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CASE STUDY

Migration and rural development in NENA countries

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Abstract - Migration is inseparable from social and economic transformations and it plays a crucial role in shaping rural livelihoods. In this paper we review the existing evidence on internal and international migration in four countries of the North Africa and Near East (NENA) region with very diverse profiles both in terms of migration and of rural development: Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. We also analyze the policy framework of rural development in the NENA region, evaluating to what extent current practice seems adapted to tackle the main issues highlighted by migration in the region.

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INTRODUCTION

The North Africa and Near East region (NENA) has a long history of migratory flows. Dating back to pre-colonial times, these flows, both within-countries and between countries, have fluctuated in tandem with significant historical events. Independence, European demand for low-skilled labor, the Palestinian exodus, the 1970s oil crises and more recently the war in Syria are but a few of the defining events that have shaped inflows and outflows in the region. At the same time, alike much of the developing world, demographic pressure has resulted in important urbanization rates as climate change and land scarcity have rendered livelihoods in rural areas more and more uncertain. The region's youth, facing unemployment rates higher than in any other region, often see migration as their only chance to climb the social ladder. Against this background, the academic discourse of the last decades holds that rather than the mere result of a lack of development, migration can encourage and accompany development, and the tide is unlikely to turn as development indicators rise in the future (De Haas, 2007a). These migratory flows are not without consequences, as an important theoretical and empirical literature has shown. Consequences arise both on the individual migrants, and on those left behind, on origin and on destination countries. The objective of this paper is to review the evidence of the origins and consequences of migration in relation to rural development in the NENA region, focusing on Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.

Gubert (2003) points out that the early theoretical literature on the impact of migration on sending countries mainly focused on its short term impact on relative prices and well-being, using the model of a dependent economy, and Djajic (1986) concludes that the effect is ambiguous and depends on the relative share of remittances. Remittances are generally considered as having a positive impact on home countries and Mesnard (2001) shows that they can lead to capital accumulation and growth in the long term. Finally, the return of migrants can also be seen as a positive externality of migration since it results in knowledge diffusion and increased per capita growth (Domingues Dos Santos and Postel-Vinay, 2003).

A recent FAO report (Deotti and Estruch, 2016) outlines the theoretical channels through which rural out-migration can impact rural livelihoods. Most channels have ambiguous outcomes, however, and these are related to the composition of the migrant population. Labor productivity for example, may increase with migration since there is less pressure on the labor market and thus a potentially more efficient allocation of labor. It could also be synonym with a brain drain phenomenon whereupon the most productive individuals of a community disappear, since they are likely to experience the largest gains from migration. The same reasoning can be applied to skills transfers, income inequality or land degradation where both a net positive and a net negative effect may occur.

In this article, we first summarize the evidence regarding the importance of international and internal migration in four countries: Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. We then review the literature on the impacts of migration on remaining households, keeping focus on issues relevant for rural households. Finally, we review the policy framework of rural development in the NENA region, evaluating to what extent current practice seems adapted to tackle the main issues highlighted by migration in the region.

1. RECENT TRENDS IN REGIONAL MIGRATORY PATTERNS: DRIVERS OF MIGRATION IN THE NENA REGION

1.1. International migration in some NENA countries

The common definition used by the main migration databases (OECD, United Nations, IOM) states that an international migrant is an individual who lives in a country where he or she was not born. According to the United Nations, the stock of international migrants accounts for 3,5% of the world's population, having been multiplied by 3 over the last 50 years. International emigration is a significant phenomenon for NENA countries, with emigration rates ranging from almost 4% for Egypt to 9% for Jordan according to UN data (UN, 2015). Interestingly, while Egypt has the lowest emigration rate, it has the largest diaspora among the NENA countries, counting almost 3.3 million Egyptians abroad (Table 1). On the other hand, Jordan has a rather small diaspora in absolute terms (of almost 700 000 migrants), but the highest emigration rate.

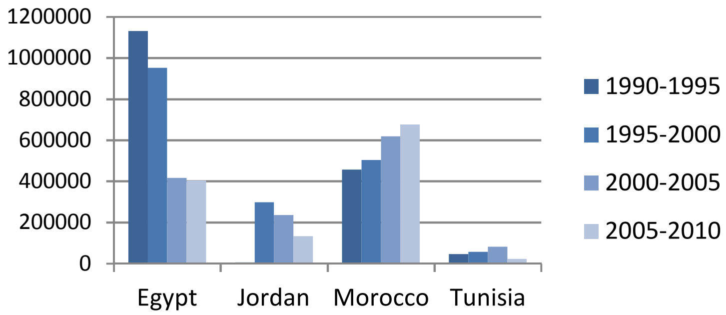
Table 1. General migration figures for NENA countries

	Egypt	Morocco	Tunisia	Jordan
Intern. migrant stock	3 268 970	2 834 641	651 044	699 719
Developed regions	546 633	2 636 112	608 428	123 213
Developing regions	2 722 337	198 529	42 616	576 506
Emigration rate	3,9%	8,3%	5,8%	9,1%

Source: Authors' computations using UN-DESA data for 2015.

These apparent discrepancies give us a first insight into the complex migration patterns of NENA countries and the changing dynamics that they have witnessed over the last decades. Recent estimated data from Abel and Sander (2014) shows that while migration outflows from Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia decreased between 1990 and 2010, migration outflows from Morocco increased significantly over the same period (see Figure 1). Interestingly, emigration flows from Tunisia had been on an upward trend between 1990 and 2005 and dramatically decreased afterwards.

Figure 1. Estimated migrant outflows, all destinations

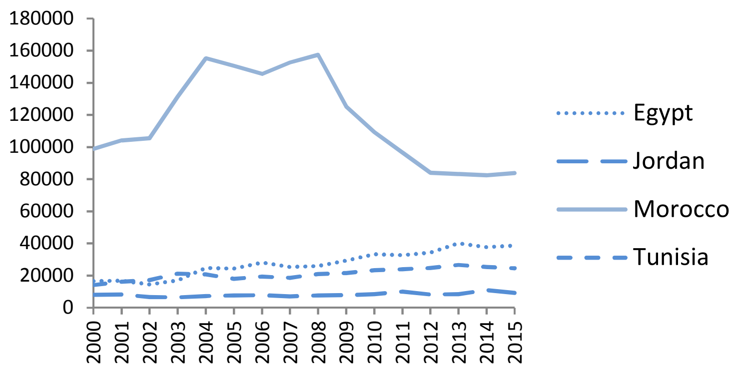


Source: Authors' calculation based on Abel and Sander (2014).

However, if we restrict the analysis to OECD countries as destinations, the picture is reversed, with all the outflows increasing between 2000 and 2015, except for Morocco (see Figure 2). Besides the difference in the methodology used to construct the data, this difference can be explained by a decrease in non-OECD migration for

Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan (emigrating less to Libya and the Gulf countries), with relatively stable flows to OECD countries, and a large increase in Moroccan non-OECD migration occurring simultaneously with a negative trend in flows towards OECD countries.

Figure 2. Emigration flows to OECD destinations



Source: Authors' calculation based on OECD data.

The above comparison has to be treated with caution due to the difference in the databases used and in the time periods considered. Discrepancies among the various sources of data are also highlighted, for instance, in Amer and Fargues (2014), who stress that the number of Egyptian migrants can vary substantially from source to source. Nevertheless, it gives us a first idea of how different destinations shape not only the size of emigration flows, but also their evolution.

1.2. International migration profiles of NENA countries

Egypt

Egypt is the largest migrant sending country in the MENA region, with 3.27 million Egyptians registered abroad in 2015 (Table 1), and also the most populous one with slightly less than 100 million inhabitants. The emigration rate remained relatively stable over the last decades, going from 3.6% in 1990 to 3.9% in 2015.

In a recent article, David et al. (2020) use survey data and find that, for 2018, almost 9 percent of the working age Egyptian population had an international migration experience, but recent migration rates were slightly lower compared with those measured in the previous wave of the survey in 2012.

Table 2 shows the evolution of the migrant stock of Egyptians in the top five destination countries in 1990 and in 2013. Saudi Arabia remains the top destination for Egyptian migrants, a fact also highlighted by Wahba (2015) in a study retracing five decades of international migration in Egypt.

Table 2. Egyptian migrant stock in the top five destinations in 1990 and 2013

1990		2013	
Saudi Arabia	954 888	Saudi Arabia	1 298 388
Kuwait	200 490	UAE	711 894
Jordan	141 413	Jordan	276 950
UAE	165 980	Kuwait	182 342
Lebanon	78 308	USA	171 985

Source : IOM data for 1990 and 2013.

The USA appears in the top-five countries of destination in 2013, hosting almost 166 000 Egyptians and this number slightly increased in 2013. However, Egyptians had started choosing it as a destination even prior to the 1980s, mainly driven by political dissatisfaction (Wahba, 2015). Emigration flows, including irregular emigration, to Europe increased significantly over the 2000s, with Italy as a main destination.

Wahba (2015) analyzes the differences between rural and urban current and return migrants and finds that rural migrants are younger than urban migrants and that rural migrants tend to be mostly engaged in low skilled occupations prior to migration. Another interesting finding is that a higher percentage of rural migrants emigrated because they were unemployed and that they rely more on migration brokers, while also using more intensely their social networks in the destination country. Moreover, the main reasons for returning are different between rural and urban returnees, end of contracts being the main reason for urban returnees and poor working conditions for rural returnees.

Jordan

The most striking feature of Jordan in terms of migration is it being both a sending and a receiving country. In 2013, there were around 640 000 Jordanians living abroad according to UN-DESA, mostly in the Gulf Countries, pulled by the higher wages, as well as the availability and quality of jobs. Similar to Egypt, the Jordanian emigration flows towards the Gulf Countries increased significantly after the 1973 oil price surge. Interestingly, Jordan experienced a skill shortage in the late 1970s due to emigration to the neighboring Gulf Countries, but the open-door emigration policy was maintained, mainly due to the dependence of the Jordanian economy on remittances (DoS, 2016).

In 2014, 68% of all Jordanian migrants were residing in Saudi Arabia and the UAE and only 16% were living outside of Arab countries (De Bel-Air, 2016a). Nevertheless, flows to the Gulf countries started to decrease after 2008 under the joint influence of the economic crisis which decreased public expenditure and subcontracting, of political tensions and of policies such as the Saudisation of the Saudi Arabian workforce. De Bel-Air (2016a) points out that, at the same time, there was an increase in the number of residence permits for Jordanians in Western countries, mainly in the US.

Contrary to other NENA countries, Jordanian emigrants are highly educated (around 70% have a higher education according to Wahba (2014) and DoS (2016)), and De Bel-Air (2016a) highlights that they often occupy professions in engineering and construction, media and higher education, as well as finance. Interestingly, she also points out to a rather balanced sex ratio, contrary to what is observed for Egypt for instance. Another striking feature of Jordanian emigration is the low prevalence of migrants originating from rural areas – 95% of the current migrants in 2012 were originally from urban areas (Wahba, 2014). Although the Jordanian rural population represents less than 20% of the population, this still shows that international migration is a phenomenon concentrated among urban Jordanians. The DoS (2014) survey on international migration shows that households with migrants in rural areas are more likely to own farm land, farm tractors and tools compared to returnees and non-migrants.

Morocco

Morocco has become one of the world's leading emigration countries and international migratory movements have long been a salient phenomenon of Morocco's economy and society. In 2013, the stock of first-generation Moroccan migrants stood at 2.8 million representing around 8.6% of the population (UN-DESA, 2015). However, if the second and third generations, who also hold the Moroccan nationality, are taken into account the Moroccan diaspora is estimated to be between 4 and 4.5 million (De Bel-Air, 2016b). Intentions to migrate are also very high, with a share of 69% of young people (18-29 years old) having expressed the desire to emigrate in 2011-2012 (De Bel-Air, 2016b).

Having started during the colonial times, Moroccan emigration, mainly male and directed towards France, intensified after the independence in 1956 and decreased afterwards with the mid-70s oil crises. Starting with the 1980s, emigration flows started to pick up, often through family reunification programs. However, after the economic crisis in 2008, flows to Southern European countries decreased significantly compared to the early 2000s, as Moroccans were disproportionately affected by the negative shock in the construction and services sectors.

Table 3. Moroccan migrant stock in the top five destinations in 1990 and 2013

1990		2013	
France	713 987	France	911 046
Italy	169 285	Spain	745 674
Israel	157 029	Italy	355 645
Belgium	135 196	Netherlands	173 489
Spain	134 656	Israel	165 963

Source: IOM data for 1990 and 2013.

In recent years, France continues to be the main residence country for Moroccan migrants, hosting more than 30% of the diaspora, while Spain hosts 25%. Interestingly, De Bel-Air (2016b) notes that among the small communities of Moroccans in the Gulf Countries and North America, the prevalence of high-skilled women is considerable compared to other destinations.

Tunisia

Similar to Morocco, Tunisia is mostly an emigration country whose diaspora, in 2014, was estimated to be of around 543 000 migrants if only the Tunisia-born are considered and of more than 1.2 million migrants if the definition extends to the born-abroad second and third generations. While emigration flows initially directed mainly toward Western Europe, especially to France as a result of the colonialist past, Tunisian migrants started choosing Libya as a destination from the mid-70s, as a result of the increase in oil exploitation, and Italy since the 1980s (Natter, 2015). While emigration to Europe was mainly low-skilled and relied on family reunification since the 1980's, technical cooperation agreements between Tunisia and the Gulf countries resulted in an increase of skilled and high-skilled migration toward these new destinations. In terms of demographic profile, Tunisian migrants in France stand out, being older than the average (almost half of them are 55 years and above) and having a more balanced sex ratio.

With the surge in unemployment rates of tertiary-educated youth, flows of students and high-skilled migration towards Germany and North America have also increased. However, irregularity is a major feature of Tunisian migration to Europe and also to neighboring countries (De Bel-Air, 2016c).

Interestingly, the Tunisian Revolution induced a change in the profiles of migrants (David and Marouani, 2017). First of all, the share of migrants originating from rural areas more than doubled after the revolution (for those having migrated after 2011, 50% of international emigrants were living in a rural area, while the percentage was of barely 20% for those having migrated before 2011). Migrants having left Tunisia after the Revolution are also slightly older, have fewer family ties, are more educated and more often irregular workers (David and Marouani, 2017).

1.3. Internal migration in some NENA countries

Internal migration outweighs international migration in terms of numbers. In 2005, 763 million people (12% of the global population) were estimated to live in their home country but outside their birth region (Bell and Charles-Edwards, 2013). Urbanization is not a new phenomenon, however: data on mobility in Morocco shows that the annual flow of rural people to urban areas increased from 2.2% of the rural population in the 1920s (when the urbanization rate stood at 12.5%) to 11.4% in the 1970s (with an urbanization rate of 43%), and by the turn of the century more than 60% of the population lived in urban areas (De Silva and Silva-Jauregui, 2004). Tunisia and Jordan have also witnessed sharp declines in their rural population, falling from 42% and 28% respectively in 1990 to 33% and 17% respectively in 2013.

Egypt constitutes an interesting country in terms of internal population movements, since its population is still predominantly rural. Out of the 82 million Egyptians estimated for 2013, 57% lived in rural areas according to the World Bank Database (WBDB). More recent data shows that, in 2018, only 9% of Egyptians declared having moved from their place of birth (David et al., 2020). The first half of the 20th century indeed witnessed a large flow of the rural population move into urban areas, with Cairo (including Giza) accounting for the lion's share of that migration. However, this urbanization has since halted, with the current share of the rural population being virtually at the same level as 50 years ago (57%). Although not all internal migration takes the shape of rural to urban migration, this decrease in rural to urban migration is mirrored in low internal mobility in the recent Egyptian censuses.

Over the last half-century, Jordan has become a highly urbanized country, with the share of rural population decreasing from 49 per cent in 1960 to 16 per cent in 2016 (WBDB). The urbanization of Jordan is due to two factors: the arrival of refugees, who mainly settled in urban areas in the northwest part of the country, and internal migration from rural to urban areas. Thus, since the early 1980s, the population of Amman has more than tripled (although part of this is due to the expulsion of 300 000 Jordanians of Palestinian origin from the Gulf in 1991), while rural areas have remained stagnant (Ababsa, 2013). The rural-urban dichotomy is also a south-north dichotomy: the few cities in the south have not fared better in terms of population growth than their rural counterparts.

Although Morocco is a significant sending country for international migrants, internal migration is likewise important, and sometimes a precursor for international migration, with young international migrants using internal migration to urban areas as a springboard for international migration (de Haas, 2005). The urbanization of Morocco has occurred simultaneously with de-agrarization, as the rural population has sought to diversify its income sources, completing agricultural income with income from non-agricultural employment. The increased attraction of relatively small urban centers such as Al Hoceima, Agadir or Ouarzazate, resulting from improved infrastructure and a decentralization process, has also implied that long-distance migration is no longer necessary for such income diversification (Berriane, 1996; De Haas, 2005). De Haas (2006) also details the impact that international migration has on internal migration. He claims that investment due to remittances by international migrant household has accelerated the growth of medium-size and large towns in migration zones, attracting internal migrants from both within and outside these regions.

Like Morocco, the urbanization process of Tunisia in the last half-century is a mixture of the Egyptian and the Jordanian cases. Much like in Morocco, urbanization has been a clear feature of the country's development since the 1960s, with a share of rural population declining from 62 per cent to 33 per cent. The determinants of migrations are often income opportunities. Focusing on tertiary educated Tunisians, Kriaa and Mouaddeb (2014) find that *push* factors (and especially the availability of jobs) play an important role in the decision to migrate between governorates. In contrast, distance does not seem to be a big obstacle in the movements of this category of youth (the fact that the country is relatively small is plausibly a contributing factor). Finally, since the 2011 revolution mobility – both international and internal – has increased as regional disparities have risen (Amara and Jemmali, 2016).

The four countries studied here share push factors such as the downsizing of the public sector, which together with a less and less profitable agriculture and unequally distributed land forces people to diversify their income sources (Deshingkar and Grimm 2004). Migration to urban areas may in this regard be a part of households' livelihoods strategy. Nevertheless, the large growth of urban centers in the region has resulted in increased unemployment, and the swelling of the informal sector (91.1% and 46.8% of employed youth (15-29 years old) in Egypt and Jordan hold informal jobs [Shehu and Nilsson, 2014]).

The available evidence suggests that internal migration has not increased in the long term, and lifetime and short-term mobility appear rather low in the region, by international standards. An exception to this is Morocco, where lifetime mobility stands at more than 30%. Internal mobility in Jordan is also specific, since the country holds an important number of refugees, an important share of which live outside refugee camps and move around in the country. Evidence from both Morocco and Tunisia shows that beyond a rural to urban phenomenon, important shares of internal migration takes place between rural areas. In Egypt, internal migration is more important in the direction urban to rural areas than the opposite.

The patchwork of motivations for internal migration and the country specificities laid out above preclude any generalizations as for the drivers of internal migration. What seems to be sure is that deteriorating agricultural opportunities and joblessness in rural areas in general contribute as push factors for young, predominantly male individuals, to try their luck in areas with more opportunities, either within or outside the country. The next section will summarize the evidence of the impacts of both international and internal migration on households' livelihoods, focusing on rural areas where possible.

2. THE IMPACT OF MIGRATION IN FOUR NENA COUNTRIES

2.1. Egypt

According to Wahba (2007), Egypt is a particularly interesting case in the migration literature since migration is both temporary and work-oriented. The temporary nature of international migration is due to the main destination countries of Egyptian migrants (Gulf countries), offering short-term contracts and no real possibilities of a prolonged stay. Hence, returnees are large in numbers, which implies that beside the remittances channel, the impact of return migration on origin localities is likely to be important.

Being a large sending country, remittances represent an important share of Egypt's GDP (5% in 2006, Binzel and Assaad, 2011), which – like in other countries dependent on foreign inflows of money – has put constraints on its balance of payments. However, at the micro level, remittances also play an important part in the incomes of Egyptian migrant-sending households, and a sizable literature has drawn on survey data to analyze the impacts of remittances on origin households.

A traditionalist view of remittances has argued that most remittances are squandered away on consumption goods of no durable utility. This view is for the most part rejected by evidence from Egypt. A significant proportion of remittances is spent on housing (Adams Jr, 1991; Zohry, 2009), and households in which a member emigrates increase their stock of durable goods more than comparable non-migrant households (Arouri and Nguyen, 2017). The likelihood of remittances being used for other purposes than consumption of non-durable goods furthermore hinges on the poverty level of the household. An interesting finding by Adams Jr (1991) is that the elasticity of investment to income is higher for migrant households, suggesting that international migration can indeed be a part of a long-run investment strategy aimed at increasing wealth durably. In this regard, social and spatial mobility may furthermore be negatively correlated, since remittances have had the effect of increasing land prices throughout the country.

Supplemental income such as remittances may also modify households' behavior in the labor market. On the one hand, an older anthropological literature from Egypt (Taylor, 1984; Adams, 1986) has shown that upon male emigration women can be forced to take up traditionally male occupations such as running the household enterprise. On the other hand, the influx of remittances might raise individuals' reservation wage, with remaining members dropping out of the labor force (Binzel and Assaad, 2011; Arouri and Nguyen, 2017). Finally, looking at the impact of remittances on the intention to migrate in three MENA countries, van Dalen et al. (2005) find a positive but not significant association between remittances and intention to migrate in Egypt. The failure to show a significant result may be due to collinearity however, since when the numbers and positions of emigrants in the household are removed as explanatory variables, remittances become positively and significantly associated with intentions to migrate.

Given the temporary and circular nature of Egypt's international migration, several authors have taken an interest in the impact of returnees. By spending time abroad, returnees save up money and gain experience that may be used upon their return. Evidence shows that returnees are more likely to become entrepreneurs than non-migrants, despite the fact that their stay is associated with a loss of social capital (Nasser, 2005; Wahba and Zenou, 2012). They also tend to invest more in formal businesses paying taxes (Nasser, 2005) and their enterprises have a higher chance of survival in the long run (Marchetta, 2012). McCormick and Wahba (2003) show that while broadly, migrants return to the same industrial patterns of employment, the migration experience is associated with a move from the public to the private sector.

2.2. Jordan

The livelihoods strategies of the rural populations in Jordan are different from those in Egypt. On the one hand, since land is more accessible in Jordan than in Egypt, a larger share of the poorests' income is derived from farm work in Jordan. On the other hand, the urbanization of Jordan far outweighs that of Egypt, since less than 20 per cent of the population live in rural areas. While in rural Egypt the poor receive 60% of their income from nonfarm activities, the equivalent number for Jordan is 20%. This means, among other things, that the rural poor in Jordan are more likely to be vulnerable to climatic change and adverse weather shocks. Having international migrants could be a way of dealing with these and other hazards (Sayan, 2006). Contrary to what was found in studies on Egypt, where a substitution of wage employment for other income activities was observed but where no effect on the overall labor market participation seems to have occurred, remittances clearly displace the labor force in Jordan. Al-Assaf (2016) uses the 2010 Jordanian Labor Market Panel Survey (JPMLS) to study the impact of remittances on labor supply of both men and women. He finds a negative and significant effect both on wage employment and on own work, across genders. A candidate explanation is that Jordanian emigration is to a large extent high skilled, with Jordanians earning 4 times what they would earn at home (Wahba, 2014). Thus, remittances do not only replace the foregone income of the household head, but also generate a true upward pressure on reservation wages in Jordanian households. These results are reinforced when remittances are instrumented by the number of Western Union offices in main Jordanian cities. Older evidence (Khaled, 1995) comparing a sample of migrant wives (518) with a sample of resident wives (532) however suggests that migrant wives work more than wives of non-migrants, especially in informal employment.

2.3. Morocco

With a stock of emigrants representing about 10% of its population, a decrease of almost 50% of the rural population over the last 50 years and as the third largest remittance recipient in the MENA region (after Lebanon and Egypt), Morocco's economy and society are strongly impacted by international and internal migration. De Haas (2007b) notes that the intensification of migration flows, internal as well as international, is the result of colonization and incorporation of rural areas, along with a certain level of socio-economic development. Up until today, remittances remain one of the most prominent features of the Moroccan migration, having reached 7% of GDP in 2012. However, studies point to various negative effects of remittances. Collyer (2004) and De Haas (2009) find that no large-scale return on remittance induced investments can be found, but they did seem to have an effect in terms of increasing intra-community inequality. In rural areas, De Haas (2007c) argues that inadequate infrastructure and absence of public services lowers the propensity to invest in low-risk sectors such as housing, retail and trade. However, Teto (2001) showed that 1.17 million out of 30 million Moroccans would fall back to absolute poverty without international remittances, although the middle and higher income classes profit relatively more from remittances than the lowest income groups. The inflow of remittances can also reverse the agricultural decline through agricultural investments, as suggested by De Haas (2001). De Haas (2007c) offers an extensive discussion on this agricultural decline, to which international migration is seen to have contributed. However, he concludes that it is internal migration, rather than international migration, that seems to be associated with a retreat from agriculture through a decrease both in poverty and in the availability of family labor.

Regarding the links between migration and labor supply, migration has historically been a male phenomenon, and hence studies on the subject tend to concern its impact on labor outcomes of women. In rural Morocco, Sorensen (2004) argues that harvesting – a typically male task in the 1950s – has progressively been feminized following male emigration and become regarded as women's work. In rural areas, the need to replace migrants' work may therefore result in an increase in women's unpaid family work, since they might have to compensate for lost labor while continuing to assume their domestic role. As international migration has been linked to increased levels of land and livestock ownership in Morocco (Steinmann, 1993; Chigueur, 2007), women's agricultural workloads may have increased as a result. Steinmann (1993) noted that the emphasis on livestock production in migrant families could partly be explained by the fact that animal husbandry is a traditionally female task and its production can therefore increase without additional male labor input. In the Todgha valley, De Haas and Van Rooij (2010) however observed an important decrease in the workload of women in international migrant households, as they could hire laborers for agricultural work. This labor demand was fulfilled by wives of non-migrants and of internal migrants, the latter having the heaviest workload due to the combination of the man's absence and lower levels of remittances (see also Steinmann, 1993). While paid work might seem an important route to women's economic empowerment, Lenoël and David (2017) show that international migration is unlikely to play a positive role in supporting women's access to cash-earning opportunities in the absence of more favorable labor market conditions at origin. Instead, international migration may lead to their withdrawal from the labor market. They argue that while patriarchal attitudes are an important factor in women's low levels of engagement in paid activities, the most compelling reason behind this situation probably lies in the lack of good job opportunities for women, especially in rural areas.

In terms of investments, De Haas (2007b) argues that, on average, current and returned international migrant households invested four and six times more, respectively, than non-migrant households. Nevertheless, similar to Egypt, housing construction remains the migrant's first investment priority (more than 71% of the funds go to real estate), sometimes transforming villages into towns. Return migrants are among those that invest the most, but this mainly concerns urban areas, where they often prefer to settle. Returnees who choose to go back to their native villages had often been less successful during their migration process and lack the material and human capital to invest (Collyer, 2004).

Finally, it is worth noting that several studies also show the impact that migration has on shaping territorial dynamics. De Haas (2007c) highlights a strong link between internal migration and international migrants' investments in the urban sector and the general process of a rural urbanization taking place in Morocco. Using a case study of rural young people in the Saïss region, Ftouhi et al. (2015) highlight the fact that the mobility of young men can ensure the transfer of knowledge and skills to farm and stimulate agricultural projects. However, the same is not true for young women, who obtain little social recognition in farming activities and whose mobility is negatively perceived.

2.4. Tunisia

Surprisingly, the literature on the impact of migration on Tunisia is far less extensive than for other countries. This is mainly due to a lack of microeconomic data on migration, a problem which was been addressed with the first wave, in 2014, of the Tunisian Labor Market Panel Survey (TLMPS), conducted by ERF, which includes an extended module on migration. Thus, until recently, most of the knowledge on migration's impact on various outcomes in Tunisia was grasped through the lenses of return migration, thanks to specific surveys targeting returnees. Mesnard (2004a) shows the predominance of entrepreneurial activities among Tunisian returnees, financed through overseas savings. In a later study she highlights that migration allows individuals to overcome credit constraints and start a business (Mesnard, 2004b). Nevertheless, it appears that returnees in Tunisia do not benefit from a phenomenon of human capital accumulation that would entail positive results on the labor market (Mesnard, 2004a). A similar result is found by David (2017) for migrants who were forced to return. Small scale surveys also give us a glimpse at the impact of migration on specific communities. Gammoudi and Sghaier (2007) analyse the impact of emigration on the Fatnassa oasis, situated in the South-West of Tunisia. They find that households having emigrants abroad have higher standards of living and the remittances were mainly used to buy agricultural land and hire laborers in order to compensate for the departure of migrants, similar to what has been observed in Morocco.

Capital flows linked to migration are another important dimension of the migration-development nexus. Similar to the Moroccan case, various studies stress the negative externalities of the predominance of real estate in the uses of remittances (Gammoudi and Sghaier, 2007). However, significant amounts were also invested in productive projects and Gammoudi and Sghaier (2007) highlight that between 1984 and 2004 more than 28 million euros were invested in the agricultural sector. In a study aiming at understanding the role played by migration in shaping the labor market dynamics in a crisis context, David and Marouani (2015) show that the increase in Tunisian unemployment between 2008 and 2011 is due to the increase in labor supply resulting from the decrease in remittances associated with the economic crisis in Europe.

3. AGRICULTURAL POLICY, RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND MIGRATION

3.1. Existing and past policy

During colonization, traditional methods of organizing agriculture in the region gave way to more capital-intensive and mechanized methods, and, in the Maghreb countries, part of previously usable land became the property of the French government, limiting and regulating agricultural activities in these areas. New ways of organizing production were put in place, and associations were created to sell produce to the colonial power. In Egypt, the 19th century saw the implementation of cooperatives under British rule. These cooperatives gained a legislative framework in the first half of the 20th century – a period that also saw the opening of agricultural credit institutions (Elmenofi et al., 2014). These movements from traditional to "modern" codified organization rural activities served the purpose of colonial governance, and left traces on rural organization after colonization.

Upon independence, Morocco and Tunisia were confronted with extreme inequality of land holding. Land belonging to colonial powers was seized and redistributed to farmers, albeit at a slow pace (Abaab et al., 1995). Even today, in Morocco, 30% of cultivated land belongs to 8500-9000 families of large landholders, and Moroccan rural development efforts still revolve around this inequality. The rural development strategy development implemented by the Government of Morocco after 2008, Green Morocco Plan (GMP), aiming to increase agricultural production and reduce rural poverty and rural-urban inequality, is thus based on two pillars: the first pillar focuses on large modern farms belonging to a small minority of large-scale farmers, and the second pillar focuses on smallholder and family farming. The increase in the agricultural sector's competitiveness foreseen in the GMP is based, on the one hand side, on the shift of production to higher value added fruits and vegetables and, on the other hand side, on capitalizing on Morocco's geographic position and its proximity to European markets. In Tunisia as well, lands seized from colonial powers were redistributed upon independence, and much like in Morocco, important efforts have been made to modernize the agricultural sector and to solve conflicts related to the privatization of previously collective lands.

The 1980s and 1990s saw structural adjustment in the agricultural sector. In Morocco, while agricultural development was a high priority until the early 1980s (Faysse, 2015), after 1985 and until 2007 a structural adjustment policy was introduced in the agricultural sector, reducing the involvement of the state in agricultural activities (Akesbi, 2006). Many of the interventionist policies such as compulsory cropping patters and indivisibility of farms in agrarian reform cooperatives got dismantled in the 1980s and the Department of Agriculture drew up contracts with associations of farmers at the national level so that these associations could undertake a series of agreed-upon actions (Desrues, 2005). In his overview of rural development policies in Tunisia, Elloumi (2006) stresses that the accession of Tunisia to the GATT in 1990, the agreements with the WTO in 1994 and the creation of a Free Trade Area with the EU in 1996 confirmed the country's entry into a process of relative openness to global markets, introducing more competition among producers, hence the emphasis on improving the competitiveness of products and the environment of producers, especially for the export sector. The rise of the manufactured products sector however restricted the role of agriculture in the development of the country. While the role of agriculture in the Tunisian economy has decreased, the number of farms has increased, the average size has fallen and the pressure on natural resources is increasing. Nevertheless, basic rural infrastructures have improved considerably, the rural exodus has slowed down thanks to the creation of jobs (although precarious), and living conditions have improved.

In Egypt, post-adjustment policies have revolved on managing land. Given the constrained land availability in Egypt and the high population growth of the last century, land reclamation initiatives have been attempted with variable success in the past century. Since the 1990s, the government has primarily targeted fringe desert areas, using an integrated approach (40% of land is reserved for villages and services), selecting settlers on the basis of poverty, landlessness and unemployment (Elmenofi et al., 2014). This became all the more paramount after a 1992 law reform rendering land rentals subject to market prices, which were 10 times as high as previous prices. In 2009, a goal of reclaiming an additional 3 million *feddans* by 2030 – more than the estimated 2.6 million *feddans* reclaimed since 1930 – was announced by the government (USDA, 2016). The plan fell apart with the revolution, but was reannounced in 2014 by Preident Al Sissi, starting with 1.5 million feddans. This newly reclaimed land would be redistributed to university graduates, Egyptian firms and foreign investment firms. Observers however remain skeptical about the capacity of the Egyptian government to achieve success in this endeavor (USDA, 2016).

In Jordan, due to very high urbanization, land pressure is less acute. Water, however, is extremely scarce and what is documented about agricultural policies in the country has mostly been focused on water management. Since the land reform programs of the 1960s, land and water have been controlled by the state (Tarawneh, 2014). The Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) manages the agricultural lands along the Jordan river, the country's agricultural backbone, and all land transactions go through the authority, at a price which it decides unilaterally. The type and amount of crops cultivated is centrally decided by the Ministry of Agriculture, and the absence of cooperation between the two has led to problems in the past (Tarawneh, 2014). The share of agriculture in GDP is low, however, and the country is heavily dependent on imports (Engelmann, 2016). This share declined further in the 1990s upon the abolition of most agricultural subsidies under the Agricultural structural adjustment as stated in Jordan's 2003 National Strategy for Agricultural Development.

Land pressure and structural adjustment have meant that farmers in the region face increasing difficulties and increasingly need to rely on other sources of income than agriculture. In Jordan, little arable land, desertification and the resulting lack of self-sufficiency in agriculture (Jordan's produce is enough to last 12 days of a year) paint a bleak picture for agricultural livelihoods in the coming years. In Egypt, demographic pressure is only partially counteracted by land reclamation policies whose extent is inevitably limited as irrigation becomes more costly the further away from water sources land is reclaimed. Furthermore, coordination problems and centralized planning, implying insufficient involvement of local stakeholders, has been a feature of past policy (Elmafati, 2014), but changes in the Egypt's institutional framework have moved towards decentralization (Nawar, 2006). In this context, recent rural development efforts have focused on *integrated* community-based development. An evaluation of eight community based projects in Egypt financed by the World Bank highlights a weakness in public resource allocation, and an associated inefficiency in poverty impact, raising concerns both on sustainability and on the prolonged attitudes of local communities to such projects (Nelson, Mathur & Moonesinghe, 2006).

In Jordan, despite widespread rural poverty (IFAD, 1980), no specific framework to address it exists. The National Strategy for Agricultural Development however focuses on access to technology and resources, the optimum use of resources such as soil and water, and improved access to financial services. Water management is however partly dependent on neighboring countries uses, and is a source of political conflict in the region. Furthermore, the National Agenda 2006-2015 also mentions addressing employment opportunities and service delivery in rural areas and secondary town, specifically through increased penetration of microfinance services, the expansion of village cluster programs and services in rural areas. No accounts of success of the program however exist.

Given the fragile livelihoods of rural populations in the region, attempts to diversify and stabilize income sources have been part not only of national policy initiatives, but also the target of external financing. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has financed dozens of projects in all four countries since 1979, with a total financing exceeding 950 m$. In all countries, there has been a focus on the availability of microcredit to fragile households, and to the improved management of water and land resources. In Egypt, attention has been cast to off-farm enterprises, given that land scarcity implies livelihoods in rural areas cannot solely rely on agriculture.

Based on the knowledge brought forth from the literature on the impacts of migration, migration policies could be articulated with respect to rural development targets in the region. In Tunisia, there are two institutions that govern controlled emigration: the National Employment and Self-Employment Agency (Agence Nationale de l'Emploi et du Travail Indépendant - ANETI) and the Tunisian Agency for Technical Cooperation (Agence Tunisienne de la Coopération Technique - ATCT). The former organizes and ensures placement of the Tunisian labour force abroad, mainly in France, while the latter deals mainly with promoting Tunisian skills and favors the placement in Arab countries. Directly linked to rural outcomes, various agencies also support the promotion of investment and firm creations, such as the Agency for Promoting Agricultural Investments (Agence de Promotion des Investissements Agricoles - APIA). One of the recent projects of APIA, supported by FAO and financed by the Italian government, concerns youth mobility, food security and poverty reduction. The program, which extends over 2 years, was launched in 2016 and aims at improving youth employability in rural areas and enhances policy coherence with regards to rural exodus and migration.

The importance of migration for Morocco is reflected in the policy initiatives it has sparked, with the maintaining of strong links with the diaspora being a priority for the Government. This is embodied in the establishment of a Ministry for the Moroccan Community Residing Abroad in 2000, the Council for the Moroccan Community abroad in 2007 and a national "Strategy of Mobilisation of the Competences of Moroccan Residing Abroad" in 2009. Keeping close contacts with the important diasporas is another way of articulating a migration policy with respect to rural development. Also, a large number of village associations have been created since the 1990s, providing a key point of contact with internal and international migrants from the village. Their aim is to improve socio-economic conditions in rural Morocco and Charfi (2009) finds that they have contributed to the dynamics of collective organization in said villages. In Tunisia too, a reform has been implemented since the 2011 revolution, which entails the election of representatives of Tunisians residing abroad to the Tunisian parliament, and the creation of a Secretary of State for Migrations and Tunisians Abroad (SEMTE) under the supervision of the Ministry for Social Affairs. Egypt has also moved towards a more inclusive approach to its diasporas in Western countries, albeit at the same time harshening laws against illegal emigrants, who risk prison under Egyptian law. After the 2011 revolution, political rights for Egyptian emigrants were strengthened as the right to vote for Egyptians residing abroad was constitutionally guaranteed. Nevertheless, the integration of diasporas has not been as profound as in countries like Morocco and Tunisia (Müller-Funk, 2017). In Jordan, a large expatriate conference was held in 2015, with the aim to establish stronger ties with the Jordanian expatriate community and promote their involvement in their home country.

3.2. Implications of the findings

The fact that migration provides diversification of revenue streams is a promising outcome, since land constraint in these countries implies that a focus on the rural non-farm sector might be a better strategy to fight rural poverty than agricultural growth (De Janvry & Sadoulet, 1993). Adams Jr (2001) has confirmed the importance of such activities in the reduction of rural income inequalities in Egypt and Jordan.

Just as migration is inseparable from social and economic transformations, opportunities for migration will play important roles in adaptation to climate change. Given the constraints on agriculture, it seems rational for countries to encourage rural income diversification. Migration can be an accompanying factor in this movement. However, it is important to keep in mind that while hardship motivates migration, migrants' agency should be respected. As argued by Carling and Taaleras (2016) poverty eradication policy has had little success in decreasing either rural-urban migration or international migration, mainly because targeted policies are minor when compared to socio-economic factors, but also because poverty reduction can fuel migration aspirations. Interestingly, they also highlight that poverty-driven migration is the result of perceived poverty and perceived causes of poverty, not of absolute poverty, and therefore, what triggers migration intentions is perceiving oneself as poor and seeing one's poverty as the results of the place in which one lives. Hence, policies focused on addressing low levels of development as key drivers of migration should be analysed and implemented carefully, pursuing synergies and creation of coherent aims. Most of these policies see agriculture as a means to reduce migration aspirations and irregular migration, and existing projects, such as "Return to Agriculture" ("Retour vers l'agriculture") in Senegal have been widely criticized (Pian, 2010 ; Reid-Henry, 2013 ; Talleraas, 2014) and have shown limited results (Panizzon, 2008 ; Diedhiou, 2014). These arguments also resonate in the context of NENA countries where we have seen that there is a considerable need for agro-industrial transformation and where agro-climatic conditions are worsening. In Tunisia for instance, recent disturbances have had destructive effects on water supply systems and multiplied practices of illegal use of water, resulting in a reduction in its availability for farms as well as for the inhabitants. This situation further reduced productivity, crop quality, incomes and the development of the agricultural sector, making the economic outlook for the people in these regions worse.

This does not imply that agricultural development should be secondary. Integrated rural development, such as the land reclamation projects in Egypt, can be fruitful for development. Indeed, improving productivity in agriculture is only part of the solution since it will not be enough to ensure decent livelihoods form most vulnerable rural populations such as small farm owners or landless households. This highlights the need for coherent policies within a holistic framework which takes into account the structural economic constraints that agricultural development faces. As argued by Boughzala and Hamdi (2014) while small and micro-projects are effective for reducing unemployment and poverty, they are not sufficient in ensuring sustainable growth based on inclusive institutions.

Within this framework, the positive externalities of migration should be harnessed, such as the increase in entrepreneurial activities which often accompanies migration. It can act as a tool in the shift from public to private employment, given that the right incentives exist. Hence, return migration policies could be tailored to accompany migrants in their establishment of businesses or in their transition to private sector jobs. In terms of use of capital, incentives can be implemented in order to redirect remittances from real estate towards productive investment in the agricultural sector in order to to mitigate the scarcity of natural resources and to overcome the barriers represented by the limited access to financial resources to improving the productivity.

Returnees do not only transfer capital, but can also bring back accumulated human capital. Given that many of them work in the agricultural sector while abroad, as we have seen for Moroccans in Spain and Egyptians in Jordan and in the Gulf States, there is a potential for knowledge and technology transfer to be harnessed. Nevertheless, this positive externality may be conditional on the returns being voluntary and not forced (David, 2017). Finally, return migrants bring back different norms, with potential impacts on demographic and gender inequality outcomes. This is slightly nuanced by the fact that women's bargaining power seems to increase upon migration.

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Migration et développement rural dans les pays d'Afrique du Nord et du Proche-Orient

***Résumé* –** La migration est indissociable des transformations sociales et économiques et joue un rôle crucial sur le bien-être et les moyens de subsistance dans les régions rurales des pays d'Afrique du Nord et du Proche-Orient (NENA). Nous passons en revue les données existantes sur les migrations internes et internationales dans quatre pays de la région NENA aux profils très divers tant en termes de migration que de développement rural : l'Égypte, la Jordanie, le Maroc et la Tunisie. Nous analysons également les politiques de développement rural pour voir sous quelles formes elles semblent adaptées pour s'attaquer aux principaux problèmes mis en évidence par la migration dans la région.

Mots-clés
Migration
Développement rural
Transferts de fonds
Agriculture
Egypte
Jordanie
Maroc
Tunisie