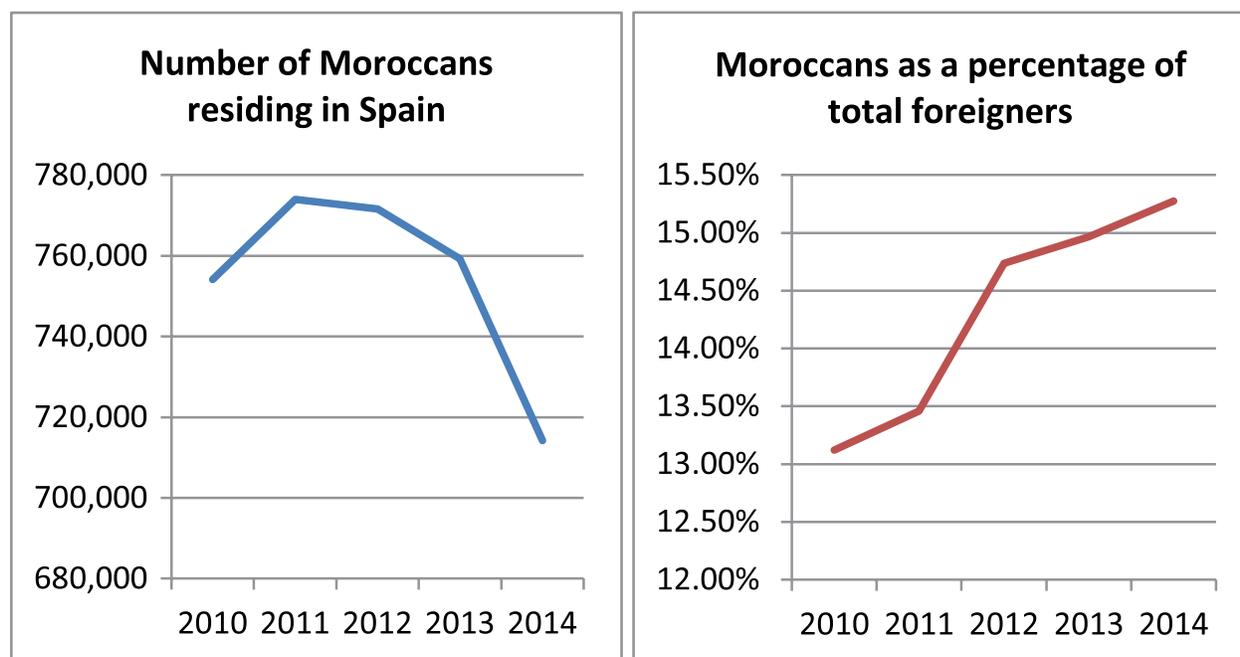
69 Migration Policy Centre, 2013g

70 MDG Achievement Fund, 2014.

71 Migration Policy Centre, 2013e.

72 Statistical Office of the European Commission, 2014.

73 Sharki, 2012.



Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2014.

Remittances

In Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, remittances play a significant role in national development, totalling two to thirteen times the net value of international and bilateral development assistance.

Country (2012)	Remittances (USD million)	Net ODA (USD million)
Algeria	1,942	144
Libya	-	87
Morocco	6,508	1,480
Tunisia	2,266	1,017

Source: OECD, 2012; World Bank, 2014a.

The impact of remittance inflows is most significantly felt in Morocco and Tunisia where, in 2013, they accounted for 6.6 per cent and 4.9 per cent of GDP, respectively.⁷⁴ These inflows have remained relatively stable over the past five years, with only slight increases in Tunisia and Algeria. Remittances are a key element in the economic strategies of receiving households, many of which rely on this income source just to meet basic needs. Any additional savings that a family can accrue is typically used to purchase land, make incremental improvements to housing or start a commercial activity. In terms of outflows, migrants in Libya sent nearly USD 2 billion abroad in 2013, by far the greatest amount in the subregion.

74 World Bank, 2014a.

Leveraging remittances for local development in the Maghreb has primarily focused on activities and projects in rural communities and economies. They have provided important sources of finance for the development of small and medium enterprises in villages in the Rif Mountains in Morocco and elsewhere in the country. The recent economic turbulence following the revolution in Tunisia has made the impact of remittances more pronounced, while simultaneously pushing the cost of transfers up to 13 per cent (according to the Central Bank of Tunisia) – one of the highest rates in the world. Several initiatives are currently working with local authorities to increase their participation and coordination in the leveraging of remittances for local economic and human development. Some countries, such as Morocco as highlighted below, are taking steps towards establishing institutional frameworks to capitalize on remittances for savings and investment purposes.

Capturing contributions from the diaspora

Migration policy in Morocco has often concentrated on Morocco's role as a sending country and its port cities as immigration gateways. In 2013, the Ministry in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs launched the MaghriBank to enhance Moroccan expatriates' financial connections to their country of origin. MaghriBank functions as an online portal to link Moroccans living abroad to the information and services of national banks.⁷⁵ The MaghriBank initiative is part of a broader fund called "MDM Invest" set up to encourage investment of expatriate Moroccans managed by the Caisse Centrale de Garantie.

Morocco has also felt near-constant pressure from Spanish authorities to stem the flow of migrant hopefuls illegally entering Europe through the Spanish gateway cities of Ceuta and Melilla. Clandestine immigration in the western Mediterranean (namely the Morocco–Spain corridor) has accounted for a relatively small number of illegal border crossings into the European Union since 2011, compared with illegal sea border crossings in the central and eastern Mediterranean, namely into Italy. However, in the first quarter of 2014, land crossings in the western Mediterranean reached an all-time high and overall illegal crossings were highest of any first quarter since the turmoil of 2011.⁷⁶

2.2 Clandestine Mediterranean crossings to Spain and Italy

Large youth cohorts increasingly move to cities attracted by educational opportunities and perceived job opportunities. Some of the same pull factors that attract the region's large youth cohorts to cities in their countries of origin also attract them to emigrate, often clandestinely, when opportunities in urban centres are found to be more elusive than previously understood. At the same time, the high rates of youth unemployment, such as those experienced in North African cities can create political instability, which can in turn make people consider illegal migration to Europe or North America to improve their quality of life.

The European Union border management agency Frontex distinguishes four principal Mediterranean migratory routes used by migrants from MENA countries based upon where irregular migrants have been detected by the European authorities.⁷⁷ Two of these primary routes run through Maghreb countries –

⁷⁵ Ministry in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs, 2013.

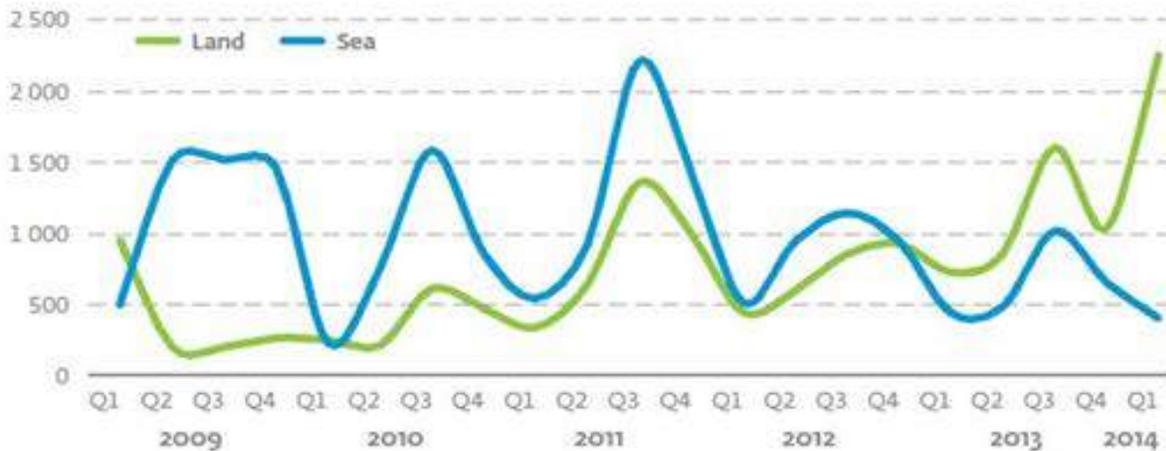
⁷⁶ Frontex, 2014.

⁷⁷ These include: the eastern Mediterranean route, with Turkey as the nexus for migrants from the Mashreq, Horn of Africa and Central Asia; the Apulia and Calabria route from Turkey and Egypt to Greece and Italy; the central Mediterranean route from Tunisia and Libya to Malta and Italy; and the western Mediterranean route used primarily by Algerians and Moroccans to reach the Iberian peninsula.

the central Mediterranean route (Tunisia and Libya) and the western Mediterranean route (Algeria and Morocco). Between 2012 and 2013, all routes monitored by Frontex, with the exception of the eastern Mediterranean route, experienced increases in migration pressure. Spikes in clandestine immigration in the past few years, to Spain and Italy in particular, are correlated with regime changes and ensuing insecurity.

The central Mediterranean route, with departure points in Libya and Tunisia saw the most dramatic increase in illegal detections in 2013, with a peak similar to that experienced during the eruption of civil unrest in the departure countries. The decrease in the numbers reported for the eastern Mediterranean route from Turkey to Greece, Bulgaria and Cyprus is largely due to strengthening of regulatory measures adopted by the Greek authorities. Between January and June of 2014, Syrians were the most represented nationality intercepted along this route – a significant departure from the typical composition of migrants along this corridor, and an indication that they are likely using other routes through Egypt and North Africa as well.⁷⁸

Figure 1: Detections of illegal border crossing on the western Mediterranean route



Source: Frontex Risk Analysis Network data as of 21 May 2014.

Note: Data shown is by border type/quarter since 2009.

In the first six months of 2014, Italian authorities alone rescued approximately 65,000 migrants attempting dangerous sea crossings, often departing from Libya. As of mid-August in the same year, that figure had climbed to nearly 100,000, which was 25,000 higher than the total illegal border detections by Italy in the Mediterranean for 2013.⁷⁹ The Strait of Gibraltar is the other key crossing for migration between Europe and North Africa. This corridor has, in more recent years, drawn significant numbers of sub-Saharan Africans to Morocco looking to enter Europe. Migrants often live in makeshift, informal settlements near the border before attempting a crossing either overland by scaling a fence or across the sea in small boats. One of the more recent measures taken by Morocco has been the construction of a wall at the Moroccan border with Melilla, which began in April 2014. Despite these measures, Spain has reported record numbers of illegal migrant crossings for the year. It has been reported that Morocco’s maritime authorities have ceased to patrol the northern coast, which Spain has attributed to this record influx.⁸⁰

78 Frontex, 2014.
 79 Ghorbal, 2014.
 80 Govan, 2014.

Municipal buildings, such as recreational facilities, are being converted into temporary shelters to accommodate the record number of migrants reaching European shores or being rescued by European authorities at sea. Earlier decreases, before the regional crises, had led many authorities and municipalities, such as Lampedusa, to downsize their intake capacity for illegal migrants, leading to severe stresses on resources and services during the 2011 influxes. This posed health and security threats as overcrowding began to jeopardize public health and emergency shelter in tents was necessary to accommodate the approximately 8,000 that had fled the violence in Libya and arrived on the Sicilian island. The Ministry of the Interior has since set up contingency plans and taken emergency preparedness measures in cooperation with local authorities in southern Italy.

Before insecurity and conflict in the region led to influxes of illegal migrants, several mechanisms had proven successful in stymying migration flows. In some cases, this has contributed to the concentration of transit migrants in North African cities as Europe strengthened its security measures. Bilateral agreements, such as those between Libya and Italy and Spain and Morocco, have shown decreased flows when properly enforced.

2.3 Challenges for Maghreb gateway cities in accommodating migrants for lengthy periods

With the tightening of European border security and a reduction in employment opportunities caused by the European financial crisis, increasing numbers of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa that would have typically used North African cities as gateways to Europe are increasingly staying in cities such as Rabat, Tunis and Tripoli. These cities face new and increasing pressures to provide adequate services and ensure security and social order. In Morocco, migrants apprehended at the borders with Spain are often transported to Fez and Rabat, where they face greater challenges to provide for themselves due to the higher costs of living.

As migrant populations grow, reports of discrimination faced by migrant communities are becoming more frequent. Many sub-Saharan Africans in Morocco have reported identity checks, arrests and evictions of migrants in urban centres.

Local and international NGOs and associations are largely responsible for filling the gaps in service provision for migrants living in urban settings, particularly the most vulnerable. In principle, in terms of health care, migrants receive the same rights and access as Moroccan nationals, though national health authorities often partner with specialized agencies (such as Doctors without Borders) for service delivery, or leave the responsibility entirely to the private or non-governmental sector. For example, Terre des Hommes, an international federation that advocates for the protection of the rights of child migrants, runs a health centre in Rabat for expectant and new mothers. The organization also cooperates with the Health Ministry and public medical institutions for medical emergencies. Furthermore, Terre des Hommes has expressed interest in involving itself with the education of migrant children, who would benefit from social integration and acquisition of the host country's language; migrant children are currently denied access to enrollment in certain cities despite national legislation that guarantees universal education.

2.4 Tensions created by transit migration from sub-Saharan Africa and recent reforms in Morocco

With the evolution of Morocco's character from a country of emigration to a country that is increasingly hosting sub-Saharan Africans, various human rights groups, including the National Human Rights Council, and migrant associations have called for a re-evaluation and reform of Moroccan migrant policy. In September 2013, King Mohammed VI announced that the government would begin working on a new, more liberal immigration policy. Although it is too early to tell how the new policy will be implemented,

the move is the government's first tacit acknowledgment that Morocco is also becoming a country of settlement.

Morocco's situation and evolution into a migrant-receiving country is one that it shares with other countries in the developing world, as a result of globalization and other subregional factors such as the European financial crisis and political conflict. As human mobility increases and is promoted as a contributing factor to economic, cultural and human development, ensuring the basic rights of migrants and meeting their basic service needs becomes a high priority on the international agenda.

Some of the key features of the policy, which was adopted in September 2013, include special regularization of certain categories of undocumented migrants and the design of an asylum system that recognizes the status of refugees. The award of refugee status to an asylum-seeker guarantees documentation that allows the refugee to access job opportunities and limited free health care. During the first five months of the policy's enactment, 580 asylum-seekers had been given refugee identity cards – 10 per cent of the population that is estimated to be eligible.⁸¹ Eligible candidates for special regularization include: those with work contracts effective for at least two years; non-nationals who have lived in Morocco for five years or more; non-national spouses of Moroccans who have lived together for at least two years; non-national spouses of regularized non-nationals who have lived together for at least four years; children of couples in one of these types of relationships; and those with severe medical conditions who arrived before the end of 2013. As of October 2014, the number of regularization requests had reached nearly 20,000, representing 103 countries. Nearly half of these requests have been approved.⁸²

Intertwined with this policy shift from a security-dominated approach to a more rights-based approach is the signing of a mobility partnership with the European Union, which contains a readmission agreement that places increased pressure and responsibility on Moroccan central and local authorities to effectively and humanely manage this population once they are readmitted into Morocco.

A combination of Moroccan foreign policy and cooperation, European security policies and economic situation, and the push and pull factors at work in sub-Saharan Africa is therefore currently transforming Morocco's migrant landscape. Until policy decisions among sending, transit and receiving countries can stem this migratory trend through local development in the migrants' countries of origin, rather than focus on containing it in destination countries, Maghrebi central and local authorities will require more and more resources to govern, integrate and serve this growing population.⁸³

81 IRIN, 2012.

82 IOM, 2014a.

83 Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, 2014.

III. GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL

As a result of rising oil revenue, all Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have adopted ambitious development programmes that are attracting an increasing labour supply, primarily from the Indian sub-continent. Between 2000 and mid-2013, the foreign population of the region grew from 10.5 to 22.4 million: 58 per cent come from the Indian sub-continent, 13 per cent from the Mashreq and another 10 per cent from other Asian countries.⁸⁴

3.1 Dealing with the continued growth in expatriate workers; limitations of policies promoting substitution of national by foreign labour

The GCC region is one of the most urbanized regions in the world. The populations of both Qatar and Kuwait are 99 per cent and 98 per cent urban respectively, and the continued in-migration of expatriate labourers, together with internal rural-to-urban migration, are continuing to drive urbanization in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. In labour-exporting countries, until 2011, employment in the GCC allowed expatriate workers to cut in half the time needed to accumulate the savings required to acquire housing or set up a business in their home country.⁸⁵ The resultant massive infusion of capital into real estate has fuelled unprecedented increases in land prices that have doubled in value every two to four years since the late 1970s and early 1980s.

As a result, non-nationals account for the majority in several countries in the region. In Kuwait, 69 per cent of the total population and 83 per cent of the labour force are expatriates.⁸⁶ In 2012, expatriates accounted for 89 per cent of the population of Qatar, 91 per cent of whom were economically active as compared to only 51 per cent of the Qatari population⁸⁷. According to mid-year estimates for 2010, non-nationals accounted for 89 per cent of the population in the United Arab Emirates; of this figure, males accounted for 78 per cent.⁸⁸ In Oman, expatriates made up 48 per cent of the population of Muscat governorate in 2010 but only 29 per cent of the total population. The expatriate population only outnumbered the Omani population in Al-Wusta governorate (formerly a region) and in the Mutrah and Bawshar wilayet of Muscat.⁸⁹ Bahrain's expatriate population decreased from 2010 to 2011, and now represents 51 per cent of the total population of the country.⁹⁰ In Saudi Arabia, the most populated country in the GCC with nearly 30 million inhabitants as of its last census in 2010, expatriates account for 32 per cent of the total population.⁹¹

Labour migration is predominately male according to national statistics in GCC countries, though women also migrate, primarily as domestic workers. The majority of unskilled or domestic labourers are from Asian countries, while skilled labour comes mainly from the Mashreq and Western countries. Foreign Arab populations, dominated by Egyptians, are also present in the GCC. In mid-2013, 79 per cent of foreign labourers came from five countries: India, 6.8 million; Bangladesh, 3.1 million; Pakistan, 2.9 million; Egypt, 2.4 million; and the Philippines, 1.8 million. Other Mashreq countries sent 461,000 workers to the GCC.⁹² In general, higher-skilled labourers from countries in the MENA region migrate to the oil-producing Gulf countries in search of better professional opportunities, while South-East Asian nationals, with less education and professional training, come to work as labourers, primarily in the construction and service sectors. Egypt is a primary country of origin for both types of labour migrants (well-educated young professional and lesser-skilled workers).

84 UN DESA, 2013.

85 World Bank, 2014c.

86 Ibrahim, 2014; Public Authority for Civil Information, 2013.

87 Qatar Statistics Authority, 2012.

88 National Bureau of Statistics, 2011.

89 Muscat National Centre for Statistics and Information.

90 Kingdom of Bahrain, 2011.

91 Central Department of Statistics and Information, 2014.

92 UN DESA, 2013.

Destination	Total migrants	Top five countries of origin (no. and % of migrants)				
Bahrain*	244,937	India (90,968) (37.1%)	Pakistan (30,372) (12.4%)	Bangladesh (29,560) (12.1%)	Mashreq (37,286) (8.6%)	Philippines (12,799) (5.2%)
Kuwait**	1,500,442	India (557,068) (37.1%)	Pakistan (185,993) (12.4%)	Bangladesh (181,023) (12.1%)	Mashreq (159,262) (10.6%)	Philippines (78,380) (5.2%)
Oman*	623,608	India (333,381) (53.5%)	Bangladesh (92,035) (14.8%)	Pakistan (66,499) (10.7%)	Mashreq (28,357) (4.6%)	Indonesia (17,994) (2.8%)
Qatar*	470,731	India (174,783) (37.1%)	Pakistan (58,356) (12.4%)	Bangladesh (57,797) (12.1%)	Mashreq (49,969) (10.6%)	Philippines (24,592) (5.2%)
Saudi Arabia**	5,263,388	India (1,080,171) (20.5%)	Mashreq (875,627) (16.6%)	Pakistan (741,613) (14.1%)	Philippines (495,585) (9.4%)	Bangladesh (490,436) (9.3%)
United Arab Emirates**	2,446,675	India (915,848) (37.4%)	Pakistan (305,782) (12.5%)	Bangladesh (297,610) (12.2%)	Mashreq (128,860) (10.7%)	Philippines (15,942) (5.3%)

Notes: *Estimates calculated based on foreign citizens.

**Estimates calculated based on foreign citizens and refugees.

Most expatriates, with the exception of skilled professionals, work in the GCC under the kafala or sponsorship system. While the system gives broad power to employers, who are in charge of visa procurement and are responsible for the legal status of the expatriates they hire, it has also been criticized for giving few rights to workers. As a result of the kafala system, the majority of unskilled expatriates working in the GCC experience a low quality of life brought on by social segregation and sub-standard living conditions. Integration into national society is deterred as a result of the current policy environment that controls the recruitment and residency of expatriates. The housing situation for many of the mostly male labourers often consists of crowded, low-cost units built and managed by the employer. The inability of expatriates to own property, combined with low wages that price them out of the rental housing market, makes it difficult for them to find alternative, better-quality housing solutions. Local governments and other public authorities have largely been unable to intervene to improve the situation for this particular class of labourers.

Several countries are now implementing policies that grant greater rights and benefits to expatriate labourers while maintaining the sponsorship system. In Bahrain, Decree 79 of 2009 allows expatriates the right to change employment without the consent of their sponsoring employer, though their legal residency in the country still depends on their being sponsored by an individual or company.⁹³ The United Arab Emirates has implemented a mandatory electronic Wage Protection System, as well as increased inspections on violations of daytime breaks and of housing conditions. In 2011, Qatar proposed a law establishing the rights and responsibilities of domestic workers. Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, has reinforced the implementation of existing protections in the 2009 Labour Code.

However, the bursting of the real estate bubble in 2008 caused the cancellation or delay of numerous projects that had cascading impacts on migrant construction workers. In Dubai alone, tens of thousands of workers lost their jobs; in 2010, hundreds of workers remained stranded in labour camps, claiming that they had not been paid and were unable to return home.⁹⁴

The high percentage of migrants in the labour force has had a negative impact on the ability of young entrants to find a job. Migrants are primarily employed in the private sector, leaving nationals to compete for a limited number of jobs in the public sector; this has resulted in high rates of unemployment among nationals. In Kuwait, 82 per cent of the national labour force is employed by the government⁹⁵ and the problem is thought to be getting worse as the current number of civil service job-seekers as of mid-September 2014 reached nearly 20,000.⁹⁶ In Abu Dhabi, the unemployment rate for United Arab Emirates citizens in the labour force was 12 per cent in 2011, 10 per cent higher than for non-nationals.⁹⁷

The magnitude of labour importation and relative proportion of foreign expatriates in the GCC has caused varying levels of concern. Governments in the region have sought to address the situation by increasing employment opportunities for nationals. Processes such as “Saudiization” or “Emiratization” have attempted to place certain restrictions on private companies’ ability to recruit labour from abroad before available positions are filled by nationals; these programmes have had limited success in addressing the unemployment problem.

3.2 Legal and cultural considerations conditioning access to land and housing

In most GCC countries, access to land and housing is a right reserved for citizens, though some governments are moving towards conditioned access to purchasing property for expatriate workers. Statelessness is also an issue in some countries. Bedouin tribes that were largely nomadic throughout Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq and Kuwait, but whose citizenship was never fully registered have resulted in thousands of bidoon, or people without citizenship. The lack of a legally recognized status in many cases restricts this group’s access to educational opportunities, health care, formal employment and home ownership. Perpetuating the issue is a legislative framework that stipulates that a woman cannot pass on citizenship to a child. As of 2013, there were 93,000 stateless people in Kuwait, 70,000 in Saudi Arabia, and 1,200 in Qatar.⁹⁸

3.3 The role of local authorities in providing services to the expatriate population

Local authorities in the GCC generally do not provide services to the expatriate population. In some countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, municipal policies can be perceived as hostile to migrant populations. In Abu Dhabi, for example, a new campaign – “Say no to bachelors thronging residential neighbourhoods – Together we ensure superior life for residents,” – calls for the eviction of expatriates from “family” neighbourhoods.⁹⁹ Landlords and property owners face fines if they are found to be accommodating large groups of expatriates. A 2013 Administrative Decree in the Abu Dhabi emirate makes it illegal for property owners to sublet units in their homes, while a municipal ordinance makes it illegal for more than three people to live in a single room. High rents in Abu Dhabi and reported salaries as low as AED 1,500–2,500 per month (USD 680) make shared living arrangements one of the limited options for expatriate labourers.

94 Human Rights Watch, 2010.

95 Public Authority for Civil Information, 2014.

96 Ibrahim, 2014.

97 Statistics Centre, 2013.

98 UNHCR, 2013a.

99 Sankar, 2014.

Campaigns such as these work to marginalize migrant communities instead of integrating them to create inclusive societies. Moreover, the overall issues of unsustainable living wages for expatriate workers and a lack of appropriate and proximate housing typologies for the population in demand go unaddressed. This issue will continue to be of concern to municipalities until sustainable solutions are found to provide expatriate labourers with affordable accommodation that is accessible from their workplaces.

In many GCC countries, temporary workers are under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior and, though beholden to different municipal ordinances, often do not interact with local authorities. Governments in migrants' countries of origin have recently increased their role in ensuring that their citizens are protected from abuse while working in the GCC. The Philippines, for example, offers domestic workers heading to the United Arab Emirates orientation and training courses, as well as pre-employment orientation seminars online to ensure safe and legal recruitment. The country's Department of Labour and Employment also has overseas offices in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia (Jeddah and Riyadh), Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi and Dubai). In migrant-sending countries such as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, the three top countries of origin for expatriate workers in the United Arab Emirates, civil society organizations have become increasingly active in advocating for the rights of migrants and offering various services to victims of exploitation and abuse.¹⁰⁰

3.4 Highlight: Expatriate-housing options in Kuwait

In 2013, Kuwait was home to 2.03 million expatriates, who accounted for 82.7 per cent of the labour force of the country.¹⁰¹ This expatriate labour force is primarily comprised of men from Asian countries working in manufacturing, construction and service industries, though many of the expatriates coming from Arab and Western countries tend to have more white-collar jobs as educators, health professionals and managers. Kuwait's rental housing market has diversified to accommodate the varying income levels of the labour force and their family situations and lifestyle choices. Meanwhile, domestic workers, such as maids, drivers and cooks, often live in single-room units attached to the household employing them.

Article 34 of the 2010 Law of Labour in the Private Sector stipulates that employers responsible for the construction of government projects or working in remote areas should provide suitable housing for employees or an appropriate accommodation allowance. The employer must also provide means of transportation, free of charge, for work undertaken in remote areas.¹⁰² Various regulations and master plan guidelines designate areas for private investment housing (for nationals and non-nationals) and private housing (strictly for nationals) in an attempt to increase access for both groups. However, in many Kuwaiti cities, private housing meant for Kuwaitis is transformed into worker housing, formally and informally, amid an increase in the number of expatriates relative to the Kuwaiti population. Most of the converted units are in housing projects awaiting redevelopment; owners rent to brokers who in turn sublet to low-income expatriate workers.

Since expatriates are sub-tenants, they lack any security of tenure. Bachelor ghettos, as they are often derogatorily referred to, have emerged in various Kuwait City neighbourhoods, including Bneid Al-Gar, Jahra, Khaitan, Subhan, Suelibeikhat, Sulaibya and the infamous settlement of Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh near the airport. Inspections in such areas have led to a series of mass arrests. In June 2013, 555 resident expatriate workers were arrested in in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh and 750 in Bneid Al-Gar on a variety of charges related to the violation of residency laws.¹⁰³

100 Malit and Al-Youha, 2013.

101 Public Authority for Civil Information, 2014.

102 Government of Kuwait, 2010.

103 Kuwait Times, 2013.

According to a survey of low-income single expatriate workers living in six different areas of Kuwait City, group housing is overcrowded and lacks basic services and amenities. Water shortages, power outages and a lack of sanitation are common characteristics of expatriate worker housing. These communities also experience higher rates of crime, violence, prostitution and disease. Despite the poor living conditions, rent is relatively affordable at KWD 10–15 monthly per person, which is less than a quarter of the average living salary of expatriate workers in the surveyed areas.

According to the Third Kuwait Master Plan by 2030, the urban population of Kuwait is expected to reach 3.9 million inhabitants, over half of whom will be single, non-Kuwaiti males. While the existing housing stock in Kuwait City is thought to be sufficient for future growth to 2030 if vacant units are transformed and utilized, both collective housing and non-Kuwaiti private housing will need to be constructed by 2030 to meet projected national demand and decrease overcrowding (89,040 dwellings in the collective stock and 149,981 private units will be required).

The plan also proposes new housing schemes aligned with the city's vision to become a financial, business and commercial hub for the region. New business apartments and executive apartment housing are proposed to accommodate Kuwaiti and Gulf State entrepreneurs and businessmen.¹⁰⁴ In 2010, the government granted foreign expatriates permission to purchase apartments on the following conditions: the unit should be no larger than 350 m² and the owner should have lived in Kuwait for at least 10 years and has no criminal record.

¹⁰⁴ Kuwaiti Engineering Group and Colin Buchanan & Partners, 2005.

IV. SOUTHERN TIER

The Southern Tier countries of the MENA region are experiencing continuations and renewals of intertribal conflict that in 2011 erupted in revolution in Yemen and resulted in the secession and independence of South Sudan from Sudan. These historic events have affected migration patterns and generated internal population movements. Some progress has been made in the living conditions of certain displaced populations, while others have experienced setbacks and a security situation that continues to deteriorate. Furthermore, the nature of the hostilities has increased pressure on local authorities in these countries to manage new and diverse migratory patterns.

Outward migration flows in Southern Tier countries reflect lack of economic opportunity, poverty and ongoing instability within these countries. Approximately 1 million Yemenis live outside of Yemen, and 1.5 million Sudanese live abroad.¹⁰⁵ Not only do Sudan and Yemen face challenges from transnational migration, but also rural-to-urban migration poses challenges for sustainable urbanization.

4.1 Migration and displacement patterns in Sudan and Yemen

The urban growth rate of Sudan today is lower than in previous decades but still hovers at around 2.5 per cent. Some of the factors driving migration to cities include ongoing civil strife, drought, the expansion of mechanized agriculture and the concentration of economic activity in Khartoum, Port Sudan and other regional centres. Furthermore, the youth population (10–24 years of age) has been estimated at around 62 per cent of the national population as of 2013.¹⁰⁶ One quarter of the youth in urban centres live in poverty. The 2011 turmoil and aftermath of the civil war has constrained municipal capacity to build infrastructure at a pace needed to accommodate the rapid rates of household formation. Employment opportunities are insufficient to absorb new entrants to the labour force, driving outmigration, which is estimated by UN DESA to have increased by about 440,000 between 2010 and 2013 and is expected to continue to increase in the next decade. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are the preferred destinations, together accounting for 50.8 per cent of migrants in 2010, followed by Chad, Kuwait and Qatar.

Population movements in the aftermath of civil war include 408,000 persons moving to South Sudan, accounting for 35.2 per cent of total outmigration in 2013, and about 300,000 moving to Sudan, accounting for 32.2 per cent of total immigration in 2010.¹⁰⁷ These population movements are expected to diminish as the political situation stabilizes but can temporally increase with every flare-up of violence among the tribes in the restive border areas between the two countries.

The Darfur region in the south-west of Sudan has experienced ongoing and renewed conflict that displaced 300,000 people in the first half of 2013.¹⁰⁸ Sudan has most recently experienced an influx of Eritrean refugees using Sudan both as a destination country and a transit country before seeking asylum in Europe. In September 2012, Sudan and South Sudan signed an agreement to ensure that citizens of both states could enjoy freedom of residence, freedom of movement, freedom to undertake economic activity and freedom to acquire and dispose of property. UNHCR reports that as of 2014 this agreement has not been fully implemented.¹⁰⁹ The North Darfur region, which has experienced renewed conflict in recent years, hosts the most number of IDPs, currently estimated at 2.5 million. The destruction to agricultural lands caused by the conflict has led to greater urbanization of the human settlement pattern.

105 UN DESA, 2013.

106 UNFPA, 2013.

107 UN DESA, 2013.

108 UNHCR, 2014d.

109 UNHCR, 2014d.

Though Yemen is the least urbanized country in the MENA region, it boasts one of the fastest rates of urbanization in the world. Urban development is particularly concentrated in Sana'a, which has seen its population increase tenfold from 162,000 in 1977 to 1.7 million in 2004.¹¹⁰ Much of this growth has taken place in the form of informal settlements. In 2012, the municipality's population was estimated to be about 2.5 million.¹¹¹

Over half of all Yemeni migrants live in the GCC. Of this figure, half are in Saudi Arabia and 23 per cent in the United Arab Emirates.¹¹² In 2013, Yemen received USD 3.3 billion in remittances, more than double the amount it had received five years earlier; these remittances amounted to 9.3 per cent of the country's GDP in 2013.¹¹³ Yemen's economic ties with Saudi Arabia as a migrant destination date back to the 1960s. Since then, Yemeni migrants have been diversifying their destinations somewhat to other GCC countries and the United States.

Yemen's internally displaced only recently surpassed its refugee population due to the civil strife that began in 2011. The country is a key destination and transit point for migrants from the Horn of Africa, predominantly from Somalia but also from Ethiopia and Eritrea. The year 2014 had seen a surge in migrants from the Horn of Africa attempting to get to Yemen, with the largest number of migrants making it to the Yemeni coast September than in any single month since 2002. It has also been the deadliest year for migrants attempting the crossing by sea with 215 deaths reported, more than the fatalities in 2011, 2012 and 2013 combined.¹¹⁴ Refugees in urban areas have access to the public health care system and education. Yemen's continued accommodation of refugees, asylum-seekers and transit migrants is uncertain and depends in large part on political considerations given the country's limited resources.

4.2 Highlight: Sudan's urban policy to accommodate massive population movements following the secession of South Sudan

The civil war and massive population movements that it generated have overwhelmed local authorities' capacity to provide adequate services, including infrastructure and housing. In addition, the decrease in oil revenues has particularly affected the economy of Khartoum state, which had been the primary location for public and private investments in the boom years. Khartoum is the primary destination of migrants in Sudan, hosting approximately 50 per cent of the country's rural-urban migrants and a significant share of IDPs, in addition to approximately 24,000 refugees.¹¹⁵ IDP camps in the capital city are clustered in the south and include the camps of Wad Elbashir, Mayo, Dar Alsalam and Jabal Awyla. The majority of IDPs in Khartoum, however, reside in informal settlements around the periphery of the city, receiving little support from the local authorities and state government.

One of the policy responses to the proliferation of informal settlements has been the replication of the 1991 sites and services model, which provides households with serviced plots with subsidized communal basic services and land titles. Replication throughout Khartoum state has produced some positive results in a short amount of time, though it has also resulted in attracting further migration to the city, leading to significant growth in the population and expansion of the urbanized area. It is now projected that metropolitan Khartoum will have a population of nearly 8 million by 2018.¹¹⁶ Khartoum governorate has

110 Cities Alliance, 2010.

111 Ali and Saleh, 2012.

112 UN DESA, 2013.

113 World Bank, 2014a.

114 UNHCR, 2014a.

115 Common Humanitarian Fund, 2013.

116 Republic of Sudan, 2013.

implemented a programme since 2006 to increase the economic self-sufficiency of villages in an effort to stem rural-urban migration to the capital city.

Regarding employment, refugees residing in Sudan most often seek jobs and income-generating opportunities in the informal economy, despite legislation that ensures refugees' right to work. Several hundred thousand South Sudanese still live in Sudan and are often denied work permits when political tensions between the two countries escalate. Some progress is being made, following the 2012 agreement. In 2013, Kassala governorate agreed to issue 30,000 work permits to refugees to allow them to become self-sufficient, less dependent on aid and contribute to the local and national economies.¹¹⁷

117 UNHCR, 2013b.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Mashreq countries have a long history of population movements intraregionally and from outside the region. Although some were violent incursions by invading forces and colonists, most were peaceful flows related to trade and commerce. Except during brief episodes of political tension, the movement of people within and between the Mashreq and Maghreb areas has been smooth.

Migration is directly linked to livelihoods and reflects migrants' household strategies for income-generation, savings-accumulation and asset-building. In most cases, the movement from the home country to the host country is accomplished based on prior planning and pre-payment of travel costs. Often driven by the absence of opportunity, poverty and loss of hope, desperate youth will opt for high-risk illegal travel to locations where they think they can earn a living. Fees are demanded by unlicensed operators to transport illegal migrants to their desired destinations. Households will save to cover the cost of sending one or more of their members abroad, with the expectation that their earnings will support the extended family.

With the exception of the GCC, MENA as a region is experiencing outmigration although sustained high fertility still entails significant population growth. MENA migrants exhibit similar objectives, strategies, modalities of travel and living patterns in destination cities as other migrants facing comparable challenges elsewhere in the world.

When a region is affected by conflict as MENA has been since 2000, migration patterns within as well as to and from the region are disrupted in countries experiencing turmoil and their neighbours. Households react to violence and insecurity by taking actions to reduce their exposure to risks during the turmoil and avoid vulnerability to adverse impacts on their livelihoods in its aftermath. Population flows between sending and receiving cities reflect this dynamic, where forced displacement is intertwined with decisions to migrate for economic or political reasons – most often prior to the turmoil. While IDPs and refugees seek more or less temporary protection from life-threatening violence, migrants seek a path to achieve economic security and enhanced social status.

Refugees and IDPs present municipalities with challenges since they require services ranging from emergency shelter, food and health care to decent and secure temporary housing to resettlement options. Responding to these challenges requires that municipalities revise their development plans and negotiate with utilities regarding preferred urban extension options. Lack of resources entails delays, which lead to informal urbanization driven by local growth dynamics as well as demand by IDPs and refugees.

Furthermore, the reality or perception of insecurity prompts some – particularly among minority groups – to leave the areas where they feel threatened or vulnerable, thereby creating a link between displacement and migration. According to informal estimates, close to 100,000 Christians have left the MENA region in the past decade. This link is reinforced by the IDPs and refugees who enter the informal or in some cases formal labour market in the municipalities where they have resettled or sought refuge, or in the cities closest to the camps where they are sheltered.

For the GCC, expatriate workers are needed to sustain the economy. These workers provide labour for the petrochemical and construction industries and the services demanded by the thriving business sector and increasingly affluent households. Expatriate professionals provide knowledge to develop the higher education and technology sectors.

The GCC labour-contracting systems preclude migration since only temporary expatriate workers are admitted. Elsewhere, apart from some intraregional migrants, migrants from sub-Saharan Africa, with the exception of some Sudanese in Egypt and West Africans in Morocco, are mostly transiting through the region. Asian migrants seek work through a network of employment agencies linking labour-supplying

agencies in sending countries to counterparts in receiving countries. Furthermore, Asian migrants employ a strategy of savings and asset-building in their own countries and usually do not stay longer than they need in the region where they are mostly in domestic occupations. In the GCC, they are engaged in a broad range of services and industrial work, including construction.

Preferential ranking on limits on particular migrant populations depend on political as well as economic considerations, since the desired skills can be obtained from diverse sources, albeit at different costs and with different cultural backgrounds. Given the turmoil in the region, it is unrealistic to expect GCC countries to relax their tight controls on the entry of expatriate workers. Because of the preponderance of foreigners among the population, municipalities would object to changes in the current system of contracted labour that would shift the responsibility of providing housing and services for expatriate labour from the contractors to the local authorities. Nevertheless, it is in the interest of municipalities to ensure that labour contractors provide acceptable standards of accommodation to the workers they bring into the cities. Such oversight would prevent the deterioration of older districts and the degradation of their urbanistic and architectural heritage through overcrowding and misuse. It would also enhance the quality of the living environment in the city and contribute to its competitiveness. Kuwait has addressed the issue in its New Town plans by including planned areas and housing typologies for expatriate workers.

Long-time labour-sending countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Sudan and Yemen will continue to simultaneously prioritize policies promoting employment-generation and seek bilateral agreements that will facilitate outmigration of the unemployed. Egypt was the first MENA country to adopt a national policy of encouraging migration and create a ministry of migration to provide assistance to workers abroad and respond to the requests of its growing diasporas and entice them to invest in the country's development projects.

The turmoil of 2011 led to a near-collapse of the tourism industry and a steep decline in exports. The resultant shortage of foreign exchange earnings were partially offset by an increase in remittances and donations from diasporas to the Egypt Development Fund.

Larger cities are more affected by the flow of remittances than smaller ones because they are the preferred location of migrants' investments in land, housing, businesses, small businesses and microenterprises. Real estate assets appreciate at a higher rate and businesses have a greater opportunity to grow. However, investments in hometowns and villages continue because they confer on migrants an enhanced social status that is difficult to achieve in larger urban centres.

The 2011 turmoil shifted the energies and resources of the municipalities towards the containment of civil unrest, protection of citizens, removal of waste and debris from public spaces and improving security in neighbourhoods. The lack of attention to urbanization trends led to a widespread disregard of development regulations. This resulted in a large expansion of informal urbanization and densification of existing informal settlements in key Egyptian, Tunisian, Lebanese, Syrian and Iraqi cities in response to the demand for resettlement in particular locations, as well as opportunistic and speculative building activities.

This chaotic urbanization is undermining the sustainability of cities and eroding their resilience to new shocks, as well as the problems caused by damage to infrastructure, shortages of fuel and shedding in the distribution of water and electricity. In Syria and Iraq, the destruction of the primary infrastructure system adds to the problems cities face in the delivery of services. In both countries, explosions of car bombs and missiles cause destruction and social dislocation in the targeted areas. The hosting of IDPs in Syria places emphasis on transiency in cities, which tends to delay reconstruction efforts and encourage informal development in the safer areas. In Iraq, safeguarding the right of return is an economic, social, political and cultural priority, which affects shelter provision for the IDPs. In Baghdad, land allocations in designated

settlement areas have given rise to patterns of underserved informal urbanization that have the potential to be upgraded. Erbil, which has been spared the destruction suffered by other cities, has benefitted from housing programmes financed by the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government.

Turmoil in the post-2011 period has sharpened political tensions and created impediments to the free flow of people ranging from visa requirements to denial of entry without security clearances. It is unrealistic to assume that restrictions will be removed as long as turmoil still affects the region. Today as in earlier times, intraregional migrants settle in cities, securing accommodation on the real estate market according to their means. Municipalities do not feel obligated to intervene. Issues of housing affordability derive primarily from the high cost of land; in many cases, land-based financing is a municipality's only feasible option to extend or upgrade services in slums and informal settlements.

Throughout MENA, the 2011 turmoil has increased the dependence on national policy directives and financial resources. In Lebanon and Tunisia, the collection of revenues has practically not been disrupted, while in Egypt, cities have been struggling with the collection of a number of low-yield taxes and fees. Outside of the GCC, municipal management in Jordan and Morocco is the least affected, despite the need for some Jordanian cities to cope with Syrian refugees and for some Moroccan gateway cities to deal with transit migration from sub-Saharan Africa.

MENA municipalities depend on budget transfers for their operating budgets, and national capital investment plans and programmes to finance their projects. Local authorities have limited discretion to act independently, but do initiate projects with central approval if they can fund them on their own or with public-private partners. Iraq is the first among the most affected countries to start on the formulation of policies to cope with the influx of IDPs into Baghdad. As in the Balkans and South-East Asia, the challenge is to adopt policies that do not compromise the right of return. This task presents difficult political and legal dilemmas; in some countries, including Sudan, Libya and Yemen, these issues are further complicated by the tribal character of the society and the rural or nomadic origin of many immigrants and displacees.

The 2011 turmoil has accelerated the transformation of planned subdivisions into gated communities and eroded the congenial social mixity that characterizes public spaces in Mashreq and Magreb cities. Municipal capacity to service the population, already stretched to the limit by chaotic informal urbanization, is unable to reach residents in underserved peri-urban areas. Severe infrastructure deficiencies more or less contribute to vulnerability in times of civil unrest, exposure to insecurity and inability to secure basic needs when facing shortages of foodstuffs, water and fuel.

In areas experiencing conflict, municipal administration is dysfunctional. Neighbourhood and community militias and resident associations help citizens cope with the hardships they endure. These emergency measures are salutary in times of violence, but are not a system of local governance. Post-conflict rebuilding of affected cities will require overcoming spatial segregation and social fragmentation.

Calls by some civil society groups for reform of municipal administration to increase decentralization will have to await the end of armed conflict and a return of stability to the region. Changes to constitutions and parliamentary elections will open up new policy directions. In the meantime, the overriding priority of urban populations is security in daily life and the opportunity to earn a reasonable income.

Irrespective of the system of local governance that different countries in the MENA region will ultimately adopt, governments leading recovery from conflict and turmoil will have to provide local authorities with the support needed to build their institutional capacity and financial resources. Guided by sound policy frameworks, municipalities will embark on the challenging process of reconnecting physical enclaves and integrating diverse ethnic, religious and sociocultural groups to enable the cities to regain pre-conflict vibrancy.

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