INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE ESCWA REGION:

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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PREFACE

It is now widely recognized that developing policies and activities designed to maximize benefits and minimize negative impacts of migration requires international migration issues to be integrated into development strategies, particularly those that are evidence-based, such as poverty reduction strategies. Such a dynamic integration promotes development and enhances its effectiveness: policies for migration and development can be designed taking into consideration linkages between them.

Migration involves more than one country, each having different priorities and objectives. Hence, countries of origin and destination of migrants should cooperate in compiling detailed statistics on the movement of people, as well as in developing and implementing effective measures. Experience indicates that it is in the interest of both countries of origin and destination, as well as of the migrants themselves, for there to be intraregional and interregional dialogue and discussion of goals and common interests, as there is, for example, between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and the countries of South-East Asia. Inter-State dialogue is a constructive way to develop coordinated migration management. Indeed, regional consultations around the world have enabled countries to better understand migratory phenomena, to build consensus, networks and capacities to manage them, and to learn from one another's experiences to inform their own policy-making.

In the Arab region, the potential for migration to contribute to development is large. The GCC countries constitute some of the most important countries of destination for migrants in the world, both by absolute numbers of migrants and in terms of migrants' share of the population. These migrants, primarily labour migrants, form an essential part of the labour pool of these countries and contribute to economic growth, while sending large amounts of money to their countries of origin. An increasing number of these migrants are occupying highly-skilled positions, enabling them to put into practice and develop skills which could be of assistance to their countries of origin. Given the different opportunities available in the countries of the region, along with their geographical and cultural proximity, many of these migrants to GCC countries of destination come from the non-oil exporting countries within the region; migrants also move between these countries. Others leave to live in Europe, North America and Oceania.

These emigration flows have important development consequences: the World Bank estimates that Lebanon and Egypt both received around US$7 billion in remittances in 2009, putting them in the top 20 remittance recipient countries in the world. In Jordan and Lebanon, remittances constitute respectively 20 and 25 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP).[1] Much of this emigration, meanwhile, is made up of highly-skilled migrants: nearly 50 per cent of Egyptian migrants in the countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for example hold a tertiary degree.[2] This profile creates opportunities and risks for development; opportunities as these migrants may be able to further develop their skills and networks in their countries of destination which could benefit their countries of origin; risks because emigration may deprive their countries of origin of these skills. At present, however, it is hard to say what the impact of migration on development in the region has been, as "data on migration in the region is outdated, scattered and unreliable … depriving policymakers of the information that is vital for sound analysis, projections and adequate policy decisions".[3] There is therefore a clear need for a consolidated effort for improved data gathering, dissemination and analysis in the region. Moreover, while ESCWA member countries participate in ongoing interregional dialogues, there is need for intraregional dialogue to develop a regional approach to management of migration and development. Currently, migration policies may be unilateral and implemented without considering their impact on development in both countries of origin and destination.

To highlight the importance of the linkage between migration and development, the United Nations is funding a project entitled Strengthening National Capacities to Deal with International Migration: Maximizing Development Benefits and Minimizing Negative Impact. The project requires each United Nations regional commission to prepare a study of two interlinked components: (a) existing institutional arrangements for, and national policies on, migration and emigrants and their links with their country of origin, and (b) key policy issues of international migration, such as gender and age; dynamics of remittances and their effects on both sending and countries of destination; temporary labour migration, including circular migration and migration of the highly qualified; the role of transnational communities in fostering development; adherence of countries to international instruments on human rights; and cooperation and coordination mechanisms. As part of the project, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has prepared this study, which in its final form comprises five qualitative studies that in total constitute a regional report entitled: International Migration and Development in the ESCWA Region: Challenges and Opportunities. These five studies are:

(a) Migration policies in ESCWA member countries;
(b) The core issues of international migration and development in the Arab Mashreq and GCC – Labour migration;
(c) Migrant remittances and their impact on development in four Arab Mashreq countries: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic;
(d) Transnational communities and development;
(e) Brain drain from the Arab Mashreq.

To shed light on the importance of the relationship between migration and development, regional dialogue between receiving and countries of origin, and addressing issues of lack of data and standardization of concepts, a chapter entitled International Migration and Development: Introduction and Overview was added.

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INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

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CHAPTER I

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW*

*This study was prepared by Munther Al Shara.

INTRODUCTION

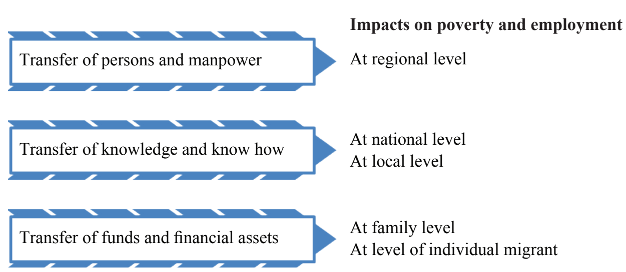
The question of international migration and its impacts on the development of both countries of origin and destination of migrants is continuing to gain in prominence in international arenas. Governments now meet annually at the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) to discuss how migration can be managed to ensure that it is beneficial for all actors involved – countries of origin and destination and migrants themselves. The theme of this latest GFMD was "Integrating Migration into Development Strategies for the Benefit of All". A key outcome of previous discussions on migration and development has been the recognition that migration's outcomes for development are complex, multisectoral and multidirectional, affecting both micro and macro-level development in different ways and different contexts. For example, the emigration of highly-skilled personnel could lead to high levels of remittances which help reduce poverty in a country, yet these remittances, if not well-managed, could have negative impacts on equality within and between communities.

1. Integration of migration into development

The relationship between migration and development is complex and multidimensional. Neither economic theory nor empirical evidence has established a sole direction for the impact of migration on development. However, the two are clearly strongly linked in the ESCWA region, in countries of origin and destination alike. Hence, the integration of international migration into development efforts has been welcomed by all countries of the region. For maximum benefits to accrue, policies on migration need to be integrated into development policies. In this context, three types of transfers involved in international migration are noteworthy:[1]

a. Transfer of population and workforce, with attendant changes in population size and the size of the labour force, as well as in the demographic structure of both. Transfer of labour may reduce unemployment in countries of origin and fill gaps in the deficit in labour force in destination countries. However, it may also lead to family fragmentation in the former, and may, due to the resulting population growth, place strains on basic services and infrastructure in the latter;
b. Transfer of know-how and knowledge. Wherever individuals move, their ideas and acquired knowledge move with them, and they acquire new skills and ideas. Hence, migration involves the movement of "knowledge capital", especially when migrants return to their countries of origin. However, this process may deprive countries of origin of important expertise and skills, negatively impacting their competitiveness. Nonetheless, mitigating this negative impact is possible by maintaining migrants' ties with the homeland and utilizing the expertise and technologies gained abroad;
c. Transfer of funds. Remittances play an important role in the lives of families left behind, and occasionally in investment in the sending country. However, they can aggravate inflation and increase income disparities.[2]

The following figure presents the three types of transfers, and their potential implications.



2. Data and statistics

Over recent decades, it has become clear that achieving positive results from migration is not automatic. Rather, they require active and coherent cross-governmental policy action based on the best possible data to achieve. It is now widely recognized that developing policies and activities to maximize migration's contributions to development, and minimize the negative effects, it is essential to integrate migration into cross-governmental development and poverty reduction strategies. These evidence-based strategies provide a conceptual and policy framework around which Government actions to fight poverty and promote goals such as decent employment and investment for development. Such integration promotes development and enhances its effectiveness.

Statistical data are crucially important for supporting efforts aimed at integrating migration issues into the development process. Availability of accurate, comparable data is essential for formulating realistic evidence-based policies. When Governments are able to answer such questions as who is moving, how they are moving, where they are moving from and to, whether they are returning or not, what skills they possess and so on, then it is possible to fully appreciate the challenges and opportunities for development that migration affords. Such data can be obtained through existing measures, for example censuses and specialized surveys such as the Living Standards Measurement Surveys or Labour Force Surveys, as well as through migration-specific surveys, and through one-off, multiple round or longitudinal data gathering methodologies. In order to facilitate a rapid integration process, they should be gathered before the integration of migration into development strategies. However, these data are often not collected, or, where they are, they are not disseminated.

The current lack of data makes addressing fundamental development planning issues difficult and inefficient. To answer questions on the demand for migrant skilled labour requires statistical data to be available on the size of available workforce distributed by occupation or skill level, the rate of return of migrants to their home countries, and the volume of migration flows compared with the volume of foreign investment flows. The absence of such data is a major obstacle to comprehensive analysis of the global economy. It also hinders any assessment of the impact of migration on development, as well as the recognition of migration as one of the factors associated with development.

3. Importance of dialogue and consultation

Developing effective measures for regulating and providing detailed data on movement of people, and implementing such measures, requires collaboration among countries of origin and destination, since the process involves human mobility between several countries, each of which has its own priorities and objectives. Experience suggests that the interest of all parties, countries of origin and destination and the migrants themselves requires them to interact and discuss their goals and common interests, regionally and across regions. Dialogue is a constructive way for enabling States to develop coordinated migration management measures. Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) provide informal, non-binding state-owned and led forums of discussion, which have proved successful in building trust between countries with very different migration profiles, and enabling free and open discussions on otherwise controversial issues. RCPs throughout the world have enabled States to, inter alia, better understand migratory phenomena, to build consensus, networks and capacities to manage them, and to learn from one another's experiences to inform their own policy-making.[3]

One of the most prominent consultative forums in the region, and perhaps the most recent, is the Ministerial Meeting on External Recruitment and Contractual Employment of Labour Sending and Labour Countries of destination in Asia, held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, on 21-22 January 2008, and attended, in addition to the GCC countries, by Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam and Yemen. Named the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, the forum confirmed that the best economic and social results of labour mobility are achieved by: providing all workers with a decent living and good working conditions; protecting them through transparent policies and procedures, including those relating to recruitment and employment, in accordance with national laws of countries of origin and destination; facilitating transfer of their savings; and developing a common framework for cooperation aimed at making the most of temporary contractual employment. Accordingly, the countries of origin and destination put forward a collaborative initiative for solving temporary contractual employment issues, through: (1) enhancing knowledge of labour markets; (2) building capacity for reconciling supply of with demand for labour; (3) cooperating in protecting temporary contractual workers from illegal practices; and (4) developing a reference framework for international cooperation with regard to temporary foreign workers. The Abu Dhabi Dialogue set 2010 as the date for the next ministerial consultative meeting.[4]

A. CORE MIGRATION ISSUES

This report is based on the deliberations of a four-day workshop on International Migration and Development in the Arab Region: Integrating International Migration into Development Strategies, held in Beirut from 19-22 July 2010, within the framework of the two year, collaborative project on Strengthening National Capacities to Deal with International Migration: Maximizing Development Benefits and Minimizing Negative Impact project, led by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)/Population and Social Development Section and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

1. Policies

Part two addresses migration policies in both ESCWA member countries of origin and destination, presenting the various features of national and regional policies, with a focus on good practices and major policy gaps. It briefly reviews migration policies and their impact on development, explaining the diverse channels through which migration affects development, such as remittances or transfer of human skills and their impact on labour markets and poverty, with emphasis on channels relevant to ESCWA member countries. Migration policies, good practices and core policy gaps in these countries are reviewed in light of available data. Most prominent among the gaps in systems governing migration in ESCWA member countries are weaknesses of: the institutional frameworks governing migration, legislation for the protection of migrant rights, and commitment to relevant international covenants and treaties.

2. Volume and flow of migration

Part three outlines the increasing volume of labour migration in recent times, which is expected to continue to grow in the light of the new patterns of migration and defined their routes and the types of migrant skills required for work in various regions of the world created by globalization. As a result of the steady decline in fertility rates, the present and future demographic structure of developed countries is characterized by continuing population shrinkage and an age distribution tending towards ageing. In contrast, developing countries have a young age distribution and an abundance of productive manpower. This imbalance may explain the growing volume of emigration from developing countries, including Arab countries, to developed industrialized countries. While Arab Mashreq countries are labour sending, the GCC countries are labour receiving. Hence, it is essential to work towards: harmonizing the needs of labour markets in the region, encouraging migration among Arab countries, and researching the best ways for achieving the desired multidimensional impact of labour migration on development efforts. Needless to say, maximization of the benefits of migration and development requires effective policies for dealing with migration, migrants and their rights, and labour market needs, as well as specific mechanisms to enable countries of origin to benefit from migrant skills for their development.

3. Remittances

Part four addresses migrant workers remittances and their impact on development, focusing on the countries of the Arab Mashreq (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic) as some of the most important countries of origin. Significant expatriate Mashreq communities are becoming an essential component in the relations with countries of destination; especially since for many, migration has turned out to be permanent, rather than temporary. However, this shift notwithstanding, these communities have maintained strong economic, social and cultural ties with their home countries. Given its impact on development, the economic dimension has a special significance. To analyse the economic dimension of ties, the following elements are focused on: (a) remittances (received and sent); (b) non-official transfers; (c) cost of transfers; and (d) economic effects of transfers. Clearly, emigration from the Arab Mashreq poses several challenges. As remittances form a major source of hard currency for these countries, maintaining them is vital for development. However, investments are equally important, hence the need for reassessing the current and potential role of emigrants, who should be perceived as active partners in national development efforts.

4. Transnational communities

Part five discusses the role of migrant groups that maintain ties with their homelands, whether by returning, sending remittances to family members, or through other forms of financial engagement, thus constituting what are called “transnational communities". The study aims to shed light on the role played by such groups in social development in their countries of origin, through supporting and establishing institutions for education, culture, and vocational training, as well as through contributing in various ways to the health sector, rural infrastructure, social welfare institutions, and support for developing archaeological and heritage sites and environmental projects. These groups also play a role in transfer of knowledge, through programmes of Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN). In addition, academic, banking and commercial institutions attempt to bring back qualified emigrant manpower for work in several fields, such as higher education, medicine, engineering, and finance, to benefit from their expertise and skills acquired abroad. The practices of countries of origin, such as Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen, vary in aims and achievements. Lebanese practices have been distinguished by their diversity, long-standing nature and the intensity of civil society participation. Hence, this part of the report focuses on the rich Lebanese experience.

5. Brain drain or brain gain?

A significant proportion of labour migration from countries of origin is comprised of highly-qualified persons, which raises the issue of "brain drain" and the attendant risks for and negative effects on the economies of countries of origin. Hence, Part six addresses brain and skill drain. There is a dearth of reliable sources of data and analysis. Research, therefore, relied partly on whatever resources are available, in addition to interviews with experts on migration in general and highly-skilled emigration in particular. Clearly, the most important factors leading to emigration of highly-skilled migrants are economic, social, and political. Undeniably, countries of origin gain some benefits, such as alleviation of unemployment among university graduates; remittances to families; and transfer of knowledge and expertise acquired through participation in production, research, and administration in developed countries, upon the return of emigrants or through their visits for work or for scientific purposes. Yet, the negative effects should not be ignored. Most notably, countries of origin invest in human capital formation, at both the individual and community levels, by spending directly or indirectly on highly-qualified individuals who then emigrate. In addition, the "brain drain" negatively impacts the standard of production and scientific research, since highly-qualified emigrants leave their production and research positions to be replaced by less qualified people.

B. CONCLUSIONS

There is a real and significant possibility for international migration to contribute to the development of the countries of the Arab region, particularly the Arab Mashreq and GCC countries of the ESCWA region. The latter are some of the most important migrant labour countries of destination,[5] both by absolute numbers and by proportion of expatriates to total population. The number of expatriates in the GCC countries rose from 200,000 in 1960 to 15.1 million in 2010. Over the same period, their share of total world migrants rose from 0.3 per cent to 8 per cent, while their ratio to total population in the countries concerned was 38.6 per cent in 2010, compared with less than 5 per cent in 1960.[6] The proportion of Arabs to total expatriates in the GCC countries is 15-20 per cent.

Expatriates are an essential part of the workforce in the GCC countries, and contribute to their economic growth. However, they also transfer large amounts of funds to their countries of origin. These remittances reached over US$34 billion in 2008, equivalent to 12 per cent of total transfers recorded in the whole world in that year. Remittances are an important source of income for the Arab Mashreq countries of origin, especially for Lebanon and Jordan, where they amounted to 25 per cent and 20 per cent of GDP in 2008 respectively.[7] The World Bank estimated that in 2009, remittances to both Egypt and Lebanon put them among the top twenty remittance recipient countries in the world. As a result of the availability of opportunities in the GCC countries, and their geographical proximity to and common cultural heritage with the non-oil countries of the region, many in the latter seek work and a better life in the former. Increasing proportions of the expatriates in the GCC countries are highly-qualified and occupy commensurate positions, gaining income and associated benefits they cannot attain in their countries of origin.

These features offer opportunities and, simultaneously, pose risks to development. Migrant workers continue to develop their skills and establish links between the receiving country and their country of origin, but their emigration deprives the country of origin of their skills, to the extent that some describe the process as one of “brain drain”. However, the issue is not settled. At present, the impact of migration on development in the ESCWA region is difficult to determine, since relevant data are outdated, scattered, and unreliable, depriving policymakers of the information that is vital for sound analysis, projections and adequate policy decisions. There is therefore a clear need for a consolidated effort for improved data gathering, dissemination and analysis in the region. Moreover, while ESCWA member countries participate in a number of regional consultation processes, they need to increase dialogue, in order to develop a regional approach to cooperation in management of migration and development, ensuring maximization of expected benefits of labour migration for all parties concerned.

CHAPTER II

MIGRATION POLICIES IN ESCWA MEMBER COUNTRIES

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CHAPTER II

MIGRATION POLICIES IN ESCWA MEMBER COUNTRIES*

*This study was prepared by Ahmed Ghoneim and Hanan Natheer.

INTRODUCTION

International migration has become a focus of attention for Governments, international institutions and academics. For example, the overarching theme of the Human Development Report 2009 was Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development (United Nations, 2009a). In 2009, the United Nations issued a resolution that takes account of all the factors affecting the relationship between migration and development, which testifies to growing international concern for issues of migration and its relationship to development (United Nations, 2009b). The report of the Global Commission on International Migration (Global Commission, 2005) pointed out the failure of countries around the world, both countries of origin and destination, to deal with migration in a manner that makes it a vehicle for development.

Having received more than 20 million migrants in 2005, which constituted 10 per cent of all migrants in the world, the Arab region is one of largest migrant receiving regions. In addition, migrants in the Arab region are highly concentrated in the GCC countries, which account for 6 out of every 10 migrants (ESCWA, 2006). Moreover, some ESCWA member countries, like Jordan and Lebanon, are both countries of origin and destination, for they send out skilled migrants and receive less skilled ones.

In the following, migration policies and their impact on development are discussed, at both theoretical and applied levels, with particular reference to ESCWA member countries. Migration policies will be reviewed, citing both successful policies and gaps.

A. MIGRATION POLICIES AND IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT: A BASELINE SURVEY

The relationship between migration and development is complex and multidimensional.[1] Migration impacts development through various channels, including: remittances, which affect both sending and countries of destination; transfer of skilled manpower; the effects of returning migrants on home economies; investments by emigrants in countries of origin; and brain drain (Jobbins, 2008). Each such channel can have varied positive or negative impacts on development, largely determined by the quality of migration policies pursued in both sending and countries of destination. For example, emigrant remittances could alleviate foreign currency shortages and improve balance-of-payments deficits, but, in the absence of effective management policies, may lead to inflation, speculation on foreign currency and increased reliance on imports.

Indeed, neither economic theory nor empirical evidence has established a sole direction for the impact of migration on development. However, they are clearly strongly linked in the ESCWA region, both in sending and countries of destination. The degree of linkage and its form, whether positive or negative, are determined by adopted migration policies (see, for example, Fergany, 2001; Fargues, 2006; Baldwin-Edwards, 2005).

1. Policies to mitigate brain drain

The brain drain is often seen as the most important channel through which migration affects development. Empirical evidence of a brain drain as a result of migration from, or within, the ESCWA region is inconclusive. One reason is a lack of information and data on characteristics of migrants. The available evidence does not indicate that States only send out skilled labour only. For example, Egypt is one of the countries that send out both highly skilled and low-skilled workers. Furthermore, whether emigration constitutes a brain drain depends much on the labour market in the country of origin (Ghoneim, 2009). Evidence points to varied patterns of migration. For example, Jordan and Lebanon are both countries that send out skilled workers, whereas analysis of the qualifications of expatriates in Saudi Arabia indicates that the country is not necessarily biased towards the import of highly skilled labour only, since about 40 per cent of expatriates there do not have a certificate of primary education (they are either illiterate or can barely read or write). The majority of expatriates in Bahrain with a period of residence exceeding two years are low skilled

(Dito, 2006). However, it is worth emphasizing that the trends described here are not discerned on the basis of information on the nationality of expatriates that distinguishes Arab from non-Arab (Asian) manpower (Wahba, 2005; Fergany, 2001).

Nonetheless, there is evidence of brain drain from the ESCWA region to the West, as shown in table 1 (Wahba, 2005; Baldwin-Edwards, 2005; League of Arab States, 2008). Countries like Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon have a high proportion of skilled manpower emigrating to the West. With some taking residence in the West for long periods, a brain drain ensues to some extent (Wahba, 2005). Most recent data on Egypt, for 2000-2007, show that the proportion of Egyptian emigrants to Canada who do not have educational certificates is no more than 4 per cent, compared with 41 per cent for those who have intermediate certificates or lower and 55 per cent for those who hold university and higher degrees.[2]

Table 1

Immigrants in Canada (15+ years old) by sending country and academic achievement,* 2001

Country	Low level education (per cent)	Medium level education (per cent)	High level education (per cent)	Total number
Egypt	3.5	17.4	79.2	34 185
Lebanon	14.4	31.0	54.6	65 045
Syrian Arab Republic	15.0	27.5	57.4	14 710
Jordan	4.0	29.9	66.1	4 260

Source: Wahba (2005) based on: Statistics Canada, Population Census of 2001, in CARIM.
* Low level education refers to those who can read and write, but did not complete primary education; medium level education to those who completed primary education or higher but do not have a university degree; and high level education to those who have a university or higher degree.

Other studies also support the contention that there is a brain drain. Indeed, even if there is, it is not due only to wage differentials between countries of origin and destination, but also to differences in institutional systems governing the business environment and the labour market, the deterioration of which in countries of origin may impede the mobility and professional advancement of skilled labour. In other words, a large part of the ability to limit the brain drain depends on countries of origin pursuing policies designed to reduce it. Such policies may be classified into two types. The first consists of creating an environment conducive to reducing the brain drain, not through prohibition, but through encouraging talent to stay at home. This type of policy is linked to the degree of economic development. However, there are policies that can be followed in the short term, such as offering higher salaries and wages to certain categories of workers, such as scientists, university professors, and others with specialized skills. The second type of policy, which is followed by a number of countries, is to attract emigrant know-how back, even if only for short regular visits, to contribute to the development of the country. An example of a specific programme for this purpose is that of the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin. This is a voluntary organization that arranges for Indian emigrant physicians to return to poor areas in India for limited periods to provide medical services (Skeldon, 2005). In contrast, to benefit, in both human and material investment, from the expertise they acquired abroad, Taiwan focuses on enticing emigrants to return through such programmes as the Business Visiting Program, or by offering them high wages (Newland and Patrick, 2004).

In some cases, political factors may be the main reasons for emigration, as is the case of Lebanon in the late 1970s and 1980s and Algeria in the 1990s (League of Arab States, 2008; Fargues, 2006).

Brain gain occurs when emigration of highly-qualified manpower benefits the sending country through transfer of technology, investment and stimulation of trade. The expertise of emigrants in investment and trade, allied to their strong links with people in their country of origin, helps to stimulate trade. In addition, brain gain can occur when people in the sending country are motivated to raise their level of education in the hope of emigrating. There is evidence that this has already occurred in countries outside the ESCWA region, such as the Philippines, but not in others, such as Mexico (Lucas, 2008). The brain gain depends primarily on national policies designed to create links with emigrants. Such policies and programmes are not necessarily governmental, but may be adopted by individuals and associations. For example, in Ghana there have been successful examples of ties between emigrants and their families used to export agricultural goods to Europe, making use of the knowledge of the emigrants of both needs of European markets and agricultural potential in their country of origin. In addition, parts of the proceeds of these projects were invested in Ghana itself, which helped encourage banks to finance local projects and elicit Government support (Pandya, 2007).

In the ESCWA region, Egypt suffers from a low return on investment in education, whether primary or secondary, with, unusually, the return on the former being lower than on the latter (Nassar, 2005). This indicates that if there is brain drain, then it may, in some cases in the ESCWA region, have internal reasons that must be addressed. In addition, the brain drain is largely correlated to length of period of emigration. Hence, if emigration to the Gulf States is temporary, as is the case with many Egyptians, Jordanians, Syrians and Lebanese, then the impact of the brain drain is reduced; especially since immigration into these States is not biased towards the highly-qualified.

Thus, the issue of the impact of the brain drain on countries of origin is still controversial (Panagariya, 2006). However, there is evidence that its negative effects may be reduced should the countries of origin pursue appropriate policies, such as labour market reform, and policies for benefiting from emigrants and returning emigrants (Docquier and Sekkat, 2007). In addition, as shown by some studies (Zohry, 2006), widespread unemployment in some ESCWA countries of origin, or people undertaking work that is incommensurate with their qualifications, indicates existence of a "brain waste" (Ozden, 2006). In short, the brain drain can be reduced dramatically through adoption of sound policies (enticing qualified emigrants to return and stay at home), as well as through promoting development in general.

2. Labour market policies

The most important effects of migration on development occur through its impact on the structure of the labour market, particularly through unemployment, which may arise in countries of destination. As in the case of the brain drain, there is no theoretical or empirical evidence that confirms that migration negatively impacts labour market structure, particularly unemployment. In the ESCWA member countries, migration is believed to have had a negative impact on unemployment in the countries of destination, especially the Gulf countries after the second Gulf War in 1990/1991, as well as in the countries of origin, which have recently become transit countries for migration (Fargues, 2009). Moreover, changing socio-political conditions over the last twenty years have forced several traditional ESCWA countries of origin to host many refugees, as in the case of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, which has had an impact on unemployment (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005). In addition, the return of emigrants after the second Gulf War had a negative impact on unemployment in countries of origin, such as Jordan where unemployment rose to 25 per cent after the second Gulf War (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005). In consequence, as will be shown later, a number of countries around the world started pursuing selective immigration policies.

On the other hand, emigration may affect countries of origin by reducing the size of the labour force, leading to rising wages. However, in the case of ESCWA member countries, such as Egypt, the existence of surplus manpower excludes such an outcome.

Generally, the role of migration policies is to organize the labour market through capping the number of expatriate workers in general or in specific sectors, as happened in a number of ESCWA member countries, such as Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic, or to prevent expatriates from undertaking certain jobs. Such policies often overlap with those governing the labour market and tend to be labour market policies more than migration policies. Through the loss of opportunities of benefiting from cheaper labour, the economic returns of such policies are often negative; yet, social, political, and sometimes even economic factors (combating unemployment) often encourage Governments to follow them.

3. Policies to attract remittances

Two migrant sending ESCWA member countries, Egypt and Lebanon, are among the top 20 countries receiving remittances by absolute value, while Jordan is among the top 20 by percentage of GDP (figure 1). On the other hand, in 2006, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman and Saudi Arabia, were among the top 20 remittance countries of origin.

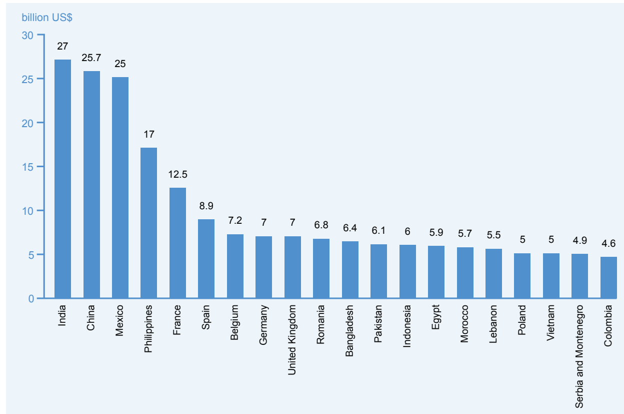
Remittances have played an important role in the economies of migrant sending ESCWA member countries, exceeding in some years the value of foreign direct investment and export earnings in countries such as Egypt and Lebanon, and reaching 23 per cent of GDP in Lebanon in 2006. According to some reports, remittance flows to the Arab countries reached US$14 billion annually, representing four times the external development assistance (League of Arab States, 2006). In the 1970s and 1980s, some countries, like Jordan, depended on migrant remittances to achieve economic growth targets (Fergany, 2001; Baldwin-Edwards, 2005). Being a source of funding that is less volatile in economic cycles than foreign investment and aid, remittances have a particular economic importance. In addition, they have a positive impact on poverty reduction. However, this impact depends on a number of other factors, including the fact that the very poor do not mostly have the ability to emigrate (ESCWA, 2006). Nonetheless, the case may be different in the ESCWA region due to the geographical proximity of the countries of destination in the Gulf and Europe, as well as due to the large number of emigrants, which reduces the cost of emigration relatively, making it more available to the poor.

It is often maintained that remittances are directed towards non-productive investments, particularly real estate, and consumption (Adams, 2006), which reduces their positive impact on development. However, this depends primarily on the remittance attraction policies pursued, the existence of an attractive investment environment, the degree of development of financial systems, and the prevailing culture and traditions. Through the pursuit of appropriate policies and the creation of an appropriate institutional system, which several ESCWA member countries lack, it is possible to focus remittances towards productive investment. Nonetheless, even if a large percentage of remittances is directed towards consumption, as in Egypt according to (Zohry, 2006), they undoubtedly help alleviate poverty, particularly in the absence of a strong social safety net, as is the case in several ESCWA member countries. Moreover, the role of remittances is not limited to their primary, even if consumer, spending, since, through the multiplier effect, they create employment and investment opportunities for small and medium enterprises, thereby helping to reduce poverty (Katseli, Lucas and Xenogiani, 2006).

Several countries around the world have pursued policies aimed at attracting remittances and directing them to productive purposes. Some, such as Eritrea, have imposed taxes on remittances, but this policy has proved to be unsuccessful. Others have focused on maximizing remittances while emigrants are temporarily abroad. The Philippines has developed special credit cards to reduce the cost of transfer of remittances to less than US$3 per transfer. Through providing emigrants with information, the Philippines Government has also sought to channel the resources of migrants to development, particularly poverty reduction projects. In Mexico, in 2001, President Fox established a department attached to the Presidential Office for Mexicans Abroad whose primary objective is to strengthen the linkages between emigrants and the country of origin. In order to overcome lack of confidence by emigrants in development projects established with their funds, remittance mobilization programmes allowed emigrants themselves to engage in the implementation, management and monitoring of projects (Newland and Patrick, 2004).

FIGURE 1a

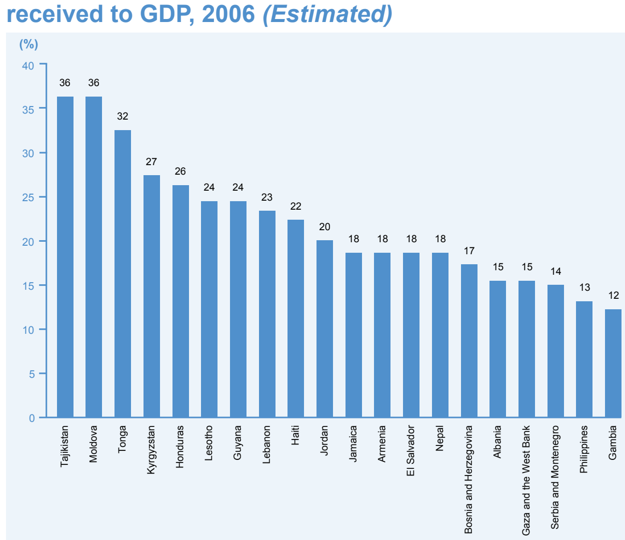
Top twenty countries in terms of absolute value of remittances received, 2007 *(Estimated)*



Source: Migration and Remittances Fact Book 2008, Top 10 (March 2008), Development Prospects Group, The World Bank, webpage: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1199807908806/Top10.pdf.

FIGURE 1b

Top twenty countries in terms of ratio of remittances received to GDP, 2006 *(Estimated)*



Source: Migration and Remittances Fact Book 2008, Top 10 (March 2008), Development Prospects Group, The World Bank, webpage: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1199807908806/Top10.pdf.

4. Policies addressing returning migrants

Returning migrants play an important role in economic development, whether through investments or the transfer of expertise acquired abroad (Wahba, 2005; McCormick and Wahba, 2002).

Generally, Arab migrant countries of origin benefit from returning emigrants through their role in reducing unemployment, and providing investments and new skills, as indicated by studies on some ESCWA member countries, such as Wahba's study on Egypt (Wahba, 2005), which indicated that returning emigrants had a positive impact on development. The skills acquired abroad helped create job opportunities for the returnees, and enabled them to manage their businesses well and use their capital productively. However, McCormick and Wahba (2002) found that returning emigrants tend to settle in urban, rather than rural, areas, which may reduce the positive impact of their return.

The maximization of the positive impact of returning emigrants on the economy and society requires appropriate policies. For example, through business visit programmes and offering high wages, Taiwan has focused on inviting emigrants to return home, hoping to leverage the expertise they gained abroad, while China and India are attempting to achieve the same end through increasing trade ties with emigrants and promoting investment by them (Newland and Patrick, 2004). Several ESCWA member countries have initiated similar policies. However, as will be discussed in detail later, these have not met expectations.

5. Policies for reception and integration of migrants

Migrant labour plays a role in alleviating the scarcity of labour and contributes to better use of capital and to economic growth. Without migrant labour, GCC countries would not have been able to carry out their ambitious, large-scale development projects.

Moreover, in the case of ESCWA member countries, there is no evidence to justify concerns about pressures by expatriates on social welfare services that are not offset by the taxes they pay. On the contrary, there is evidence that revenues from taxes levied from expatriates, especially the highly educated and highly skilled, surpass in value, and by a large margin, the financial benefits and social privileges they get. However, evidence in the case of the low skilled is not as strong (Wahba, 2005).

Some States have pursued policies designed to specify the tax contribution of labour migrants and the benefits they receive from public services, depending on various factors, including whether they are working officially, their income level, whether they need Government services, and whether such services are available to them (Lucas, 2008).

As will be discussed later, several countries, including ESCWA member countries, have also initiated policies for defining the rights of labour migrants, or at least certain groups among them. In certain cases, countries of origin play an important role by concluding agreements with countries of destination and encouraging consulates to defend the rights of their nationals. The Philippines is perhaps the most advanced in this regard. In addition, some countries, including some ESCWA member countries, have developed programmes to provide potential emigrants with information on their rights and on life in countries of destination. Such policies could contribute to reducing the costs of migration.

This brief overview of some policies on migration and the relation between migration and development shows that many issues are yet to be settled, at both the theoretical and the practical levels, especially in ESCWA member countries. Nonetheless, whether the positive impact of migration on development outweighs its negative impact is often contingent upon the policies adopted by both sending and countries of destination.

B. MIGRATION POLICIES IN ESCWA MEMBER COUNTRIES

Over the past decade, several ESCWA member countries have adapted existing laws and regulations and developed new regulatory frameworks governing migration, and modernized methods for attracting remittances. However, in light of the high degree of uncertainty engendered by political events, which, in turn, has significantly affected policies towards migration, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of these developments in relation to their ability to control migration rates, attract more remittances and direct them towards productive activities. Nonetheless, the policies of certain individual countries will next be reviewed, based on laws, regulations and available studies.

1. Egypt

Egypt is customarily considered a migrant sending country. However, some studies (Baldwin-

Edwards, 2005) maintain that it has become a net importer of migration, since the total number of unrecognized refugees and irregular immigrants, estimated to have exceeded 5 million, surpasses the total number of emigrants, estimated at three million. Hence, it is necessary to discuss both immigration and emigration policies.

(a) Emigration policies

From the early 1950s to the mid-1960s, Egypt applied restrictive emigration policies. The Labour Force Committee, established in 1964, began giving a restricted number of emigration permits, then moved on to facilitate migration, until support for emigration became evident in 1967. It should be noted, however, that emigration in the Nasser era was related more to politics than economics (Roman, 2006).

(b) The institutional framework

In 1969, a Department of Emigration was established at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to coordinate work on emigration among various branches of Government, conduct studies, and develop sound policy recommendations (Information and Decision Support Centre, 2007).

At the beginning of the 1970s, the Government began to develop an institutional framework for emigration. Article 52 of the 1971 Constitution provided for the right of Egyptians to emigrate and return to the homeland. Law 73 of 1971 granted Government employees the right to emigrate and return to their jobs under certain conditions. With the implementation of the Openness Policy in 1974, all obstacles to emigration were removed (Roman, 2006). Economic factors played a major role in encouraging emigration to alleviate unemployment, benefit from remittances to cover the deficit in the balance of payments and finance private sector projects, and provide labour to the Gulf States during the oil boom (IOM, 2003). Thus, Government bodies began to organize labour emigration to Arab countries and the private sector was allowed to open emigration facilitation offices (Al-Sawi, 2005).

Emigration continued to receive close attention. Several agencies, governmental and non-governmental, were established to consolidate links between Egyptian emigrants and the homeland. A presidential decree, Resolution No. 574 of 1981, established a Ministry of State for Emigration Affairs, with the aim of looking after emigrants and providing them with services (IOM, 2003).

The establishment of a specific ministry for emigration reflected growing interest by Government in emigration, as well as its importance for the economy. Law 111 of 1983, Emigration and Care for Egyptians Abroad, is the main law governing emigration. It guarantees the rights of emigrants, sets the purview of the ministry, and provides for the right to dual nationality. Although the law differentiated temporary emigration (less than one year) from permanent emigration, this distinction does not have any real bearing in practice. The law also exempted remittances from taxes and fees when deposited in Egyptian banks (Roman, 2006; IOM, 2003).

In 1996, the Ministry of Emigration was merged with the Ministry of Manpower to form the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, which was charged with caring for Egyptians abroad and strengthening their ties with the homeland. Law 111 of 1983 provided for the establishment of a higher committee for emigration, but it was not established until 1997 by a presidential decree that entrusted it with improving cooperation among various ministries (IOM, 2003). The Committee is chaired by the Minister of Manpower and Emigration and includes representatives from 13 ministries, such as the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defence. Its functions include the establishment of training centres for potential emigrants and making them aware of relevant issues, in addition to helping them maintain their ties with the homeland through providing them with information and cultural material, teaching Arabic to their children, and providing them with religious services by sending Egyptian imams and priests. However, not all these activities are actually undertaken (Ghoneim, 2009).

Institutionally, the emigration section of the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration is responsible for the establishment of training centres for emigrants, as well as for developing policies and solutions in response to the needs of emigrants. However, some studies (Roman, 2006) have criticized the failure of this section to carry out its full responsibilities.

(c) Policies for care for emigrants and integrating them into host societies

In the context of international cooperation, the Egyptian Government, represented by the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, the International Organization for Migration, and the Italian Government established an integrated system for emigration in 2001. The project aims at facilitating legal migration, increasing the integration of Egyptian immigrants into Italian society, increasing their ties with their country of origin, and maximizing the benefits that their expertise and savings could bring to economic and social development in Egypt. The project has helped create a database of Egyptian emigrant communities in Italy, which, in turn, helped the Government to develop appropriate policies towards them, and helped these communities to follow economic and social developments in Egypt (Roman, 2006). Simultaneously, another project was aimed at upgrading the IT and management skills of the employees of the migration section of the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration. The two projects are a model of international cooperation in addressing migration challenges and maximizing its benefits for both the sending and countries of destination.

The website of the migration section of the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, which includes information on emigrants and their conditions, is an important source of information for potential emigrants. The site also has advertisements on investment opportunities in Egypt and employment opportunities for potential emigrants.

The emigration section also trains potential emigrants, advertises job opportunities abroad, and raises awareness of emigration and residency conditions abroad. It also works on consolidating ties between emigrants and the homeland by, for example, teaching the Egyptian school curriculum to Egyptian children in some countries (Fargues, 2006).

The Egyptian Government has concluded agreements on labour mobility and migration with several Arab countries that receive Egyptian labour, such as Jordan, Libya and Qatar, as well as with countries that export labour to Egypt, such as the Sudan. Mostly, these agreements regulate the entry and movement of labour and the jobs that can be filled, but do not rigorously address living conditions and rights of migrants.

In addition, Egypt has two agreements with two western countries, Greece and Italy. The agreement with Greece, which was signed in 1981 and modified recently, governs visits by Egyptian fishermen to Greece (Collyer, 2004). With Italy, there are two agreements, signed in 2005 and 2007. The first sets an annual quota for Egyptian labour migration to Italy to satisfy Italian market needs as defined by the Italian Government. The second bilateral agreement provides for resettlement in Egypt of irregular Egyptian immigrants. The two agreements have been implemented since 2007, although the Egyptian side has difficulty in filling the specified labour quota due to an inability to match the required jobs with available Egyptian skills (Ghoneim, 2009). Egypt is currently conducting negotiations with both France and Cyprus aimed at concluding agreements similar to those with Italy and Greece.

(d) Policies to attract remittances

As mentioned earlier, the Egyptian Government imposes no constraints, charges or taxes on transfer of funds, nor does it place any restrictions on currency conversion. However, Egyptian banks do not provide private banking products designed to attract remittances, but some public banks, such as Banque Misr and the National Bank of Egypt, have branches abroad to facilitate fund transfers. Ghoneim (2009) explains the reluctance of banks to establish banking products for emigrants by the failure of previous attempts to attract transfers, particularly in light of the low costs of transfer in general. Nonetheless, Egypt Post has begun to take measures and develop products to facilitate the receipt of remittances in Egypt.

(e) Immigration policies

The Egyptian Government does not have a declared policy on immigration, other than policies on the organization of the labour market, such as setting a limit of 10 per cent of total employment of foreign workers by virtue of the executive rules of the Egyptian Labour Law (Law No. 12 of 2003). As for dealing with refugees, the Egyptian Government has declared that it authorizes the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to deal with asylum cases.

Thus, Egypt has the institutional framework for dealing with emigration, notwithstanding shortcomings related to cooperation among ministries, control of irregular emigration and the effectiveness of training centres. In contrast, the institutional framework and explicit policies for dealing effectively with immigration are lacking. Though the Egyptian Government has not promulgated restrictive policies on immigration, labour law and practices in relation to refugees and work permits for foreigners indicate an undeclared selective policy.

2. Syrian Arab Republic

Migration is less important in the Syrian Arab Republic relative to other ESCWA member countries. In addition, a lack of data and information limits the ability to analyse its migration policies.

In general, the Syrian Arab Republic is classified as a country of origin, with a long history of emigration to the West and Arab Gulf States, especially after 1960. Syrian emigrants have largely been highly-qualified, and Jordan and Lebanon have been the two major countries of destination (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005).

(a) Citizenship policies and labour market regulation

The Syrian Arab Republic is one of the few States that does not have restrictive naturalization legislation. A foreigner is entitled to Syrian nationality when marrying a Syrian woman (ESCWA, 2006). Other laws governing nationality are flexible to some extent (Law No. 276 of 1969) and allow dual nationality. However, the Syrian Government has started pursuing some restrictive policies. Minister of Social Affairs and Labour Resolution No. 2040 limits the employment of foreigners to no more than 10 per cent of the total personnel in any concern, and limits their wages to no more than 30 per cent of the total. In addition, foreigners are not allowed to occupy certain jobs. However, the Syrian Arab Republic allows Palestinian refugees to be treated as Syrian workers, which is more liberal in comparison with Jordan and Lebanon, though the Syrian Arab Republic is more restrictive in granting nationality compared with Jordan. The protectionist policies were most likely a reaction to the inflow of Iraqi refugees in the aftermath of the second Gulf War, but the Syrian Arab Republic is still more liberal in this regard than other ESCWA member countries.

(b) Emigration, reduction of brain drain and remittance attraction policies

Syrian Government policy towards emigration is more protectionist than that towards immigration. Since the 1990s, the Syrian Government has required exit permits for certain professions, prohibited Government employees from working abroad without prior authorization, and imposed sanctions on violations. However, this policy was applied selectively; the Government allowed scientists to work in the Gulf States for specific periods, and did not place any restrictions on the emigration of the low skilled. In some cases, the Syrian Government requested that the Government of Saudi Arabia prohibit Syrians from working in certain professions in the Kingdom in an attempt to reduce Syrian emigration, and guaranteed jobs in the Syrian Arab Republic for some professions, such as for engineers for a period of 5 years after graduation. These measures were an attempt to stem the brain drain. In addition, the exchange rate of Syrian currency was adjusted to attract more remittances through regular channels. However, this attempt was not as successful as expected (Winckler, 1997).

(c) Policies for care of emigrants

Recently, the Syrian Arab Republic began efforts to consolidate ties between Syrian emigrants and the homeland. The Ministry of Expatriates was established in 2002, and in 2004, the Government created the Syrian Expatriate Advisory Council, which comprises fifteen prominent expatriates of Syrian origin. The Council, which meets once every six months, works toward strengthening the ties between Syrian emigrants and the homeland and enhancing their contribution to the development of the Syrian Arab Republic. The Board has met periodically and received political support at the highest level, meeting the President of the Republic.

Thus, the limited information available indicates a lower level of interest in issues of migration in the Syrian Arab Republic than in other ESCWA member countries. The Syrian Government has started to set up the institutional framework for addressing emigration positively, especially when compared with the restrictive policies pursued in the past and others that are still being pursued.

3. Lebanon

Lebanon is a special case with regard to both immigration and emigration. As a result of a succession of political events, such as the civil war, large numbers of Lebanese migrated to the West, although data on numbers are uncertain. Subsequent to the announcement of the reconstruction programme, a large number returned. Despite the poor economic conditions in the 1990s and the small size of the Lebanese population, the number of foreigners in Lebanon is relatively large. Emigration is of great importance and the country pursues liberal policies towards it.

(a) Emigration policies and care for emigrants

The civil war played a major role in forming Lebanon's liberal policy towards emigration; there are no restrictions and dual nationality is permitted. In 1994, the Ministry of Emigrants was established, but was merged with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2000 to form the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants. The reasons behind this institutional change may have been political or financial (Brand, 2007). Some studies maintain that Lebanese emigration policy is not long term, which may be attributed to the lack of policy coherence in general, given the political conditions of the country. The Lebanese World Union, which was created in the 1960s, is the only institutional framework for addressing the affairs and interests of emigrants. However, available information is insufficient to assess its work.

(b) Immigration policies, organization of labour market and rights of immigrants

Despite the liberal immigration policies of the country, there are many restrictions on Palestinian refugees, particularly when compared with how they are treated in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. They are barred from many jobs and numerous restrictions are placed on their ownership of land and property, as well as on their human rights, while health insurance and compulsory education in schools are provided by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005).

Excluding the situation of Palestinian refugees, which began to ease upon issuance of Regulation No. 147/1 in 2005, which allowed Palestinian refugees to work in some jobs until then not permitted, the policy towards immigration is liberal. Other than traditional requirements, such as documented contracts (as per Regulation 17561 of 1964 and its amendments in 1984 and 2009, and Labour Law No. 10 of 1962), there are no restrictions on the work of immigrants. Some high-skilled and low-skilled jobs are not allowed for non-Lebanese, though there are exceptions, as per Regulation 79/10.

One positive development is Regulation 70/1 of 2003, which sets the rules for employment offices that bring in domestic foreign workers and ensures their rights, as per Lebanese Labour Law.

Thus, Lebanon lacks an institutional framework for regulating emigration and immigration. However, its liberal policies have not adversely affected its labour market.

4. Jordan

(a) Migration policies in the 1960s and 1970s

(i) Policies on refugees[3] and displaced persons

Since its establishment in 1921, Jordan has received repeated waves of immigration, mainly due to regional wars, political instability in its surroundings, and its open door policies towards immigration from Arab countries under the principle of Pan-Arabism. Jordan was the first and main shelter for Palestinian refugees after the two wars of 1948 and 1967. It also received other waves of immigration: Palestinians returning from Kuwait after the first Gulf War in 1991 and also in 2000, Lebanese fleeing the civil war from 1975 to 1991, and Iraqis after 1991 (De Bel-Air, 2007). After 1948, most Palestinians living in Jordan were granted Jordanian nationality under Nationality Law No. 6 of 1954, becoming an integral part of Jordan. Thus, the population of Jordan increased in 1948/9 from 500,000 to 1.5 million, a third of whom were refugees. After the 1967 war, Jordan received approximately another 400,000 Palestinian refugees. The number of Palestinian refugees in Jordan in 2003 reached 1.7 million, out of a total population of 5.5 million (Olwan, 2006).

(ii) Emigration policies

With the population increasing about three-fold in the period until 1967 and the decrease in available agricultural land with the loss of the West Bank in 1967, Jordan faced a rise in unemployment to 12 per cent (Olwan, 2006). It tried to resolve this crisis by encouraging emigration, particularly to the Gulf States, under the banner of Arab unity or Arab nationalism, considering emigration as Jordan's contribution to Arab unity and integration (Olwan, 2006).

In the 1950s and 1960s, many Jordanians of Palestinian origin emigrated to the Gulf States, mostly skilled workers in education, health and other public services. The rise in oil prices in 1973 led to a second wave of labour emigration to the Gulf States. Competition with migrants from South-East Asia led to emigrants from Jordan being mostly highly qualified. However, Jordan did not consider such emigration as brain drain; on the contrary it sought to encourage it, adopting Education for Export as a national goal in the 1970s. Thus, between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s, about 42 per cent of the total workforce emigrated, leading to a fall in unemployment to 2 per cent in 1986. In 1987, the number of male Jordanians working abroad was 350,000, more than 50 per cent of them in Saudi Arabia, and more than 30 per cent of them are university graduates.

The promotion of emigration by Jordan is motivated by the benefits accruing from it. In addition to reducing domestic unemployment, these include support to the State budget from two sources: first, foreign aid from the Gulf States for harbouring refugees; and second remittances from workers abroad. Indeed, remittances became the primary source of national income. During 1974-1991, Jordan occupied the fourth rank among nations in terms of degree of dependence on remittances (Olwan, 2006). At 32.25 per cent, the ratio of remittances to GDP was at its highest in 1976, then began to decline until 1980 when it was 24 per cent, then rose in 1981 to 29.28 per cent after the second rise in oil prices, and again in 1984 to 31.67 per cent, but fell sharply thereafter to 19.7 per cent in 1988 with the impact of stagnation in the Gulf States following the decline in oil prices (Nassar, 2006). As an indication that the country is heavily dependent on aid from Gulf oil producers and remittances from Jordanians working in these countries, Jordan's economy is said to be a rentier economy and Jordan is often described as the only non-oil country with an oil economy. In 1980, the financial assistance obtained by Jordan from the Gulf States, combined with remittances from workers in these countries, constituted about 50 per cent of GDP (De Bel-Air, 2007).

(iii) Immigration policies

In the 1960s and 1970s, remittances and large scale emigration led to a structural shift in the local economy and the labour market. Most remittances were invested in consumption, mainly in real estate and imported goods, in addition to some limited productive investments, particularly in agriculture in the Jordan Valley. As a result, the demand for unskilled labour in agriculture, building and construction increased. However, with the age structure of the population being heavily tilted towards the young and given the marginal contribution of women to the labour force, the labour market could not satisfy this increased demand. Hence, since the late 1970s, the Government has encouraged the import of unskilled labour, mainly immigrants from Arab countries. Indeed, Jordan allowed immigration from neighbouring Arab countries unconditionally. Until 1984, Syrians, Egyptians and other citizens of Arab countries were not subject to residence requirements and the authorities turned a blind eye to irregular immigration from Arab countries, while subjecting immigrants from non-Arab countries to more protectionist entry and residence procedures; hence the high proportion of Arab labour to the total foreign labour during the period.

These policies resulted in a division of the labour market into two parts. One is dominated by national labour and is characterized by high wage levels and job stability in both the public and private sectors, but is heavily dependent on remittances. The other, which includes construction, agriculture and some other service sectors, such as domestic work, is dominated by foreign workers and is characterized by relatively low wage levels, high turnover of employment, and a lack of any mechanisms to protect workers' rights. Thus immigration to Jordan did not make up for emigration of skilled local labour to the Gulf, but rather substituted for unskilled local labour, which achieved upward mobility, abandoning labour intensive unskilled sectors and rural areas to the cities, particularly to the capital, Amman (Chatelard, 2004).

(b) Regulation of migration policies since the mid-1980s

However, in the mid-1980s, Jordan began to abandon the open door policies towards immigration and refugees, attempting to indigenize jobs and substitute foreign labour with national labour. This was mainly forced on Jordan by the collapse of the rentier economy and the consequent rise in unemployment, as well as by the reluctance of national labour to undertake jobs deemed to be socially low level, including domestic work and construction. The decline of Arab oil prices in the mid-1980s led to a decrease in foreign aid from the Gulf States. It also led to a shift in labour migration policies of the Gulf States, towards reducing foreign employment and indigenizing jobs, which resulted in the return of large numbers of Arab workers in general, and Jordanian workers in particular, to their countries of origin. The return of workers increased dramatically when the Gulf War broke out in the early 1990s, with about 300,000 Jordanians leaving Kuwait, which increased the population of Jordan by about 10 per cent (Nassar, 2006), reduced remittances to 10 per cent of GDP in 1993, and raised unemployment drastically to 25 per cent in 1991 (Chatelard, 2004).

With the economy facing severe problems, signified by high unemployment, inflation and borrowing, the Government, in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, resorted to economic reform programmes in 1989, including trade and financial liberalization, privatization, and promotion of foreign investment.

This coincided with growing instability in the region, the Palestinian uprising in 2000, rising Palestinian-Israeli tensions, instability in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic and the second Gulf War in Iraq. Fears that regional conflicts may overspill into Jordan led to changing policies towards refugees.

Clearly, Jordan has faced several challenges that resulted in a reconsideration of its immigration and refugee policies. The Government tried to address unemployment, distribution of resources and maintenance of security and stability in an unstable regional context, which required controlling immigration and reducing foreign labour. On the other hand, it was under pressure by the United States and international institutions to open its market to foreign workers for two reasons. The first was to implement economic openness and liberalization programmes to attract foreign investment, which entail greater openness to immigration and movement of labour, and the second was to allow Iraqis into the country at a time when the Palestinian refugee problem was still dominating the country's political agenda.

The following sections address the fundamental changes in immigration, emigration and refugee policies in Jordan since the mid-1980s.

(i) Immigration policies

As a result of high rates of unemployment since the mid-1980s, the Government began to adopt measures designed to limit the entry and residence of foreign workers, with a view to providing more job opportunities for citizens. In a survey by the United Nations in 2005 on the views of States on immigration, Jordan was in the group of countries that expressed interest in reducing the number of foreign workers, as shown in table 2 (ESCWA, 2006).

a. Labour market and residence regulation policies

Law 24 of 1973 and its amendments constitute the legislative framework for regulating the residence and affairs of foreigners in Jordan. According to this law, a foreigner entering the country requires a valid passport or travel document and a valid visa granted for a certain fee. Article 18 stipulates that any foreigner wishing to reside needs a residence permit for a certain fee, and is required to leave the country once the permit expires, or else has to renew it.

TABLE 2

Perceptions of governments of Arab countries of levels of immigration in 2005

	Classification of countries by their views on level of immigration		
Ratio of expatriates to total population	Lowering the ratio	Maintaining the same ratio	Non-interference
Greater than 15 per cent	Lebanon Oman Jordan Kuwait Qatar Saudi Arabia United Arab Emirates	Bahrain Lybia	
From 5 per cent to 15 per cent	-	Syrian Arab Republic	
Less than 5 per cent	Egypt Morocco Yemen	Algeria	Tunisia

Source: ESCWA (2006).

The residence permit is for one year and is renewable. However, Article 22 of the Law allows issuing five-year residence permits to women married to Jordanians and to foreigners who have been residing in Jordan for more than ten years. Children under 16 do not need a residence permit (Article 25). Article 23 sets the fee for obtaining or renewing a residence permit at 15 dinars. As mentioned above, until 1984, openness towards Arab immigration pursued by Jordan meant that this law and the labour law that requires work permits for expatriates were not enforced on Arabs, particularly Egyptians, who were allowed to stay and work in Jordan without a permit.

However, this trend began to shift since the mid-1980s, when Jordan began to adopt more stringent policies towards Arab immigration. In 1984, Law 24 of 1974 was enforced on Arabs and Egyptians, requiring them to obtain work and residence permits, and the authorities began meticulously applying the law to previously-tolerated illegal residents (De Bel-Air, 2007). In addition, Law 14 of 2006 raised the residence permit fees to 30 dinars per year and to 10 dinars for issuing a substitute in case of loss.

Labour Law 8 of 1996 was issued to replace Law 28 of 1986. Article 12 of the latter law regulates the work of expatriates in Jordan, and is intended to encourage the employment of nationals and raise the cost of employing foreigners. According to it, foreign workers have to obtain a work permit for a maximum of one year, renewable, from the Minister of Labour or his representative, prior to being hired. The work permit should be granted only if the expertise required is not available among Jordanian workers, and priority should be given to Arabs. The law also gives the Ministry of Labour the right to deport and bar from re-entry for three years any foreign worker who does not comply with it. The law provides for levying from the employer a fee on each issued or renewed permit to support the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Fund.

Other measures to raise the cost of hiring foreigners included raising work permit fees. The amended Labour Law 28 of 1986 set these fees at 10 dinars for Arab workers in the agricultural sector, 30 dinars for other Arab workers, and between 50 and 150 dinars for other expatriates. These fees were raised gradually, reaching US$200 for Arabs and US$450 for other expatriates in mid-2006, then increasing again to US$500-US$700 and US$900-US$1300 for the two groups respectively. However, actual increases were lower. For example, in mid-2007, work permit fees for Egyptians amounted to US$285 (De Bel-Air, 2007).

Moreover, employment of non-Jordanians in almost all fields other than construction, building, agriculture, and domestic work, was prohibited.[4] In 1999, in order to link flows of immigrant workers to requirements of the labour market, have more control over such flows, and for security reasons, a new system for awarding employment contracts was introduced, which required workers to obtain contracts through Jordanian economic representatives and embassies abroad prior to departure.

The ministries of labour and interior estimate the numbers of regular and irregular immigrants and their locations, ensure collection of fees for work permits, and try to rectify the status of irregular workers. For example, an agreement was signed between Egypt and Jordan in July 2007 to enable the Egyptian embassy in Amman to help irregular Egyptian immigrants to normalize their status (De Bel-Air, 2007). In addition, about 18 bilateral agreements have been concluded between Jordan and countries of origin to set, among other aspects, conditions of employment and minimum wage levels.

b. Policies to integrate immigrants into Jordanian society

Jordan has implemented measures designed to promote the integration of immigrants, especially workers from Arab countries, into society, including:

i. Nationality Law 6 of 1954, which allows Jordanian citizenship to be granted to Arabs who have lived in Jordan for 15 years or over, on condition that they relinquish their original nationality (Article 4). In addition, Article 12 allows a naturalization certificate to be granted to foreigners, under certain conditions including living in Jordan for 4 years or more. It also allows this condition to be waived, with the consent of the King, for Arabs or if granting naturalization is in the public interest;
ii. Law 30 of 1978 on social security, which applies to all workers in Jordan, regardless of nationality;
iii. Law 24 of 2002, which allows foreigners to own or rent property upon approval by the competent authorities, under the condition of reciprocity by the home State of the foreigner concerned, with Arabs excluded from the condition of reciprocity.

However, there are some measures that restrict the integration of immigrants, including those that disallow their stay in the country upon the expiration of their term of residence, and prohibit them from joining trade unions and similar organizations in accordance with Article 108 of Labour Law 8 of 1996. On the other hand, in accordance with the instructions, conditions and procedures for employing and bringing in non-Jordanian workers issued in 2006 under the provisions of Article 4 of Regulation 36 of 1997, foreign workers are allowed, upon the expiration of their contract of employment, to move from one employer to another in the same sector or in another sector without their employer's approval, except in the agriculture sector, where workers are allowed to move only within the sector. While the employment contract is still in effect, a worker is allowed to move to work for another employer in agriculture and construction, subject to employer approval. In other sectors, workers are allowed to transfer to another employer only after six months of employment. Subject to employer and the competent ministry approval, the original work permit is cancelled and a new work permit is issued subject to new fees.

c. Policies to protect the rights of migrants

Exemplarily, Jordan has adopted a number of measures to protect the rights of immigrant workers, including:

i. Since September 2005, the instructions, conditions and procedures for bringing in and employing non-Jordanian workers have included the requirement that the employer pay a bank guarantee for each worker, to ensure protection of the rights of the worker, and the value of a return ticket to the country of origin, to be used on a decision from the minister or his delegate should the employer or the employee breach any of the obligations provided for in the instructions or the Labour Law;

ii. Regulation 3 of 2003 regulates offices bringing in non-Jordanian domestic workers. It enables the Ministry of Labour to monitor these offices to ensure their compliance with the rules and apply sanctions in cases of violations of rights;

iii. In January 2003, the Ministry of Labour started, in cooperation with the Women's Development Fund of the United Nations, implementing a special employment contract for non-Jordanians domestic workers, designed to protect this type of employment. With this, Jordan became the first State in the Middle East and North Africa to attempt solving the problems arising from the fact that the Labour Law does not cover domestic workers. (ILO, 2004; Baldwin-Edward, 2005).[5]

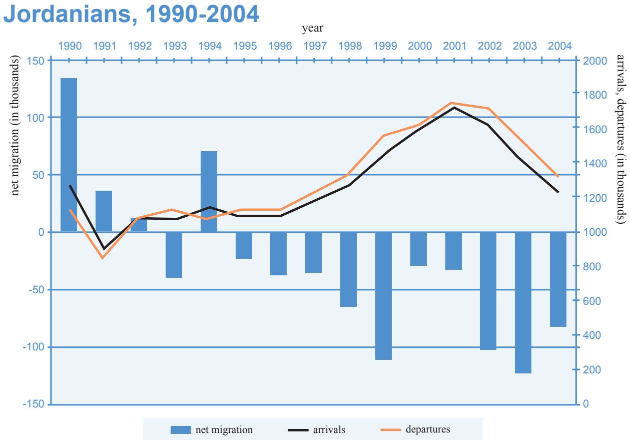
d. Emigration policies, caring for emigrants and their integration into host societies

Jordan's policies towards emigration contrast with its immigration policies. Since the 1960s,[6] Jordan has adopted open-door emigration policies. According to the aforementioned United Nations Report of 2005, Jordan is one of eleven countries worldwide that have expressed an interest in increasing emigration, mainly to solve local unemployment problems, enable citizens to achieve a better standard of living given the relatively low income levels in the country since the late 1980s, and receive the remittances that constitute a primary source of national income. During the period from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, many Jordanians returned to the country, causing a decline in remittances. However, in the wake of the signing of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel in the mid-1990s, there was a rebound; since then, numbers of emigrants abroad, and thus remittances grew until they reached about 800,000 in 2007, as shown in figures 2 and 3.

Most emigration was to North America and Australia. However, after the events of the 11 September 2001, emigration was directed to the Gulf again, in particular to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (De Bel-Air, 2007). During 1962-1973, policies did not address the situations of emigrants, emphasizing only the importance of remittances as a main source of income within the context of economic development plans.

FIGURE 2

Immigration, emigration and net migration of Jordanians, 1990-2004



Source: De Bel-Air (2007).

The 1973-1975 Development Plan was the first attempt to deal with emigrant affairs in some detail, stressing the importance of the role of the Government in caring for emigrants. It suggested that bilateral agreements be concluded between Jordan and countries of destination, to ensure that Jordanian expatriates benefited from local labour laws and that Jordan embassies look after Jordanian expatriates. Moreover, the plan adopted the principle of education and human investment for the purpose of exporting labour.

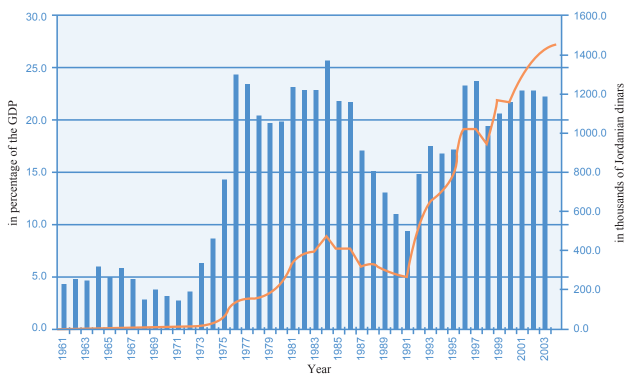
It was not until the mid-1980s that Jordan adopted specific policies towards emigrants.

Annual conferences for Jordanian expatriates were organized by the Ministry of Labour between 1985-1989. The main purpose was to give Jordanians abroad the opportunity to discuss the problems they face and enable the Government to respond to them, as well as encourage expatriates to invest in Jordan, although some argue that this latter objective was the main one (De Bel-Air, 2007; Brand, 2007).

After a break, another conference was held in 2001, attended by King Abdullah II. However, unlike previous conferences, this was for expatriate businesspersons only. In the same context, Jordanian embassies established commercial representative offices tasked with linking supply of and demand for Jordanian labour, particularly in the Gulf States. Moreover, the Jordanian Ministry of Labour provides information about offices catering for employment of Jordanians abroad (De Bel-Air, 2007).

FIGURE 3

Remittances of expatriate Jordanians, 1961-2004



Source: De Bel-Air (2007).

Notwithstanding their political and economic objectives, Jordan's open-door emigration of skilled labour policies raise some concerns regarding a brain drain. Economic reform programmes aim at developing Jordan into a regional centre for technology, which requires the development of the information technology sector, which in turn, depends on skilled labour. Thus, emigration of skilled workers and the ensuing of brain drain may hinder achieving these development goals (De Bel-Air, 2007).

5. Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries

Migration to the Gulf region differs significantly from other contemporary migrations worldwide. Over a few decades, the Gulf region experienced radical changes in the composition of its population and labour force. Expatriate labour became dominant in all countries, and in some, expatriates came to constitute the majority of the population. Oil-related modern migration began to Bahrain and Kuwait in the 1940s, and spread later to the rest of the region. Oman was the last Gulf country to join the major countries of destination. Having surplus capital while suffering severe labour shortages at all skill levels, opening the labour market widely was the only available means for these countries to achieve economic growth (Shamsi, 2006; Shah, 2008).

In the aftermath of the rise of oil prices in the mid-1970s, expatriate labour was drawn in to meet demand by the State and businesses. At a time when the national labour force, for which the modern State was the major employer, was ill-prepared, infrastructural projects and major expansion of services, trade, construction and other activities generated a large demand for labour (Dito, 2006).

Table 3 depicts the historical development of labour migration into the GCC over the past two to three decades and shows a clear predominance of expatriates. In the United Arab Emirates, the percentage of expatriates to total population increased from 2.4 per cent in 1960 to 58.9 per cent in 1975 and to 71.4 per cent in 2005. In Qatar, the percentage increased from 32 per cent in 1960 to 78.3 per cent in 2005. The United Arab

Table 3

Expatriate labour in GCC countries 1960-2005 (Percentage of total population)

	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
Bahrain	17.1	20.1	17.3	22.1	29.8	33.1	35.1	37.5	37.8	40.7
Kuwait	32.6	51.1	62.3	65.7	69.6	71.1	72.4	58.7	62.2	62.1
Oman	5.6	5.8	5.4	8.2	15.2	21.4	24.5	26.3	24.8	24.4
Qatar	32.0	48.7	61.4	69.6	72.2	78.2	79.1	77.2	76.0	78.3
Saudi Arabia	1.6	3.3	6.2	12.8	20.0	26.4	29.6	24.7	23.9	25.9
United Arab Emirates	2.4	18.0	29.3	58.9	70.8	71.5	71.2	70.5	70.4	71.4

Source: Shamsi (2006).

Emirates and Qatar are clearly exceptional in this regard. In contrast, Oman is the least influenced, with expatriates amounting to 5.6 per cent of total population in 1960, rising to 26.3 per cent in 1995, and then decreasing to 24.4 per cent in 2005.

(a) Policies regulating expatriate labour in GCC countries

(i) The 1970s

In the 1970s, labour migration and employment policies were quite liberal. Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates did not limit the entry of expatriate workers, giving priority to meeting labour needs, rather than to political and security issues and considerations of the control of the growth in the number of expatriate residents. In 1975, the Governments of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries facilitated the entry of expatriate workers from the West and other friendly countries. Employers no longer had to apply for individual visas; instead, they could obtain group visas to meet their needs. Moreover, workers were exempted from income tax and foreign companies were encouraged to import whatever labour they needed (Shamsi, 2006);

(ii) The 1980s and later

Towards the end of the 1970s and in the early 1980s, migration policies underwent significant changes as a result of the negative impacts of the predominance of the expatriate population, including: a disproportion in population structure and labour market; adverse effects on cultural and social values; imbalance between supply of and demand for labour; and an unavailability of qualified labour for the new information and communication economies. The significance of the latest problem mounted with the increasing control of large multinational companies that created new patterns of migration. An influx of expatriate labour with high technological skills engendered strong competition in the labour market and highlighted the problem of mismatch between the outputs of the educational system and the needs of the labour market (Dito, 2006; Shamsi, 2006).

The most important challenge facing the labour market in GCC countries is unemployment among nationals, which rose from 7.6 per cent in 1999 to 12.5 per cent (15 per cent in Bahrain,) in 2003 (Shah, 2008).

Unemployment is a particularly serious problem in view of the modest size of the national workforce in GCC countries, and is undoubtedly one of the most important factors leading to the adoption of policies designed to reduce the numbers of expatriates. Other factors include the direct and indirect negative impact of expatriate remittances on investment and the balance of payments. (Dito, 2006; Shamsi, 2006).

The trend towards reducing the numbers of expatriates was reflected in the survey conducted by the United Nations of the views of States on the desired proportion of migrants to or from each country (Shah, 2008; United Nations, 2006). According to the results of this survey, all GCC countries, with the exception of Bahrain, considered the level of immigration to be too high and indicated a desire to reduce it. Bahrain considered it appropriate and indicated a desire to keep to it.

Thus, since the mid-1980s, GCC countries began enforcing stringent controls on the entry of expatriate workers, seeking to reduce their numbers (Shah, 2008). The indigenization of jobs and the substitution of expatriate labour, in both the public and the private sectors, became national policies. Programmes and policies in the six Gulf countries differ depending on the specific political, economic and social considerations, but all are making efforts to limit the numbers of expatriates.

Indigenization means the gradual substitution of expatriate labour in accordance with short, medium, and long-term national plans that also seek the adequate training of national labour. Several such policies and plans have been developed by the GCC countries as a regional group, as well as by each country individually (Shamsi, 2006). The following are examples of the most important efforts made by GCC countries as a group (Dito, 2006; Shamsi, 2006):

a. Round-table meeting in Bahrain of ministers of labour. On 7 May 1998, Bahrain hosted a round-table meeting of ministers of labour and social affairs in GCC countries with the International Labour Organization (ILO). The meeting emphasized the need to develop the systems and institutions in these States to reduce reliance on expatriate labour;
b. Meeting of the ministers of industry in Kuwait. In their meeting in October 1998, the ministers approved a unified GCC strategy for increasing the proportion of national technical and professional employment in industry to at least 75 per cent by 2020;

c. Efforts of the Executive Office of the Council of the GCC Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs. The Office declared that it intends to conduct a comparative study of social insurance laws and systems in the GCC countries. Considering the disparities in social insurance systems to be one of the most important obstacles impeding manpower flow among GCC countries, the study would seek to identify a common ground for unifying these systems or bringing them closer. The Office also indicated that it intends to prepare a study of the activities of expatriate labour recruitment offices and a survey of labour structure in member States.

In fact, ever since the beginning of the influx of foreign workers in the mid-1970s, there have been no declared labour migration policies in the GCC countries. Instead, such policies were reflected in a range of systems and laws for control of expatriate labour, which have undergone changes and modifications in response to regional and global economic and political developments. The development of these systems and laws was not governed by an overall vision and was not based on careful study and planning, resulting in some shortcomings in addressing labour migration issues. Nonetheless, they responded to changes in patterns of inflow of expatriates and created a sort of balance between making use of expatriate labour and benefiting from the local national workforce. Some of the most important manifestations of these laws and regulations are the following (Shamsi, 2006):

1. Gulf countries impose strict control on the inflow of labour by ministries of internal affairs (visas, and residence and deportation procedures) and ministries of labour and social affairs (work permits). For example, the current conditions imposed on Asian labour are a result of this strict control.
2. Apart from occasional provisions in the Qatari Labour Code and the decision of the United Arab Emirates to allocate 30 per cent of employment to Arab labour, Arab labour percentages are still low.
3. The desire by Gulf countries for substituting national for expatriate labour is patently genuine. However, the realization of this desire is impeded by several factors, including: shortages in human resources, a dearth of appropriate educational and training outputs, a reluctance among citizens to undertake manual work, and the possibility of gaining a reasonable income just by virtue of being a citizen.
4. A common feature of all Gulf countries is the lack of an accurate information system on labour markets that would enable the collection, processing and exchange of information to control the movement of labour and avoiding risks resulting from the influx of expatriate labour.

Current immigration policies in the Gulf countries can be divided into three main groups; namely:

a. Those governing work and residence of expatriates;
b. Those aimed at indigenization of jobs and reducing legal and illegal migration;
c. Those for protection of rights of expatriates.

(b) Policies governing work and residence of expatriates

The main objective of migration to the Gulf countries is work. Hence, labour migration policies focus on regulating and managing the entry and residence of foreigners for work or visits.[7] Expatriate workers are there temporarily for the duration of their employment contract and are not allowed access to permanent residence or citizenship. Policies focus on regulating and managing the entry and flow of these temporary workers and their dependents, and as well as the duration of their residence.

Policies for regulating the residence of expatriates in the Gulf countries are uniform. Foreigners are allowed entry only if they satisfy the following conditions:

a. Having a valid passport issued by a country or authority recognized by the Ministry of Interior;
b. Having a sponsoring guarantor who is a citizen or a resident;
c. Obtaining a visa to enter the country. This could be a visit visa[8] that is then changed to a work visa, or an ab initio work visa obtained at the request of the sponsor (employer) identifying the type of work. Notably, a condition is that local labour is not available for the work that the expatriate worker is recruited for (Qatar Labour Law of 2004, Saudi Labour Law issued by Royal Decree M/51 of 2006, Resolution 8 of 1994 on conditions for obtaining work permits in Bahrain, Ministerial Decree 640 of 1987 regulating residence of foreigners in Kuwait);
d. A foreigner who enters the country has to obtain a license to stay within a certain period that varies from one country to another,[9] for a limited duration, the maximum of which also varies from one country to another,[10] with the possibility of

renewal prior to expiry by a certain period that is often a month. Changing employer is not allowed except with the consent of the current sponsor (employer) and with the authorization of the competent authority (Ministerial Decree 640 of 1987 in Kuwait, Law 3 of 1963 in Qatar, Saudi Labour Law of 2006). Moreover, some countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, require that the worker spend a minimum period in the employ of the original sponsor (Suter, 2005).

In addition, there are conditions on families joining their breadwinners. Often, these are linked to a minimum wage. For example, Kuwait requires that the monthly salary of the breadwinner be not be less than KD250 (Shah, 2008), while the United Arab Emirates requires it to be not less than AED3,000, in addition to accommodation expenses, or AED4,000 excluding these (Suter, 2005). In many cases, the salary is less than the minimum required, ruling out bringing in the family. Breadwinners must also pay annual fees for the residence of their families that vary in value from one country to another.

GCC countries adopt specific policies designed to prevent expatriates from residing permanently. These include:

a. Limiting employment contracts, often to two years, subject to renewal. In most cases, these contracts are renewed repeatedly, resulting in almost permanent residence. Moreover, a substantial proportion of expatriates are born in the country of destination. For example, in 2007, 16.3 per cent of all expatriates in Kuwait were born in the country (Shah, 2009);
b. Mostly, granting citizenship or even permanent residence, even for those born in the country, is prohibited. Children born in the country are allowed to stay under the auspices of a parent acting as a sponsor. Once a male child reaches 21, he is permitted to stay only if he obtains a work or student permit for himself. A female child may stay under the auspices of a parent acting as a sponsor until she marries (Shah, 2009);
c. Preventing expatriates from owning transferable property in both Qatar and Kuwait and other Gulf States[11] (Suter, 2005; Shamsi, 2006);
d. As noted above, an expatriate is allowed to work only if guaranteed by a national sponsor[12] (Shamsi, 2006);
e. Residency is terminated if the expatriate resigns, is made redundant or his employment is not renewed before expiry. Some countries require a minimum period of stay outside the country before the expatriate is allowed to obtain a new work permit (Shamsi, 2006);
f. Expatriate workers are not allowed to benefit from any training programmes (Suter, 2005);
g. Expatriates are not allowed to join a trade union or any similar organization (Suter, 2005);
h. Expatriates are prohibited from benefiting from any rights to free health care;
i. An expatriate may be deported at any time by a decision of the competent authority for specific reasons related to security, health or any other reason, as provided for by Article 21 of Law 3 of 1963 governing the entry and residence of aliens in Qatar.

(c) Indigenization and reduction of (legal and illegal) expatriate labour policies

Labour importation policies in the Gulf countries follow two complementary axes:

First: Indigenization and promotion of the national labour force.

Second: Reduction of the expatriate labour force.

The Gulf countries have planned to substitute expatriates with national labour gradually. The relevant measures and policies can be divided into three groups as follows:

- Raising the cost of living for expatriate workers;
- Indigenization through administrative procedures;
- Measures designed to reduce illegal immigration.

i. Raising the cost of living for expatriate workers

Many countries have resorted to measures that raise the cost of living for expatriates, while providing the State with revenues, with the aim of reducing attraction of the Gulf countries to expatriate workers. Examples include (Shah, 2008):

Health-care fees: By Law 1 of 1999 on Health Insurance for Aliens living in Kuwait, as a condition of granting residence, expatriates have to obtain health insurance for themselves and members of their families, in most cases at the expense of the expatriate worker, rather than the employer. Saudi Arabia also imposed a similar system in 2001. In the United Arab Emirates, a similar system has been implemented since 2006, and new fees were imposed for surgical operations, ranging between 400 and 500 dirhams depending on the type of surgery, which are high compared with average wage levels for expatriates. A

BOX 1

The sponsorship system

The sponsorship system involves two parties: the sponsoring guarantor, who must be a citizen, and the expatriate worker (the sponsored). The former is responsible for the latter materially, legally and morally. Non-citizens are not permitted to work or reside in the country without having a sponsoring guarantor. Most of the dealings of the sponsored person with Government agencies are carried out through the sponsoring guarantor, who is responsible for all material and legal costs. In return, the system gives the sponsoring guarantor the right to confiscate the passport of the sponsored person and prevent him/her from travelling without permission. The sponsored person is remunerated for the work undertaken and may apply to the authorities in case of being subjected to irregularities or violations of labour laws (Dito, 2006; Shamsi, 2006).

These rules apply to all expatriates, whether working in the public or the private sector. In the public sector, the Government institution is the sponsoring guarantor, while in the private sector, it is the employer, whether a company or an individual. This system has been criticized for giving rise to risks, including (Dito, 2006):

1. The employer has privileges giving him monopolistic powers over the local labour market and restricting the movement of expatriate labour. Thus, expatriate labour rights are poorly-protected in comparison with those of national labour. In fact, the system violates the rights of the expatriate worker, giving the sponsoring guarantor control over the life and fortunes of the expatriate worker. In that sense, the system clearly violates international laws and conventions that prohibit imposition of restrictions on freedom of movement and travel by virtue of Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Shamsi, 2006). Numerous studies point out that many expatriate workers have over the years complained of being subjected to violations and abuses of labour laws by employers (Suter, 2005).
2. The system has contributed to the practice of leasing out business licences and, consequently, the emergence of a clandestine labour market. In addition, it has contributed to an "inflation of commercial activities" carried out by small enterprises, without any actual development of innovation among citizens.
3. The system has encouraged unlawful employment.
4. The system has weakened incentives for developing management structures and work organization in the private sector, thereby impairing its ability to attract national manpower to work in it.
5. The system has led to a preference for establishing labour intensive, cheap projects having a high profit margin, particularly in the construction sector.
6. The system has distorted the value system in society, particularly citizenship based on rights, rather than privileges.

On the other hand, some believe that the system provides care for the expatriate worker and assists in controlling expatriate labour, which represents a large proportion of the population. The abolition of the system would lead to influx of millions of workers from Asian and Arab countries, resulting in economic and social problems, including: generally low salary levels, which would force former sponsored workers to accept lower payment and inferior jobs. Indeed, many of the problems faced by expatriates in the Gulf countries also exist in their countries of origin and they are often exploited by travel agencies in those countries (Shamsi, 2006).

Several studies had high hopes for abolishing the sponsorship system in Kuwait, replacing it by alternative systems, including a system of exchange of permits, establishing a joint stock company to provide the required labour for employers, and forming a labour committee for each expatriate community, linked to the General Federation of Trade Unions. In Qatar, the revision of expatriate worker laws, including the sponsorship and health-care systems for expatriates, is being discussed. The Saudi Government is considering various alternatives, including accepting investors' projects and assets as collateral securities. Notably, GCC Governments, rather than individuals or business owners, could act as the sponsor, securing the safety and professional interests of expatriates and classifying the requirements of the labour market. An annual fee can be imposed on renewing the residence permits of expatriate workers to cover the management costs (Shah, 2007; Shamsi, 2006).

fee of KD1 (US$3.4) is charged for medical examination in clinics, and a fee of KD2 (US$6.8) for medical examination in hospitals, which is high compared with expatriate salaries, which range between US$100 and US$150. When this law was promulgated in 1999, many expatriates sent their families back home because of their inability to bear the costs of compulsory health insurance (Shah, 2008).

The cost of authenticating academic qualifications in the United Arab Emirates was raised in 2005 from 100 dirhams (US$27) to 510 dirhams (US$139);

In Saudi Arabia, SR100 (US$26.6) per year are levied from all expatriate workers to fund a training programme for the national workforce, and the United Arab Emirates is considering introducing a similar system (Shah, 2008).

ii. Indigenization through administrative measures

Gulf countries apply administrative measures aimed at substituting foreign with national labour. Examples include:

In 2003, Saudi Arabia announced a 10-year plan to limit the ratio of expatriates to total population to a maximum of 20 per cent by 2013, as well as to reduce the number of expatriates by half (Shah, 2008; Shamsi, 2006);

Quotas: some Gulf countries limit the number of work permits granted to employers or for domestic workers at the national level, such as in Saudi Arabia, or at project level, such as in Oman. Some limit the ratio of expatriate to total workers in the public or private sectors. The Saudization law of 1996 stipulates that indigenous employment be not less than 75 per cent of all employment, that wages of Saudi workers be not less than 50 per cent of total wages, and that 50 per cent of all training funds be allocated for professional training of Saudis. After the Iraqi invasion, Kuwait limited expatriate employment to 35 per cent of the total in the public sector (Shah, 2008 and 2007), and set a quota for the number of locals to be employed by the private sector, and imposed fines and penalties on companies that do not meet the set percentage, such as denial of access to tenders for Government contracts (ILO, 2004).

In the United Arab Emirates, a minimum percentage of national employment was set for the banking sector, with fines imposed on non-compliant banks. However, more than half the banks in the United Arab Emirates did not comply, preferring to pay the fines instead, which is indicative of the many difficulties the private sector faces in employing nationals (Shah, 2008).

In Oman, percentages of local employment were set for some sectors; 60 per cent for the transport and storage sector, 45 per cent for the financial services and insurance sector, and 15 per cent for the contracting sector (Yousef, 2005).

Some countries specified the percentage of expatriate workers to be substituted by local labour. In Kuwait, this ratio was raised in 2006 from 7 per cent to 15 per cent (Shah, 2008). In Saudi Arabia, the number of expatriate workers to be substituted in banks and financial institutions was set at 9800 in 2003 (ESCWA, 2006).

In addition to such restrictions or quotas, some countries accorded greater attention to the *skill levels of expatriate workers*. The United Arab Emirates decided to dispose progressively of 240,000 workers in the private sector who do not have appropriate educational qualifications. Saudi Arabia also decided to test expatriate technicians to make sure they have the skills required for the jobs they aspire to (Shamsi, 2006).

Barring jobs to expatriate workers. Most Gulf countries post lists of jobs exclusively reserved for nationals. Saudi Arabia declared about 25 occupations as limited to Saudi citizens, including taxi drivers, employees in jewellery shops, staff in Hajj and Umrah offices, staff in car showrooms, and public relations staff (Shah, 2008; Yousef, 2005). This resulted in the closure of several jewellery shops in Jeddah, where 60 per cent were owned by expatriates (Shah, 2008).

In Kuwait, 16 jobs were identified in 2006 as exclusively reserved for Kuwaitis, including jobs in programming and operation of computers and in secretarial work, as well as cashiers and car drivers (Shah, 2008; 2007). Similarly, in Dubai, public relations work is reserved for nationals. This is also the case for working as a driver or cashier in Oman, where, in some areas, the sale of female gowns is also reserved for women citizens (Shah, 2008).

Raising the cost of recruiting expatriates and motivating the employment of local labour. In an effort to restrict demand for expatriate labour, Gulf countries resort to measures designed to raise the cost of recruiting expatriates. Examples include imposing charges on expatriate labour and requiring expatriates to pay for health insurance for themselves and their families, as in Kuwait as per the Employment Act of 2000, and also in Oman (Yousef, 2005). Other examples include work permit fees imposed by most Gulf countries for new expatriate workers or for annual renewal of residence permits. On the other hand, Governments apply pressure on and give inducements to the private sector to indigenize jobs. Giving subsidies for substituting expatriates with local employment in the private sector, as well as for reducing the wage gap between the public and the private sectors is an example (League of Arab States, 2006 and Girgis, 2002).

In addition, Governments give the private sector incentives for employing citizens, such as granting soft loans and applying protectionist measures (League of Arab States, 2006). In Saudi Arabia, training programmes for citizens are supported through work permit and entry visa fees collected from expatriates (Yousef, 2005). In 2001, Bahrain started supporting training programmes for citizens in the private sector and linked this support to the level of national employment in an establishment. Moreover, customs exemptions for raw materials and machinery were linked to the ratio of national employment in an establishment within the framework of the indigenization of jobs (Yousef, 2005). Similar policies were pursued in Oman. In Kuwait, the labour law of 2000 stipulated providing Government social allowance for local workers in the private sector; granting subsidies for training citizens; and linking the granting of Government contracts to the extent to which an establishment achieves specified indigenization objectives, while imposing sanctions on non-compliance (Yousef, 2005).

Strict control of work permits. Gulf states limit the number of work permits issued and restrict the transfer of a work permit from one employer to another. For example, in Bahrain, the Minister of Labour announced in 2003 that, as of 2005, granting or renewal of work permits will be restricted in the sectors marked for job indigenization, with the exception of skilled labour unavailable in the local market. Ministerial Resolution 19 of 2004 limited the renewal period of temporary work permits to 6 months only (Shah, 2008; Yousef, 2005). In 2004, Saudi Arabia suspended the issuing of work permits to new companies and to those that employ fewer than 10 workers, requiring them to employ local labour. However, companies found this difficult, either due to lack of qualified local labour or because nationals demand inflated wages (Shah, 2008).

iii. Measures to reduce irregular labour migration

Immigration into Gulf countries is illegal if (Shah, 2008):

A migrant enters illegally, without the required documents or with forged documents. However, this type of irregular immigration is rare;

A migrant does not leave the country upon expiry of employment contract or related period of residence, whichever is shorter. This type of irregular migration is common;

A migrant works for other than the legal sponsoring guarantor when a sponsoring guarantor sells the work permit obtained to another person. Although official data are lacking, this has become a problem in all Gulf countries, casting doubt on the efficiency of the sponsorship system.

The Gulf countries have adopted several measures to reduce and eliminate irregular labour migration, including:

1. Arresting and deporting irregular immigrants. In June 2005, Saudi authorities deported some 2,700 overstayers. As a result, 45 illegal clothing factories and a number of illegal factories producing illegal alcoholic beverages were shut. Irregular labour migration is a cause of vagrancy in Saudi Arabia, with the number of vagrants estimated at 600-800, mostly women, children and the elderly (Shah, 2008).
2. Granting amnesties.[13] Since the mid-1990s, several Gulf countries have granted amnesty periods to irregular labour migrants. For example, in 2003 the United Arab Emirates allowed 100 000 irregular migrants to stay (Khonker, 2008). Similarly, Kuwait granted amnesty periods more than once, most recently in 2007 (Shah, 2007), and Oman granted an amnesty in December 2005.
3. Imposing penalties on those who trade in visas. For example, the United Arab Emirates imposes a fine of dirhams10,000 and/or imprisonment for 6 months for employing an irregular worker (Suter, 2005).
4. Some Gulf countries, such as Kuwait and Bahrain, are considering regulating or cancelling the sponsorship system, which is believed by some to be the main cause of trading in visas and the consequent spread of irregular labour migration.

The lack of recent comprehensive data on the results of indigenization and substitution policies prevents a thorough assessment of these policies. Nonetheless, most literature indicates that most do not achieve the envisaged ratios. Table 4 shows that until 2005, the ratios of expatriates to total population in the Gulf countries and ratios of expatriates in the labour force have increased, or at least remained steady, with the exception of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. In Kuwait, these ratios declined; but some attribute this decline to the Gulf War, rather than to indigenization policies. In Saudi Arabia, the ratio of expatriate to total labour declined from 64 per cent in 1995 to 50 per cent in 2000. Overall, the ratio of Arab to total labour in the GCC countries declined from 72 per cent in 1975 to 25 per cent in 2002 (League of Arab States, 2006).

Though indigenization of jobs laws and measures vary and the acuteness of unemployment differs from one Gulf country to another, the following are common features that explain the failure of these policies to achieve their targets (Dito, 2006; Shamsi, 2006):

Table 4

Ratio of expatriates to total population and to total employment in GCC countries

Country	Date of initiation of indigenization and substitution programmes	Ratio of expatriates to total population (percentage)			Ratio of expatriates to total employment (percentage)			
		At beginning of programme	2000	2005	1985	1995	2000	2003
Bahrain	1996	37	38	41	58	60	59	59
Kuwait	1991	72	62	62	86	83	82	81
Oman	1988	25	25	24	52	64	64	71
Qatar	2000	--	76	78	77	82	86	86
Saudi Arabia	1995	25	24	26	63	64	56	50
United Arab Emirates	1999	--	70	71	91	90	90	--

Source: ESCWA, 2006.

1. The lack of integration of indigenization policies with socio-economic development strategies in each country, as well as the lack of integration among the GCC countries, which explains the slowness and ineffectiveness of decisions to facilitate the mobility of national labour among the GCC countries, despite a continuing emphasis on the importance of such mobility by all GCC conferences.
2. An emphasis in indigenization policies on quantitative aspects of employment (ratios of indigenization – specific occupations – economic sectors) rather than qualitative indicators related to wage levels, working conditions, and training, which has led to accumulated unfilled vacancies in most national employment offices, since the unemployed decline to accept the wage levels and working conditions on offer.
3. A lack of accurate data on the labour market has made assessment of indigenization policies difficult and controversial.
4. The reluctance of businesses to employ nationals, considering them to be slow, dependent and lacking a desire to improve their scientific and professional capacities compared with expatriate workers who accept lower wages and are obedient, committed and highly productive. Additionally, nationals are reluctant to work in the private sector.
5. Poor compatibility between the outputs of education and the needs of development projects and infrastructure, in addition to the low participation of women in economic activity.

(d) Efforts and measures to protect the rights of migrant workers

With the increasing global interest in human rights, evident in the increasing number of Government and civil human rights agencies and associations in various areas, concern for the rights of migrant workers has become an integral part of migration policies in various countries. Such policies are no longer limited to regulating expatriate labour and residency; they also focus clearly on the protection of rights of immigrants.

In line with this global trend, and especially in light of the criticism levelled at Gulf countries for the violations of rights of labour migrants, they are adopting rights protection mechanisms. These primarily include the regulation of expatriate labour recruitment and employment offices and imposing restrictions on migrant workers. However, in many cases, the conditions and requirements set are not adhered to, and generally, Gulf countries are criticised for the ill-treatment of labour migrants, especially women domestic workers, with frequent reports of abuse, torture and harassment by employers.

Gulf countries have tried to address these problems through several measures, including the establishment of shelters for domestic workers and providing a hotline for complaints. In 2007, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates both established shelters to provide safety and health and legal support for expatriate workers who suffer ill-treatment or torture (Shah, 2009).

In 2003, Bahrain announced a national plan to help workers who are subjected to ill-treatment, which provided for establishing temporary shelters and hotlines for complaints, and other measures designed to help domestic workers in emergency situations. The plan also provided for dissemination of information on the rights and obligations of expatriates in Bahrain to embassies of labour countries of origin, employment offices and others (Baldwin-Edwards 2005; ILO 2004).

In 2003, the Saudi Shura Council approved the establishment of the Saudi Human Rights Commission and the National Society for Human Rights, an independent watchdog for human rights. The Human Rights Commission investigates any violation of the human rights of expatriate workers. In 2004, the Ministry of Labour and a department for the protection of expatriate workers from exploitation were established, and a policy to bar employers proved guilty of abuse from employing expatriate labour was adopted (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005). In addition, Saudi Arabia announced in 2005 an amendment to the Citizenship Act to allow expatriates to obtain citizenship upon meeting a set of conditions related to length of residence, level of education, and other considerations (ESCWA, 2006; Shah, 2006).

Moreover, the Gulf countries drew criticism for the difficulties caused mainly by the sponsorship system to migrant workers wishing to move from one employer to another. As has already been mentioned, some countries, such as Kuwait and Bahrain, have begun reconsidering this system (Shah, 2009).

Attempts have also been made to address problems of failure of employers to pay the salaries and wages of expatriate workers.[14] For example, Kuwait issued ministerial resolution 110 of 1995, obliging employers to transfer wages higher than KD100 to the banks. The United Arab Emirates paid wages in arrears from the bank guarantees of defaulting companies and barred them from bringing in more expatriate workers. It also imposed a system of payments requiring the deposit of the wage in the worker's bank account at the end of each month, to ensure regularity of payment and facilitate control (Khondker, 2008).

(e) Evaluation of labour migration policies in GCC countries

Generally, labour migration policies comprise a significant number of elements, from the methodology for determining the needs for, or the surplus of, expatriate labour, all the way to integrating labour migrants into their new environments, as well as all the relevant criteria, laws, regulations and institutions. However, it appears that these policies have not cohered into a consistent whole in most GCC countries; at best, there is in each country a set of declared objectives and some measures aimed to achieve them (Shamsi, 2006).

Our review of labour migration policies in the Gulf countries has identified some general features. A common goal is to substitute expatriates with national labour gradually. In furtherance of this aim, the indigenization of jobs is encouraged, while imposing certain restrictions on entry of expatriate labour. Such restrictions include allowing the entry of expatriate workers to the country only through very complex procedures; not allowing them to stay beyond the expiration of their contract; not allowing them to bring in their families; not allowing them to own real estate or stocks, or work without a local sponsoring guarantor. However, these policies have led to high levels of irregular migration (League of Arab States, 2006; ESCWA, 2006).

Despite the specific features of individual labour markets in the GCC countries, they share general features that tend to make it difficult, if not impossible, for national labour to compete with expatriate labour successfully, namely:

a. The division of labour markets between the public and the private sectors;
b. The dependence of the private sector on low paid jobs;
c. The restrictions placed on movement of expatriate workers, in contrast with the high flexibility enjoyed by national labour.

Decades have elapsed since the policies designed to control the volume of expatriate labour in the countries of the region were first pursued. However, these policies did not take into account the root causes of the persistence of large-scale labour migration and its close association with the socio-economic structure of these countries. Remarkably, the large labour migration coincided with large increases in numbers of new young entrants to the labour market and high unemployment rates.

The most important reasons for the poor performance of labour migration policies in the GCC countries are:

1. The generation of low skill jobs, along with the systems and procedures for bringing in expatriate workers, encouraged the renewal of demand for low skill labour. The demand for unskilled labour is growing in various regions in the world. However, the specificity of the situation in the Gulf countries lies in the interdependence between the demand for unskilled labour and the sponsoring guarantor system, which has created a dynamic that is not linked with the actual needs of the market. That dynamic has, in turn, led to the inflation of commercial activities and a surplus of expatriate workers, through both formal and informal expatriate labour markets. On the other hand,

BOX 2

An overview of some agreements by ESCWA member countries on migration and movement of labour

There are a number of multilateral and bilateral collective agreements among Arab countries aimed to organize labour mobility. Some such agreements provide for the protection of the rights of migrant workers in general. The Convention of the Economic Unity Council of 1965 seeks to achieve economic integration among Arab countries, within the framework of economic and social development, and to allow freedom of movement and residence of labour. Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Mauritania, Somalia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Palestine and Yemen ratified this Convention. Further to this Convention, the Declaration of Principles on the Movement of Arab Manpower of 1984 stresses the need for giving priority to Arab nationals and increasing regional cooperation (Roman, 2006).

Available information indicates that ESCWA member countries have entered into numerous bilateral agreements; Egypt has more than 12, and Jordan 18. Often, the objective of these agreements is to promote cooperation in the areas of labour mobility, training and protection of the rights of migrant workers.

In the context of regional integration between such ESCWA member countries as Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, and the European Union, there are two types of cooperation in matters of labour emigration to the latter. The first is collective, held through the European Union Association Agreements with individual ESCWA member countries, and through the European Neighbourhood Policy, which includes action plans and articles relating to prevention of irregular migration and to the social rights of migrants, but does not include articles relating to management of future migration. The second type is bilateral agreement. The two agreements that Egypt has with Italy and Greece are more specific and focus on the special interests of the countries involved, which is what collective agreements lack.

the public sector is unable to create enough jobs for the increasing numbers of national entrants to the labour market, while the private sector relies on low wage employment shunned by citizens. Some argue that this is the dilemma of the indigenization of jobs: despite economic growth and creation of new jobs, the problem lies in the type and quality of these jobs.

2. Competition in labour costs and inequality of actual costs in the market between expatriates and citizens has led to a renewal of the employment of cheap expatriate labour, which over time has resulted in high rates of unemployment of national labour.
3. The continued refusal by citizens to undertake some types of work for social and cultural reasons, viewing them as inferior and meant for expatriate workers.
4. The preference of nationals for employment in the public sector.
5. The difficulty of laying off national labour in the public sector, even if inefficient, which lowers productivity and leads to veiled unemployment.
6. The strong conflict between the goal of reducing the numbers of expatriate workers and that of developing and encouraging the private sector, which relies for its prosperity on expatriate labour.
7. The lack of accurate data on labour migration and its various implications, the availability of which is crucial for monitoring it and studying its effect on the labour market and other economic, social, security and cultural domains, as well as for developing appropriate policies and coordination among the various GCC countries.

Solving the problems that impede development and application of appropriate labour migration policies in the Gulf countries requires the harmonization of employment with economic policies, on the basis of a clear development vision, which would ensure that the private sector is the engine of economic growth, and that private sector jobs are best filled by nationals. However, this requires reforms in at least three key areas, namely the labour market; the education and training sector; and policy coherence and integration.

C. GOOD MIGRATION PRACTICES AND GAPS IN REGULATIONS GOVERNING MIGRATION IN ESCWA MEMBER COUNTRIES

1. Good migration practices

- Policies to combat irregular immigration
  The resettlement agreement between Egypt and Italy and the parallel agreement on the annual quota for Egyptian workers travelling to Italy are useful for both sides. They provide incentives to each party, while regulating migration, rather than stopping it, which serves the interests of both. The same approach could be followed among Arab countries that fear growing irregular immigration.
- Policies to combat trafficking in persons
  The United Arab Emirates is one of the few ESCWA member countries that have taken

meaningful steps towards combating trafficking in persons, especially women and children. Since January 2003, the Government began to use DNA analysis to detect trafficking in children fraudulently posing as members of the family. More than 250 children were returned to Pakistan and Bangladesh and traffickers were arrested (ESCWA, 2006).

- Policies to safeguard the rights of immigrants
  A number of ESCWA member countries have taken measures to safeguard the rights of immigrants. For example, Jordan included expatriate domestic workers in the Labour Code and issued special contracts for them. These provide for the respect of the human rights of the workers and define their financial rights, including the minimum wage. Jordan has also amended the law governing employment offices specializing in bringing in expatriate domestic workers to enable the authorities to have control over them (ESCWA, 2006) and Lebanon has followed suit.
  Bahrain issued its first human rights report in 2003, which covered the abuse of expatriate domestic workers. Based on this report, the Ministry of Labour took serious steps regarding issuing work permits to domestic workers and established a hotline to receive their complaints (ILO, 2004; Baldwin-Edwards, 2005).
  In Saudi Arabia, the Shura Council approved the establishment of the Saudi Human Rights Commission in 2003 as an independent body whose key functions include investigating violations of the rights of expatriate workers. In December 2004, the Kingdom established a new Department of the Ministry of Labour tasked with protecting expatriate workers from abuse, and took serious measures against 30 Saudis who abused expatriate domestic workers (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005).
- Using modern security devices to monitor the entry and exit of immigrants
  Lebanon is a leader in this field among ESCWA member countries. It created an electronic database that keeps record of the number of times immigrant workers enter Lebanon and the names and addresses of their employers, making it easier for the authorities to monitor and keep track of immigrants in case of security unrest (ILO, 2004).
- Policies to integrate immigrants into the host communities over the long term
  Saudi Arabia is preparing a policy of integration of non-Arab expatriates, through an act that requires a period of residence twice as long as for Arabs, but allows expatriates of all nationalities to apply (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005).
- Policies for good management of emigration and economic development
  An example is the agreement between Egypt and Italy to send an annual quota of Egyptian emigrants to Italy, dictated by the needs of the Italian market, and to establish a comprehensive project that helps to raise awareness of job opportunities in Italy and provides potential emigrants with the necessary training. The project also helps Egyptian emigrants to Italy to keep their ties with Egypt and introduces them to investment opportunities in Egypt.

2. Gaps in regulations and policies governing immigration to ESCWA member countries

In the following, four key gaps in regulations governing immigration to ESCWA member countries are discussed.

First gap: The absence or weakness of institutional frameworks governing migration.

With the exception of Egypt, the majority of ESCWA member countries either do not have an integrated institutional framework for dealing with migration or have a weak one. As previously noted, existing frameworks are weak either because they are incomplete; or due to poor coordination among Government bodies; or due to absence of laws, procedures and policies; or because of lack of transparency and frequent policy changes. Even in the case of Egypt, some institutions, like the Supreme Council for Migration, do not function effectively.

Second gap: The weakness of legislation on rights of migrants.

Some ESCWA member countries have recently shown concern for rights of migrants. Jordan, Lebanon and Bahrain have taken measures to protect expatriate domestic workers. However, generally, legislations safeguarding rights of immigrants are clearly weak.

Third gap: The weakness of policies for combating irregular migration.

There are no resettlement agreements between ESCWA member countries, and, with the exception of the agreement between Egypt and Italy, between ESCWA member countries and other countries. Few ESCWA member countries criminalize trafficking in persons. Some ESCWA member countries have ratified relevant international conventions. Lebanon, Egypt, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Yemen[15] are among the 89 countries that have ratified the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air. Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates[16] are among the 97 countries that have ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

Fourth gap: The weakness of commitment by numerous ESCWA member countries to international treaties and conventions governing the rights of migrants.

The ratification of international treaties to protect the rights of migrants is weak in the Gulf countries, with the exception of Bahrain and Kuwait. Bahrain and Egypt were the only two ESCWA member countries who ratified the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, while the 1990 United Nations International Convention on Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families has been ratified only by Egypt (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005). Egypt and Yemen are the only ESCWA member countries to have ratified the Convention of 1951 and its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, while ESCWA member countries with a high share of refugees, such as Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, have not done so (ESCWA, 2006).

D. SUMMARY

The Human Development Report 2009 outlined, in relation to migration, a number of basic approaches that must be pursued at the global level. These include protecting the basic rights of migrants, reducing the costs of transactions associated with migration, integrating human movement into development strategies, and liberalizing and simplifying channels that enable persons to work abroad (United Nations, 2009). However, the central challenge facing the countries of the world in general and ESCWA member countries in particular is how best to manage migration (rather than allow or disallow it) to maximize the benefits and minimize the losses. In light of the continuous change in the political and social conditions of their societies, ESCWA member countries should undertake certain measures to improve migration management.

On the other hand, a fundamental problem is the lack of data on migrants and their distributions by age, skill and education in ESCWA member countries, both receiving and sending (Adams, 2006; Baldwin-Edwards, 2005). For these countries to develop appropriate policies for putting migration in the service of development, sound data on immigrants should be available. Thus, there is an urgent need in the countries of destination to publish detailed statistics on migrants by country of origin, as well as data disaggregated by specific criteria to allow trends to be tracked over time. Moreover, data should be updated continuously, which requires employing modern statistical methodologies, rather than relying on population censuses, which are carried out every ten years, or longer in many ESCWA member countries. One such modern method is the population register followed by some European countries, which allows the continuous registration of population and changes in places of residence (Fargues, 2006). In addition, data should cover irregular as well as regular migration. With accurate, up-to-date data, ESCWA member countries can set the right policies so that migration would not become a source of brain drain in countries of origin or a financial burden on budgets of countries of destination, but an essential element in the development process in both.

One important measure that must be taken up by ESCWA member countries is to consolidate ties between emigrants and homelands. A number of institutions in countries of origin aim to promote such ties. However, more efforts are needed, such as giving emigrants the right to vote in elections, issuing identity cards abroad, and improving consular services. Moreover, the credibility of declarations of Governments on immigrants and the services they offer to them needs to be enhanced. As pointed out by the 2005 report of the Global Commission on International Migration, the success of these efforts may be contingent upon international compliance with treaties and conventions on the rights of migrants (Global Commission, 2005).

Cooperation among Arab countries in general and ESCWA member countries in particular with regard to migration should be reconsidered. There are some relevant agreements, but these are not implemented. The Arab Declaration on International Migration issued by the League of Arab States in July 2006 is a step in the right direction (League of Arab States, 2006). However, it needs to be buttressed by implementation mechanisms, especially in relation to rights and treatment of immigrants, which requires collaboration at the regional level, through regional and bilateral agreements and implementation mechanisms.

An important issue, particularly for the Gulf countries, is that despite the similarity of their economies, each country needs to develop specific migration policies. The global financial crisis in 2008 has shown that the effects of migrants returning to their countries varied (Fix et al., 2009). While Saudi Arabia was not affected severely, the rest of the Gulf countries were. Hence, while general policy frameworks could be developed collectively, the specific circumstances of each country may require particular details.

CHAPTER III

CORE ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB MASHREQ AND GCC – LABOUR MIGRATION

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CHAPTER III

CORE ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB MASHREQ AND GCC – LABOUR MIGRATION*

*This study was prepared by Magdi Ibrahim.

INTRODUCTION

Migration is a social phenomenon with demographic, economic, and political dimensions relevant to development. As a component of population growth, it has an effect on population size and characteristics in both countries of origin and destination. Moreover, labour migration has a profound impact on the size, growth and characteristics of the labour force, as well as on economic activities, and hence on development, in both countries of origin and destination. In addition, migration has a social and behavioural effect on the migrants themselves and on the population in both countries of origin and destination, apart from its effects on political stability and security and ethnic balance. All in all, migration provides crucial opportunities for development and prosperity to the various countries involved.

With growing inequality among peoples and societies, as well as among population groups within societies, in relation to prevailing demographic, social, and political conditions, migration volumes, patterns and trends have varied across epochs and among different regions. Of late, globalization has shaped new migration patterns, determining its flows and the quality of skills emigrating to such receiving regions, as Australia, Canada and the United States, and the European countries, which focused on attracting and recruiting highly skilled manpower from all over the world, while adopting policies and setting laws that severely circumscribe ordinary and traditional labour migration.

The countries of the Arab region are at the forefront of countries concerned with migration. The population of the Arab world represents 5 per cent of the world's population, while its share of migration exceeds 10 per cent of the world total. Arab countries host more than 9 million immigrants and Arab emigrants to Europe and the United States exceed four million.[1] Recent estimates indicate that in 2008, Arab expatriates constituted about 12 per cent of the population in the Arab world.[2]

The focus here is on a number of key international migration and development issues in the Arab Mashreq and Gulf cooperation Council (GCC) countries, particularly issues of labour migration. We will address the characteristics of this migration, the migration of women, the impact of migration on demographic structures, and the brain drain, in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, and the GCC countries.

The fundamental motivation for migration in the twenty-first century is the search for work. Hence, management of migration flows has become a top priority, with balancing the supply of and demand for labour at the global level proving to be the major challenge. Given that each of a majority of countries have concurrently become an exporter and an importer of labour, labour migration has become a way of life, imposed by the differences among States and regions in population growth rates, income, and opportunities for work. The current demographic imbalance between an elderly north and a young labour force in the south is perhaps a strong indicator that migration from developing countries to advanced industrial countries will grow.[3]

Over the past decades, international migration has emerged as a social phenomenon in the Arab world. Arab Mashreq and Maghreb countries are labour countries of origin, while GCC countries are labour receiving, and there are countries that are simultaneously both sending and receiving. There is thus an urgent need for researchers, planners and policymakers to study trends, patterns, dimensions and implications of migration, with a view to developing appropriate strategies for maximizing benefits and minimizing drawbacks. The major drawback is the 'brain drain', which underlines the risks and challenges posed by labour migration to national and regional development in the Arab region.

With the increasing volume of migration among countries and regions and the growing diversity of its patterns and demographic, social and economic development implications, interest in studying the interrelationship between international migration and development has mounted. Over the past decades, migration has contributed to global, regional and national economic growth, helped build several societies, reduced social and economic inequalities among individuals in various countries, refined workforce skills in both sending and countries of destination, and promoted the cultural heritage and intellectual development of peoples of the world. Given the increasing relative size of international migration in various Arab countries and the diversity of its forms and trends, it could stimulate extensive regional development.

Stressing the importance of international migration to the development process, since leaving the country of origin may be the best possible option, if not the only option, for improving people's life chances, the 2009 United Nations Human Development Report, for the first time since the series of reports began in 1990, addressed migration in a chapter titled Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development.[4] The report presents a comprehensive set of reforms that can provide great benefits to migrants, communities, countries, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. It highlights six key reforms that can be pursued separately, but if employed together in an integrated approach can maximize the positive effects of migration on human development. These are:

a. Liberalizing existing legal channels to allow more workers to emigrate;
b. Ensuring the fundamental rights of immigrants;
c. Reducing the costs associated with the migration process;
d. Finding solutions that benefit both migrants and host communities;
e. Facilitating the movement of persons within their own countries;
f. Mainstreaming migration into national development strategies.

These are indeed important recommendations on migration and development in the countries of the Arab region, both the countries of origin of the Arab Mashreq and the countries of destination of the GCC. They focus in particular on reducing irregular migration to Europe and the OECD countries and on ensuring the rights of migrants under some of the systems applied by countries of destination, such as the sponsorship system, as well as on benefiting from the competencies of skilled emigrants in national development in the Arab countries.

The report describes the great inequality in the distribution of opportunities in the world, which leads to movement of individuals, with its enormous potential for enhancing human development. It also finds that both development and migration promote the freedom of individuals, enabling them to live a life of their choice. Hence, understanding the various aspects and dimensions of population movement is fundamental for formulating appropriate migration policies.

The third issue of the Population and Development Report issued recently by ESCWA, which addresses international migration and development in the Arab region,[5] explains the most important result of demographic transition in the majority of developing countries, including Arab countries. The proportion of working age population is rising gradually, while fertility rates are declining, which occurs in the final stages of demographic transition when the ratio of working age population reaches its highest point and fertility falls to the replacement rate of 2.1 children/woman. This phenomenon is called the "demographic window" or the "demographic gift", where the proportion of the population of working age is as high as possible and the burden of dependency is at its minimum.

The "demographic window" is positive if properly exploited to create better investment opportunities; optimize exploitation of natural and human resources; provide sufficient job opportunities to reduce unemployment rates; ensure optimal use of the capacities of youth; eradicate poverty; enhance work productivity to increase competitiveness; consolidate social security, health insurance, and welfare programmes dedicated to special groups, such as the aged; and capitalize on remittances for development.

Conversely, if the "demographic window" is missed, international regular, not to mention irregular, migration pressures would mount, as a result of rising unemployment rates, with the rise in working age population and failure to provide sufficient job opportunities forcing young people to look for employment opportunities abroad and accept possibly inappropriate work conditions in the labour markets of countries of destination.

The study concludes that if the "demographic gift" is not to be wasted, workforce capacities ought to be built to match local and international market requirements and opportunities for investment and economic growth should be expanded. Otherwise, migration, and concomitant social and political pressures, would grow.

Some studies of the emigration of highly qualified people in general, and from the Arab world in particular, indicate that its rates have increased in recent years, particularly among university graduates, in consequence of the selective immigration policies adopted by Western and major industrial countries. Such countries as

France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom tend to favour educated and skilled persons, and facilitate their employment, residence and even naturalization.[6] The 1998 UNESCO report[7] pointed out that a third of the Nobel laureates in the United States are immigrants born in developing countries, and that half of those who obtain their doctorate degrees in France do not return to their countries of origin.

Underscoring the gravity of emigration of highly qualified persons, some studies term it "brain drain", pointing out that it is more serious the greater the qualifications and the higher the skills of the emigrants. Arab countries have lost 54 per cent of their doctors, 26 per cent of their engineers and 17 per cent of their scientists to Europe, the United States and Canada, who jointly attract 75 per cent of total Arab highly qualified emigrants.[8]

The 2008 Regional Report on Arab Labour Migration, issued by the Population Policies and Migration Department of the League of Arab States, subtitled: Brain Drain or Brain Gain points out that dazzling rapid changes in information and communication technologies have obviated the need for the highly qualified to be physically present in their countries of origin for them to contribute to the development of their communities. The report refers to the raging controversy between those who consider the brain drain a most important impediment to development in developing countries, maintaining that efforts should be made to encourage the return of highly-skilled migrants, and those who emphasise the positive aspects of highly-skilled emigration. The advantages include: massive remittance flows that support development projects in countries of origin; returning emigrants tending to invest in more advanced projects; emigrants, by virtue of their high expertise and the political positions they occupy abroad, could facilitate political and scientific cooperation between their countries of origin and their adopted countries, establishing collaborative opportunities between the scientific research centres in their countries of origin and those in advanced industrial countries. Thus insights and ideas emerged that, from the perspective of developing countries, consider emigration of the highly-qualified not a brain drain, but an opportunity for securing developmental returns.[9]

Aware of the continued emigration of highly-qualified persons and the need for integrating Arab emigrants into the fabric of the nation, and recognizing the important role they can play in the service of their countries and the Arab world as a whole, the League of Arab States has over the past decades, through several decisions both at ministerial and summit meetings, sought to promote cooperation and communication with Arab expatriates abroad, in an attempt to marshal their capabilities for social and economic development in their home countries. The Arab Declaration on International Migration, subtitled Activating the Role of Migration in National Development and Arab Regional Integration, adopted by the representatives of and experts from Arab countries at their meeting at the Secretariat of the League of Arab States in July 2006, confirmed the need to exert all possible efforts to enhance interest in Arab labour migration issues, the rights of migrants, and the ways to communicate with them and benefit from their know-how in Arab national development. These decisions and resolutions culminated in convening the meeting of Arab ministers on migration affairs and Arab expatriates, at the Secretariat of the League of Arab States in Cairo in February 2008, at the invitation of the Secretary-General, to conduct a general assessment of causes and implications of emigration and conditions of Arab expatriates abroad, as well as to develop an Arab strategy for addressing issues of migration.[10]

In the following, available data on trends and patterns of international migration in the Arab Mashreq and the GCC countries are considered, highlighting most important demographic, social, and economic characteristics of migrants. Development challenges and opportunities are underscored and distinguished experiences highlighted.

A. QUALITY OF DATA AND STATISTICS ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

Studying international migration requires highly accurate, consistent, and comparable periodic data and statistics on the volumes, trends and patterns of migration across different countries, and on numbers of migrants in both sending and countries of destination by demographic, social, and economic characteristics, in addition to other relevant data on causes and timings.

In practice, various countries provide direct accurate data on immigration to the country through successive population censuses, which each time register incomers and resident aliens born abroad, and collect data on the demographic, social, and economic characteristics of immigrants, the causes of their immigration, and duration of their residence. Many countries classify census data in separate sections covering expatriate resident populations, which together constitute a source of accurate data on international immigration into the countries of destination.

In contrast, censuses in the countries of origin do not provide data on numbers and characteristics of emigrants leaving before the census date. Such data may in principle be obtained from the censuses of countries of destination, but this method is impractical, since countries of destination often conduct their censuses at different times, on different bases, and using different methods, making it difficult to both compile data on any sending country and carry out international comparisons.

Nonetheless, standard references on demographics provide a number of technical methods that can be applied to obtain indirect estimates of net international migration between successive censuses. However, such estimates do not provide detailed data on migration trends and characteristics of migrants to and from a country. Hence, the use of these methods is limited to studying some quantitative aspects of international migration as a component of population growth.[11]

A number of international bodies and organizations, including the Population Division of the United Nations, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation Development (OECD), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), have, in recent times, played a prominent role in providing highly accurate data on international migration, providing researchers and planners in various countries around the world with a set of relevant databases.

We relied here mainly on the database of the OECD, which includes the countries of Europe, the United States, Canada, Mexico, Australia and New Zealand. These are the major developed industrialized nations that receive the majority of immigrants from around the world and account for more than 90 per cent of global migration. The OECD data covers annual immigration flows into member States, as well as total migrants or labour migrants over 15 years and longer. These data, which are classified by country of origin, detail demographic, social, and economic characteristics and period of residence. The data also cover movement of returning migrants from OECD member countries, classified by country of origin.

We have also adopted the United Nations Population Division estimates of migrant populations and international migration flows to and from countries, including Arab Mashreq and GCC countries. These estimates are in the form of a time series for each individual country, spanning the past two decades. For labour migration into GCC countries, census data on expatriate resident labour have been adopted as the most reliable available data.

B. MIGRATION TRENDS AND DYNAMICS

1. Emigration from the Arab Mashreq countries and the GCC countries

Recent United Nations estimates indicate that in 2005, cumulative international migration reached about 191 million migrants, with women representing nearly half of the total and slightly more than half in developing countries. A third of this migration is between developing and developed countries, a third among the developing countries themselves, and a third among the developed countries.[12] European countries account for about 34 per cent of total migrants worldwide, compared with 23 per cent for North America and 28 per cent for Asia, with the rest shared by African and Latin America countries.

OECD countries are the major labour migration countries of destination, particularly for Arab labour. OECD data show that the cumulative

Table 5

Distribution of emigrants to OECD countries* by country of birth, 2000

Country	Number of migrants	Percentage distribution	Rate of migration (per cent)
	Arab Mashreq countries		
Egypt	337 405	32.6	0.5
Jordan	72 296	7.0	1.4
Lebanon	353 657	34.2	7.5
Syrian Arab Republic	143 940	13.9	0.9
	GCC countries		
Bahrain	9 785	0.9	1.4
Kuwait	46 264	4.5	2.0
Oman	4 972	0.5	0.2
Qatar	4 850	0.5	0.8
Saudi Arabia	59 473	5.7	0.3
United Arab Emirates	2 430	0.2	0.8
Total	1 035 072	100	

Source: Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries (Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, N.D. Available at: http://stats.oecd.org/#).
* OECD countries include Australia, Canada, Italy, France, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States.

total of immigrants from Arab countries to OECD countries reached about 5 million in 2000, 79.1 per cent of whom came from the Maghreb countries, and the rest (20.9 per cent) from the Arab Mashreq and GCC countries.

As shown in table 5, emigration from GCC countries was about 12 per cent of the total, with the highest percentage being from Saudi Arabia at 5.7 per cent, followed by Kuwait at 4.5 per cent. The table also shows that the highest rate of emigration was from Lebanon at 7.5 per cent of total population, while the rate from Egypt amounted to only 0.5 per cent of total population, due to the large relative size of population of the country.

Table 6 on the age structure of emigrants (15 years and older) residing in OECD countries shows that the age distribution of emigrants from the Mashreq countries is markedly different from that from the GCC countries. Emigration from the latter to the OECD countries is mainly by the less than 35 years old, who account for more than 95 per cent of the total from the United Arab Emirates, compared with 87 per cent from Oman, 78 per cent from Saudi Arabia, and about 75 per cent from both Qatar and Kuwait. In contrast, emigrants from the Arab Mashreq to OECD countries are mainly from the 35 years old and above age group, who account for about 78 per cent of the total from Egypt, compared with 70 per cent from the Syrian Arab Republic, and approximately 60 per cent from both Lebanon and Jordan.

Table 6

Distribution of emigrants aged 15 and older to OECD countries* by age group and country of birth, 2000 (Percentage)

Country	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Arab Mashreq countries						
Egypt	6.6	15.7	23.1	23.0	14.0	17.6
Jordan	12.6	27.6	31.8	16.4	6.4	5.0
Lebanon	11.0	24.4	27.7	12.2	10.2	9.5
Syrian Arab Republic	9.8	20.4	27.5	17.2	12.5	12.5
GCC countries						
Bahrain	37.1	23.2	26.4	9.9	1.8	1.6
Kuwait	35.5	38.6	22.1	2.7	0.8	0.4
Oman	58.8	28.3	8.7	2.6	0.9	0.6
Qatar	46.1	28.6	21.6	1.9	0.5	1.5
Saudi Arabia	47.2	30.8	15.4	4.6	1.0	0.9
United Arab Emirates	80.5	15.1	2.5	1.0	0.4	0.4

Source: Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries (Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, N.D. Available at: http://stats.oecd.org/#).
* OECD countries include Australia, Canada, Italy, France, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States.

The high proportion of emigrants from the GCC countries in the younger age groups 15-24 and 25-34 is due to the fact that the main motive for emigration from these countries is study, while work is the main reason for emigration from the Arab Mashreq countries, which explains the high proportion of emigrants from those countries in the older age groups, as is the case for Egypt and Lebanon in particular.

Data in table 7 on the educational level of emigrants (15 years old and older) from the Arab Mashreq and the GCC countries to OECD countries show that those who have a university degree represent high proportions of emigrants, reaching about 50 per cent in the case of Egypt and about 45 per cent in the case of both Kuwait and Qatar. This confirms that emigration of the highly qualified and those with scientific expertise is the dominant feature of international labour migration.

Table 7

Distribution of emigrants aged 15 and over to OECD countries* by level of education 2000[a/] AND 2009[b/] (Percentage)

	Less than secondary		Secondary		University+	
Country	2000	2009	2000	2009	2000	2009
Arab Mashreq countries						
Egypt	19.5	18.8	30.8	30.7	49.7	47.3
Jordan	20.8	20.0	37.6	37.8	41.6	41.0
Lebanon	34.9	33.8	30.9	31.6	34.2	30.9
Syrian Arab Republic	33.7	33.0	31.2	30.3	35.1	33.3
GCC countries						
Bahrain	17.6	15.8	40.3	40.6	42.1	40.2
Kuwait	18.4	16.7	36.8	36.9	44.8	44.2
Oman	15.7	13.6	45.9	44.6	38.4	37.5
Qatar	17.9	16.1	37.5	37.5	44.6	43.9
Saudi Arabia	25.4	22.8	38.6	38.8	36.0	35.8
United Arab Emirates	23.6	21.0	51.4	50.2	25.0	24.2

Source: a/*Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries* (Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, N.D. Available at: http://stats.oecd.org/#).
b/UNDP (2009), pp. 4 and 8.
* OECD countries include Australia, Canada, Italy, France, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States.

Durations of stay in countries of destination are an important indicator in the historical analysis of migration flows, since they may be linked to social and economic development in the societies under study. Thus, a relatively high number of immigrants in a given period may reflect high levels of social and economic mobility. In addition, the length of stay in a receiving country reflects the level of ability of the immigrants to adapt and integrate into the fabric of the host community, which, in turn, leads to labour market stability.

Table 8 shows the distribution of immigrants aged 15 and over by country of birth and duration of stay in 2000. The majority of migrants from the four Mashreq countries stay for relatively long periods, often more than ten years. 71 per cent of Lebanese immigrants had stayed for more than ten years and 37 per cent for more than twenty, compared with 64 per cent and about 30 per cent respectively for Syrian immigrants, 62 per cent and about 40 per cent respectively for Egyptian immigrants, and 62 per cent and 32 per cent respectively for Jordanian immigrants. This pattern indicates that the majority of immigrants from the Arab Mashreq countries in the OECD countries work and settle permanently.

Table 8

Distribution of emigrants aged 15+ from Arab Mashreq and GCC countries in OECD countries* by duration of residence and country of birth, 2000 (Percentage)

Country	Less than a year	1-2	3-4	5-9	10-19	20+	Not stated
			Arab Mashreq countries				
Egypt	3.9	6.5	6.7	13.0	22.2	39.6	8.1
Jordan	4.7	7.5	7.3	16.9	29.3	32.3	2.0
Lebanon	2.7	4.1	3.7	14.4	33.9	37.1	4.1
Syrian Arab Republic	3.2	6.4	5.7	16.6	34.5	29.6	4.0
			GCC countries				
Bahrain	11.9	16.6	11.9	14.9	20.1	19.0	5.6
Kuwait	7.6	13.6	12.2	25.9	29.2	8.7	2.8
Oman	20.0	13.8	13.8	24.3	18.1	4.7	5.3
Qatar	9.6	19.0	13.6	22.2	24.1	7.1	4.3
Saudi Arabia	16.1	15.5	11.5	15.8	22.7	11.5	6.9
United Arab Emirates	11.9	22.1	14.0	19.7	24.7	2.3	5.2

Source: Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries (Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, N.D. Available at: http://stats.oecd.org/#).
* OECD countries include Australia, Canada, Italy, France, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States.

In contrast, the table shows that the majority of emigration from GCC countries to the advanced industrial OECD countries is relatively recent, that the duration of stay does not exceed ten years, and that it is for study. For example, 72 per cent of emigrants to OECD countries from Oman stay in the country of destination for less than ten years. Comparable ratios for United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain, are 67.7 per cent, 61.7 per cent, 59.3 per cent, 58.8 per cent, and about 55 per cent, respectively.

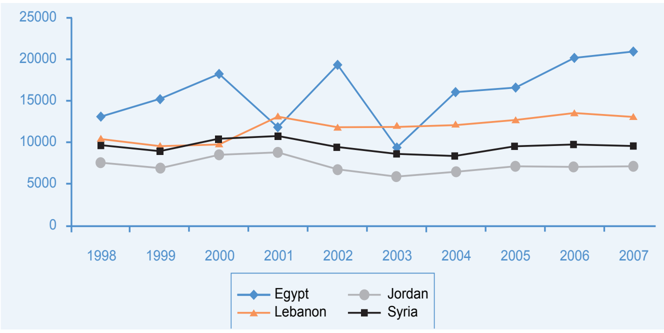
Data on children born to expatriates in countries of destination is useful in identifying the cumulative number of immigrants at a certain time, such as the date of a census or survey. Likewise, analysis of data on duration of stay in countries of destination helps to assess the ability of immigrants to integrate into the host communities. However, capturing the full picture of the dynamics of international migration from the Arab Mashreq and the GGC requires tracking emigration flows over the past in order to identify trends and changes.

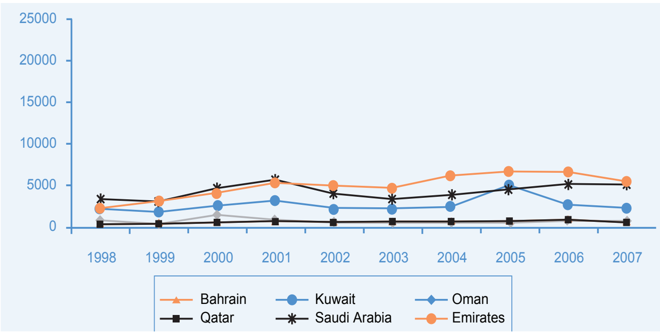
Figure 4 depicts the annual emigration flows from the Arab Mashreq and GCC countries to OECD countries during 1998-2007. It shows:

a. A significant reduction in annual emigration flows from the region during 2002-2003, which is attributable to the extraordinary measures taken by developed and industrialized countries to curb immigration, particularly from the Arab region, in the wake of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks;
b. A significant increase in the volume of annual emigration from Arab Mashreq countries compared with those from the GCC countries. This is attributable mainly to the large difference in population size. For example, the number of emigrants from Egypt in 2007 was about 110 times that from Bahrain, about 30 times that

FIGURE 4

Emigrants from Arab Mashreq and GCC countries to OECD countries, 1998-2007

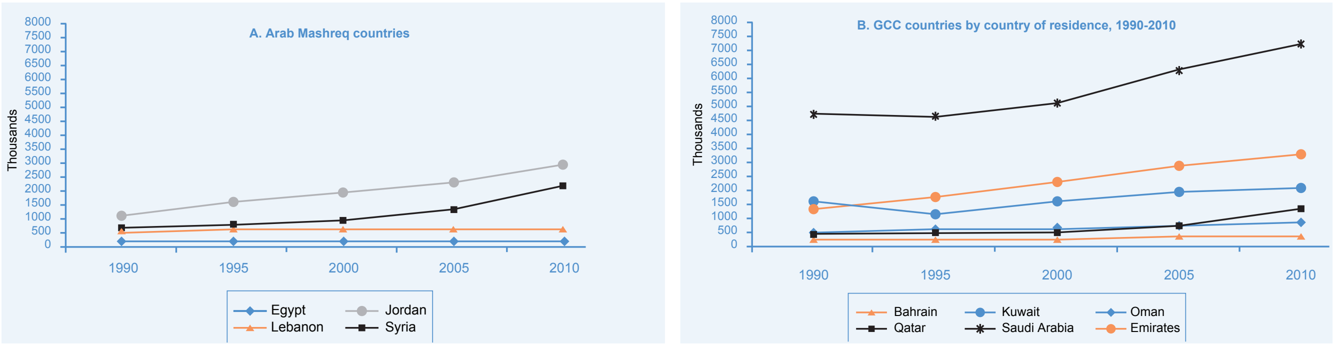




Source: Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries (Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, N.D. Available at: http://stats.oecd.org/#).

FIGURE 5

Estimated number of immigrants by country of residence, 1990-2010



Mid-year estimates of cumulative numbers

Source: *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision* (Geneva and New York, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2009).

from each of Oman and Qatar, and about ten times that from Kuwait;

c. A steady increase in emigration flows from Egypt and Lebanon beginning in 2004, while the number of emigrants from Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic was relatively steady during the period;
d. The numbers of emigrants from each of Bahrain, Oman and Qatar were steady at a low level that varied between 200 and 800 emigrants annually, while the annual number of emigrants from Kuwait exceeded 2,000, and from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates 5,000 each;
e. Most probably, emigration from the GCC countries, which have themselves been among the largest countries of destination of labour migration in the past few decades to OECD countries is largely for the purpose of education and study.

2. Migration to Arab Mashreq and GCC countries

Trends in international migration in recent years indicate that the Arab Mashreq and the GCC countries have not only provided major developed and industrial countries with technical and scientific expertise and skilled labour, but have also played an important role in receiving international migration from various parts of the world, particularly labour migrants to GCC countries, spurred by the needs of the GCC labour markets, resulting from ambitious socio-economic development projects.

The Population Division of the United Nations provides estimates of the numbers of immigrants who were living in the Arab Mashreq and the GCC countries over the two decades from 1990 to 2010. These are presented in figure 5 and confirm that there has been a continuous increase in the volume of labour migration to those countries. For example, the number of expatriates in Saudi Arabia has increased from 4.7 million to 7.3 million, in the United Arab Emirates from 1.3 million to 3.3 million, and in Qatar from 370 thousand to 1.3 million. The trend is not far different in other GCC countries.

Similarly, there has been an increase in immigration to the Arab Mashreq countries. The number of immigrants in Jordan doubled from about 1.15 million in 1990 to about 3 million in 2010, while in the Syrian Arab Republic, it increased three-fold from 690,000 to 2.2 million.

In 2005, the Arab Mashreq countries had varying numbers of expatriate residents. Jordan had some 2.35 million, amounting to 42.1 per cent

Table 9

Distribution of expatriate residents in Arab Mashreq and GCC countries by country of residence, percentage of females and migration rate,* 2005

Country	Number of expatriate residents	Percentage of females	Migrants as a share of the total population
	Arab Mashreq countries		
Egypt	745 246	46.7	0.3
Jordan	2 345 235	49.2	42.1
Lebanon	721 191	44.2	17.7
Syrian Arab Republic	1 326 359	48.9	6.9
	GCC countries		
Bahrain	278 166	31.9	38.2
Kuwait	1 869 665	25.6	69.2
Oman	666 263	20.8	25.5
Qatar	712 861	25.8	80.5
Saudi Arabia	6 336 666	30.1	26.8
United Arab Emirates	2 863 027	27.7	70.0

Source: Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision (Geneva and New York, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2009, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2008. Available at http://esa.un.org/migration/index.asp?panel=1).
* migrants as a share of the total population = percentage of expatriate residents to total population.

of the total population, compared with the Syrian Arab Republic at 1.33 million and 6.9 per cent.

Table 9 also shows that the percentage of female expatriate residents in the GCC countries is low, ranging between 20.8 per cent in Oman and 31.9 per cent in Bahrain, and is high in the Arab Mashreq countries, ranging from 50 per cent in Jordan to 44.2 per cent in Lebanon.

3. Immigration of women into Arab Mashreq and GCC countries

Gender is one important characteristic that reflects the selective nature of migration. Since economic factors are the major drivers of migration, it is likely that its volumes and trends indicate greater activity by males, particularly in developing countries, including Arab countries.

Table 10 presents the distribution of labour immigrants into the Arab Mashreq and the GCC countries by gender, the percentage of females among migrants over the world as a whole, in the group of developed countries, and the group of developing countries for the years 1990 and 2005. Figure 6 presents the ratio of women labour immigrants to total labour immigrants in the GCC countries. The data show the following:

a. For the years 1990 and 2005, while women accounted for about 50 per cent of total migrants in the world and even exceed 52 per cent in developed countries, their ratio is only about 46 per cent in developing countries;
b. At 49 per cent in both 1990 and 2005, the ratio of women labour immigrants to total labour immigrant population in the Arab Mashreq countries approached the world average, while it decreased significantly in the GCC countries to about 31 per cent in 1990 and then fell again to only 29 per cent in 2005;
c. There were significant variations in the ratio of women labour migrants to total labour migrants in the GCC countries. It was lowest in Oman, at 21 per cent during 1990 and 2005; and highest in Kuwait in 1990 at 39 per cent, decreasing to 31 per cent in 2005;
d. There was a steady increase in the volume of labour migration during this period for both males and females in all regions. The rate of increase among female migrants worldwide and in developed countries was higher than the rate of increase among male migrants, but lower in the developing countries. Over 1990-2005, the rate of increase in immigration into the Arab Mashreq countries was about 65 per cent for females and about 67 per cent for males, compared with 42 per cent and 52 per cent respectively into the GCC countries;
e. During the period, in both Qatar and Saudi Arabia, there was a higher rise in the ratio of female labour migrants to total labour migrants compared with males. In Qatar, the numbers of female and male labour migrants increased by 200 per cent and only 66.7 per cent respectively compared with 35.7 per cent and 33.3 per cent in Saudi Arabia.

As in the case of immigration into the Arab Mashreq and the GCC countries, male emigration exceeds female emigration from these regions to

Table 10

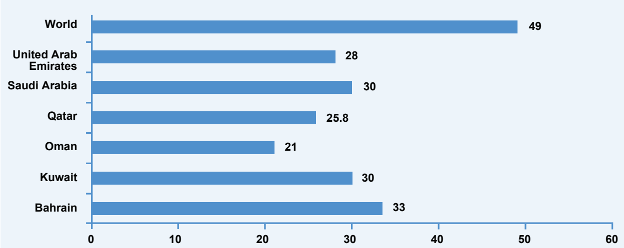
Distribution of expatriate residents in Arab Mashreq and GCC countries by country of residence, percentage of females and migration rate,* 2005

	Number of migrants (thousands)				Percentage increase		Percentage of females	
	1990		2005					
	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	1990	2005
World	76,385.63	79,132.43	96,074.29	99,171.12	25.8	25.3	49.1	49.2
More developed regions	42,783.56	39,571.17	60,492.33	56,695.61	41.4	43.3	52	51.6
Less developed regions	33,602.07	39,561.27	35,581.96	42,475.51	5.9	7.4	45.9	45.6
Arab Mashreq Countries	1,234.55	1,301.41	2,268.99	2,370.54	83.8	82.2	48.7	48.9
GCC countries	2,711.04	5,914.15	3,674.11	9,052.54	35.5	53.1	31.4	28.9
Bahrain	49.35	123.85	88.63	189.53	79.6	53.0	28.5	31.9
Kuwait	619.00	966.28	561.16	1,308.50	-9.3	35.4	39	30
Oman	88.76	334.81	138.35	527.91	55.9	57.7	21	20.8
Qatar	95.39	274.43	183.87	528.99	92.8	92.8	25.8	25.8
Saudi Arabia	1,418.82	3,324.18	1,908.72	4,427.95	34.5	33.2	29.9	30.1
United Arab Emirates	439.72	890.60	793.37	2,069.66	80.4	132.4	33.1	27.7

Source: Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision (Geneva and New York, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2009, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2008. Available at http://esa.un.org/migration/index.asp?panel=1).
* Migration rate = percentage of expatriate residents to total population.

FIGURE 6

Ratio of women migrant workers to total migrants in GCC countries and world, 2005 (Percentage)



Source: *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision* (Geneva and New York, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2009). Comment: world figure should be 49.2, Saudi Arabia 30.1, UAE 27.7, Oman 20.8, Kuwait 30, Bahrain 31.9.

the major developed and industrialized countries. Table 11 presents the distribution of emigrants (15 years and over) from the Arab Mashreq and the GCC countries to OECD countries by gender in 2000. At 47.2 per cent, the ratio of women was highest for Bahrain, followed by Egypt at 42.3 per cent, and lowest for Oman at 32.7 per cent. In the rest of the countries of the region, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates, the ratio of women was slightly less than 40 per cent.

The trends in women's migration to and from the Arab Mashreq and the GCC countries in general indicate that Arab migration is relatively steady, that traditional migration patterns which emphasize importance of family stability and family reunion are continuing, and that there is a growing demand for female migrant labour in health, education, and other Government, community and personal services, while some of the countries in the region require that women labour migrants be accompanied by their husbands or close relatives.

Table 11

Distribution of migrants aged 15 and over in OECD countries by gender, 2000

Country	Percentage of males	Percentage of females	Total
	Arab Mashreq countries		
Egypt	57.7	42.3	100
Jordan	61.3	38.7	100
Lebanon	55.0	45.0	100
Syrian Arab Republic	54.9	45.1	100
	GCC countries		
Bahrain	52.8	47.2	100
Kuwait	58.9	41.1	100
Oman	67.3	32.7	100
Qatar	60.4	39.6	100
Saudi Arabia	60.2	39.8	100
United Arab Emirates	61.8	38.2	100

Source: *Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries* (Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, N.D. Available at: http://stats.oecd.org/#).
* OECD countries include Australia, Canada, Italy, France, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States.

4. Migrant participation in labour force and migrant unemployment

(a) Labour emigration from Arab Mashreq and GCC countries

The key motive for emigration in general and emigration of highly qualified persons in particular is to seek appropriate job opportunities. Table 12 presents OECD data on immigrants from Arab Mashreq and GCC countries, which point to the following:

- High rates of participation in economic activity among immigrants from Arab Mashreq countries compared with those from the GCC countries. In 2000, the rate ranged from about 61 per cent for immigrants from the Syrian Arab Republic to 71.6 per cent for those from Egypt, compared with only 33.6 per cent from Oman, 40.8 per cent from United Arab Emirates, and 47 per cent from Qatar. Work is the key driver of emigration from Arab Mashreq countries, while education and study are the main motives of emigration from GCC countries;
- Rates of participation in economic activity declined significantly in 2009, compared to 2000, among immigrants from Mashreq countries, while remaining relatively stable among immigrants from GCC countries. This could be attributed mainly to the lower demand for migrant labour from the Arab region by the major industrial and developed countries, as a consequence of the events of 11 September 2001;
- There is a strong correlation between employment rates and the educational level of immigrants from all countries of the region without exception. For example, in 2000, the rate of employment among immigrants from Egypt with a high level of education was around 78 per cent, compared with only 55 per cent among immigrants with a low level of education. Likewise, the rates for Oman were 45 per cent and less than 24 per cent, respectively;
- Rates of unemployment among immigrants from the countries of the region in OECD countries are generally less than unemployment rates in the countries of origin. Among immigrants from Egypt, Jordan, Bahrain, and Oman, the unemployment rate was around 8 per cent, compared with 9-11 per cent for those from each of Kuwait, the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia; and exceptionally high at 15 per cent for those from United Arab Emirates.

Table 12

Distribution of emigrants aged 15 and over to OECD countries* by level of education 2000[a/] AND 2009[b/] (Percentage)

Country	Level of education	Employment rate 2000	Employment rate 2009	Unemployment rate 2000	Unemployment rate 2009
Arab Mashreq countries					
Egypt	Low	55.3	–	12.6	0.9
	Medium	67.7	–	9.6	9.7
	High	77.8	–	6.3	6.5
	Total	71.6	59.9	7.9	8.3
Jordan	Low	45.9	–	11.0	12.0
	Medium	60.5	–	8.0	8.5
	High	71.9	–	6.0	6.2
	Total	62.8	61.9	7.5	7.9
Lebanon	Low	44.8	–	14.9	15.3
	Medium	63.0	–	10.8	11.0
	High	78.7	–	6.8	6.9
	Total	63.2	56.9	10.0	10.4
Syrian Arab Republic	Low	47.4	–	13.9	13.7
	Medium	59.0	–	10.2	10.5
	High	72.6	–	8.0	8.6
	Total	61.2	55.3	10.1	10.5
GCC countries					
Bahrain	Low	56.4	–	6.3	6.1
	Medium	56.1	–	10.1	10.1
	High	68.8	–	6.9	6.7
	Total	61.7	61.7	8.0	7.9
Kuwait	Low	35.8	–	17.7	18.9
	Medium	46.7	–	11.7	12.3
	High	68.7	–	6.1	6.3
	Total	55.8	53.8	9.1	9.6
Oman	Low	23.9	–	8.8	7.5
	Medium	26.0	–	8.8	10.4
	High	45.2	–	6.1	6.1
	Total	33.6	34.4	7.4	7.7
Qatar	Low	39.5	–	14.1	14.5
	Medium	35.7	–	15.8	15.8
	High	59.7	–	6.7	6.9
	Total	47.5	45.7	10.4	10.7
Saudi Arabia	Low	29.2	–	19.4	18.4
	Medium	41.6	–	13.0	13.2
	High	51.7	–	8.0	8.2
	Total	43.5	43.5	11.5	11.8
United Arab Emirates	Low	31.4	–	17.5	18.8
	Medium	35.3	–	17.2	17.1
	High	58.3	–	11.2	10.6
	Total	40.8	40.8	15.0	14.9

Source: a/*Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries* (Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, N.D. Available at: http://stats.oecd.org/#).
b/UNDP (2009), pps. 151-154.

- Unemployment rates decline significantly among immigrants with a high level of education, compared with immigrants with a low level of education. This confirms that developed and industrialized countries are interested in attracting and providing appropriate employment opportunities to educated talent from developing countries. The rate of unemployment among highly educated immigrants was half or less than half that for those with a low level of education for most countries in the region, with the exception of Bahrain, where educational level did not affect unemployment rates;
- Unemployment rates among immigrants from the countries of the region were relatively stable during 2000-2009, without significant change in either general rates or rates by educational level.

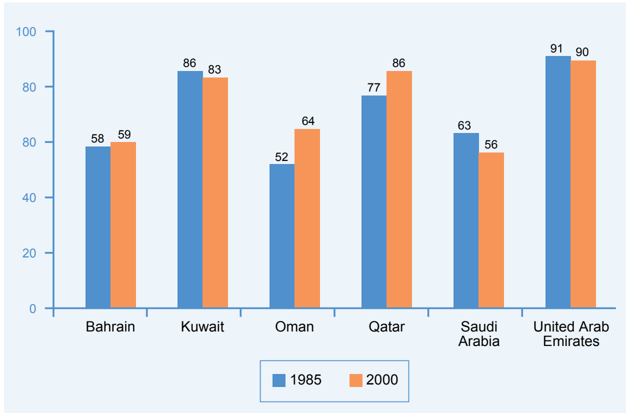
(b) Labour emigration to GCC countries

To meet the needs of their labour markets, GCC countries receive the largest number of labour migrants from around the world; 8.6 million in 1995, rising to 12.8 million in 2005.[13]

Figure 7 shows clearly the key role played by expatriate labour. In 2000, expatriates constituted more than 50 per cent of total labour force in all GCC countries, with their ratio ranging from 56 per cent in Saudi Arabia to 90 per cent in the United Arab Emirates.

FIGURE 7

Percentage of expatriates in labour force in GCC countries, 1985-2000



Source: Dito (2006).

The figure also shows small differences in the ratio of expatriates to total labour force during 1985-2005. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates succeeded in reducing that ratio slightly, while it increased in Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain to varying degrees.

Labour migration to GCC countries is unprecedented and, perhaps, unrepeatable: the contribution of expatriates to the labour force exceeds that of nationals, with the former constituting 90 per cent of total labour force in some countries. This began in the mid-1970s in the aftermath of high oil prices. Extensive infrastructural construction projects were initiated and rent, construction, services and trade activities expanded, despite severe shortages in national manpower. The result was a reliance on the readiness of foreign manpower to work within the context of a new type of migration that is at once temporary and permanent: expatriates are considered temporary, regardless of the duration of their stay in the country, which, in many cases, lasts for decades. Expatriate labour is brought in on a "temporary" basis, while the underlying reality of the business sector requires a "sustainable" supply of expatriate labour. Thus the "sponsorship" system was developed as a mechanism for bringing in expatriate workers, while providing privileges to citizen employers, who, under this system, have a monopoly over expatriate labour, and simultaneously restricting movement of the latter. The system, however, has adverse repercussions on the rights of expatriate workers compared with national workers.[14]

5. Participation of women migrant workers in the labour force

The lower participation of migrant women in the labour force is perhaps more pronounced than their lower numbers in total migration to and from the Arab countries under study. Given that the GCC countries are the largest countries of destination, studying the ratio of females to total expatriate labour force in them is instructive. Table 13 shows this ratio in various years over the last two decades. Notably:

a. There is a steady increase in the volume of both male and female expatriate labour, though the increase of the latter is faster.
b. The low participation of women in the expatriate labour force is a reflection of their low participation in the labour force in general in the Arab region. There are no substantial differences between rates of participation of women in the expatriate labour force and their participation in the labour force in general;
c. Notwithstanding the lower ratio of participation of women in the expatriate labour force in all GCC countries in the 1980s and 1990s, this ratio has increased significantly in recent years in most countries: for example, in Bahrain from 8.8 per cent in 1981 to 19 per cent in 2003, and in Saudi Arabia from 5.1 per cent to 14.1 per cent in 2002.

6. Some experiences in promoting role of migration in development efforts

(a) Building an integrated migration information system in Egypt

Within the context of institutional capacity-building, in 2001-2004, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration implemented the Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS), as one of the Egyptian-Italian cooperation projects for development. The project aims to:

Table 13

Total and expatriate labour force in the GCC countries by gender

		Total labour force (thousands)		Expatriate labour force (thousands)		Percentage of females in labour force	
	Year	Females	Males	Females	Males	Total	Expatriates
Bahrain	1981	19	127	7	74	13.2	8.8
	2003	74	256	37	157	22.4	19.0
Kuwait	1995	195	551	144	442	26.1	24.5
	2003	361	1 058	257	890	25.4	22.4
Oman	1993	68	637	45	38.7	9.7	10.4
	2001	--	--	183	347	--	34.5
Qatar	1986	19	181	16	163	9.3	9.2
	2001	50	273	37	240	15.6	13.2
Saudi Arabia	1974	96	1.621	20	371	5.6	5.1
	2002	901	5341	436	2657	14.4	14.1
United Arab Emirates	1980	28	532	26	479	5.0	5.2
	2000	252	1657	--	--	13.2	--

Source: GCC (2003).

- Facilitate legal emigration and integration of immigrants;
- Improve the social conditions of Egyptian immigrants through reinforcing their cultural and economic ties with the homeland;
- Build channels for deployment of the human and financial resources resulting from emigration in the development effort in Egypt.

The system is designed to facilitate the storage, updating and recovery of all relevant data. In turn, the acquisition and systemization of data permit the identification, profiling, and communication with Egyptian communities abroad. The system also disseminates information on work opportunities and working conditions abroad, as well as on the rights and duties of emigrant workers. Moreover, the system apprises emigrants of socio-economic developments and investment opportunities in Egypt. The Egyptian side continues to receive material and technical support to ensure system sustainability beyond the 2001-2004 period of the project.

Some Egyptian immigrants in Italy support the project site on the Internet. However, a significant proportion of them do not use the Internet, and some are worried that the system may be used to control them, rather than promote their role as partners in development.[15]

The system could be further developed through addition of information and communication portals for specific opportunities and areas of cooperation, such as:

- A portal for information on trade and investment opportunities in various economic sectors in Egypt, involving the Ministries of Trade, Investment and International Cooperation;
- A portal for information on Egyptians abroad in order to provide data on skills and expertise that may be leveraged for various projects.
- A portal for information on opportunities for social development, where NGOs and social ministries define education and health projects needed at the local level that may be supported by remittances and expertise from Egyptians abroad. This portal may also post information on and addresses of NGOs in Egypt and Egyptian associations abroad to facilitate direct contact;
- A portal for information on Egyptian networks abroad, to facilitate exchange of information and dissemination of best economic and social practices;
- A portal for information on migration and integration services to give potential emigrants access to social and economic information on the country of destination and addresses of local bodies that provide services and facilities for integration of immigrants.

(b) Qatar's initiative to create a sustainable partnership with Arab scientists abroad

It is important for the League of Arab States to sponsor initiatives made by Arab countries to establish partnerships with Arab expatriates, such as the Qatari initiative to create a sustainable partnership with Arab expatriate scientists abroad. The first Conference of Arab Expatriate Scientists was held in Qatar in 2007, at the invitation of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. It concluded with establishing the Arab Expatriate Scientists, which is a body intended to facilitate benefiting from the expertise of expatriates in advancing knowledge, creativity and scientific research in the Arab countries. This important Qatari initiative is consistent with the call of the Syrian Arab Republic for the establishment of a database of Arab expatriate expertise.[16]

(c) Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) programme

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) TOKTEN, was introduced in 1977 to help reduce the adverse effects of the brain drain. It is designed to transfer knowledge via having an up-to-date database of expatriate expertise, disaggregated by sending and countries of destination. Countries of origin benefit through short voluntary consultative visits by expatriates to their home countries to provide scientific and technical support. Volunteers use their acquired learning along with their familiarity with the local culture and language to transfer their knowledge and skills effectively. The programme is distinguished by its low cost, since expert volunteers are given only travel and accommodation expenses. 49 countries benefit from this programme, including Algeria, the Sudan, Lebanon and Palestine.[17]

(d) League of Arab States efforts to promote contribution of migration to national development and to regional Arab integration

Over the past decades, the League of Arab States has made efforts to enhance its developmental role. The Arab declaration on international migration, entitled Activating the Role of Migration in National Development and Arab Regional Integration was adopted by representatives and experts of Arab countries meeting at the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States in July 2006. The declaration comprised a wide range of principles and recommendations for strengthening Arab cooperation and coordination, sharing information and scientific research, providing training to facilitate movement of labour between Arab countries to meet the needs of both sending and countries of destination, standardizing policies and programmes, and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants.

The recommendations also emphasized the need to disseminate Arab culture among Arab communities abroad, particularly among second and further generations of Arab emigrants, to discuss with these communities how best they can support Arab causes, to strengthen their ties with their home countries, and to benefit from their skills and expertise in development.

These efforts culminated in the Meeting of Arab Ministers concerned with Arab migrants and expatriates, at the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States in Cairo in February 2008, at the invitation of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, following on the nineteenth Arab summit held in Riyadh in 2007. The meeting focused on the implications of emigration of technologists and the brain drain on the social and economic development in the Arab world, and emphasized the important role of Arab expatriates and the need to provide them with appropriate opportunities to participate in national development programmes. A general assessment of the motives for and implications of Arab emigration and the conditions of Arab expatriates abroad was made, and an Arab strategy to address issues of emigration and emigrants was formulated. In addition, the meeting recommended to the Economic and Social Council of the League of Arab States establishing a Council of Arab Ministers concerned with affairs of emigrants and Arab communities abroad.[18]

C. SUMMARY

Labour migration has increased in recent years and is expected to continue increasing, given that globalization has produced new paths for labour migration, as well as new skills, in various regions of the world. Globalization calls for integration within a global culture dominated by science and knowledge, depending on free movement of production factors to maximize global economic growth opportunities; it encourages freedom of trade and exchange of goods and services, and provides opportunities for unrestricted capital movement. Yet, globalization also tightens up restrictions on movement of individuals, for it facilitates only the movement of skilled labour, and is highly selective in searching for those who possess knowledge and creativity, by drawing out of developing countries the very human capital they need for development.

The current demographic imbalance between an elderly north and a young labour force in the south is perhaps a strong indicator that emigration from developing countries to advanced industrial countries will grow.

Arab Mashreq countries are countries of origin, while the GCC countries are countries of destination; hence the need for efforts to harmonize the needs of the various labour markets and encourage inter-Arab labour migration.

Global migration trends confirm the important role that should be played by the Arab Mashreq and the GCC countries in formulating global migration volumes and patterns, since the former will be a major source of skills and expertise needed by the labour markets of the developed and industrial countries, while the latter will be key countries of destination for expatriates from various regions of the world.

Two viewpoints have emerged from the debate on policies and measures needed for harmonizing migration movements with the needs of labour markets on the one hand, and addressing the brain drain on the other. The first viewpoint calls for stemming the brain drain and encouraging return of Arab expatriates to contribute to the development of their homelands through financial, moral and administrative incentive policies. In contrast, the second viewpoint, which seems more realistic, calls for enhancing ties with expatriate communities and providing opportunities for them to contribute to transfer and indigenization of knowledge and expertise in the service of development in the homelands, while remaining abroad.

CHAPTER IV

MIGRANT REMITTANCES AND THEIR IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT IN FOUR ARAB MASHREQ COUNTRIES: EGYPT, JORDAN, LEBANON AND THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

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CHAPTER IV

MIGRANT REMITTANCES AND THEIR IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT IN FOUR ARAB MASHREQ COUNTRIES: EGYPT, JORDAN, LEBANON AND THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC*

*This study was prepared by Mohamed Khashani and Mohamed Bensaid.

INTRODUCTION

The Arab Mashreq countries are most important countries of origin, to the extent that emigration has become a social phenomenon. Sizeable Arab Mashreq communities abroad have become an essential component in relations with the countries of destination, especially with temporary emigration turning into permanent settlement, particularly amongst the Lebanese and those who emigrated to Europe and America. Nonetheless, emigrants have maintained close economic, social, and cultural ties with their home countries, with economic ties assuming a special importance, given their impact on development.

Rational management of emigration requires the adoption of an approach that takes into account its relationship with development, the analysis of which should be multidimensional, focused on (1) remittances; (2) the use of remittances; (3) the economic effects of remittances; and (4) future implications and recommendations.

In carrying out this analysis, certain difficulties were encountered: there is a lack of research and statistical data on some countries, such as Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, and differences in statistical data depending on source. The latter difficulty is attributable to absence of well defined transaction channels that allow the determination of volumes of remittances, as well as to the use of more than one type of intermediary in the transfer process.[1]

The focus here will be on macroeconomic analysis due to a lack of information on microeconomic aspects.

Given their economic and social role, remittances have been the subject of much work. We will focus on issues of definition and evaluation, as well as on the motives that impel a migrant to save and remit. Remittances have important microeconomic and macroeconomic impacts. They are a good source of foreign currency for the countries of origin and of income for many families. The total income of a migrant comprises several elements:

a. Direct income: mainly salaries or wages earned from professional activity;
b. Indirect income: family and non-contributory allowances, including social security, medical and social grants and unemployment aid, if the immigrant is residing legally in a country that provides such benefits.

Before making an overall assessment of such remittances to the Arab Mashreq countries,[2] it is worth noting that the ability of immigrants to save depends mainly on the general living conditions in the country of destination, the level of integration of the immigrant into the host community, and the degree of adoption of the dominant mode of consumption. Finally, the propensity to save depends on the objectives set by the immigrant for the migration project, since the perspective of the immigrant is a decisive factor in disposal of available income. Overall, however, the migration project is economic, based on accumulating maximum savings.

Generally, remittances are an ambiguous, difficult to define notion, due to diversity of transfer practices and the lack of control on some transfer channels. These include “visible” official channels, the transfers through which are entered into account in the balance of payments as “transfers without counterpart”, and “unofficial” channels that escape official statistics. The latter include:

a. Cash taken in by the emigrant when coming home on holiday or sent through a third party. Such remittances, which supply the parallel exchange market with foreign currency, are transferred through informal networks, consisting of family members, and commercial networks;
b. Clearance transactions among compatriots, whereby an emigrant pays in the country of destination for purchases or invoices on behalf of a compatriot who, in return, settles by paying in the country of origin in the national currency to the account of the first person or that of the family. This form of transfer is used due to the fact that currencies of countries of origin may not be convertible and foreign exchange controlled;

c. Tangible assets that are brought in by emigrants when they come back to stay, such as furnishings, durable domestic appliances and electronic equipment, which are meant either for personal consumption or for resale in informal markets.
   Use of this means of transfer is widespread in the Arab Mashreq countries. Encouraged by tax exemptions for the commercial sector in the Gulf countries, the so-called "suitcase trade" accounts for a considerable share of total remittances. An objective assessment of these remittances is lacking. The only available assessment is for Egypt, where they are estimated to represent 20 per cent of total remittances (El Sakka, MIT, 2004).

Remittances are affected by three main factors: institutional, personal (microeconomic), and economic.

- Institutional factors: are related to the following initiatives:
  - Establishing and improving institutions for strengthening ties between emigrants and their country of origin;
  - Establishing structures to encourage investment and entrepreneurship by emigrants;
  - Developing programmes to mobilize qualified emigrants.

  Other institutional determinants that have an impact on remittances are:
  - Respect for democracy and human rights;
  - Good governance, particularly commitment by the State to fight unnecessary bureaucracy and bribery;
  - Quality of judicial and tax systems.
- Personal factors (microeconomic): It is worth recalling that migration is an economic project based on accumulating maximum savings. However, ability of immigrants to save and transfer to the country of origin varies according to type of emigrant. The following factors play a determining role:
  - Time: the behaviour of first generation emigrants is different from that of succeeding generations, and the behaviour of those who consider their migration to be temporary differs from that of those who decide to stay permanently in the country of destination;
  - The nature of work and income of the migrant: real wage and privileges;
  - The number of dependents and their ages, and whether the family is accompanying the migrant or not;
  - The living conditions in country of destination and the extent of integration of migrant into the host society and degree of his adoption of the prevailing mode of consumption;
  - The role of the sponsor: in some of Gulf countries, migrants need the consent of the sponsor when the amounts they wish to transfer are substantial;
  - The decision to return and its timing influence the degree of propensity to save and remit;
  - The strength of ties and solidarity with the family: The most important determinant of the value of remittances is the nature of the relationship between the migrant and beneficiaries, who are primarily family members. Frequently, emigrants consider what they grant a debt and a way of paying for the investment in their upbringing and education and the financing of their emigration;
  - Remittances may be in return for services rendered to the family at home, such as caring for children and other family members who remained behind. They may also be considered by emigrants as a means for building a good reputation among family members, relatives and the community at home;
  - Economic: the overall migration project is based on accumulating maximum savings. Usually, emigrants do not save what is left of their income after consumption, but rather, save and then consume what is left; i.e., saving is the primary objective. Notably, there is a "strong correlation between low levels of education and high rates of remittances".[3]
- Economic factors: These factors are mainly the general economic climate; especially, investment conditions, number and spread of money transfer institutions and banks networks, and type and quality of services provided by money transfer institutions, as well as the costs of transfers.

A. REMITTANCES IN ARAB MASHREQ COUNTRIES

1. Incoming remittances

Notably, remittances that pass through official channels are only part of the total financial flows sent by emigrants to their home countries. On the whole, remittances are an indication of the close association between emigrants and their country of origin.

Table 14

Annual remittances through official channels
Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, 1990-2009 (Million US dollars)

	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Egypt	4 284	3 226	2 852	2 911	2 893	2 961	3 341	5 017	5 330	7 656	8 694	7 800
Jordan	499	1 441	1 845	2 011	2 135	2 201	2 330	2 500	2 883	3 434	3 794	3 650
Lebanon	1 818	1 225	1 582	2 307	2 544	4 743	5 591	4 924	5 202	5 769	7 180	7 000
Syrian Arab Republic	385	339	180	170	135	889	855	823	795	824	850	827
Total	6 986	6 231	6 459	7 399	7 707	10 794	12 117	13 264	14 210	17 683	20 518	19 277

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Year book 2008.

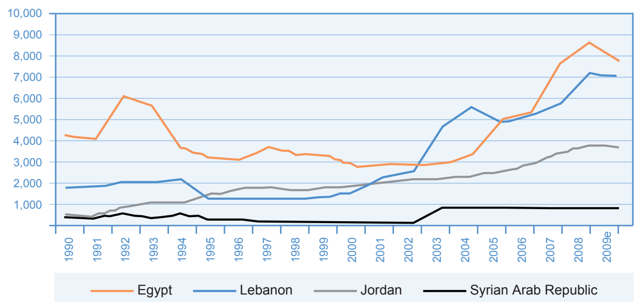
Over 20 years, from 1990 to 2009, the volume of remittances to the four countries increased by 276 per cent. At 731 per cent, Jordan recorded the highest rate of increase, followed by Lebanon at 385 per cent, the Syrian Arab Republic at 215 per cent, and Egypt at 182 per cent. These rates confirm the increasing trend of incoming remittances, with the subsequent dependence of the economies of these countries on them. It should be noted that these data are in terms of numerical dollar value. Hence, actual flows are less if erosion of the value of the dollar is taken into account.

Given the importance of the non-official remittances, it is difficult to assess the evolution of overall remittances in the four countries without taking them into account. Political and economic conditions in the Gulf States, which are the most important source of remittances, have a direct impact on their rates. In Egypt, for example, the rate in the 1990s tended to decline because of events in the Gulf, but the next decade, with the exception of 2002 when there was a slight decrease, saw a rise in remittances, especially from 2004. One major explanatory factor is the high price of oil and the resulting high demand for Egyptian labour. In Jordan, after the rise of remittances in the 1980s, which amounted to US$1237 million in 1984, they fell to US$499 million in 1990, then increased again to exceed US$1986 million in 1995, particularly after resumption of emigration to the Gulf countries, starting in 1994 (De Bel Air, 2003). The downward trend in the 1990s and the rise in the following decade also apply to the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon. highlights the evolution of these remittances in the four countries over two decades.

The effects of the global financial crisis on remittances became apparent in 2008. However, such effects remained below the overall levels forecast by some sources. In the case of Lebanon, for example, according to the International Monetary Fund, remittances were expected to decline by 12 per cent, but the Central Bank of

FIGURE 8

Evolution of remittances in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and the Syrian Arab Republic 1990-2009 (Million US dollars)



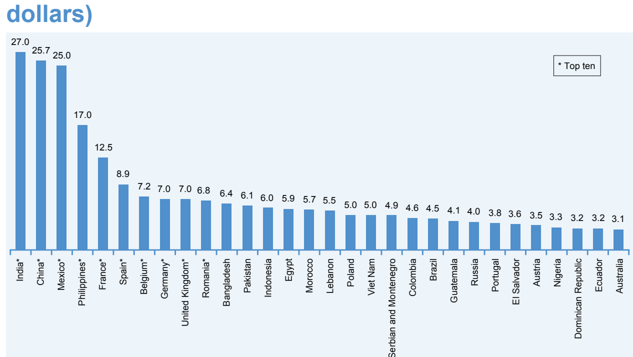
Source: World Bank staff estimates based on the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008..

Lebanon considered that they rose by 7 per cent (November 2008 statement), and eventually recorded a rise for the year of more than 24 per cent, as indicated in table 14.

According to World Bank data for the year 2007, Egypt remains the largest recipient of remittances among the four countries. In comparison with countries of origin, including developed countries, Egypt is ranked first among Arab countries and 14 internationally, while Lebanon is ranked sixteenth. If developing countries only are considered, Egypt and Lebanon rank ninth and eleventh, respectively, and Jordan later, while remittances to the Syrian Arab Republic seems less important in comparison.

FIGURE 9

Top remittance receiving countries, 2007 (Billion US dollars)



Source: World Bank (2008), p. 17.

2. Outgoing remittances

The value of outgoing remittances varies in the four countries; Lebanon is the biggest sender of remittances compared to the size of its immigrant population, as outgoing remittances accounted for 12.4 per cent of GDP in 2007. Thus, Lebanon ranks second at the international level after Luxemburg, where outgoing remittances constituted 19.6 per cent of GDP.[4] Among the four countries, Jordan ranks second as a country of destination. Table 15 shows relatively smaller remittances out of both Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic. However, these are rough estimates, since they only relate to funds transferred through official channels.

Table 15

Outgoing remittances from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, 2008 (Millions US Dollars)

Country	Outgoing remittances
Egypt	180
Jordan	479
Lebanon	3 022
Syrian Arab Republic	235

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

A comparison of remittances received and sent shows that, substantial differences notwithstanding, net inflows are positive for the four countries. For example, in the case of Egypt, in 2008, due to extensive emigration compared with immigration, incoming remittances represented 4,830 per cent of outgoing remittances, i.e., roughly fifty times. For Lebanon, incoming remittances represented only 238 per cent of outgoing remittances, which is due to the fact that though Lebanon is a net migrant sending country, it also has a significant number of immigrants from Arab countries, such as the Syrian Arab Republic, Egypt, the Sudan, and Asian countries, resulting in net remittances constituting only 12.4 per cent of GDP. Jordan ranks in the middle, with incoming remittances being nearly eight times outgoing remittances, while for the Syrian Arab Republic, incoming remittances are 3.6 times outgoing remittances (table 16).

Differences in the relative importance of remittances in these countries can be explained by differences in migration volumes, levels of education and qualifications of migrants, patterns of migration (permanent or temporary), and nature of migrant labour, as well as by pay differences between countries of origin and destination and differences in money transfer channels and their costs.

Table 16

Incoming and outgoing remittances Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, 2008

	Incoming remittances (million US$)	Outgoing remittances (million US$)	Net remittances (million US$)	Rate of incoming remittances to outgoing remittances (million US$)
Egypt	8 694	180	8 514	4 830
Jordan	3 794	479	3 315	792
Lebanon	7 180	3 022	4 158	238
Syrian Arab Republic	850	235	615	362

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

3. Distribution of remittances by country of residence[5]

The distribution of remittances by country reflects the cumulative stock of migration in the various countries of destination. However, data on sources of remittances are rare and inaccurate. Moreover, available data on the four countries vary from one source to another due to differences in criteria. Such discrepancies are obvious in United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) statistics.

Table 17

Distribution of incoming remittances to Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic from regions of the world (per cent)

	Egypt	Jordan	Lebanon	Syrian Arab Republic
Africa	12.5	(.)	2.1	4.7
Asia	58.6	74.2	11.0	33.0
Europe	13.3	7.6	33.1	31.9
Latin America and the Caribbean	0.1	0.1	4.0	2.7
North America	13.1	17.1	36.9	25.7
Oceania	2.3	0.9	12.9	2.0
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: UNDP (2009), pps.159-162.

Data on Lebanon confirm the problems posed by statistics. According to a recent report by the International Monetary Fund (May 2009), Lebanese remittances from GCC countries represent 54 per cent of total remittances, those from the United States, Canada, and Australia 16 per cent and from the rest of the world, including Europe and Africa, 30 per cent. There are vast differences between these estimates and those in table 17, or those offered by the World Bank, which show that Lebanese remittances from the United States, Canada, and Australia represent 60 per cent of total remittances (Abi Samra, 2010).

For Egypt, available data are estimates by the Central Bank of Egypt, from which the distribution of remittances for the years 2000-2001 and 2007-2008 can be compared, as shown in table 18.

Table 18

Geographical distribution of Egyptian Remittances by country of residence 2000-2009 (Percentage)

	2000-2001	2007-2008	2008-2009
Kuwait	7.8	21.0	20.4
United Arab Emirates	10.6	16.3	17.7
Saudi Arabia	24.0	11.2	12.5
Qatar	1.6	1.5	1.8
Bahrain	0.4	0.9	0.5
Oman	0.4	0.4	0.4
Gulf countries group	44.8	51.3	53.3
Most important European countries*	10.9	10.8	13.8
United States	36.9	32.3	29.1
Other countries	7.4	5.6	3.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Central Bank of Egypt.
*France, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Spain and Switzerland.

The United States is the most important source of remittances to Egypt as a single country, accounting for more than a third of total remittances. These remittances are mainly the savings of skilled workers and those with a high level of education. Migration to the United States is permanent, with immigrants intending to settle in it and return to their country of origin only occasionally.

The Gulf countries come in the second place, with remittances being mainly from professionals. Migration to the Gulf countries is temporary, as migrants come to them with the intention of accumulating savings, and often return to their countries of origin when they attain their goals.

Table 19 illustrates the evolution of total remittances of Egyptian expatriates from GCC countries. They transferred more than US$1,504 million from the Gulf countries in 1999-2000, increasing to US$4,155 million in 2008-2009. The table shows that Saudi Arabia was the most important source of remittances until 2004, followed by the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait. Starting in 2005, Saudi Arabia began to lose its position and was replaced by Kuwait, with remittances amounting to US$17,071 million in 2008, which represented 41 per cent of total remittances from GCC countries and 20 per cent of total remittances flowing into Egypt from abroad. Thus, Kuwait became the second most important single remittance sending country after the United States. If these remittances are an indication of volume of migration, Libya remains an exception, as Egyptian expatriates in Libya represent 27.6 per cent of the total of Egyptian migration, while, due to relatively poor wages and to restrictions on money transfers, their remittances represent only 0.26 per cent of total formal remittances.[6]

UNDP estimates that the GCC countries are the main source of remittances to Jordan, while Europe and North America are in the case of the Syrian Arab Republic.

3. Remittances per emigrant

As a measure, remittances per emigrant are an indicator of the individual effort of the emigrant. For the year 2005, this measure appears to be more significant for both Jordan and Lebanon, since the proportion of skilled emigrants from these two countries exceeds its counterparts from Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Table 19

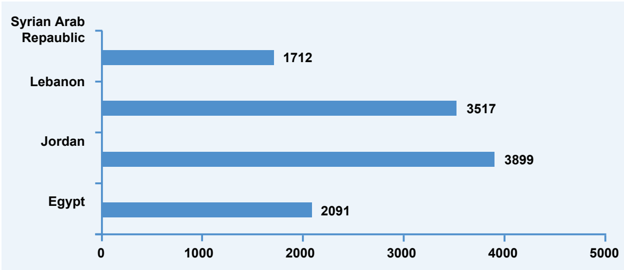
Remittances of Egyptian Expatriates from the Gulf 1999-2009

	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009*
Total (Millions of US Dollars)	1 504.4	1 273.6	1 457.9	1 278.8	1 192.8	1 779	2 608.5	3 096.7	4 389.6	4 155
Saudi Arabia (per cent)	49.0	53.5	42.6	49.6	53.6	40.8	29.7	27.8	21.9	23.5
Kuwait (per cent)	27.3	17.5	25.8	19.9	17.2	33.1	35.4	35.7	40.9	38.4
United Arab Emirates (per cent)	18.8	23.7	24.0	23.7	23.4	20.9	27.9	32.0	31.7	33.2
Qatar (per cent)	2.8	3.5	3.1	3.8	3.9	3.6	4.2	3.3	3.0	3.4
Bahrain (per cent)	1.3	1.0	3.7	1.9	0.6	0.6	1.8	0.7	1.8	0.9
Oman (per cent)	0.8	0.9	0.8	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Central Bank of Egypt, the monthly report, several issues.
* Estimated data.

FIGURE 10

Comparison of official remittances per emigrant 2005 (US dollar)



Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008, taking into account the minimum estimate of Lebanese migration (1.4 million).

Varying estimates are an obstacle to identifying this measure precisely, since it is related to estimates of numbers of emigrants.

Evaluating remittances per Lebanese emigrant faces this problem of estimating the number of emigrants. The World Bank does not take into account naturalized emigrants when estimating the number of emigrants from a certain country, thus estimating Lebanese emigrants to be 622,000. However, the Lebanese scholar Yusuf Courbage makes two estimates:

a. Low estimate: equals the difference between the number of Lebanese resident in Lebanon (3.5 million) and the number who are registered in civil records (4.9 million);
b. High estimate: approximately 12 million Lebanese (Courbage Y., 2009).

Riad Salameh, the Governor of the Bank of Lebanon, adopts the latter method of estimation, which takes into account generations of offspring of emigrants, to conclude that the number of Lebanese emigrants is about 16 million.[7]

The above data indicate that emigrants from Jordan and Lebanon have a higher level of qualifications than Egyptian and Syrian emigrants. However, other data indicate other differences,

Table 20

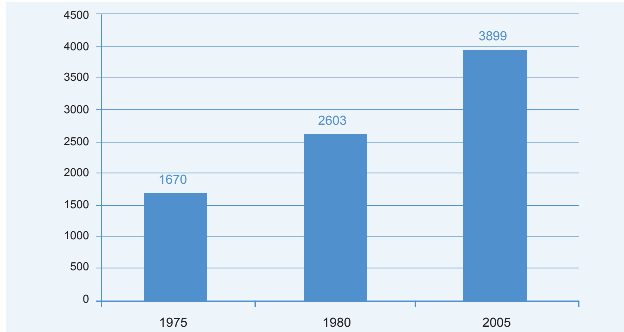
Remittances to Lebanon per emigrant, 2005

	Remittances (thousand US dollar)	**Number of emigrants** (thousand persons)	**Remittances per emigrant** (US dollar)
World Bank/ United Nations Population Division	4 924 300	622	7 918
Yusuf Courbage low estimate	4 924 300	1 400	3 517
Yusuf Courbage high estimate	4 924 300	12 000	410
Governor of the Bank of Lebanon	4 924 300	16 000	308

Source: World Bank (2008), p. 144; Courbage, Y. (2009); and Al-Khbar (2007).

FIGURE 11

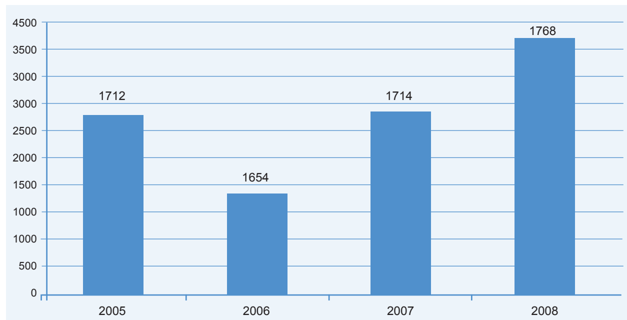
Remittances to Jordan per emigrant, 2005-2007 (US dollar)



Source: Number of emigrants for 1975 and 1980, Zaqqa (2001), and for 2005, World Bank (2008).

FIGURE 12

Remittances to the Syrian Arab Republic per emigrant, 2005-2008 (US dollar)



Source: World Bank (2008).

such as countries of destination and working conditions and wage levels in them.

Taking into account the same problem and relying on available data, remittances per emigrant for both Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic evolved as shown in figures 11 and 12.

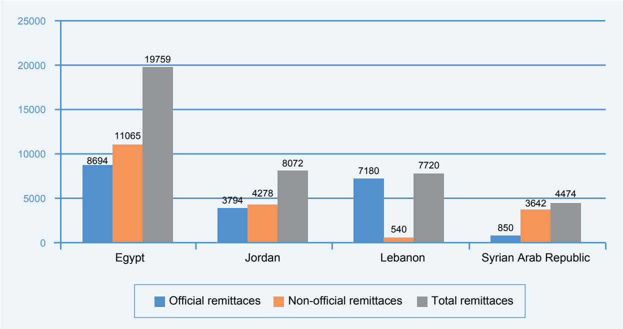
Admittedly, all the above estimates will change if we take into account non-official remittances, particularly to the Syrian Arab Republic and Egypt. In any case, the estimates would still be rough, due to the difficulty of determining numbers of emigrants.

4. Non-official remittances

Certainly, remittances are not limited to official channels. However, there are no studies of the exact volume of non-official remittances, and estimates differ.[8] In estimating non-official remittances to the four countries under consideration, we will rely here on a study by the European Investment Bank, issued in 2005. Non-official remittances are crucial for three of the four countries. If we take non-official remittances into account, total remittances more

FIGURE 13

Comparison of official and non-official remittances, 2008 (Millions of US Dollars)



Source: World Bank (2008) for official remittances; Barendse, J. et al (2005) for non-official remittances.

Table 21

Advantages and disadvantages of various transfer channels

Transfer channel	Disadvantages	Advantages
Bank	Rapidity and security	Very high cost Beneficiary must have a bank account No bank network in rural areas
Mail	Affordable costs Simplicity	Process occasionally very lengthy
Transfer companies	Simplicity Security High rapidity Widespread networks	Very high cost Cost varies by amount and sending country
Intermediaries	Simplicity Low cost Confidentiality	Unspecified duration Risk of fraud

than double for both Egypt and Jordan. The Syrian Arab Republic records the largest percentage of non-official remittances, which account for more than 80 per cent of the total. In Lebanon, nonofficial remittances are relatively low, representing only 7 per cent of the total. These estimates are below estimates found in other sources, which indicate that non-official remittances to Egypt, for instance, amount to 33 per cent and to Jordan to 22 per cent of total remittances (El-Sakka, MIT (2004)). One reason for the large volume of non-official remittances is perhaps the cost of official transfers.

Money transfer channels vary greatly. Table 21 compares advantages and disadvantages of various channels.

The relative disadvantages of official channels, especially the high costs, in particular those imposed by transfer companies, undoubtedly drive emigrants to use non-official transfer channels.

According to a study by the European Investment Bank, money transfer channels vary from one country to another, but money transfer companies are dominant, particularly Western Union and Money Gram, with the consequent impact on transfer cost.

The following factors have also contributed to the use of non-official channels:

a. The poor coverage of money transfer centres in countries of origin and the unavailability of national banks branches in countries of destination, for example in the case of Morocco;[9]
b. Restrictions on transactions in foreign currencies;
c. Variation in exchange rates of foreign currencies;
d. Cost of transfers;
e. Geographic proximity, which encourages emigrants to carry their savings with them when they visit their home countries, especially temporary or irregular emigrants, such as

Table 22

Bank branches and money transfer centers, 2004

	Egypt	Lebanon	Jordan	Syrian Arab Republic
Bank branches	3 000	700	500 to 550	NA
Money transfer centres	89	960	575	One only

Source: Barendse, J. et al (2005).

Table 23

Comparing transfer costs

	US$500 (Percentage)	**US$200** (Percentage)
Transfer from Saudi Arabia to Jordan, 2008		
Banks	2.54	4.54
Money Transfer Companies	3.39	5.79
Average	3.11	5.37
Transfer from Saudi Arabia to Egypt, 2008		
Banks	3.68	5.68
Money Transfer Companies	3.65	5.25
Average	3.67	5.47
Transfer from United Arab Emirates to Egypt, third quarter of 2009		
Money Transfer Companies	1.48 to 9.24	2.71 to 12.1
Average	4.59	6.77
Transfer from Germany to Lebanon, third quarter of 2009		
Banks	5.81	14.52
Money Transfer Companies	8.76	11.55
Average	6.55	13.78
Transfer from the United States to Lebanon, third quarter of 2009		
Banks	7.6	19
Money Transfer Companies	3.05	6.44
Average	5.89	14.29

Source: "Remittance Prices Worldwide" (Washington D.C., World Bank, N.D., available at http://remittanceprices.worldbank.org/).

Egyptian emigrants to Libya and Syrian emigrants to Lebanon.

Transfer costs vary in channel, time and place. The following table presents the costs applied by banks and transfer companies.

Clearly, transfer costs are higher for small values and for some countries, such as the United States.

The reduction of the costs of remittances would lead to a reduction in the number of people who use non-official channels to send money to their countries of origin, and would be more effective in regulating the so-called non-official services.

B. MACROECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF REMITTANCES

The impact of remittances on the economies of the four countries becomes clear when they are compared with macroeconomic indicators, such as GDP, exports, imports, income from tourism, foreign direct investment, official development assistance, foreign exchange reserves, and external debt. In the absence of reliable data on non-official remittances, we will consider here official remittances only.

1. Ratio of official remittances to GDP

The importance of remittances is reflected mainly in the ratio of official remittances to GDP, which, in 2008, was one fifth in Jordan and more than a quarter in Lebanon. Over almost three decades (1980-2008), the data for Jordan and to a lesser extent for Lebanon, suggest a more or less steady ratio, but that is not the case for the Syrian Arab Republic and Egypt, where it declined greatly from 5.9 per cent to 1.5 per cent in the case of the former and from 11.8 per cent to 5.3 per cent in the case of the latter.

Internationally, according to 2007 data, Lebanon comes fifth in terms of remittance dependant countries, after Tajikistan (46 per cent), Moldova (38 per cent), Lesotho (29 per cent), and Honduras (24 per cent), and Jordan sixth, after Guiana (24 per cent). Among Arab countries, these two are the largest recipients of emigrant remittances, followed by Morocco, which ranks twentieth (9 per cent).

2. Ratio of official remittances to exports of goods and services

Ratios of remittances to total exports of goods and services in the four countries indicate that the labour force is the most important component of their exports. In Lebanon, in 2007, the value of remittances was equivalent to that of total exports. The ratio declined from 350 per cent in 1990 and again from 144 per cent in 2003. In Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic, the ratio declined considerably over the period.

3. Ratio of official remittances to imports of goods

Remittances are important in financing imports. In 2003 in Lebanon, the ratio of their value to that of imports was approximately 73 per cent, declining gradually to 48.4 per cent in 2007. This decline, and a similar decline in the cases of both Egypt and Jordan, is attributable to the openness

Table 24

Ratio of official remittances to GDP

	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Egypt	11.8	9.3	9.9	5.4	2.9	3.6	4.2	5.6	5.0	5.9	5.3
Jordan	20.0	20.0	12.4	21.4	21.8	21.6	20.4	19.8	20.4	20.8	19.0
Lebanon			64.0	10.5	9.4	24.0	26.0	22.9	22.9	23.3	25.1
Syrian Arab Republic	5.9	2.1	3.1	3.0	0.9	4.0	3.5	2.9	2.4	2.0	1.5

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Table 25

Ratio of official remittances to exports of goods and services

	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Egypt	38.6	46.5	49.5	23.8	17.6	16.4	15.0	18.4	16.6	19.3
Jordan	50.3	51.6	20.0	41.4	52.1	45.6	39.1	37.7	37.5	44.3
Lebanon			355.8	96.7	67.9	143.4	131.2	107.9	96.6	100.5
Syrian Arab Republic	31.8	17.0	11.0	9.6	2.6	12.6	8.6	7.0	6.0	6.1

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

of these economies, particularly subsequent to the implementation of partnership agreements with the European Union.

4. Ratio of official remittances to tourism revenues

Tourism is accorded high importance in the economic policies of Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan, and is a major source of hard currency for these countries. Nonetheless, emigrant remittances far outweigh tourism revenues in Jordan; amounting in 2007 to nearly 150 per cent of these revenues. In Lebanon, remittances were equivalent to tourism revenues during 2007-2008. In Egypt, despite the big leap achieved by tourism by receiving 11 million tourists in 2007, remittances amounted to about 80 per cent of tourism revenues, and their contribution as an important source of hard currency was greater than even that of the Suez Canal.

5. Ratio of official remittances to foreign currency reserves

Formal remittances account for a significant part of foreign currency reserves; in 2006, approximately 43 per cent in Jordan, nearly 40 per cent in Lebanon, and more than a fifth in Egypt. The decline in this ratio over the period covered indicates a rise in the contribution of other sources for reserves.

6. Ratio of official remittances to foreign direct investment

Official remittances received by Lebanon were more than twice the FDI it received, while in Jordan they were almost the same. For the four countries, the ratio varied even though remittances increased consistently due to variability of foreign investment volumes. Remittances to Egypt amounted 1,366.4 per cent of FDI in 2003; but fell to 66.1 per cent in 2007. The same trend is noted for the Syrian Arab Republic, where remittances represented only 66.7 per cent in 2000, then rose to 310.9 per cent in 2004, to drop to 132.5 per cent in 2006.

Income earned by emigrants is a financial asset that can be invested in countries of origin to make up for shortfalls in foreign investments. The four countries can utilize remittances in investment by adopting policies to incentivize such investment and create a favourable climate for it.

Table 26

Ratio of official remittances to imports of goods

	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Egypt	39.6	35.5	41.6	26.3	18.5	22.5	17.7	21.1	18.4	19.5
Jordan	37.2	42.1	21.7	43.8	45.3	43.3	32.1	26.8	28.1	28.6
Lebanon						72.7	65.8	58.6	60.9	48.4
Syrian Arab Republic	19.3	8.9	18.7	8.5	4.8	20.1	12.3	9.4	8.5	8.8

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Table 27

Ratio of official remittances to tourism revenues

	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Egypt	109.2	61.2	62.9	52.8	69.6	65.5	82.3	79.1
Jordan	148.1	197.3	173.9	143.8	142.1	143.6	148.6	128.9
Lebanon	172.5	213.2	69.9	94.3	82.5	94.7	105.5	99.8
Syrian Arab Republic	26.9	16.6	101.4	45.4	40.4	37.6	82.3	

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Table 28

Ratio of official remittances to foreign currency reserves

	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006
Egypt	257.7	405.5	159.6	159.6	21.7	21.8	23.4	24.3	21.8
Jordan	69.5	241.7	58.8	58.8	55.4	42.4	44.2	47.6	42.9
Lebanon			275.5	275.5	26.6	37.9	47.6	41.4	38.9
Syrian Arab Republic	230.0	421.4							

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Table 29

Ratio of official remittances to foreign direct investment

	1990	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Egypt	593.4	638.8	240.9	1 366.4	305.3	95.0	53.9	66.1
Jordan	721.8	3 548.8	228.8	492.6	292.0	155.2	85.9	187.1
Lebanon				161.5	314.1	187.3	191.0	202.8
Syrian Arab Republic		339.0	66.7	555.6	310.9	164.6	132.5	

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Table 30

Ratio of official remittances to official development assistance

	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Egypt	195.2	182.6	79.0	160.5	214.8	300.1	229.5	504.2	610.6	706.9
Jordan	62.3	190.2	56.3	267.3	334.0	176.4	387.6	374.4	497.5	681.4
Lebanon			721.2	658.4	793.9	2 106.8	2 116.8	2 021.9	735.5	614.4
Syrian Arab Republic	45.6	57.4	56.4	95.3	114.0	756.7	806.8	1 046.3	2 974.2	1 098.7

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

7. Ratio of official remittances to official development assistance

A recent study of the World Bank of rural development indicates that emigrant remittances reached globally about US$300 billion in 2006, which is equivalent to three times the ODA granted by rich countries.[10] In 2006, the ratio was higher in the four countries under consideration; five times for Jordan and about twenty times for Syria. Table 30 shows that the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon benefit least from ODA. However, such comparisons are relative, since they relate only to remittances that pass through official channels. Nonetheless, they clearly highlight the importance of remittances.

C. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF REMITTANCES

Remittances have economic and social effects at two levels: investment and living conditions of recipient families.

1. Investment

Overall, investments by emigrants in the four countries are concentrated in real estate. In Egypt, according to field research carried out by Wahba,[11] savings of emigrants are invested as follows:

a. Improving housing conditions, 46.1 per cent: 42 per cent in urban areas and 50.1 per cent in rural areas;
b. Establishing economic projects, 10.1 per cent: 10.54 per cent in urban areas and 7.6 per cent in rural areas;
c. Depositing savings in banks, 9.13 per cent: 15.3 per cent in urban areas and 3.1 per cent in rural areas (Wahba, J., 2003).

The same investment trends, giving priority to housing, also apply to Jordan, Lebanon, and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Contrary to the prevalent economic viewpoint, investment in housing has several undisputed advantages: better housing conditions improve the health conditions necessary for reproduction and rearing of children. It also energizes local economies and professions and services linked to the construction sector, such as joinery, ironworks, construction equipment, and sanitary ware, which, in turn, promotes direct and indirect job creation, giving credence to the adage: "when the construction sector thrives, so do all economic sectors". However, overconcentration of investment in real estate has disadvantages, mainly high inflation, resulting from trading in land and real estate and widespread speculation in the real estate market, which impairs the ability of groups other than emigrants to afford adequate housing.

Though scarce, other available studies suggest the same conclusions. In the case of Egypt, for example, a small percentage of remittances is directed towards investment (Zohry, 2009). The contribution of returning emigrants to investment is more significant, with 10 per cent of them investing in economic ventures (2005, Nassar), concentrated in major cities and limited to some small business activities, such as public taxis. Apparently, the length of stay abroad and the value of savings play a role in encouraging investment (Cormick and Wahba, 2001).

Similarly, in Jordan, emigrant remittances are invested mainly in the real estate market, with the exception of some returning emigrants who started small, low technology ventures.[12]

In the case of the Syrian Arab Republic, only 8 per cent of households use part of the remittances received in investment (Khawaja, M., 2002). This applies mainly to remittances from Syrian expatriates in the GCC, especially those who return home with significant savings and invest in commercial activities (Kawakibi, S., 2008). In general, these investments are primarily important in the informal sector, with returning emigrants investing in trade, transportation and services. However, detailed data on the distribution of this investment are unavailable.

Lebanese expatriates are more inclined towards contracting. In addition to investing in housing and land, emigrants have become interested in advanced economic sectors, with Gulf and West Africa real estate companies making similar investments in Lebanon. The impact of remittances was evident in the banking sector in the 1990s, as they contributed to the establishment of about 42 of a total of 86 banks based in Lebanon, through partnerships with 49 emigrants (Boutros Labaki, 2003).

Expatriate remittances to Lebanon contribute also to supporting the liquidity of the economy and to the revival of the banking sector. In June 2009, non-resident deposits amounted to about US$14 billion; equivalent to 16 per cent of total deposits in commercial banks. The International Monetary Fund considers this estimate to be very modest, as a significant proportion of emigrants who deposit money in Lebanese banks have resident accounts (Abi Samra, M., 2010). Indeed, the IMF estimates that, in 2008, the value of deposits by expatriates was about US$3 billion (IMF: country report 09/131, Lebanon).

Emigration has had variable effects on the agricultural sector. In some regions, the emigration of young people has led to the decline of the agricultural economy and has weakened the relationship between emigrant and land. However, in other cases, by expanding cultivated areas and modernizing means of agricultural production, remittances have had the significant positive effect of improving agricultural activities at village level. Nonetheless, the fact that in Egypt, some returning emigrants leave agricultural work to run commercial activities or services (Heba Nassar, 1991) is worth noting. Undoubtedly, remittances invested in the renovation of localities where emigrants come from contribute to their developments and to alleviating their isolation. Yet, in many cases, a lack of infrastructure causes resources from migrants to haemorrhage to other, more developed areas.

In addition to the above, emigrants represent a significant proportion of incoming tourism. In Lebanon, for example, Lebanese emigrants make up more than half of incoming tourists (Abi Samra, N, 2010).

Several factors explain the remittance investment pattern outlined above:

a. Investment in real estate is a symbol of social success for the emigrant and the family;
b. In most of these countries, there is an absence of Government policy that directs investment towards other productive sectors;
c. Cultural factors, such as an aversion to risks involved in investment in productive sectors and a reluctance by many emigrants to deal with banks;
d. Time is one of the main factors that prevent optimal investment of remittances. Emigrants do not have the time to follow the administrative procedures related to investment, nor can they afford to travel frequently between the country of destination and the country of origin to resolve problems that may arise;
e. The propensity to consumption that dominates the behaviour of many emigrants and their desire to satisfy consumption needs of their families.

2. Impact of migration on the family

Indisputably, remittances improve the living conditions of families, as official remittances per capita indicate (table 31).

Per capita remittances to Lebanon more than doubled between 1990 and 2008, when they amounted to US$1,712. Jordan comes far second with US$618 for the same year, followed by Egypt, then the Syrian Arab Republic.

Another indicator that highlights the importance of remittances for families is the ratio of official remittances to the final consumption of households. Table 32 shows that in 2006, the ratio was more than 25 per cent for Lebanon, and slightly lower at 23 per cent for Jordan. Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic were far behind, at only 7 per cent for the former and 3.6 per cent for the latter.

The impact of remittances on families is evident in particular in enhancing living conditions and at the social level.

Table 31

Official remittances per capita 1985-2008 (US Dollars)

	1985	1990	1995	2000	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Egypt	63	74	51	41	41	65	68	96	107
Jordan	378	153	335	380	431	449	502	578	618
Lebanon		611	351	419	1 388	1 206	1 261	1 386	1 712
Syrian Arab Republic	32	30	23	11	46	43	40	40	40

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Table 32

Ratio of official remittances to final consumption of households

	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006
Egypt	17.0	13.6	13.8	7.2	3.8	4.9	5.9	7.8	7.0
Jordan	25.4	22.5	16.8	33.2	27.0	27.7	25.0	20.5	23.0
Lebanon			45.9	10.4	11.0	28.1	30.5	26.0	25.6
Syrian Arab Republic	9.1	3.3	4.6	4.5	1.5	6.6	5.4	4.3	3.6

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

(a) Enhancing standard of living

Emigration is a means for securing income to support the family, enhance social protection, and help reduce poverty.[13] In many cases, this is reflected first in the improvement of housing conditions, replacing unfit housing with decent conditions which are well provided with amenities or by moving from tenancy to ownership.

New consumer values have emerged in relation to house furnishings, food habits, and leisure time. Large numbers of emigrant households started acquiring modern appliances, such as refrigerators, televisions, automatic washing machines, phones, and dish antennas. Available studies emphasize this trend. For example, the majority of households that have emigrant members in Egypt consume 74 per cent of the remittances they receive in financing their daily consumption and spending on health, while housing is the primary concern for 7.3 per cent of these households, and education for 3.9 per cent (Nassar, 2008). Ayman al Zohry (Zohry, 2009) confirms these trends and finds that remittances are primarily used to finance daily consumption, while financing for "productive investments" is relatively weak.

For Lebanon, a number of studies emphasize that the poorest areas are those that do not have a tradition of emigration, or do not send emigrants out at similar rates to other areas (Marwan, 2010). This, for example, is the case of the Akkar province in the north of the country, and the two regions of Hermel and Baalbek in the Bekaa Valley, where emigration rates during 1975-2001 were at least four times less than those of the Nabatiyeh and Beirut regions.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, remittances are used mainly to finance daily consumption, luxury goods and housing (91 per cent), rarely being employed in "productive investment" (Khawaja, 2002).

Without remittances, poverty rates would have inevitably increased, since many households would have become poor or poorer. Available data for Egypt confirm this. According to a study conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the poverty rate for households who have one emigrant member is twice lower than families with no emigrant members (10.78 per cent versus 20.67 per cent) (cf. Nassar, 2009). Research shows that households in the first category were more able to meet their spending needs, whether on consumption, health or education.

D. AT THE SOCIAL LEVEL

The social effects of remittances are to some extent contradictory. Financial and in-kind remittances that improve living conditions of households and enable them to carry out some economic activities are factors of stability. However, relatives of emigrants may view remittances as a sign of social success as a result of emigration, which may entice them to emigrate themselves in search for better living conditions.

Emigration by a husband may create an emotional vacuum that negatively impacts his wife and children, and hence family stability. When a male breadwinner emigrates, his wife, mother or sister would have to shoulder responsibility for the family, which, in turn, could negatively impact the economic and social status of the women concerned. When a wife emigrates to work as a child minder, then this could be tantamount to an export of “affection” at the expense of the children who stayed behind.

Finally, it is worth noting that remittances have other negative impacts. They contribute to: high inflation, as a result of consumption of imported luxury goods and real estate trading; shunning work; and lessening the economic value of work as in rent economies; all of which increase imports and consequently aggravate the trade deficit

E. GOOD PRACTICE

There are several instances of good international migration practice that may serve as examples in closely linking emigration to development. Some instances, one from each continent, are reviewed below.

1. Mexican experience

In 1986, the State Government of the Zacatecas region instituted a Three-For-One programme, which was later adopted by the federal Government: for each peso (the Mexican unit of currency = US$0.079042) emigrants give for a communal project, each of the federal Government, the State Government, and the municipality gives a matching peso. The aim is to involve Mexican emigrants in social programmes in health, housing, education, communication and culture, as well as in productive enterprises, particularly in the poor areas or those that have high rates of emigration.

The programme also aims to foster relations between emigrants and regions of origin. Emigrant associations propose investment projects that are then endorsed by a specialist Government committee. Federal authorities adopted this initiative upon the success of the experiment in the Zacatecas region, where dozens of projects were funded, including urban infrastructure, water networks, road paving, public lighting, and school repairs. These projects helped improve living conditions, alleviate poverty, and indigenize the expertise gained by the emigrants while in the United States.

2. Philippines experience

In an effort to foster and safeguard the rights of emigrants, the “life-cycle” approach adopted by the Government of the Philippines addresses three phases: pre-emigration, emigration, and return and reintegration.

Pre-departure education seminars offer financial advice to emigrants and their families, mainly on the value of savings and investment. The Commission on Filipinos Overseas assists in promoting and facilitating reintegration of returning emigrants by sharing knowledge and financial assistance. In addition, a national centre for reintegration, with local branches, was established. A fund was also established to support a low cost social security system for emigrants, which provides them and their families who remain behind a safety net that could serve as a model for other countries of origin.

Philippine banks are leaders in developing schemes to attract savings of emigrants. The most prominent example is the PC Bank, which offers emigrants a set of additional services, such as life insurance, health insurance, and children’s education. Answering the real needs of emigrants, these schemes have led to expansion of the network of the bank.

3. United Kingdom experience

The United Kingdom model focuses on reducing the cost of money transfers. To this end, working groups were established, with representation from management, private banks and public institutions of countries of origin. The United Kingdom was the first European Union country to establish in 2005 a website offering comparisons of transfer costs from the United Kingdom and other European countries to 80 other countries. In addition, the site provides practical advice and guidance on transfers. Since its inception, transfer costs for 100 pounds were reduced by 5.6 per cent to 11 countries and by 28 per cent to India.[14]

4. Moroccan experience: Migration and Development (Migrations et Développement) Association

The experience of the Migration and Development Association in Morocco is pioneering. The association, which is a French-Moroccan NGO that has two branches in Morocco, has succeeded in promoting participation of emigrants in local development. Active in rural, poor and remote local communities in the region of Sousse, it provides infrastructure for electricity, potable water, educational and health institutions and roads, relying on community involvement, thus helping population stability and limiting emigration. Through a participatory approach that relies on establishing local village associations to voice village needs, the Association has succeeded in providing infrastructure for about 700 Moroccan villages. It undertakes funding and development of projects, relying on collective remittances and aid from French representative institutions, and has recently moved towards implementing profitable projects (Khachani, 2003).

5. Local experiences

In Lebanon, UNDP and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants launched the Live Lebanon initiative in November 2009, with the aim of engaging Lebanese emigrants in developing their home villages and hometowns and financing development projects in poor areas of the country. A website (LiveLebanon.net) has been set up, through which expatriates provide grants to finance proposed projects costing from US$7000 to US$700,000 in areas they wish to help.

The initiative was received positively, collecting US$35,000 in its first three months. Its significance derives from providing an opportunity for Lebanese expatriates to contribute to the development of their country through a neutral institution that has no political or religious affiliation.

In Egypt, IOM and the Migration Affairs and Egyptians Abroad Section at the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration, in collaboration with the Italian Government, founded in 2001 the Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS), to manage emigrant outflows, improve status of emigrants, and direct remittances and knowledge to Egypt. The objective is to strengthen ties with Egyptian expatriates by reinforcing relations with Egyptian associations abroad. It is hoped to reach similar agreements with other countries that receive emigrants from Egypt. Data on the results achieved by the programme are not available.

A large proportion of Jordanian emigrants do not have access to insurance in the host countries. Hence, in 2001, Jordan initiated a project to provide Jordanian expatriates and their families with access to social security benefits (old age, life insurance, disability and health care). As part of the project, the Jordan Social Security Corporation established centres in such Gulf countries as Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia (Khouri, 2007). It is worth noting in this regard that the Jordan Engineers Association, to which 80 per cent of Jordanian engineers working abroad belong, aims at maintaining links between emigrant engineers and the homeland.

Table 33

Projects Accomplished by the Migration and Development Association in Morocco

Area of intervention	Number of beneficiary villages	Number of beneficiaries	Budget in Moroccan dirhams (MAD)
Potable water	55	26 188	5 384 194
Electricity	103	35 731	19 913 500
Empowering women	16	62	2 162 240
Education	52	1 425	6 130 140
Health	164	40 623	624 000
Workshops	50	552	3 375 694
Roads	255	70 000	3 630
Economic activities	–	–	12 474 000
Total	695	174 581	53 660 771

Source: Migration and Development Association, Morocco.

F. SUMMARY

Emigration poses several challenges to the countries of the Arab Mashreq. Reforming international migration policies in the Mediterranean countries entail elaborating a new approach that takes into account the economic effects of emigration on countries of origin. The difficulties faced by these countries, and their need for achieving strong and sustainable growth, require mobilization of all internal and external resources.

Undoubtedly, remittances are a major source of hard currency for Arab Mashreq countries. Maintaining this resource and using it in productive investment are vital for their development. The emergence of new models of emigrants who invest in various sectors in the countries of origin provides a development opportunity. Clearly, emotional and cultural links to the homeland are not enough to encourage emigrants to invest in it; they must be augmented by economic incentives and by a favourable investment climate, which requires a reconsideration of the current and potential role of emigrants by all institutions. Emigrants ought to be active partners in development efforts. For the future of the economies of the Arab Mashreq countries, this, without doubt, remains the best way to make emigration a tool for development and the emigrant a key player in its advancement.

CHAPTER V

TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES AND DEVELOPMENT

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CHAPTER V

TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES AND DEVELOPMENT*

*This study was prepared by Boutros Labaki.

INTRODUCTION

Research into transnational communities and development has been motivated by the steady growth of international migration, particularly in the Arab Mashreq, over the past four decades. Worldwide, migration has accelerated in the last two decades in the wake of end of the Cold War and the transformation of the countries belonging to the former Soviet bloc, the People's Republic of China, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia into free market economies. Similar developments have occurred in several countries of the Arab world. The result has been the acceleration of the pace of globalization, so that, in principle, obstacles to the movement of goods, services, capital, information, voice, print and visual messages and humans have been removed, leading to an acceleration of migration worldwide, particularly in the Arab Mashreq.

In consequence, there has been mounting interest in international migration by officials, politicians, administrators, researchers, writers, and the media. Descriptive and analytical studies, scientific and press articles, and audio-visual media abounded, as well as periodic publications and books published by Government departments; universities and research centres in both migrant sending and migrant countries of destination; and international institutions, particularly United Nations bodies. Interest soon widened to cover the impact of international migration on economic and social development in countries of origin. Migrant groups were named "transnational communities".

From the 1970s to the late 1990s, researchers warned of the damage incurred by countries of origin in the Arab Mashreq, especially those sending highly-qualified persons, terming the phenomenon "brain drain". Several conferences and numerous books and articles were devoted to the subject. These focused on the harm incurred due to loss of value added to economy that would have been gained had the qualified emigrants stayed and worked at home, arguing that remittances make up for but small fraction of the loss. Some studies focused on involvement of Arab emigrants, especially to industrialized countries, in host communities and their achievements and the difficulties they faced, while others addressed the impact of emigration, through remittances and their uses, on civil and social change in the countries of origin. Notably, most Arab writers have focused on negative impacts of international migration on countries of origin, while western writers focused on positive aspects.

In the 1990s, literature on the subject made a turn. The evolution of economic thought towards more liberalism; the successive collapse of planned economies in Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa and the end of the Cold War in favour of the West, particularly the United States, were echoed in research on international migration and its impact on countries of origin. With attitudes towards globalization and its economic and social impacts becoming positive, focus shifted towards benefits of international migration for socio-economic development in countries of origin, and the gains accruing to both sending and countries of destination (the win-win situation).[1]

A more balanced report, entitled: International Migration and Development in the Arab Region: Challenges and Opportunities, was published by ESCWA in 2007. The following is an excerpt from the English version:

"Arab migrant skills are diverse, and it is difficult to generalize about them.

The number and quality of skilled migrants has increased over the past 10 years, because of constant change in the demand for skilled migrants in labour markets in industrial countries, especially in information technology, communications, computer science, health, education, scientific research and other highly skilled fields. Labour markets in countries of destination lack such skills because of demographic change and the fall in the population of working age. Some describe European countries as "grey haired", because of their increasingly ageing population. The following remarks can be made on the situation of skilled Arabs who emigrate from the Arab region:

1. Poor countries suffer from the brain drain because their educated population is small, while the migration rate of educated persons appears high in rich countries because their populations are small.

2. While most Arab migrants to France completed their education there, and many of them were born in that country, the situation is different in the case of Arab migrants to the countries of the New World, i.e. Australia, Canada, and the United States who usually migrate after they complete their university education or to continue their studies in those countries.

Some researchers consider that the brain drain from Arab countries is not so severe as in Asia or South America. It has positive impact, as migrant remittances support national economies and contribute to knowledge transfer. Skilled persons who do not migrate do not benefit their countries because there is no structure to support their roles in knowledge and technology.

Developments in Arab international migration have led to the emergence of a new kind of migrant Arab elite in major economic sectors, especially in Europe, in the fields of information, tourism, import, export and transport, and in some small and medium-sized enterprises, including textiles, nutrition and construction equipment. In view of the economic openness of many Arab countries, the phenomenon can constitute a bridge, especially between Europe and Mediterranean Arab countries, and provide opportunities for cooperation and economic exchange in the form of joint development projects by sending and countries of destination. While the role of skilled migrants is important, it is equally important to raise official awareness of the need to take advantage of their scientific, academic and practical expertise, in order to prepare and develop alternative national competencies, and to solicit their contribution to investment and scientific research policies. Egypt, Lebanon and countries of the Maghreb provide examples and lessons that can be built upon and learned, in order to increase the scientific and practical benefits of skilled persons, as is demonstrated by the ministries for emigrants or expatriate affairs that have been established in Morocco since 1990 and Algeria since 1996 and in Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic. Skilled labour sending Arab countries have finally discovered the importance of those competencies as a source of wealth that can be used to achieve national development goal".

This conclusion is balanced and nuanced. It addresses details of international migration and its diverse impacts on countries of origin, which vary by receiving country or continent; mentions negative and positive aspects of migration; avoids simplistic generalizations; and takes into consideration the change in international economic environment towards openness and more interaction among nations.

It is useful to note here the efforts made by the Centre for Arab Unity Studies in Beirut in supporting and disseminating research on Arab international migration to countries in the two continents of Africa and America.[2]

A. NATIONAL POLICIES ON TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES

The following are observations on migration policies in Arab Mashreq countries:

a. With variations, most Arab countries are satisfied with migration. However, degrees of satisfaction of countries of origin are more varied;
b. Most countries of origin lack the capacity for proper formulation of migration policies. There is a general lack of detailed information, both quantitative and qualitative, despite research and surveys conducted by some countries in the 1980s. Hence, researchers and policymakers rely on scattered information, making precise comparisons difficult. Most data come from the countries of destination in Europe, the Americas and Australia, while data from Arab and African destination countries are poor or virtually non-existent;
c. Migrant sending countries are primarily concerned with remittances, with concerns for the rights of emigrants in countries of destination coming second;
d. Expatriates from Arab Mashreq countries in the Gulf countries face serious competition from Asian labour. In addition, considerable numbers of qualified Arabs emigrating to the Americas and Europe do not work in skilled occupations commensurate with their level of education and expertise, which may be attributable to low quality of their education and poor knowledge of languages;
e. Undoubtedly, precise methodological field surveys and research aimed at producing the statistical data and information are necessary for countries of origin to formulate appropriate policies, which also require effective partnership between sending and countries of destination;
f. A number of Arab countries have established ministerial agencies or independent institutions to deal with affairs of emigrants and expatriates.

A detailed consideration of Lebanese institutions and policies would give a realistic view of how a migrant-sending country, with a long tradition of emigration, deals with its communities abroad. Institutional changes reflected the political wrangling that dominated the eighties and caused splits in the World Lebanese Cultural Union. The balance of political forces after 1990 led to establishment of the Ministry of Emigrants, through which some influential political groups sought political control of bodies representing Lebanese emigrants. The attempt failed: emigrant institutions split and the Ministry of Emigrants clashed with the Foreign Ministry, which led to the abolition of the Ministry of Emigrants and its integration into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The latter then restored its traditional name of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants. This experience points to the difficulty of managing the relationship with emigrants from outside the diplomatic and consular representation of the sending country. However, such representation needs to be developed in line with the need to deal effectively with emigrant communities, as well as countries of destination.

The early adoption by Lebanon in 1948 of a system of free exchange and free movement of capital and the 1956 Bank Secrecy Act accelerated and facilitated movement of emigrant capital into

Table 34

Lebanese expatriates remittances

Year	Ratio of remittances to national income (percentage)	National income (million LL)	Remittances (million LL)
1951	5.38	1 086	58
1952	6.46	1 115	72
1953	6.76	1 168	79
1954		1 356	--
1955	6.4	1 374	88
1956		1 417	--
1957	6.32	1 303	95
1958	5.58	1 325	74
1959			75
1960			90
1961			92
1962			88
1963			93
1964	3.48	2 861	99
1965	3.57	3 154	112
1966	3.52	3 460	122
1967	3.80	3 442	131
1968	3.66	3 861	141
1969	3.60	4 112	148
1970	4.50	4 411	149
1971			197
1972			215
1973	11.92	7 901	342
1974	19.53	10 880	2 125
1975	12.39	9 506	1 178
1976	1.42	5 490	78
1977	26.16	13 170	3 420
1978	17.39	11 653	2 027
1979	35.61	16 123	5 742
1980	40.38	18 979	7 664
1981	38.26	22 578	8 640
1982	35.08	24 267	8 514

Table 34 (continued)

Lebanese expatriates remittances

Year	Ratio of remittances to national income (percentage)	National income (million LL)	Remittances (million LL)
1983	15.52	25 437	3 948
1984	28.76	27 810	8 000*
1985		42 585	--
1986		52 500	--
1987	19.5	2 559	500
1988	19	3 154	600
1989	16.2	2 465	400
1990	13.6	2 203	300
1991	--	--	--
1992	--	--	--
1993	--	--	--
1994	--	--	--
1995	10.53	11 122	1 172
1996	10.18	12 997	1 323
1997	9.91	14 865	1 473
1998	10.10	16 168	1 634
1999	11.34	16 491	1 870
2000	12.79	16 491	2 110
2001	13.50	17 100	2 380
2002	13.75	18 500	2 544
2003	13.85	19 700	2 728
2004	14.29	20 400	2 916
2005	16.65	20 900	3 048
2006	22	20 900	4 633
2007	25	21 255	5 022
2008	25	22 743	5 774
2009	13	24 722	3 192

Source:
- For the years 1987-1990, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Beirut and the Central Bank of Lebanon;
- For the years 1995-2009, the Central Bank of Lebanon and the External Sector Annual Report;
- Arab Economic Report 2005;
- For the years 1951-1987, Boutros Labaki, "Lebanese migration and its local impact in war and reconstruction: present conditions and future prospects", conference organized by the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, Ottawa, 14-15 December 1990.

Table 35

Lebanese exports and national income

Year	Exports (million LL)	National income (million LL)	Ratio of exports to national income (percentage)
1997	3 524	14 865	23.7
1998	3 599	16 168	22.6
1999	3 688	16 491	22.3
2000	3 689	16 491	22.3
2001	4 152	17 100	24.2
2002	4 648	18 500	25.1
2003	5 067	19 700	25.7
2004	6 589	20 400	32.2
2005	7 047	20 900	33.7
2006	7 189	20 900	34.3
2007	8 507	21 255	40.0
2008	11 961	22 743	52.5
2009	11 568	24 722	46.7

Source: For national income.
- Exports: "Economic Accounts of Lebanon, Retrospective 1997-007". Republic of Lebanon – Presidency of the Council of Ministers – National Committee for Accounts;
- Lebanese Customs Website: www.customs.gov.lb.

Lebanon, which was manifested in the development of the banking sector and certain industry and construction sectors. In addition, double taxation agreements between Lebanon and some countries of destination encouraged Lebanese expatriates to invest some of their money in Lebanon, where the tax burden is less severe. Moreover, the establishment of bilateral chambers of commerce with a number of countries of destination facilitated the introduction of Lebanese businessmen to their counterparts, some of whom were of Lebanese descent, which in turn contributed to trade exchange, as did trade agreements between Lebanon and a number of countries of destination.

B. TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: LEBANON AS A MODEL

The main contribution of Lebanese emigrants to economic development of Lebanon is remittances, which are used for investment or for consumption. The promotion of Lebanese products abroad is also a more recent contribution.

1. Remittances from Lebanese emigrants

Lebanese emigrants in general, particularly those who work in Arab oil-exporting countries and Sub-Saharan Africa, send part of their incomes to Lebanon. These remittances have been of crucial importance in some periods over the last fifty years, especially from 1973 to 1990, the period of the oil boom and the "wars of others" on Lebanese territory (1975-1990) and after 1995.

Constituting 5 per cent to 7 per cent of national income, remittances played a very a limited role in the 1950s, declining to 3.5 per cent to 4.5 per cent of national income in the 1960s. However, during 1974-2010, when the income of Arab oil-producing countries grew greatly, and the internal economy of Lebanon declined dramatically because of the "wars of others" on Lebanese territory, the Lebanese emigrated massively, mainly to oil-exporting countries. The remittances they sent played a crucial role in the Lebanese economy and society, reaching 40 per cent of national income in the early 1980s. This role declined later with the decline of the economies of the countries of destination. Remittances varied between 10 per cent and 25 per cent of GDP over 1990-2008, dropping to 13 per cent in 2009, with the beginnings of the global economic crisis.

Between 1997 and 2009, the contribution of national exports to national income ranged between 22 per cent and 52 per cent, while that of remittances was between 10 per cent and 25 per cent, i.e., the contribution of exports to national income was twice that of emigrant remittances.

2. Use of remittances to support families and relatives in Lebanon

The use of remittances to support families and relatives in Lebanon is difficult to assess through statistical evidence, but may be approached through examination of scattered, small-scale field investigations undertaken over 1974-2010. Such use is clearest in the case of emigrants to Arab oil-producing countries, where work is the major objective of emigration, with a substantial part of the family remaining at home. The same could be said of emigrants to West, Central and Southern Africa, and probably applies to a much more limited extent to emigrants to Western Europe, the Americas, and Australia. Emigrants to the latter countries have been sending only a limited amount of hard currency to their families and relatives in Lebanon, particularly over 1984-1997 when the exchange rate of the Lebanese Lira deteriorated significantly against foreign currencies. Field studies covering villages and towns in various parts of Lebanon point out clearly the prominent role played by remittances sent to families and relatives in towns like Zahle (Bekaa); Saida, Ansar, Kafr Rummane, Arabsalim (South Lebanon); Shartun, Kaakur, Beit Shabab (Mount Lebanon); Kfar Zeina, Karm El Mohr and Kahf al Malul (North Lebanon).[3]

3. Acquisition of real estate

In Lebanon, this type of use of emigrant remittances, which existed before 1973, became a major component of the demand for real estate since 1977, being clearly apparent in summer when emigrants traditionally return for holidays.[4] Emigrant demand for both land and buildings is particularly notable in the Greater Beirut area.

Several Lebanese companies active in trade and contracting in Arab oil-producing countries and East and West Africa have made important investments in real estate in Lebanon. Among many others are the Hariri Group, Al Mabani Group, Wedge Group, Zakhem Group, Lahoud Engineering Company.[5] The use of remittances to acquire real estate in the homeland is not confined to Lebanon, but is widespread in all Arab migrant countries of origin.

4. Investing in firms of various sizes in various economic sectors

The majority of investment is in small firms, with the emigrant moving socially upward from being waged to being a small entrepreneur, frequently in construction, transport, retail trade, and various service activities.[6]

Medium-sized firms are mainly established by small and medium entrepreneurs coming from Arab oil-producing countries and West Africa. A field survey conducted in 1982 of emigrants from the town of Beit Shebab returning from Guinea shows that two thirds established firms:

a. 45 per cent, medium-sized firms in trade (textiles, supermarkets);
b. 30 per cent, medium-sized manufacturing firms;
c. 10 per cent, firms in the services sector.[7]

Large firms were also established in various sectors. Investments in agriculture are concentrated in the irrigated-agriculture areas of the Southern Coast, Central Bekaa and Akkar. Such investments are gradually moving into the inner parts of South Lebanon, in the process changing an environment characterized by traditional dry farming. These agricultural projects are carried out mainly by emigrants to West Africa, many of whom hail from Southern Lebanon.[8]

Several groups of Lebanese contractors invested in construction, general works and engineering in Lebanon, capital generated mainly in Arab oil-countries and Africa. 80 per cent of the contractors involved worked or still work in Arab oil-exporting countries. Most investment was in construction and general works, especially in the 1990s, in the framework of the continuing reconstruction process begun in 1990, but has been concentrated since the late 1990s in construction in the private sector. This trend accelerated in 2005, with the rise of Arab oil revenues, and especially since 2008, with the global economic crisis that prompted many Lebanese expatriates to redirect their money deposited in the West towards investment in Lebanon, mainly in real estate.

In the banking and financial sector, the amount of emigrant capital invested is sizeable. Lebanese emigrants have invested in 42 out of 86 banks in Lebanon. Contributions come from the Arab Gulf countries (20), Sub-Saharan Africa (18), Latin America (8), and, minimally, Asia (2) and Canada (1). Clearly, emigrants to Arab oil-exporting countries and Sub-Saharan Africa are the most active in the banking sector.

Finally, the manufacturing industry has also been an important arena for emigrant capital investment. Academic research on 35 manufacturing companies established in Lebanon by Lebanese emigrants found the following distribution: 50 per cent came from Latin America, 20 per cent from Egypt, and the same from Sub-Saharan Africa, with only 2 per cent and 1 per cent each from the United States and the United Kingdom, respectively.

The above-mentioned sectors are the main ones in which Lebanese emigrants invested in their country of origin. Other sectors include agriculture, tourism, insurance, transportation, domestic and foreign trade, electricity, and water. However, the available information on investment in these sectors is not sufficiently precise.

5. Contribution of emigrants to opening new markets for local products abroad

This economic role has been played by emigrants for decades. However, it has developed rapidly over the last two decades, due to the new competitiveness acquired by some Lebanese manufactured goods in world markets, as a consequence of the sharp fall of the exchange rate of the Lebanese lira and the low salaries in Lebanon since 1984, and more recently as a result of the high exchange rate of the euro against the dollar, which has been the dominant currency in Lebanon for the past quarter century. Many emigrants, particularly in Europe and North America, actively contribute to the diversification of Lebanese exports. In 1984, Arab markets received 95 per cent of Lebanese exports, but by 2001, the ratio dropped to 60 per cent, and then again to 52 per cent in 2004. That Lebanese emigrants are active in the food industry and restaurants in the countries of destination must have helped promote Lebanese food products.

6. Contribution of emigrants to economic development in Lebanon through civil society organizations

Some emigrants formed associations through which they have established a network of Lebanese emigrant businessmen all over the world, with the aim of cementing relations between the Lebanese private sector and export markets. Through the institutions and societies they have established in Lebanon, emigrants have modernized the methods of cultivation of fruits, such as apples, cherries and pears to improve their exportability, and developed beekeeping and honey production. In addition, institutions founded by emigrants contributed to the development of the technology sectors, through cooperation with academic and scientific institutions in Beirut.

C. CONTRIBUTION OF EMIGRANTS TO SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: LEBANON AS A MODEL

Lebanese emigrants have not invested only for their direct personal profit; many have funded projects for the public good in numerous fields, including education, public health, infrastructure, social services, monuments and heritage. In the following, some information on representative contributions is provided.

1. Role of emigrants in promoting education and culture

This role began before independence in 1943 and has been prominent in several fields. The following are some major examples:

a. Founding the Jafet Library at the American University of Beirut by the Jafet family in Sao-Paolo;
b. Founding the Amiliya Network of schools and other social institutions of the Amiliya Association by Southern Lebanese emigrants to West Africa;
c. Founding the St. John Damascene Antiochian Orthodox University of Balamand by Issam Fares, Fouad Debbas, Rafik Hariri and other Lebanese emigrants to the Gulf and other countries;
d. Building and founding schools, such as in Kfar Zeina (North Lebanon) by emigrants to Australia and Dik el Mehdi (Metn) by emigrants to West Africa;
e. Funding the Université St. Joseph premises in Kfar Falous in South Lebanon by Rafik Hariri, an emigrant to Saudi Arabia;
f. Funding a network of training centres in IT and various other educational projects in North Lebanon by Mohamad Safadi, an emigrant to Saudi Arabia;
g. Supporting public and private schools in the district of Kesrouan by George Frem, an emigrant to Saudi Arabia;
h. Funding the Mabarat Schools network, partly by emigrants to Africa, the Gulf countries and America;
i. Funding the Maria Aziz School in Jezzine by emigrants from this town to Mexico;
j. Establishing vocational schools and an Institute of Technology in Joya near Tyre by Ali Al Jammal, an emigrant to Nigeria;
k. Establishing a network of schools and a University in the Western Bekaa by Abdul-Rahim Murad, an emigrant to Brazil;
l. Funding the construction of the Lycée Français in Habbush in Nabatiyeh by emigrants from the region to French-speaking African countries

This is in addition to providing the financial support for students and educational institutions provided by several emigrants (Rafik Hariri, Issam Fares, Fuad Debbas, Emile Bustani, Michel Eddé and his sons, Mohammed Safadi, George Frem, Pierre Abou Khater, Abdullah Zakhem, Fouad Makhzoumi and others) and funding institutions such as the Islamic Association for Higher and Vocational Education, funded by the Lebanese emigrants to the Gulf.[9]

2. Support by emigrants to the health-care sector

The Tell Shiha Hospital in Zahle was funded by emigrants who hail from the city.[10] The St. Louis Hospital in Junieh was funded by Lebanese emigrants to America,[11] and a health centre in Bkassine (near Jezzine) was funded by H. Ghanem, an emigrant from the village.[12] Notable in this regard are the numerous donations from Southern Lebanese emigrants to the Imam-Al-Sadr and the Islamic Shiite Supreme Council medical institutions in South Lebanon and the south-western suburbs of Beirut.

In addition, there are the donations of emigrants to Canada and America to St. Georges Greek Orthodox Hospital in Beirut,[13] and the funding of the Kfar Falous (near Jezzine) hospital by Rafik Hariri, and the establishment of a dispensary in Bejdarfel (near Batroun) in the late 1990s by Raymond Abi Rached, an emigrant to the United States.

3. Role of Emigrants in supporting basic infrastructure projects

Numerous infrastructure projects were funded and supported by Lebanese emigrants in more than one region in Lebanon. The following are examples:

a. Funding the electrical network of Ibl El Saki (near Marjayoun) by Karam El Rassi, a rich emigrant from the village to Brazil;[14]
b. Funding an artesian well in the village of Zrarieh (near Tyre) by Hussein Taan, an emigrant to West Africa;[15]
c. Funding the basic infrastructure in the late nineties in Bejdarfel (near Batroun), by Raymond Abi Rached, a rich emigrant to the United States;[16]
d. Funding construction of several bridges destroyed by Israel in the war of July-August 2006 in various regions of Lebanon: Najib Mikati, an emigrant to the Gulf and Africa; George Frem, an emigrant to Saudi Arabia; Wadih al-Absi, an emigrant to Iraq and Kuwait, an emigrant from Al Hamra family from Marjayoun, and Saad Hariri, an emigrant to Saudi Arabia.

4. Contribution of emigrants to building and funding social welfare institutions

The following are a few examples of the numerous donations from Lebanese emigrants to fund social welfare projects in various regions of Lebanon:

a. Building, funding and running SOS Orphans Villages in Bhersaf (Metn), Sfaray (Jezzine), and Boksmaya (Batroun) by Michel Gemayel, an emigrant to Iran;[17]
b. Funding a series of associations for social services by Rafik Hariri and George Frem and others (emigrants to Saudi Arabia) in several Lebanese regions;
c. Funding several institutions by Elias Sharbine, an emigrant to Africa from Tyre, who is particularly active in aiding institutions of all denominations located in his city of origin;
d. Funding various public institutions in Miziara (near Zghurta) by the Shaghuri family, emigrants to Nigeria;
e. Funding various public institutions mainly in Akkar and other Lebanese regions by Issam Fares (emigrant to Saudi Arabia and the United States);
f. Funding the Imam El Sadr social welfare institution and institutions belonging to the Islamic Shiite Supreme Council by Shia Southern Lebanese emigrants to Sub-Saharan Africa, the Arab Gulf and the United States;
g. Funding several institutions in Jbeil and its surroundings by Emile Nawfal, an emigrant to Kuwait;
h. Funding several welfare institutions by Mohamad Safadi, an emigrant to Saudi Arabia;
i. Funding welfare institutions in the Batroun region and elsewhere in Lebanon by Antoine Zahra, an emigrant to the United Arab Emirates;
j. Funding a number of institutions in the Metn region by Sarkis Sarkis, an emigrant to Eastern Europe.

5. Contribution of emigrants to conservation of monuments and archaeological heritage

Contributions of this type epitomise the interest of emigrants in the villages and cities of their homeland. For example:

a. Funding by Miguel El Abd, a prominent emigrant to Mexico, of the clock on Parliament Square in Beirut;
b. Funding of Naum Labaki's monument (former Parliament Speaker in 1923-1924) in Baabdat, by emigrants to Brazil originating from the village;
c. Funding of the Emigrant Monument at the eastern entrance to Beirut by the Lebanese community in Mexico.

D. TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE TO COUNTRY OF ORIGIN BY EMIGRANTS

Attempts should be made to benefit from the expertise of Lebanese emigrants for the socio-economic development of Lebanon through the transfer of knowledge by Lebanese returning emigrants, thus transforming some negative aspects of globalization into positive opportunities.

Over the last two decades, Lebanon tried to attract back some of its “emigrant brains”, as did some private Lebanese institutions. The following are examples:

a. The American University of Beirut Medical Faculty invited American medical doctors of Lebanese descent to teach and work in its hospital and tried to expand cooperation with them;
b. In August 2001, the Association of Lebanese Engineers organized an international congress for Lebanese engineers, with the aim of interesting them in engineering activities in Lebanon and the Arab world;
c. UNDP provided some support to such endeavours through a programme known as Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN), which began implementation in the 1990s, in collaboration with UNDP, UNESCO, and the Centre for Lebanese Studies in Oxford (United Kingdom). The programme led to the return of several expatriates to work successfully in Lebanon;
d. Upon the end of the “war of others” in 1991, when reconstruction and development efforts began, the Council for Development and Reconstruction of Lebanon (CDR) was in need of technical staff with international experience. Needs for specific skills were announced in the international press. Hundreds of applications were received from Lebanese in Western Europe and North America and dozens of people with appropriate qualifications were hired, with satisfactory productivity and efficiency results;
e. Through its New York office, the Lebanese American University contacts Lebanese professors and researchers working in American universities and research centres in attempt to attract them to work in Lebanon;
f. In the 1990s, several Lebanese public entities, banks and corporations recruited qualified Lebanese working abroad to key positions;
g. Several consulting, manufacturing, and technical services corporations were established, in collaboration with emigrant Lebanese professionals and scientists, such as, in high technology, the computer programming firm founded in Beirut by Nehmeh Tawk, a computer specialist returning from France, to export computer programmes to France, and Arab Project Development (APD) founded by Paul Hussein Tawk;
h. In the late 1960s and the 1970s, several engineering and computer firms were founded by Lebanese and other Arab emigrants in Lebanon; this is a model that deserves study with a view to generalizing it;
i. Hospitals and medical centres were, and are being, set up by attracting emigrant medical specialists in various fields. For example, the Eye and Ear Hospital was established by Lebanese physicians working in the United States, Canada, and Europe. Such hospitals have a local and regional role, attracting as they do, patients from several Arab countries;
j. Firms were set up in cooperation with universities and the private sector to develop scientific and technical projects. St. Joseph University and the Lebanese American University, both in Beirut, attempted initiatives to attract emigrant “brains”. The experiment started in the public sector between 1991 and 1995, in collaboration with the French techno-park Sophia Antipolis. The experiment failed, but the initiative was taken up by the St. Joseph University’s Faculty of Engineering. In 2000, the park, with its constituent incubators, started working under the name Berytech, and is now expanding in collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine of the same university;
k. Another techno-park is under preparation, in collaboration with the Investment Development Authority of Lebanon (IDAL) and the Municipality of Damur.

E. BEST PRACTICE IN THE REGION

All Arab countries of origin, such as Morocco, Tunisia, the Sudan, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, have bodies seeking to put their emigrant communities in the service of development.

Egypt has linked emigration to planning and regulating the employment of the workforce, both at home and abroad, as well as to raising efficiency and productivity, with the aim of achieving full, productive employment as a means of and an end to socio-economic development, in addition to providing care for Egyptians abroad and enhancing their ties with the country of origin.

In Jordan, the Ministry of Labour looks after the affairs of the emigrants, through an annual conference held to discuss their issues and problems. In addition, Jordan implements an educational policy aimed to promote university education extensively, to produce emigrants able to earn high incomes in countries of destination, for their remittances to be used in consumption, development and economic investment.

Tunisia also holds an annual conference to examine problems of Tunisians abroad and ways to integrate them into Tunisian society.

The Syrian Arab Republic enacted laws to facilitate return of emigrants and to encourage them to invest their savings in development projects.

In Yemen, the Ministry of Expatriate Affairs looks after the affairs of emigrants and proposes the necessary measures. The Ministry makes efforts to involve emigrants in development plans and policies, facilitate their access to services and facilities, and protect their rights and preserve their cultural identity and strengthen their ties to the homeland.

Lebanon is distinguished by being the first, around 70 years ago, to develop policies on emigrant communities. It has Government agencies and civil society organizations in Lebanon and abroad that implement various economic, cultural, social, and media projects. Lebanon has also enacted legislation to facilitate the participation of Lebanese emigrants in the economic, political, social and cultural life of the country. Returning emigrants participate in political life and have established or contributed to the majority of Lebanese political parties. A significant number have been elected to Parliament, become ministers and prime ministers, headed major political parties, and occupied the most important positions in the public administration.

F. SUMMARY

Undoubtedly, emigrant communities have an important role in the development of their countries of origin, economically and socially, for they represent the “processes of mental and societal change that enable a human group to increase its gross product sustainably and self-reliantly.” Foremost among the positive effects of emigration is that in some cases it constitutes a safety valve for population overcrowding in the countries of origin. Moreover, remittances are a source for funding household consumption, education, and health care, productive projects of various sizes in varied economic sectors, some social services institutions, and public services. International migration and returning emigrants are a source of openness to the outside world; a catalyst for renewal of the technical and regulatory framework of the economy and society; and an agent for the transfer of science, knowledge and modern technology to the countries of origin.

On the other hand, emigration deprives the economies and societies of the countries of origin of the youngest and the most enterprising of the labour force; and may contribute to emptying wide rural areas of population, leading to the decline of agriculture. In addition, it may contribute to the ageing of the population, thereby distorting the age structure.

CHAPTER VI

BRAIN DRAIN FROM THE ARAB MASHREQ

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CHAPTER VI

BRAIN DRAIN FROM THE ARAB MASHREQ*

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INTRODUCTION

Brain drain is defined as a "global transfer of resources in the form of human capital; generally, emigration of highly-qualified people from developing countries to developed countries, including, generally, but not exclusively, engineers, doctors, scientists, and other university graduates".[1] This migration is a global phenomenon that includes both poor and rich countries, but is typically from the developing South to the developed North and from the less advanced among the group of developed countries to the more advanced, which have started competing to attract this type of selective migration.

The term 'brain drain' was first coined in the early 1960s in the United Kingdom to describe the emigration of highly-qualified people with scientific and industrial expertise to the United States. Today, it applies to the scientific and technical elite in all Arab countries, in particular, the Syrian Arab Republic. Scientific talent in universities and science institutes in the Arab Mashreq tend to emigrate to where they can be welcomed, sponsored and better invested. Initially, emigration is in the pursuit of education and specialization at universities and scientific environments that accord science and research more esteem and provide grants and facilities to the talented and eminent, facilitating their move to the employment phase, where companies, research centres and industrial enterprises employ them by rewarding them with high salaries.

The real problem is not that highly-qualified people leave their homelands and move to developed scientific institutions in Western industrialized countries, for this could benefit the development and advancement of science and could bring new expertise to the country, as the Japanese and Chinese emigrants did after the First World War. The problem is that the emigrants involved are unable or do not wish to leave their adopted countries to return to their countries of origin, taking with them the scientific expertise and technical skills that can advance development in the latter. Hence, the impact of such emigration on development cannot be ignored.

Through providing attractive financial offers, entry visas, residence, and other tempting incentives, globalization has helped the emigration of qualified and productive people from developing countries to industrialized Western countries.

Statistics from studies by the Arab League, the Arab Labour Organization, UNESCO, and other international and regional organizations show that the Arab countries have contributed a third of the brain drain from developing countries, and that 50 per cent of the physicians, 23 per cent of the engineers and 15 per cent of the scientists from the Arab countries have emigrated, particularly to Europe, the United States and Canada, and that 54 per cent of the Arab students who study abroad do not return home.

Scientific research into emigration from the Arab Mashreq countries is generally constrained by lack of basic information and statistics; these are seemingly treated as "taboo" or national security secrets. The dearth of data lends itself to broad analytical discrepancies and allows political manipulation aimed at substantiating particular analyses.

The literature on the emigration of brains and talents attributes it to a combination of several political, economic, social and personal factors. Among these are the following: the inability of the national economy to absorb the highly-qualified, the inadequacy of financial returns when the highly-qualified are employed, the inadequacy of educational systems and their inconsistency with development projects, social and political instability, problems bedevilling development and modernization, administrative and organizational complexities, and certain laws. Most importantly, the lack of political and scientific freedoms and fetters on thought, research, writing are key factors, for they lead to alienation, driving people to emigrate in pursuit of freedom and stability.

In contrast, countries of destination have the advantage of scientific and technological progress in a climate of stability that attracts talent from countries of origin, providing them with material and moral recognition and the wide margins of public freedom and individual liberty that provide a healthy environment for creativity.

This research relies on a few sporadic sources. The few available figures are to be found in general reports that do not relate specifically to the issue in question, hence the use of field research and personal interviews. Some analysis of the case Arab Mashreq countries in general is offered, but the Syrian case is focused upon as representative. The factors of emigration are similar in all the countries concerned. However, there are some differences, associated with the wars and political crises experienced by some individual countries, as well as with the economic policies pursued.

In the case of Jordan, recent studies have estimated[2] that there are approximately 670 thousand Jordanians working abroad, most in the Gulf countries, and mostly well qualified. The brain drain is rarely discussed, and then, given the "open door" policy pursued, only within the context of addressing the issue of unemployment among the educated. Favouritism and the free-market economic policies adopted are the most important factors driving the highly-qualified to emigrate. Other reasons are the economic recession and the resulting weak purchasing power, and low salaries and wages. The open door policy is based on the belief that emigration helps to offset low wages by providing access to higher salaries abroad, which, in turn, helps raise family income through remittances. In addition, encouraging the emigration of the highly-qualified is a political means for mitigating political opposition and reproducing elites.

Experts believe that the emigration of the highly qualified from Egypt plays a positive role in development, since it gives them the chance to find jobs that satisfy their aspirations, which are not available in the local market.[3] In addition, qualified emigrants remit significant funds to Egypt that constitute around 4 per cent of its GDP. Egypt has signed several bilateral and other international agreements to facilitate the process of brain emigration.

In the case of Lebanon, which is a country of emigration par excellence, significant numbers of emigrants are highly-qualified, and this affects the country demographically, socially and economically. Lebanese law does not restrict emigration of highly-qualified people, but Lebanon seeks to regulate emigration and encourage emigrants to return, through cooperation programmes with the European Union and United Nations agencies.

This research attempts, with evident difficulty, to address the Syrian brain and skill drain. Figures are lacking. Hence, the work relies solely on social, political and economic analysis. In a way, our work on the Syrian brain drain could be perceived of as a model for research work on neighbouring Mashreq countries, as well as a model of the difficulty of accessing data in the Arab region, which is a serious handicap, given that regional and international reports have consistently pointed out the importance of data in addressing social, economic, cultural and political phenomena scientifically and methodologically.

A. EXTENT OF SYRIAN BRAIN AND SKILL DRAIN

The brain and skill drain is one of the most prominent characteristics of Syrian emigration. Yet, there are no credible local studies or statistics on its extent, rates, or distribution over host countries; hence the inevitability of relying on international estimates, mainly based on data produced by the countries of destination using sophisticated statistical techniques. Given the lack of credible and reliable national and international data on the extent of Syrian emigration, estimates vary between about 20 million emigrants since the mid-nineteenth century and no less than 10 million.

A study carried out by United Nations experts on migration and development estimated that up until 2000, Syrian emigrants with tertiary education (university and above) to OECD countries accounted for 35.1 per cent of total Syrian emigrants, who constitute 0.9 per cent of total immigrants in these countries, compared with 31.2 per cent for those with secondary education and 33.8 per cent for those without secondary education.[4] Thus the highly-qualified and those who are in the process of being so account for more than 60 per cent,[5] which is consistent with attempts by the OECD and Western countries to attract skilled and qualified labour from all over the world.

A study by the World Bank estimated that up until 2005, Syrian emigrants with tertiary education who had completed their education in the Syrian Arab Republic accounted for 5.2 per cent of the total, who according to this study numbered 480,708 or 2.5 per cent of the total population of the Syrian Arab Republic.[6] The same study estimated that annually 9.5 per cent of all medical graduates who had received their medical education in the Syrian Arab Republic emigrate to countries of the OECD; and that this figure does not include physicians who emigrate to the GCC countries, particularly to Saudi Arabia. The high rate of emigration of Syrian physicians reflects the increase in the number of medical graduates since the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Aleppo and the Faculty of Medicine at the University of October graduated their first cohorts in 1974. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that the rate of emigration of physicians educated in the Syrian Arab Republic is many times more than that cited by the Mediterranean Migration Report. As an example, sources of the Arab American Medical Association indicate that the number of Syrian physicians in the United States is more than 6,000 out of 15,000 Arab physicians, with Syrian and Egyptian physicians ranking first. Likewise, Syrian physicians living in Germany are estimated to number 18,000 out of a Syrian community estimated at 59,000.

B. CAUSES OF BRAIN DRAIN

1. Economic causes

These may be summed up by low GDP and weak economic growth. Like the economies of other non-oil Arab countries, the Syrian Arab Republic is a developing economy. Poor production structures and growth factors have led to "a type of economic stagnation and negative rates of growth or lack of it".[7] Economic growth rates are modest compared with high population growth rates, leading to a low level of per capita income and increased unemployment rates due to inability to provide jobs for new entrants to the labour market.

Overall, the economy of the Syrian Arab Republic has passed through five phases.[8]

1. Accumulation of private wealth upon independence. The economy relied mainly on individuals taking the initiative to invest in productive sectors to meet the needs of the local market and export to neighbouring ones. The national economy boomed. As a result, ownership income increased substantially, leading to accumulation of more wealth in the hands of a small social group and to low wage incomes. The low incomes of some social groups played an important role in the decline of investment in the second half of the 1950s, which, in turn, led to slower rates of economic and industrial growth, prompting economic and social changes in the early 1960s.
2. Economic and social transformations. In the 1960s, policies favourable to lower-income social groups were adopted and agricultural reform undertaken, along with frequent nationalization of industry and foreign trade, leading to flight of capital.
3. General economic advancement. In the 1970s, the Syrian Arab Republic adopted economic pluralism, but with the public sector assuming a leading role. This is the "oil pulse," phase. Oil was discovered and invested nationally and the Syrian Arab Republic benefited from high oil prices leading to larger volumes of aid and funds from Arab Gulf countries.
4. Confronting the repercussions of the global economic recession and the sharp drop in oil prices in the 1980s. Foreign assistance declined from an average of US$1.5 billion in the late 1970s and early 1980s to US$300 million in the mid-1980s,[9] weakening the potential for growth. The severe economic crisis weakened the Syrian lira and led to a sharp decline in purchasing power and high rates of inflation.
5. Economic and social changes. In the 1990s, the production of light oil and international oil prices increased, as did revenues accruing from oil exports to the former Soviet Union States, under a debt repayment agreement. This phase was also that of openness and economic reforms, adopted between 1987 and 1991.[10] The reforms included giving the private sector a larger role in the national economy, gradual liberalization of foreign trade and prices, and stimulating exports. Law No. 10 of 1991 was one of the most important of such reforms. It sought to encourage domestic, foreign and Arab investment, through a range of exemptions and exceptions from restrictions and controls on imports and capital movement.

The low per capita income and the resulting low standard of living have been the most important economic factors of emigration. The income earned by the qualified and skilled is so low as to be incommensurate with their level of scientific and cultural attainments. It is not only low compared with what they can get in developed countries, but also with other groups in society, such as businessmen, traders and manufacturers, who may have higher incomes despite lower educational levels, confirming that in many cases income is related neither to production nor to work.

In almost all countries, wages are usually determined by scales proportionate to the scientific and technical qualifications of the individual, while in the Syrian Arab Republic there are several different wage levels for engineers and doctors. Often, on appointment or even promotion, non-economic and non-objective considerations play a substantive and significant role in determining wages, without any regard for efficiency or qualifications. Increases in prices and living costs unmatched by increases in incomes exacerbate the difficulties faced by the highly-qualified professionals, along with other limited income segments of population.

Under the circumstances, highly-qualified persons have to look for other rewarding jobs that help secure the basic living requirements of their households, quite apart from the requirements of scientific research, such as books, references, computers and Internet, and travel. The result is diversion away from scientific activity and development.

The 1970s was a decade of full employment,[11] with compulsory employment of all university graduates upon graduation. However, unemployment, particularly among university graduates, increased in the aftermath of the acute structural economic crisis in the 1980s, a crisis that weighed heavily on workers in the public sector in particular. Inflation escalated at an unprecedented rate, consuming wages, reducing public sector investment, and freezing public sector development and recruitment, thus hampering the absorption of new entrants to the labour market. University graduates suffer unemployment badly, as 48 per cent of owners of private enterprises prefer to employ ordinary workers and 20.5 per cent prefer to employ graduates of technical and vocational schools,[12] a situation attributable to lack of technological capacity and scientific research.

Decree 6 of 2004 put an end to the commitment by the State to employing all engineers. Planners envisaged that the decree would create job opportunities for graduate engineers outside the public sector, in private consulting and contracting. However, the actual effect was reducing job opportunities for engineering graduates, leading many to consider emigrating upon graduation or transferring to other disciplines, such as science and economics.

Moreover, the strict administrative procedures and rigid bureaucracy encountered by researchers generate anxiety and instability, leading to intellectual isolation and confusion, and detachment from scientific research and development.

Highly-qualified emigrants include large numbers of scientists, engineers, and medics. Clearly, this is a result of recruitment patterns in the developed countries, but also of the fact that the Syrian Arab Republic sends scholarship students in these fields to these countries, who then fail to return upon graduation or re-emigrate soon after they return home.

Highly-qualified persons constitute an elite. They seek to realize themselves and secure their livelihood in a way that ensures freedom of thought and safeguards the potential for creativity. However, this behaviour is inconsistent with "the basic assumptions of development thinking, which are that strategy ought to, at least theoretically, make the most of all factors that govern society, not the individual or short-term benefits".[13] The Syrian brain drain is a phenomenon inherent in structures based on backwardness and dependency.

2. Social causes

Undoubtedly, decisions to emigrate rest on economic, scientific and professional considerations, but are also affected by social and psychological factors that are, sometimes, decisive. Based on freedom of thought, expression and implementation, the social system of the developed countries is a force of attraction; in addition to opportunities for securing a decent living, social guarantees, extensive social services, and fulfilment of human needs. Moreover, developed countries of destination facilitate the granting of permanent residence, followed by citizenship, to highly-qualified immigrants, giving them a sense of belonging and equality. Notably, restrictions that have recently been tightened on entry to and residence in Europe and the Americas do not apply to certain elites, including highly-qualified persons.

Marrying into the host society is another crucial social factor contributing to the brain drain. In such cases, not all family members would be willing to exchange their lifestyles for new ones in the country of origin. Even if the family returns, the likelihood of re-emigration is high, given the difficulties of coping with life in a comparatively traditional society.

Yet another important social and psychological factor is the long period of compulsory service, which deters those who emigrated early in life or completed their higher education abroad from returning home. The Government has facilitated and simplified certain procedures, but such measures are inadequate.

Politically, democracy has not taken root in the Arab countries, including the Syrian Arab Republic. Social ties, including tribalism, regionalism and sectarianism play a key role in employment in important positions. Large numbers of the highly-qualified are, as a result, excluded from participation in policy making and modernization efforts, thus exacerbating their grievances. Indeed, there is an inherent contradiction in centralized political systems between monopolizing privileges, lack of political awareness and a lack of respect of rights on one hand, and requirements of scientific progress, democracy, freedoms and maintenance of rights, on the other.

The final communiqué of the Tenth Conference of the Arab Parliamentary Union, an Arab quasi-Governmental organization, pointed out that Arab Parliaments lack legitimacy, and remarked that "lack of political and social stability and problems of Arab democracy sometimes alienate the highly-qualified or force them to emigrate, seeking freer and more stable conditions".[14]

C. POSITIVE EFFECTS OF BRAIN DRAIN

To deny that the brain drain has some positive effects would be untenable. Among such positive effects are the following:

a. Helping alleviate the unemployment of university graduates, which, although figures are unavailable, is certainly on the rise, especially in consequence of the rescinding of the commitment to full employment of engineering graduates by the public sector for five years. Uncontrolled population growth, the rate of which is one of the highest in the world, has exacerbated unemployment and disguised unemployment, especially among the highly-qualified, spurring many to emigrate. However, the proportion of the highly-qualified to the total labour force is small. Hence, their emigration has only a slight effect on total unemployment, but would certainly have a negative impact on the educational structure in the Syrian Arab Republic.

   Clearly, emigration of the most able, qualified and experienced segments of population impairs development efforts, which, in turn, exacerbates unemployment. Nonetheless, it may be argued that under present economic conditions, the emigration of the highly-qualified reduces unemployment among them, and is, therefore, the lesser of two evils.

b. Generally, emigration has tangible economic benefits. For developing countries, monetary and in-kind remittances are a major source of hard currency, improve the macroeconomic framework and the balance of payments, reduce poverty, and help finance development. Some argue that remittances alleviate disparities resulting from globalization, since two-thirds of all international remittances have developing countries as their destination.[15] In general, if utilized productively, in an economic climate conducive to investment, rather than being spent on consumption, remittances can play a role in increasing production and creating jobs. In any case, whichever way they are used, remittances have a positive impact.[16]

   ILO reports indicate that the volume of emigrant remittances is continuing its upward trend. Over the decade 1995-2005, emigrant remittances increased globally from about US$102 billion to about US$232 billion, with 72 per cent going to developing countries.[17]

   Unofficial remittances constitute the bulk of Syrian emigrant remittances. Total remittances vary along several axes: temporary emigrants remit more than permanent emigrants; skilled emigrants remit more, given their higher incomes; emigrants running businesses remit more than waged emigrants; and emigrants to the GCC countries, Lebanon and Jordan remit more than emigrants to the United States, Canada and Europe.

   Removal of restrictions on emigrant remittances in recent years has had a positive impact. It increased the flexibility of the banking system, allowed the private sector to enter into banking, unified the exchange rates of the currency, narrowed the gap between regular and irregular markets of currencies, and reduced the cost of remittances.

   Relative to GDP, remittances from Syrian temporary and permanent emigrants are significant. Providing an appropriate framework for investment of medium and large capital and flexible, safe channels for small and medium-size savings, as well as encouraging small and micro enterprises, would achieve the high rate of national savings needed for raising investment rates and enhancing GDP growth. In turn, this will have universal and, if equitable distribution policies are pursued, equitable benefits, while increasing the competitiveness of the Syrian economy. In this way, the brain drain would, despite certain negative effects, have an overall positive impact on development.

c. Acquisition of advanced scientific knowledge and promotion of scientific exchanges are possible positive advantages of emigration. Knowledge and technology would be transferred should emigrants who have gained expertise abroad return to the Syrian Arab Republic on a permanent basis. However, compared with other developing countries, rates of return of highly-qualified emigrants are low; circumstances in the Syrian Arab Republic still drive brains to emigrate rather than return, and Syrian scientific talents tend to prosper abroad, rather than at home.

D. NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF BRAIN DRAIN

A significant proportion of the output of the Syrian education system, which, until a few years ago, was free and comprehensive, emigrates. The system spends highly, for example, on educating and training doctors, but a significant proportion emigrates. Engineering graduates have knowledge that may surpass, in quantity if not quality, that possessed by graduates of colleges in the West; but it is the West, not the Syrian Arab Republic, that ends up getting some of the best Syrian engineers. The expertise of a sixth-year student surgeon in the Syrian Arab Republic may, due to extensive practice, exceed that of experienced surgeons elsewhere, making Syrian surgeons among the best in the world. Yet, Syrians go abroad for medical treatment; for example, in 2004, an estimated 5,200 patients went to Jordan.[18] The reason is not inefficacy of Syrian physicians, but rather the institutional problem of the absence of a medical system.

The brain drain for a country of origin is a brain gain for a country of destination. Human and financial resources are spent on education and training in countries of origin, for their output to be had for free by Western countries. The result is weakness and deterioration of scientific production and research in the Arab countries, compared with Arab scientific production in Western countries. In this era of the knowledge economy, the consequence is economic revenue for countries of destination and net loss for countries of origin; especially that the advanced technologies and inventions of the emigrants become the “intellectual property” of the former. This dynamic contributes to widening the knowledge and technological gap between rich countries and poor countries. UNESCO considers that, with the human element being the most important factor of production, the brain drain is an abnormal type of scientific exchange between States, since the flow is in one direction, constituting a reverse transfer of technology. With the increasing rates of Arab brain drain to the West, the dependency of Arab countries in various fields increases at a high, and often exorbitant, economic cost. In other words, Arab countries bear a dual loss: they lose the funds spent and efforts made in educating and training qualified Arab emigrants, and to address shortages, they import western know-how at a great cost.[19]

The brain drain sabotages productive forces in the national economy and increases tensions in the high-level manpower market, which, in turn, influences wage levels. The loss is not compensated for by remittances from ordinary labour emigrants. Clearly, the higher the level of expertise of the emigrant workforce, the higher is the loss by the national economy.

In addition, the brain drain impairs the competitiveness of the Syrian economy by weakening the productivity of the factors of production. Economists differentiate between quantitative growth through expansion of production inputs and qualitative growth due to increased productivity of factors of production. More than 70 per cent of economic growth in developed countries is attributable to the latter. The quality of the internal and external efficiency of human capital is the main source of productivity, which results from the value added by knowledge and forms the basis of knowledge economy.[20]

In the 1970s, the Syrian Arab Republic missed a unique opportunity for indigenization of technology by reverse engineering, replicating the success of the Asian “tiger” economies and India, Brazil and Ireland. Due to the lack of optimal investment of skills and brains and the high rate of their emigration, investment in technological innovation was modest, sometimes declining to between one half and one third of potential production capability.

Notwithstanding relative progress in recent years by the Syrian economy, as judged by various competitiveness indicators, the educational composition of Syrian labour has deteriorated. The labour survey of 2005 indicated that more than three fifths of the workforce was illiterate, and at 6.8 per cent, the ratio of university-degree holders to total labour force was very low. According to the key competitiveness indicators of the Syrian economy (2006-2007), higher training and education declined, with the country moving from rank 96 in 2006 to rank 104 in 2007. Likewise, by the brain drain indicator, the Syrian economy declined rapidly, from rank 86 in 2006 to rank 112 in 2007.[21]

The negative effects of the brain and skills drain are most serious for countries that suffer from a scarcity of highly-qualified people, Arab countries included. The scientific gap between Arab countries and developed countries in disciplines such as engineering, medicine and physics is widening. The number of Arab scientists and engineers working in scientific research is only 371 per million of population, compared with 979 for the world,[22] 3,700 for the United States, 6,000 for Japan, and 5,600 for the United Kingdom, while the ratio needed for unleashing the creative capabilities of a country is estimated to be 1 500.[23] In addition, the scarcity is aggravated by the high rate of emigration. While some reports of the League of Arab States indicate that more than 15 per cent of Arab university graduates in critical specialisms emigrate annually to the countries of the North, other international reports estimate the ratio to be no less than 20 per cent.[24] The total number of Arab scientists abroad is estimated to be 1,090,282, compared with 717,815 for China and 1,050,484 for India, while the population of each of the latter two States is more than 4 times that of the Arab world as a whole.

E. POSSIBILITIES OF ATTRACTING BRAINS AND SKILLS BACK

Despite the rapid pace of globalization and the interconnection and openness of markets within the context of the largest global trade liberalization in history, severe restrictions have been imposed on transfer of technology under "intellectual property protection" laws that have figured prominently in World Trade Organization (WTO) rules. In effect, the protection of "intellectual property" has become the other side of the openness of markets and trade liberalization within the context of globalization. Like all other countries acceding to, or seeking to join, the WTO, the Syrian Arab Republic has adapted its national laws to the requirements of the Convention on the Protection of Intellectual Property. As a result, there is need for a clear policy towards the mobilization of the highly-qualified, both in the Syrian Arab Republic and within Syrian emigrant communities. Non-traditional means of mobilization of emigrant expertise, through use of modern communications, are worth considering seriously. Efforts by developed, as well as developing countries, to mobilize the highly-qualified and limit their emigration have intensified with increasing global economic and commercial interconnectedness. Indeed, advanced the scientific research and innovation systems that benefit from emigrant skills are crucial, along with linking the inputs and outputs of these systems with the development process and raising the level of expenditure on scientific research to no less than 1 per cent of GDP, which is the globally recommended critical ratio.

According to Gita Hourani,[25] developed countries not only seek to attract brains from other countries, they are also rallying efforts to keep their highly-qualified people and developing incentives to dissuade them from emigrating. In the United Kingdom, for example, the Government imported technology from the United States to encourage its own scientists to remain in the country. China requires university graduates to work for a minimum of five years in the country or "redeem" their degrees by paying US$6,000. The European Council approved increasing research allocations to 3 per cent of GDP, in an effort to stop European brain drain, and attract back emigrants to other countries, including the United States. India, which had lost thousands of brains to the developed world, established the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, to maintain contact with emigrants, facilitate their participation on a larger scale in the economic life of the country, and help returnees navigate through administrative procedures. Many Indian emigrants returned, bringing in billions of dollars, attracted also by a prosperous economy and a favourable investment environment. Some developing countries have started to follow policies aimed at reducing emigration of the highly-qualified. In consequence, fierce competition for them will ensue.

Comparing experiences, it could be argued that programmes and projects for transfer of knowledge by expatriate experts constitute the most advanced non-traditional form of mobilization. The success of such programmes has changed perceptions about the "brain drain"; it is no longer perceived of as a net loss to the sending country, but as a net profit instead. The Syrian Arab Republic could benefit substantially from such programmes.

UNDP, UNESCO and some research centres in Western universities support a programme to transfer, through expatriate nationals, knowledge about higher technologies related to the knowledge economy. Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine and some Maghreb countries have been beneficiaries. Since 2005, more than 234 highly-qualified Palestinian experts in science, agriculture and health have served in the occupied Palestinian territories under the programme, which has been assisted by PALISTA, the Palestinian Scientists and Technologists Abroad. The latter is a network established in 1998, with the aim of harnessing the scientific and technological knowledge of Palestinian expatriates for socio-economic development. The network maintains a database of expatriate Palestinian scientists, engineers and professionals; and conducts discussions over the Internet among subscribers.[26] The network established links with Palestinian NGOs active in agricultural development, and contributed to improvement of quality of seeds and crops; pest control by innovative, cheap methods; use of modern irrigation to mitigate water scarcity; and to capacity-building of farmers.

In Lebanon, the Lebanese Engineers Association holds a large conference for Lebanese engineers abroad, in order to benefit from their expertise in planning reconstruction projects. The Faculty of medicine at the American University of Beirut (AUB) invites expatriate Lebanese physicians to teach and work in its hospital. Other Faculties of AUB make similar efforts. Efforts coordinated with UNDP and some western universities have been successful. Various highly-qualified expatriates returned home, and through collaboration with Lebanese experts abroad, a number of large-scale industrial projects were developed, including software production and exportation, to France in particular.[27]

All Arab countries that have programmes for transfer of knowledge by expatriate nationalsare countries of origin with a high ratio of highly-qualified people among their emigrants. Notably, the Syrian Arab Republic is the only such Arab country that still lacks this kind of programme.

A group of Syrian expatriates attempted to form an interactive network, the Network of Syrian Scientists, Technologists and Innovators Abroad (NOSSTIA), as an NGO. The network, whose main objective is to promote advanced scientific technologies in the Syrian Arab Republic through transferring knowledge by Syrian expatriates, held its first conference in 2001, with the participation of 50 Syrian expatriate experts and an equal number from inside the Syrian Arab Republic. The network was strongly supported by the Arab School for Science and Technology (ASST), the Syrian Computer Society, and the High School of Telecommunications in France. It developed ideas for work in energy, water and information technology. However, the institutional hurdles it faced forced it to restrict its activities to organizing a biennial information and communication technology international conference, held three times so far, in 2004, 2006 and 2008. The Network has not been able to contribute substantially to national development plans and policies, with its work being carried out by a few individuals, rather than being institutionalized.

Internationally, two models from very different parts of the world, the South Korean and the Colombian, stand out. The first aims at inducing skilled emigrants to return by ensuring appropriate financial, moral and legal conditions at home, while the second seeks to benefit from emigrant skills by establishing networks of researchers as part of a programme to transfer knowledge by expatriate nationals.[28]

F. SUMMARY

Issues pertaining to emigration of highly-qualified people have not been addressed sufficiently by the authorities responsible for development in the Syrian Arab Republic. Data on trends of this emigration are simply unavailable.

The low standard of living and poor financial incentives for university teachers are among the main reasons for the decline of the scientific infrastructure in the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as for emigration of the highly-qualified. Administrative hurdles, bureaucratic procedures, and iniquitous promotions, particularly in Syrian universities, are a major cause of emigration. Moreover, decision makers and owners of means of production are not fully convinced of the importance of scientific research, which has led to a large gap between the poor scientific research output of the universities and labour-market needs. Syrian society has suffered losses due to the brain drain: the economic cost of educating and training these highly-qualified people, and the significant economic and social cost of bringing in foreign experts and technologists.

In addition to economic factors, the brain drain from the Syrian Arab Republic has the following causes: the weakness of the institutional environment, lower public expenditure on scientific research, the absence of scientific research and innovation, the mismatch between the skill levels of the highly-qualified and the technical and economic development levels, the low esteem accorded to the highly-qualified compared with that accorded to the bureaucracy, a preference for loyalty over efficiency in recruitment and promotion, the appointment of qualified people in positions incommensurate with their qualifications, low incomes, difficult intellectual and psychological problems, and the selective immigration policies pursued by the countries of destination that favour educated and skilled labour.

The effects of the brain drain are in general mixed. The net effect can be positive, when the sending country mobilizes its highly-qualified expatriates to contribute, directly or indirectly, to knowledge transfer in today's world of globalized knowledge economy and interdependent, open, competitive markets. Otherwise, the net effect can be negative for countries that pursue economic liberalization in general, and trade liberalization in particular, which faces them with complex challenges, in a market that has become more globalized than ever.

The net effect of the brain drain on the Syrian Arab Republic has been negative. Generally, the negative impact of the brain drain on the knowledge and human capital is more significant when the proportion of technical and higher-education graduates, particularly in advanced sciences, is low or medium, as in the case of the Syrian Arab Republic. Conversely, the net negative impact is less significant when that proportion is high, as in India and China, for example.

Multiple social, economic, scientific and even political deficiencies have thwarted the proposed development programmes. Highly-qualified scientists and technologists have been excluded from planning and implementation of these programmes. As a result, their productivity declined sharply, and they were left with the option of emigration, or rather forced emigration.

Studying the brain drain and its causes constitutes a good entry point to the development of an effective strategy for structural reformulation of the diverse social institutions to enable them to play an effective role in development. Political will is needed for crystallizing mobilization policies and 'attraction', rather than 'exclusion', strategies. Moreover, it behoves literature on the brain drain to cease talking of the role of the West in impoverishing our societies, focusing instead on the role played by the economic, social and scientific policies of the country itself in "forced emigration".

CONCLUSIONS

1. There is, in the ESCWA member countries, a fundamental migration data problem relating to definitions of migrants, as well as to their classification by age, occupation, educational attainment, skill and expertise, for both sending and countries of destination.
2. Links between emigrants and their countries of origin are relatively weak in all fields, particularly in the case of emigrants to countries outside the ESCWA region.
3. Coordination and cooperation between ESCWA countries of origin and destination on migration issues is lacking. Agreements, if any, are inadequately enforced, in the absence of clear frameworks for dialogue aimed at ensuring maximum benefits for all parties.
4. Sometimes, emigration plays the role of a safety valve for unemployment. At other times, it is blamed for depriving countries of origin of certain skills and competencies. However, modern literature on international migration views emigration as a means for openness to the outside world, and a catalyst for renewal, innovation, creativity, and the transfer of modern technologies and expertise to countries of origin in cases where emigrants return to their countries of origin, particularly if policies and programmes to re-absorb them are in place.
5. Remittances, both official and unofficial, sent by emigrants to their countries of origin are an important source of national income and enhance the balance of payments. However, they mostly finance consumer spending, with only insignificant amounts financing productive investment activities.
6. Many sending and countries of destination have not incorporated migration into development in order to maximize its benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establishing a national migration observatory. The main task of such an observatory would be to build an integrated information system for all migration affairs, including databases on migration outflows and inflows, both legal and illegal, and their classification by demographic, social and economic features, as well as databases of relevant legislations, laws and procedures regulating affairs and interests of migrants. The observatory may be located in the Ministry of Expatriates or the Ministry of Labour, or be set up as a separate institution. It should be supported by legislation to ensure cooperation by all relevant agencies, such as interior ministries, social security institutions, civil society institutions and other stakeholders.
2. Enhancing the role of the central agency for statistics in each member state to enable it to provide all data and statistics needed by the observatory on migration and development policies.
3. Developing policies that link migration with development through taking migration into consideration in development strategies, those for combating poverty, tackling unemployment, and workforce development. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation can be the appropriate body to coordinate such efforts.
4. Developing policies that link emigration with development through strengthening ties between emigrants and their home countries and institutionalizing such ties. The Ministry of Expatriate Affairs or the Ministry of Labour may undertake this task, in collaboration with all relevant agencies.
5. Regulating remittances from emigrants to their home countries and facilitating them through official channels, in order to maximize their benefits, adjust their volumes and movement, and direct them towards investment as much as possible. The Ministry of Finance, in cooperation with the Central Bank and the banking sector, can play an important role, as can investment promotion institutions in various countries.
6. Launching initiatives to promote regional dialogue among ESCWA member countries to ensure implementation of existing agreements, and concluding further bilateral and multilateral agreements among sending and countries of destination, with the aim of regulating migration flows; safeguarding the interests of all parties in a balanced way as to maximize benefits of migration, minimize its negative effects, and make it an essential component of development for both parties; and emphasize the fundamental human rights of migrants. GCC can take the initiative at the regional level.
7. Establishing a regional information system for migration sponsored by ESCWA, in cooperation with member countries and/or migration observatories in them.
8. Undertaking by ESCWA to facilitate regional dialogue among members, or among subgroups, as well as between member countries in groups or as a single group and other regions.
9. Working by ESCWA, through organizing regional workshops, towards strengthening the national capacities of member countries for collecting information and statistics on migration, and tabulating, classifying and analysing such information, in order to support decision-making.
10. Providing technical support by ESCWA to member countries to help them develop and implement strategies for integrating migration into development.

ENDNOTES

PREFACE

1 World Bank, Migration and Development Brief 11.
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CHAPTER I

1 International Organization of Migration (IOM) (2010), Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning: A Handbook for Policy-Makers and Practitioners.
2 IOM will be issuing a Handbook addressed to the Governments and other actors wishing to integrate migration into the strategic plans of developing countries.
3 IOM, 2010, An Assessment of Principal Regional Consultative Processes on Migration.
4 To review details and documents of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, see www.colomboprocess.org, and the (IOM) web site www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/policy.
5 In oil-producing countries, migrants are generally referred to as expatriate workers "Al amalah al wafidah".
6 Human Development Report 2009, United Nations, New York 2009, p. 21.
7 World Bank Migrants' Remittances Database, 2010.

CHAPTER II

1 For a thorough survey of the various channels of the impact of international migration on development and their interaction see: Taylor, J. Edward, Joaquín Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Douglas S. Massey, Adela Pellegrino (1996), International Migration and National Development, Population Index, Vol. 62, No. 2, pp. 181-212. Also see: De Haas, Hein (2005), International Migration, Remittances and Development: Myths and Facts, Third World Quarterly, Vol. 26, No. 8, pp. 1269-1284.
2 Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration (CARIM), Database (2010), Demographic and Economic Module, Webpage: http://www.carim.org/index.php?callContent=59.
3 Jordan did not sign the Geneva Convention of 1951. Palestinians registered with United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) are the only ones considered refugees, while any other refugee from another nationality is considered a visitor or temporary immigrant, (De Bel-Air 2007).
4 Banned to non-Jordanians are: the medical, engineering, managerial and accounting, and clerical professions; working in telephone exchanges, communications, and warehouses; working as a vendor, hairdresser, decorator; all educational professions, except rare specialties in which there is a shortage of supply among Jordanians; electrical professions; selling fuel in major cities; working as a mechanic, driver, guard, messenger and concierge.
5 This contract includes a number of significant conditions:
- The employer is prohibited from keeping workers' passports, which is a practice that clearly violates human rights, but is prevalent in other countries, particularly in the Gulf countries, where passports are kept to stop the worker from escaping.
- Wages must be paid within seven days from the due payment date and a receipt must be signed by both parties.
- Workers should be allowed one day off a week. In some other countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, domestic workers are not allowed a day off.
- The contract specifies for non-Jordanian domestic workers a minimum wage equal to that of Jordanians in similar jobs, which eliminates wage discrimination by nationality.
6 Prior to 1962, an exit permit was required, in order to control emigrants and hinder the formation of opposition groups abroad in the aftermath of the coup attempt in 1957, which was followed by martial law (Brand, 2007). However, since 1962, the exit permit was abandoned and emigration open-door policies were adopted within the context of promoting personal freedoms.
7 With the exception of the United Arab Emirates, which allows the granting of tourist and transit visas. However these represent a very small percentage of all visas; the more common types of visas are visit and work visas (Suter, 2005).
8 A visit visa is issued at the invitation of a citizen or a resident and is certified by the competent authority. It can be converted to a work visa at the request of the sponsor (employer) under certain conditions (Suter, 2005).
9 For example, this period is two months from date of entry into Kuwait (Ministerial Decree 640 of 1987 for executive regulations of Aliens Residence Law), while in each of the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, it is a 30-day period (Act 3 of 1963 governing Aliens Entry and Residence in Qatar , but may be extended to two months in the United Arab Emirates.

10 Up to five years in Kuwait (Ministerial Decree 630 of 1987), up to three years in the United Arab Emirates (Act 3 of 1963), and one year renewable in Qatar (Act 3 of 1963). A residence permit is tied to its purpose, i.e., to duration of the employment contract and expires at the end of employment, even if the permit itself has not expired, unless it is converted to another purpose (Ministerial Decree 640 of 1987 in Kuwait, and Law 3 of 1963 in Qatar and the Saudi Labour Law of 2006).
11 With the exception of Dubai, where expatriates were allowed in 2002 to lease property for a period of 99 years (Suter, 2005).
12 With the exception of the Convention of the GCC that stipulates that member States grant each other the same treatment they grant to their citizens.
13 Allows irregular labour immigrants to leave the country without being penalized by fines or imprisonment.
14 Such practices led migrant workers to go on strike protesting against non-payment of salaries. For example, there were strikes in the United Arab Emirates in March 2006 and October 2007. There were similar strikes in Kuwait in November 2007 by Chinese labourers and in April 2008 by Bangladeshi labourers against non-payment of wages and salaries for periods up to five years (Shah, 2009; Shamsi, 2006).
15 Treaties Office Database, EUROPA, webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/prepareCreateTreatiesWorkspace/treatiesGeneralData.do?step=0&redirect=true&treatyId=2841.
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3 IOM, op. cit.
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15 Andrea Stocchiero, Fostering Egyptian Local Development through Diasporic Networks in Italy, CeSPI Policy Paper on The Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS) Project, Rome, May 2004.
16 League of Arab States (2008), Recommendations of the Meeting of Arab Ministers Concerned with Immigration and Expatriates, Cairo, 18 February 2008.
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18 League of Arab States, Arab Expatriates Department, 2008, File No. N 109 (08/02/03) – M (004), Cairo.

CHAPTER IV

1 This situation has led expatriates to use informal and irregular channels to send remittances, such as travel and tourist offices, and import and export offices, which could provide legal cover and avoid legal prosecution.
2 In the rest of the report, this designation refers to Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic.
3 Khachani Mohamed: Moroccans from Abroad: the Migratory Issue Put to the Test of the Euro Moroccan Partnership. Publications of the Moroccan Association of Study and Research on Migrations. Rabat p. 143 (In Arabic).
4 Marwan Abi Samra, L’émigration libanaise et son impact sur l’économie et le développement, ILO, 2010.
5 According to the 2006 Arab Economic Report issued by the Arab Monetary Fund, remittances from workers in the GCC countries are estimated to be about US$25.7 billion, including US$14 billion from Saudi Arabia alone. At about US$39 billion, the United States comes top of a list of 20 remittance countries of origin in the world, followed by Saudi Arabia at US$14 billion, Switzerland at US$13 billion, Germany at US$10 billion, and out of a list of 20 countries, four Arab countries are included as remittance sending countries; the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, Kuwait and Qatar, with combined remittances exceeding US$13 billion.
6 Mohamed Khachani 2008: Les Marocains dans les pays arabes pétroliers. Publication de l’Association Marocaine

d'Etudes et de Recherches sur les Migrations. Rabat, 2008.

7 Al Khabar Newspaper, 24 February 2007 (In Arabic).

8 Given the difficulty of assessing such transfers, the difference may be significant. Some estimate such remittances to Lebanon to be between 50 per cent and 70 per cent of the total (Barendse et al., 2005).

9 Lebanon has the largest coverage of money transfer centres, where they attract 70 per cent of total remittances.

10 Journal: Développement Durable du 9 mars 2010.

11 The research indicates that 33 per cent of emigrants did not save and that the distribution covers those who did.

12 Al Hayat Newspaper, 18 March 2006 (In Arabic).

13 It has become generally accepted that emigrant remittances are an important means for alleviating poverty. The World Bank estimates that a 10 points increase in GDP through remittances reduces poverty by 1.2 per cent. For example, the State of World Population 2006 report published by the United Nations points out that 60 per cent of the households that escaped the clutches of poverty in Nicaragua during 1998-2001 had at least one member working abroad, and remittances sent to El Salvador, Jamaica, Jordan, and Yemen in 2000 increased the gross national product (GNP) by more than 10 per cent, while 1.2 million Moroccans were able in the same year to clear the poverty threshold relying on remittances. Al Akhbar, Saturday, 13 March 2010 (In Arabic).

14 The French Development Agency established in 2007 a similar website.

CHAPTER V

1 There are many resources on migration and its benefits for the various sending and countries of destination. See appendix 1.

2 Two bibliographic lists follow this section. One lists references on international migration from Lebanon and other Arab countries, the other references on international migration in general.

3 See Elizabeth Longuenesse, Migration from Kafr Rumman to Kuwait, in Migration and Social Change in the Arab Mashreq, (L'émigration de Kfaruman au Kuwait Beirut, in Migrations et Changements Sociaux dans l'Orient Arabe, CERMOC), 1986, p. 56; as well as, Ali Nourredine, Migration in Arabsalim, Doctoral thesis, University of St. Joseph, College of Arts and Humanities, Beirut, 1986 (In Arabic), p. 88; and also in the same context: Wafa'a Shartuni: Migration from Shatoun, M.A. thesis, Institute of Social Sciences, Lebanese University, Rabieh, 1988 (In Arabic); It is also useful to review Ghassan Sheikh Ali, Political Relations in Ansar, South Lebanon, Graduate Diploma from the Institute of Social Sciences, Lebanese University, Beirut, 1983, p. 21 (In Arabic); and Michel Asmar, Beit Chababb youth emigration to Guinea (L'émigration des habitants de Beit Chabab en Guinée), M.A. Dissertation, Institute of Social Sciences, Lebanese University, p. 198; Michel Nancy, Alkaakur in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, an article in Hanun, a Lebanese geography magazine, Issue XVII, 1982-1984, Beirut, Lebanese University, Department of Geography, Faculty of Arts and Humanities (In French).

4 Boutros Labaki, Capitaux d'émigrés et reconstruction du Liban, an article in Le Commerce du Levant, 10 December 1984, Beirut, p. 12.

5 Ibid., p. 13.

6 Ibid.

7 See Beit Chabab youth emigration to Guinea (L'émigration des Habitants de Beit Chabab en Guinée), M.A. Dissertation, Institute of Social Sciences, Lebanese University, pp. 85-86.

8 See, Riyadh Saade, Annual Report on Agriculture in Lebanon (Rapport Annuel sur l'Agriculture Libanaise), several versions (1975-1990), Beirut, Lebanon.

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10 Jacqueline Issa Mansur, Emigration from Zahle, MA in Social Sciences, Institute of Social Sciences, Lebanese University, 1984, p. 33.

11 Interviews with the late Mgr. Zouein (In Arabic).

12 Al-Nahar Newspaper, Beirut, 27 October 1981 (In Arabic).

13 Interview with Rev Anthony Gabriel Vicar of St. Georges Antiochian Orthodox Church in Montreal, August 1987.

14 This information was given to the author by the late Professor Albert Hourani, Oxford, United Kingdom.

15 Al-Nahar Newspaper, Beirut, 23 April 1981 (In Arabic).

16 Interviews by the author with Raymond Abi Rached in Bejdarfel 1993.

17 Interviews with manager of SOS Children Village, in Bhersaf, Lebanon, 2002.

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2 http://cadmus.eui.eu/dspace/handle/1814/13447.

3 http://cadmus.eui.eu/dspace/handle/1814/13454.

4 Jean-Christophe Dumont, "Immigrants From Arab Countries to the OECD: From the Past to the Future", United Nations

Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in the Arab Region, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, Beirut, 15-17 May 2006.

5 Data do not allow distinguishing between those who emigrated to pursue higher or university education and those who emigrated for work. The latter do not necessarily constitute the largest group, since some OECD countries, like the United States, focus on attracting secondary school graduates with certain skills or some years of experience, including graduates of post-secondary middle and technical institutes.

6 This number does not correspond with the actual number of Syrian emigrants worldwide; it takes account only of emigrants to the Americas, the European countries and GCC countries.

7 Walid al-Nouri, The Challenge of Population and Development Strategy in Syria, National Population Conference Working Papers, Damascus, 10-12 November 2001, p. 20.

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16 Ibid., p. 303.

17 Samir Radwan, Labor Migration in the Twenty First Century, International Politics Journal, Issue 165, July 2006, p. 47.

18 For in-depth information: The First National Report on Syrian Population, Syrian Commission for Family Affairs, State Planning Commission, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Damascus, 2008, p. 179.

19 The League of Arab States Secretariat memorandum on Arab brains and on developing a clear policy on absorb highly-qualified Arabs and curb Arab emigration , The Arab Parliament Journal , 22nd year, issue 82, December 2001.

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26 Compare with Population and Development, (ESCWA), op. cit., p. 31.

27 Ibid., pp. 30-31.

28 Ibid., pp. 30-31.

APPENDICES

CHAPTER IV

Remittances of Egyptian emigrants 1977-2009 (Millions of dollars)

1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
928	1 773	2 214	2 696	2 181	2 439	3 666	3 963	3 212	2 506	3 604	3 770	3 293
			1990	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
			4284	4 054	6 104	5 664	3 672	3 226	3 107	3 697	3 370	3 235
			2000	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009[e/]**
			2 852	2 911	2 893	2 961	3 341	5 017	5 330	7 656	8 694	7 800

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Remittances of Jordanian emigrants 1973-2009 (Millions of dollars)

1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
			45	75	167	411	470	521	601
1980	**1981**	**1982**	**1983**	**1984**	**1985**	**1986**	**1987**	**1988**	**1989**
794	1 033	1 082	1 110	1 237	1 022	1 184	938	895	627
1990	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
499	448	844	1 040	1 094	1 441	1 702	1 819	1 624	1 752
2000	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009[e/]**
1 845	2 011	2 135	2 201	2 330	2 500	2 883	3 434	3 794	3 650

Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Remittances of Lebanese emigrants 1990-2009 (Millions of dollars)

1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
1 818	1 895	2 016	2 050	2 165	1 225	1 225	1 225	1 225	1 402
2000	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009[e/]**
1 582	2 307	2 544	4 743	5 591	4 924	5 202	5 769	7 180	7 000

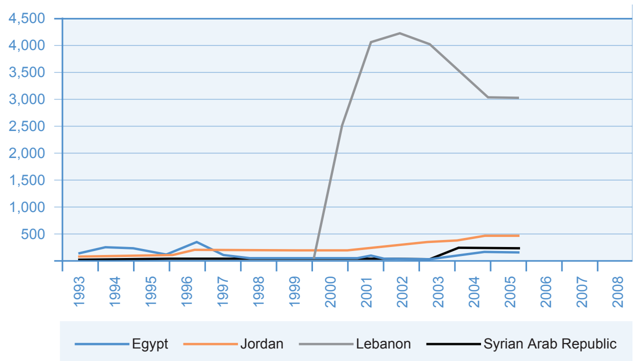
Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Remittances of Syrian emigrants 1977-2009 (Millions of dollars)

1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
92	636	901	774	436	411	387	321	350	323	334	360	430
			1990	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
			385	350	550	352	535	339	313	238	220	198
			2000	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009[e/]**
			180	170	135	889	855	823	795	824	850	827

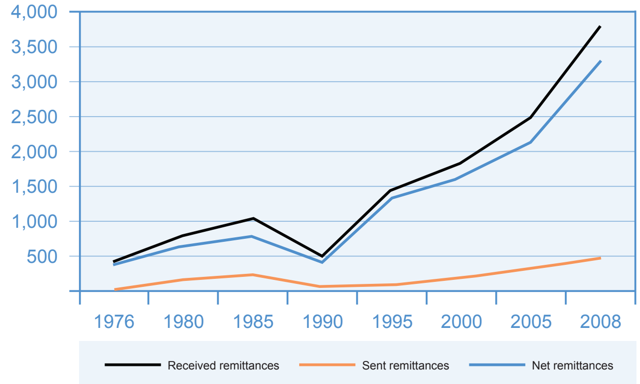
Source: World Bank staff estimates, based on International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Evolution of emigrant remittances in the four countries (US dollar)



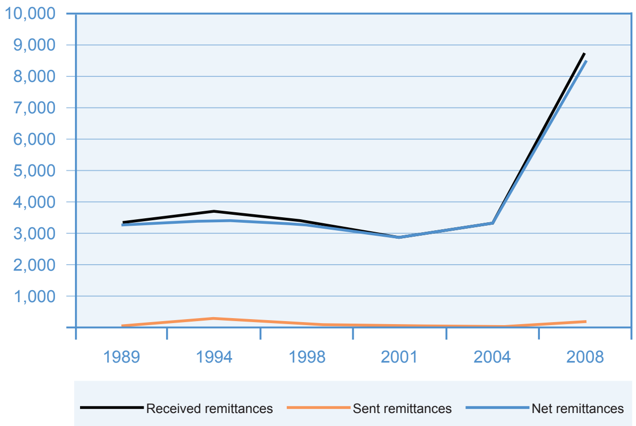
Source: World Bank staff estimates based on the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Sent and received migrant remittances in Jordan (US dollar)



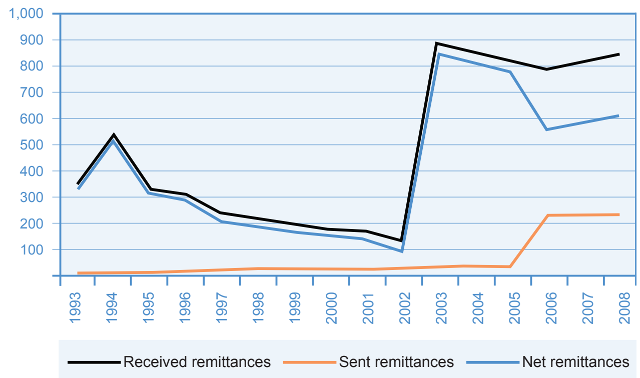
Source: World Bank staff estimates based on the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Sent and received migrant remittances in Egypt (US dollar)



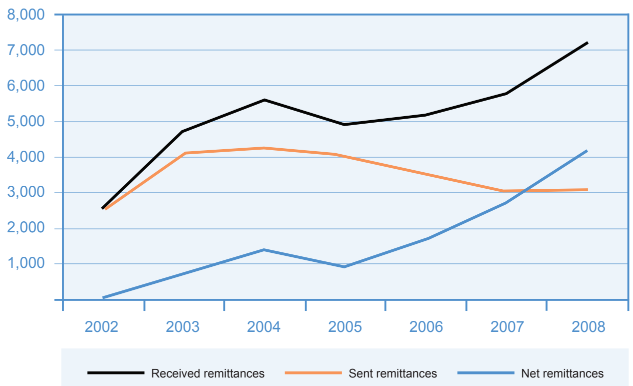
Source: World Bank staff estimates based on the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Sent and received migrant remittances in Syrian Arab Republic (US dollar)



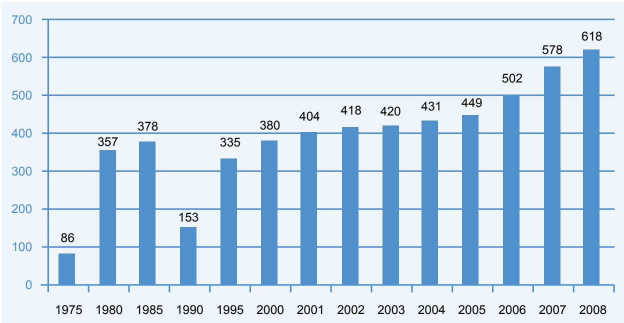
Source: World Bank staff estimates based on the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Sent and received migrant remittances in Lebanon (US dollar)



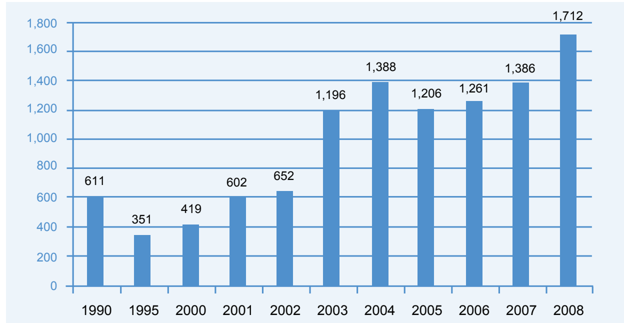
Source: World Bank staff estimates based on the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008.

Per capita official remittances in Jordan 1975-2008 (US dollar)



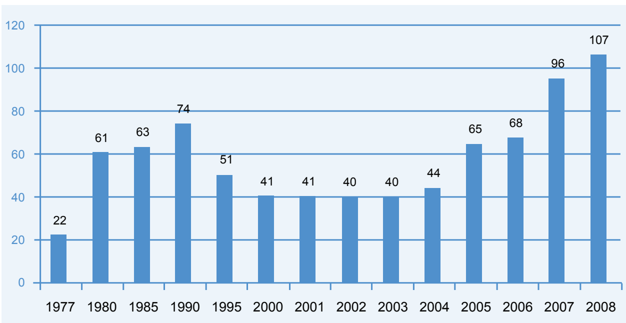
Source: World Bank (2008); and World Population Prospects: the 2008 Revision (Geneva and New York, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2009).

Per capita official remittances in Lebanon 1990-2008 (US dollar)



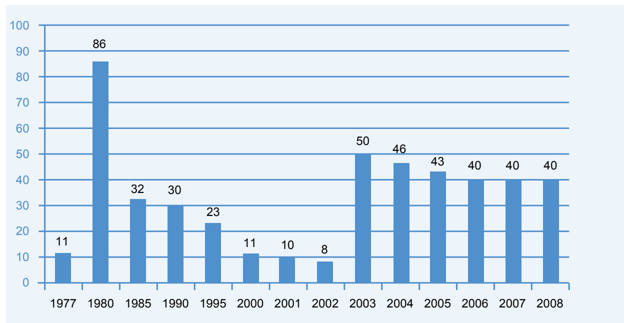
Source: World Bank (2008); and World Population Prospects: the 2008 Revision (Geneva and New York, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2009).

Per capita official remittances in Egypt 1977-2008 (US dollar)



Source: World Bank (2008); and World Population Prospects: the 2008 Revision (Geneva and New York, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2009).

Per capita official remittances in the Syrian Arab Republic 1977-2008 (US dollar)



Source: World Bank (2008); and World Population Prospects: the 2008 Revision (Geneva and New York, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2009).

Ratio of official remittance to external debt (percentage)

	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Egypt	14.1	8.9	13.0	9.6	9.8	10.1	10.7	16.7	18.2	25.1
Jordan	42.5	25.9	6.0	18.8	25.1	26.4	28.9	32.5	36.0	41.0
Lebanon			102.2	41.3	16.1	25.5	25.2	22.0	21.7	23.4
Syrian Arab Republic	21.8	3.2	2.2	1.6	0.8	4.6	4.5	12.6	12.2	

Source: World Bank (2008); and World Population Prospects: the 2008 Revision (Geneva and New York, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2009).

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