The Integration of Migrants in Egypt

Lessons from Research, Stakeholders and International Experiences

MRU
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وحـــدة أبحـــاث الهجـــرة

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MIPEX	Migrant Integration Policy Index
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees

I. INTRODUCTION

All too often a person's home (or identity) is not directly linked to their place of birth. Humans are often faced with choices due to either social or environmental unrest. People move because of political strife, war, uprisings, societal oppression, racial and/or religions discrimination, droughts, desertification, earthquakes and other natural disasters. The Exodus of humanity is gathering pace across the globe, particularly within the Arab region.

Researchers and scholars vie with one another in studying the plight of migrants and refugees. Social sciences focus their attention on studying the dynamics and interactions of the lives of migrants within their new host societies, predominantly in the Global North or in the countries of the Global South, which become the last resort should the migrant's hopes of the host country in the south being a mere transit point on their journey to the north fall through.

This study seeks to uncover the determinants of the lives of migrants from developing countries to similar countries. It aims to answer a number of key questions, including:

- To what extent can the societies of developing countries, with their fragile social structures and ailing economies — such as Egyptian society — absorb such large numbers of migrants and refugees?
- What is the capacity of migrants themselves to integrate into the new society, both culturally and economically, across various sectors?
- What are the general outlines of the Egyptian government's policies towards those arriving in Egypt as migrants and refugees?
- Are there so-called "temporary crisis policies", or do host countries, including Egypt, capitalize on crisis policy decisions to make them part of their long-term public policies on integrating newcomers?
- And is there a specific vision for Egypt's cooperation with international and local organizations on the issue of migrants?

This study, a collaborative endeavour by a distinguished cadre of researchers, brings together the esteemed Cairo University, specifically the Faculty of Economics and Political Science and its promising Migration Research Unit, in a fruitful partnership with the active Cairo Office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The research centres on the migrant community, which has exceeded nine million individuals residing in Egypt as guests and newcomers. The study aims to analyse the extent of migrant integration into Egyptian society through a historical/inductive approach, examining key indicators such as proficiency in the dominant language of the host society, access to the labour market, family reunification, political participation and naturalization to acquire civil rights within the host country — criteria widely recognized in the scholarly literature.

Accordingly, the study is grounded in a comprehensive methodology combining a review of the theoretical literature on migrant integration issues with an examination of successful case studies in the Middle East and North Africa region, with a particular emphasis on models most relevant to the Egyptian context. Methodologically, the analysis is supported by in-depth interviews to analyse the perspectives of civil society organizations and stakeholders, elucidating their perceptions and opinions regarding Egypt's migrant integration policies. Furthermore, the study meticulously observes and analyses the policies, decisions, and procedures implemented by the Government of Egypt concerning migration and asylum.

In light of the foregoing, the study is divided into five fundamental sections. The first section focuses on defining concepts, differentiating between the notions of migrant and refugee, integration and assimilation, and identifying indicators of migrant integration within host societies, in addition to presenting general frameworks for integration policies.

Secondly, the study will delve into the various theories of migrant integration into host societies, with a particular focus on the policy framework approach. It will explore whether a single model can be applied across diverse socioeconomic and cultural contexts.

The third part of the study will examine the experiences of Arab countries in integrating migrants and refugees, using Jordan and Morocco as key case studies to explore their experiences in health, education, social assistance and protection policies, and the labour market.

In the fourth part, the focus shifts to the specific case of Egypt, examining the extent to which migrants enjoy their basic rights to social protection, education, health, and employment. It will also explore the relationship between the State and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the primary challenges affecting Egypt's efforts to absorb migrants and refugees.

The fifth part of the study will examine the visions and roles of civil society organizations in Egypt in completing the cycle of policymaking and evaluation of migration policies. Recognizing the need to distinguish between general state and crisis management policies, the study is committed to academic transparency, information sharing, and research ethics. It aims to direct the attention of researchers, policymakers, and development partners, including civil society organizations and international organizations, towards the understanding that a rigorous study of the situation of migrants and refugees in Egypt is the only way to preserve Egypt's soft power and harmonious relations with the citizens of countries experiencing conflict. Furthermore, it emphasizes the need to incorporate certain crisis management policy decisions into the State's long-term public policies for a more rational approach to calculating the gains and losses for the State in managing migrant integration in Egypt.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY OF MIGRANT INTEGRATION

When examining the theoretical contributions of the social and human sciences regarding migrant integration process into host societies, it is essential to first clarify the meanings and connotations of several key concepts related to the study's subject matter. These include integration, the programmes or policy frameworks associated with migrant integration, the distinction between migration and asylum, and integration indicators.

IOM emphasizes the multifaceted nature of the concept of integration, which is understood differently depending on the country and context. Migrant integration is generally identified as a two-way process of mutual adaptation between the host society and migrants, whether individuals or groups (Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016; Sironi et al., 2019). IOM (2012) further defines successful integration as a dynamic, two-way process involving mutual adaptation between migrants and the host society, based on the principles of protecting fundamental rights, non-discrimination, and achieving long-term (legal) settlement in host societies, which enables them to contribute effectively to the development of both their host countries and their countries of origin. Therefore, this adaptation becomes essential for all participating parties and is not merely a luxury for the host country, even if it is a developing country. Rather, it is a fundamental requirement for achieving an effective and comprehensive approach to managing migration in various contexts, as well as the resulting benefits,

such as strengthening security, achieving economic stability, and social harmony in the host country.

IOM views multicultural integration policies as "A model of integration policies that welcomes the preservation, expression and sometimes even the celebration of cultural diversity. This approach encourages migrants to become full members of society while retaining their cultural identities. It combines the recognition of varied backgrounds, traditions and ways of seeing the world with certain universalist values, such as the rule of law or gender equality, that override cultural differences and guarantee the same rights for all. The integration relationship is then best captured in the image of a mosaic enabling minority ethnic groupings to live side by side with the majority constituency." (Bauloz et al., 2020, p. 342; Sironi et al., 2019, p. 142).

A. Programmes or policy frameworks for migrant integration

Since integration does not occur spontaneously, it is linked to a set of specifically designed policies aimed at facilitating the integration of migrants into host societies. These policies and frameworks consider the rights and obligations of both host societies and migrants, including education for children and adults, health and social services, and access to the labour market.

In this sense, the term integration implies the importance of commitment to and respect for a set of fundamental values between migrants and their host societies to maximize the benefits of migration for all stakeholders. IOM describes comprehensive integration approaches as those that "help ensure that migrants are able to participate fully in the economic, social, political, and cultural life of the host society." These programmes enable migrants to develop their knowledge, skills, experience, and capacities (i.e. their human capital) during their stay in the host country, thereby promoting economic growth in those countries and simultaneously building vital links between their country of origin and the host country.

It is worth noting that integration programmes and related policies are more effective when designed to consider migrants' characteristics (gender, age, education, language and so on), the duration of their stay, and the overall economic and social conditions of the host country. There is no ideal integration programme; rather, each country must develop its own approach that is appropriate to its circumstances and the characteristics of the migrant community residing within it.

In addition, these programmes should include specific strategies to raise awareness among host communities about migrants' positive contributions and the benefits of living and working in multicultural environments. This will reduce misunderstandings among host communities about the presence of migrants, which may hinder the success of any integration programmes or policies.

It is worth noting that implementing migrant integration programmes is not easy, as it intersects with a large and complex number of policies in any country, in the areas of education, health, labour markets, and equal opportunities, as well as domestic policies related to citizenship acquisition, national security, and human rights. Therefore, each host country must determine its migration acceptance policies, starting with the legal status of the migrant and the associated rights and obligations, as well as their ability to access various services. This, in turn, requires coherence and harmony between the policies pursued in countries in these areas, taking into account the process of migrant integration on the one hand, and the basic cost of providing these services and the State's ability to bear these costs on the other, ensuring the preservation of the basic rights of migrants and avoiding harming host communities.

Last but not least, UNHCR (2024) describes integration programmes for resettled refugees as "a mutual, gradual and multi-faceted process, with inter-related legal, socioeconomic and cultural dimensions". Therefore, integration requires a degree of coordination, cooperation, and resource allocation that can be adjusted and adapted to address any gaps or challenges that emerge over time and experience as a result of meeting the population's evolving needs. Although the context differs from the definition provided by IOM, everything contained in the previous definition also applies to the processes of integrating migrants into host societies.

B. The difference between migration and asylum

Initially, it is important to note that the term "migrant" is considered a broad term. There is no specific definition for it in international law, as it is merely a general expression for any individual who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. This term encompasses a number of specific legal categories of persons, including foreign workers, smuggled or irregular migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, and international students. The treatment of these categories differs in terms of legal regulation or lack thereof, as well as the challenges they face, and the interventions required to govern migration processes and maximize benefits for all (Sironi et al., 2019, p. 132).

Therefore, there is no internationally agreed upon definition of the term "migrant." The previous definition is a contribution from IOM for its specific purposes and does not entail conferring or recognizing any new legal description or content. However, it is important to distinguish between two approaches to defining a migrant: The inclusivist approach and the residualist approach (ibid.).

While the inclusivist approach, followed among others by IOM, considers the term "migrant" to be comprehensive, covering all types of human movement, and therefore, according to this concept, international migration includes economic migration, climate migration, movements related to political asylum, and asylum due to wars, unrest, and conflicts, the exclusive approach defines "migrant" more narrowly, excluding those fleeing wars or persecution, as well as refugees and asylum-seekers (Carling, n.d.).

Finally, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) (1998, p. 9) defines an international migrant as "any person who changes his or her country of usual residence" excluding movements across international borders related to recreation, holidays, visits to friends or relatives, business, medical treatment, or religious pilgrimage. It is worth noting that this study will adopt the latter definition of a migrant, which refers to "any person who changes his or her country of usual residence." Thus, it encompasses short-term and long-term migration, regular and irregular migration, labour migration, environmental migration, student migrants, as well as refugees, asylum-seekers, and victims of human trafficking who cross international borders.

C. Indicators for measuring migrant integration

Numerous indicators exist for measuring migrant integration. The IOM *World Migration Report 2020* has identified six key dimensions to consider when measuring the integration of refugees and migrants into host societies: (1) Proficiency in the dominant language of the host society; (2) Education; (3) Labour market inclusion; (4) Family reunification; (5) Political participation; and (6) Naturalization (Bauloz et al., 2020, pp. 190–200).

Two other reports provide additional indicators for measuring migrant integration: the Indicators of Immigrant Integration report of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), developed in partnership with the European Union, and the

Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), produced by the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs and the Migration Policy Group since 2004. The latest MIPEX report, released in 2020, covers 56 countries on all continents (MIPEX, n.d.; Solano and Huddleston, 2020).

The OECD report uses 83 indicators to measure the integration of migrants and their children into societies within the OECD, the European Union and several other countries. The report covers three general groups for measuring integration: Adult migrants, youth with foreign-born parents, and individuals with nationalities from countries outside the OECD and the European Union. It relies on key integration indicators such as integration into education, the standard of living, the labour market, civic participation, and social inclusion (OECD and European Commission, 2023).

The major indicators within the groups branch out into subindicators covering areas such as education, which necessitates proficiency in the host country's language, the educational attainment level of migrants, and the extent to which adults can access education. In health, subindicators include the percentage of individuals in good or better health, those who are overweight, smokers, those reporting unmet medical needs, individuals struggling to afford health-care costs, and the percentage of households that have not used any health care or dental services in the past 12 months.

In the labour market, indicators focus on employment rates among migrants, participation rates, long-term unemployment rates among migrants, the proportion of individuals fearing job loss or inability to find employment, and the proportion of inactive individuals expressing a desire to work. Consideration is also given to the percentage of employed individuals working long hours, part-time, or involuntary part-time jobs, along with the categorization of jobs by contract type, skills required, qualification levels, the proportion of self-employed workers, the share of income derived from a primary client for the self-employed, and company size.

Living standard indicators are divided into average income, income distribution, relative poverty rates, the share of individuals at risk of poverty or social exclusion, home ownership rates, the proportion of tenants paying market rent, tenants paying reduced rent, overcrowding rates, the proportion of substandard housing, the housing cost burden, and the percentage of individuals reporting at least one major issue in their neighbourhoods.

Civic engagement and social integration indicators encompass naturalization rates, national voter participation rates, perceptions in the host State regarding the presence of migrants, perceived economic and cultural impacts of migration, membership rates in voluntary organizations, the percentage of individuals trusting the police, parliament, or legal system, the proportion of those believing migrant integration is very successful or somewhat successful, host community views on the evolution of integration outcomes, perceived social integration factors for successful integration, and discrimination based on race, nationality, or ethnicity (OECD and European Commission, 2023, pp. 41–42).

As for the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), unlike its OECD counterpart which measures levels of integration through indicators, MIPEX represents a valuable tool for assessing the effectiveness of government policies for migrant integration, focusing on the policy making phase not the level of integration itself (Bauloz et al., 2020). MIPEX covers eight policy areas, resembling the six integration areas featured in IOM *World Migration Report 2020*, albeit substituting language proficiency for anti-discrimination measures against migrants and adding education and health sectors. Each policy area of the eight is then categorized into four public policy dimensions, amounting to 32 dimensions, further subdivided into approximately 167 subindicators forming the general index (Klarsfeld et al., 2021).

It is important to conclude this section by highlighting the Egyptian perspective on migrants and refugees, as the official Egyptian discourse employs the term "guests" to refer to regular and irregular migrants, as well as refugees residing in Egypt until they can return to their home countries, clearly implying that their presence in the country is temporary and exceptional. Egypt provides its "guests," particularly regular migrants, with all the basic services and ensures their enjoyment of economic, social, and cultural rights on an equal footing with Egyptians, within its limited resources, as will be detailed in the fourth section of this study.

III. PRINCIPAL THEORIES ABOUT MIGRANTS' INTEGRATION INTO HOST SOCIETIES

The theories presented here provide diverse perspectives for comprehending the intricate dynamics of migration and integration. For the purposes of this discussion, the term "migrants" is employed to encapsulate the impact of integration on both migrants and their identities.

A. The assimilation theory

This theory describes the integration of migrants/refugees as a set of social processes aimed at fully incorporating minorities into the middle class, referred to as upward mobility. It posits that migrants/refugees gradually adopt the cultural norms and behaviours of the host society, leading to the erosion of their original cultural identity. Assimilation is often viewed as a one-way process centred on concepts, such as cultural integration, social mobility, and the melting pot (Zhou, 1997). Thus, this theory emphasizes eliminating cultural differences and the original cultures of migrants within the host society, leaving no room for divergences to surface (Lee, 2009).

However, subsidiary concepts have evolved alongside assimilation theory, presenting alternative frameworks. The first is the spatial assimilation theory which posits that migrants/refugees seek to enhance their social status by relocating to areas inhabited by host society members, where prevailing societal cultures dominate. This relocation facilitates cultural integration (Wen, 2019). The primary factor underpinning this theory is the socioeconomic status of migrants, which may influence their decision to move to new local host communities. Other factors, such as education, language proficiency, and obtaining citizenship, also contribute to bridging the gap between migrants and citizens (Murayama and Nagayasu, 2021). The segmented assimilation theory, the second alternative framework, extends beyond the idea of integrating migrants into the middle class, claiming that migrant integration happens across various societal strata, through three pathways: (1) traditional integration or upward mobility into the middle class; (2) integration into the lower urban class or downward mobility and (3) economic integration as part of the State's economic fabric, while preserving each migrant group's cultural identity (Yu and Greenman, 2005).

B. The social networks and social capital theory

This concept relies on social relationships and shared values between migrants and the host society or among migrant groups themselves. It distinguishes two types of social capital: "bonding social capital", that is formed between homogeneous groups among migrant communities; and "bridging social capital", found between heterogeneous groups, including between different migrant groups or between migrants and the host society. The bridging social capital, in particular, is seen as instrumental in narrowing cultural gaps among these groups (Zhang et al., 2024).

This theory asserts that migrants' networks of social relationships may significantly influence their integration process. In fact, access to resources through these networks would also foster migrants social and economic mobility by reinforcing community support, communication, and resource sharing.

C. The new assimilation theory

This theory prioritizes socioeconomic integration over sociocultural integration. It posits that economic integration is more effective than cultural assimilation, suggesting that socioeconomic integration can create space for cultural distinction, provided it does not hinder daily practices such as religion (Bloemraad et al., 2023). Unlike classical assimilation theory, this new framework diverges in several key areas. It first emphasizes the role of institutions, networks, and economic relations, framing assimilation as a deliberate process guided by formal and informal institutions. Second, it recognizes the necessity for the host society, established migrants, and new arrivals alike to accept the assimilation of newcomers, moving beyond the classical focus on new arrivals alone (Rauhut and Laine, 2023).

D. The integration/mutual accommodation theory

According to this theory, integration is a dynamic process, as stressed by IOM. It necessitates that the host society adapts to newcomers while newcomers respect the host society's culture and traditions (Castles and Miller, 1998). The ultimate goal is to establish common ground and a mutual understanding of the challenges faced by all parties and to identify solutions. This theory underscores the critical role of government institutions in formulating policies that facilitate mutual understanding and prepare the host society to accept and incorporate migrants (Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016).

E. The multiculturalism theory

In contrast to assimilation theory, multiculturalism advocates the coexistence of multiple cultures within a single society. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing and valuing cultural diversity rather than imposing a singular behavioural model. The core concepts of this theory include cultural pluralism, intercultural dialogue, and the "salad bowl" concept (Kymlicka, 2012).

F. The policy framework theory

This theory examines how public policies can facilitate or impede integration programmes, focusing on their development, implementation, and evaluation. It highlights the potential hindrance posed by restrictive frameworks in migration laws and social services. Despite its methodological challenges (Lakhno, 2023), the theory underscores the iterative nature of policymaking, suggesting that policies often require reassessment and adjustment based on their outcomes.

Proponents of this theory argue for a flexible approach to policy frameworks, linking adaptability to the absence of a one-size-fits-all model. Instead, challenges associated with specific policies may be addressed by introducing alternative contexts and frameworks, aiding researchers in understanding effective, systematic, and transparent policymaking processes.

The principles of this theory draw inspiration from Sartori's (1970) contributions to the conceptualization and classification of political systems and Thomas Dye's (1972) definition of policies as "everything governments choose to do or not to do." This perspective posits that not all policies necessitate government decision-making, nor are all policies classified as public policies. For example, a private company deciding to adopt a policy on gender equality and non-discrimination can do so independently of governmental consultation (Elman, 2005).

Nevertheless, non-governmental policies — whether public or private — fall within the analytical purview of this theory. Similarly, Jenkins' (1978) definition of policies as "a set of interrelated decisions made by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them in a specific situation", aligns with this framework, highlighting the interconnectedness of decisions and their broader implications within diverse policy contexts.

Undoubtedly, each of the theories mentioned above offers valuable insights and sheds light on the complexities of integration and the diverse experiences of migrants. These theories provide policymakers striving to establish inclusive societies that respect diversity with a guiding framework to inform their efforts.

G. Integration of migrants in the Global South: The need for different theoretical frameworks

The process of integrating migrants within the Global South has not been sufficiently theorized compared to the dynamics of South-to-North migration. Consequently, understanding how governments in the Global South manage the integration of migrants remains highly challenging. Theories developed in the Global North — such as those on assimilation, multiculturalism, and globalization — often fail to align with the unique conditions and contexts of southern countries. As a result, analyses of integration in the south typically rely on case studies of individual countries' experiences in addressing the challenges posed by integrating refugees and migrants.

According to the 2011 report by OECD, the integration of refugees in southern countries is fundamentally different from that in the north. Governments in the south often pay little attention to refugee integration; in many cases, they actively differentiate between local populations and migrants, creating societal divides between these groups. International reports highlight instances where discrimination against migrants in southern countries has taken precedence over integration efforts. Despite the higher volume and density of South-to-South migration compared to South-to-North migration, countries in the Global South lack a consistent approach to integrating migrants. Frequently, they attempt to isolate unintegrated migrants, leading to the creation of segregated "ghettos" that further deteriorate migrants' living conditions. Nevertheless, host societies in the south are often inherently multicultural, exhibiting diverse identities (OECD, 2011).

Some attribute this exclusion to the fact that many Global South countries, given their deteriorating economic conditions and surplus unemployment, see no benefit in the integration of migrants into the State and society. However, communities frequently interact regardless of official State policies, fostering shared spaces within host societies where migrants can integrate informally. This emerging trend, emphasizing the role of host communities in integrating migrants, represents a departure from the State-centred and institutional approaches prevalent in the north (Abdelhady and Norocel, 2023). In Fact, theories addressing refugee integration in the Global North fall short when applied to understanding the integration of refugees in the Global South. According to the 2011 OECD report, every integration model encounters a limit in comprehending the diverse societies it seeks to address (OECD, 2011).

In fact, the existing literature on migration integration in the Global South remains insufficient to establish robust assumptions, though glimpses into specific regions of the south do offer valuable insights. Cases of migrant integration in the south have shown significant variation, with some adopting clear programs and policies for migrant integration, while others lack such programs. In some instances, discriminatory policies are even implemented, weakening integration opportunities and reinforcing segregation and exclusion of migrants.

One notable example is that middle eastern experience, as observed by Errichiello and Abdelhady (2022), demonstrates that most countries in the region pay little heed to migrant integration. Their policies neither promote pathways to citizenship nor enhance integration initiatives. Instead, they institutionalize segregation, a trend purportedly rooted in the colonial legacy of the Middle East and the Arab World. In Latin America, a similar lack of strategic vision and cohesive political frameworks for integrating migrants into host societies prevails (García-Juan and Güell, 2019).

However, the situation in South-East Asia is comparatively better, with several countries establishing organized migration systems that enable the formulation of policies to integrate migrants economically, socially, and culturally (Rogozhina, 2020). In Africa, legalized discrimination against migrants prevails in several countries. Côte d'Ivoire, for example, has implemented discriminatory policies favouring Ivorian nationals over migrants in employment opportunities. Similarly, Sierra Leone's constitution permits legalized discrimination against non-citizens or non-indigenous residents (OECD, 2011, p. 65).

Thus, it can generally be concluded that the Global South lacks a unified strategy and broad vision for integrating migrants into society. Instead, much of the responsibility depends on high-level collaboration with international organizations such as UNHCR and IOM and other donors that provide funding and assistance in managing migration issues.

In the following section, the study explores migrant integration experience in two Arab countries: Morocco and Jordan. This is then followed by a dedicated section on the Egyptian case. Subsequently, a comparative analysis of the policies adopted in these countries will be conducted to assess their effectiveness in achieving migrant integration into host communities.

IV. MIGRANT INTEGRATION IN THE ARAB WORLD: CASES OF MOROCCO AND JORDAN

To trace the mechanisms and governance of migrant integration policies in the Arab Region — especially in the context of a security-focused approach that primarily perceives migrants and refugees as a national security threat necessitating control and surveillance — it is essential to examine how these countries simultaneously avoid discrimination and safeguard the basic rights of migrants. Morocco and Jordan were chosen for their comparability to Egypt in several aspects, including economic conditions and shared migration challenges of varying degrees, such as irregular migration and pressures on urban infrastructure, public services, labour markets, and social cohesion. However, Morocco and Jordan differ from Egypt regarding the onset of migration waves and their adoption of distinct regulatory frameworks. Additionally, they have successfully utilized international capabilities to address migration challenges effectively. This section explores the unique experiences of Morocco and Jordan in managing waves of migrants and refugees over the years, with the aim of drawing valuable lessons for the Egyptian case.

Country profiles:

1. Morocco: Spanning approximately 500,000 square kilometres, Morocco is home to around 37.7 million people. With a GDP of USD 144.4 billion, its GDP per capita is estimated at USD 3,771.4 and the per capita income stands at USD 3,760.

2. Jordan: With a geographical area of roughly 90,000 square kilometres, Jordan has a population of 11.4 million and a GDP of USD 50.97 billion, yielding a per capita GDP of USD 4,455.5. Meanwhile, its per capita income is USD 4,420.

3. Egypt: The largest of the three, Egypt covers approximately 1 million square kilometres and has a population of about 115 million. Its GDP reached USD 396 billion, translating to a GDP per capita of USD 3,457.5, and its per capita income stands at while its USD 3,840 (World Bank, 2025).

Given the variations in area, population, and overall economic output (measured by GDP), this study relies on per capita GDP and per capita income as indicators of a country's economic performance and the well-being of its population. The two metrics serve as benchmarks for assessing economic strength and average income across the three countries, highlighting their relative parity. The comparable economic performance and living standards of Morocco, Jordan, and Egypt render them suitable cases for analysing how host countries' economic conditions influence their adoption of migrant integration policies, especially that standard of living of host countries is a crucial determinant in shaping their approaches to migrant integration. This section will examine the policies implemented by Morocco and Jordan to accommodate and integrate migrants. The subsequent section will independently address Egypt's approach to managing migrant situations.

A. The Moroccan experience

Statistically speaking, Morocco is a quintessential migration hub, with approximately 3.3 million Moroccans living abroad, constituting 9 per cent of its population. Meanwhile**,** Morocco also serves as a destination for various forms of migration, including labour migration, international students, and transit migrants crossing its territory enroute to Europe. Although transit migrants are fewer in number, they have nonetheless drawn the attention of both Moroccan and European policymakers while also garnering significant media coverage on migration and asylum issues in the country. Furthermore, approximately 102,400 foreigners reside legally in Morocco, representing just 0.3 per cent of the population. However, this figure excludes foreign nationals working under bilateral agreements with Morocco, such as migrants from Tunisia and Senegal.

As for irregular migration, the route to Europe via Morocco's Atlantic coast was dubbed in 2021 as the world's deadliest path among irregular migration routes. Migrants faced violent treatment at the hands of both Moroccan and Spanish forces, including forced deportations, detention, and the ever-present risk of drowning as they attempted to reach European shores. These attempts often included crossings through the land borders between Morocco and Spain at Melilla and Ceuta, the two Spanish exclaves in North Africa that share land borders with Morocco.

For extended periods, Morocco's approach to managing migration flows was characterised by security-based measures. At times, Moroccan authorities sought to accommodate migrants and refugees, while at other times resorting to forced deportations or administrative detention. In December 2014, however, the Moroccan government adopted the National Strategy for Immigration and Asylum, which embraced a clear rights-based approach to migration and asylum issues. This initiative established Morocco as a trailblazer, being the first country in the Middle East and North Africa to develop a strategic framework for addressing migration and asylum matters (Morocco, Ministry of Moroccans Residing Abroad and Migration Affairs, 2014). The strategy provided a comprehensive framework for public and private initiatives and contributions from civil society, operating under a contractual partnership between the State and its national and international partners.

The strategy aimed to address four key challenges related to migration**:**

1. The Humanitarian Challenge – ensuring the protection of human rights, combating discrimination, and fighting human trafficking.

2. The Integration Challenge – facilitating access to health care, education, housing, employment, and social communication.

3. The Foreign Policy and Governance Challenge – promoting shared responsibility, regional and international governance, and enhancing regional and international cooperation.

4. The Economic, Cultural, and Social Challenge – viewing migration as an opportunity for development rather than an obstacle to progress.

This strategic vision branched out into four main objectives: (1) Facilitating the integration of legal migrants; (2) enhancing the legal and regulatory framework; (3) establishing and appropriate institutional framework; and (4) managing migration flow while respecting human rights (ibid.). However, the practical implementation of this "humanitarian policy respectful of human rights" persisted only until 2017. This was due to the re-emergence of security concerns, the reinstatement of border controls, and the use of violence to curb irregular migration. These developments underscore the complexity of migration and mobility issues in Morocco, much like in other North African nations. Coordination with the European Union to mitigate irregular migration across the Mediterranean began through the Mobility Partnership Agreement between Morocco and the European Union, signed on 7 June 2013. This agreement formed part of the European Union's broader strategy to enhance cooperation with North African partners on migration issues. Its primary aim was to foster collaboration between the two parties in migration and mobility matters.

As for refugees and asylum-seekers, estimates by UNHCR in 2024 indicate that approximately 20,000 refugees and asylum-seekers reside in Morocco. Of these, 9,700 hail from diverse nationalities, including the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. Given the limited resources available, support is prioritized for the most vulnerable groups, with the UNHCR assuming responsibility for registration and providing most forms of assistance once individuals are recognized as refugees (Belamine and Lghanadi, 2024). Nonetheless, Moroccan authorities often arrest asylum-seekers and individuals seeking international protection. This is primarily attributed to a lack of understanding of these issues among public officials, further exposing this already vulnerable group to risks such as detention and forced deportation, particularly in Rabat and major urban centres (Lmaizi, 2022, p. 13).

Regarding the legal framework for managing asylum, the legislative environment has also faced significant challenges. Despite the National Human Rights Council's 2013 call for a policy to integrate refugees and their families into health, education, housing, vocational training, and employment, as well as its recommendation to uphold the principle of non-refoulement, progress has been stalled. The Council also advocated for establishing a national legal and institutional framework to regulate refugee status and the conditions for exercising the right to asylum.

These recommendations formed the basis for drafting an asylum law, which the Moroccan Ministry of Justice presented multiple times in different iterations. The most recent was Bill No. 66-17, prepared in 2018. However, it faced stiff resistance from certain government members for various reasons, leading to its obstruction and the failure of its adoption to date. Additionally, several non-governmental organizations criticized the most recent draft for what they described as setbacks compared to earlier versions from 2014–2015 (ibid., p. 16).

Observers have noted that the enactment of an asylum law would help Morocco better monitor entry and residency within its borders (Belamine and Lghanadi, 2024).

In the absence of an enacted asylum law, Morocco's current asylum framework continues to delegate responsibility to the UNHCR, which now oversees the reception of asylum applications and determines refugee status (UNHCR, n.d.a). However, obtaining a refugee certificate from the UNHCR is not the final step for asylum-seekers. Individuals recognized as refugees by the UNHCR must schedule a hearing with the national authority responsible for providing legal and administrative protection to recognized refugees — the Office of Refugees and Stateless Persons under the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This process is required to obtain a national refugee card issued by the Moroccan government, valid for one year.

Consequently, asylum-seekers must undergo another interview before a committee affiliated with the Office to secure recognition of their refugee status by Moroccan authorities. This recognition is essential for obtaining legal protection from arrest campaigns or forced deportation, as Moroccan police generally only acknowledge the refugee card issued by the Office of Refugees and Stateless Persons as proof of refugee status. After receiving the national refugee card, the individual must then apply for a residency permit. This application process requires presenting a certificate of residence, a rental agreement, payment slips, and personal identification documents (ibid.).

a. Social assistance and protection

The legal unit within UNHCR provides legal advice and representation to refugees and asylum-seekers in dealings with authorities, whether in courts or with the police in cases of detention (UNHCR, n.d.b). Notably, UNHCR and its local partners offer specialized legal and medical assistance to women and girls among the refugee population who experience any form of gender-based violence (UNHCR, n.d.c).

Regarding assistance and social protection for irregular migrants (those without legal status), they are not entitled to any rights, guarantees, or benefits. They are excluded from free health-care services and cannot enrol their children in the formal or even informal education system. The growing number of irregular migrants has prompted an acceleration of efforts to propose urgent solutions to improve their conditions. The year 2013 marked a significant shift in Morocco's approach, with the initiation of exceptional operations to regularize the status of irregular foreigners, whether migrants or refugees. On 17 September 2013, the Government of Morocco established a national committee chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. This committee was tasked with regularizing the status of refugees recognized by UNHCR and facilitating their integration. While this exceptional intervention succeeded in regularizing the status of thousands of refugees — allowing them easier access to essential services — it does not negate the pressing need for a comprehensive legal framework to manage refugees effectively. Such a framework is necessary to enhance the sustainability and efficiency of Morocco's asylum policies, a goal that remains unfulfilled (Zaanoun, 2023, pp. 33–34).

The Government of Morocco initiated the establishment of a specialized committee to oversee regularization cases for migrants and review rejected decisions under the supervision of the National Human Rights Council on 6 June 2014. This approach demonstrated significant flexibility to accommodate as many irregular African migrants as possible (Lahlou, 2015), recognizing the importance of migration in shaping Morocco’s relations with African nations and the African Union, paving the way for Morocco’s rejoining the African Union on 30 January 2017 (Zaanoun, 2023).

The exceptional regularization of irregular migrants' status — undertaken in two phases — resulted in the administrative correction of numerous cases. A preliminary plan was launched for those who regularized their status to ensure access to fundamental rights, including education, health care, and employment, for themselves and their families. Furthermore, the Social and Humanitarian Assistance Programme — part of the National Strategy for Immigration and Asylum — distributed clothing, food, and medical supplies and provided legal support to approximately 2,000 migrants.

However, the temporary and circumstantial nature of these exceptional regularization operations negatively impacts the sustainable empowerment of migrants' rights. The Moroccan authorities have not announced any new regularization initiatives, leaving many unable to reconcile their status to access essential services, unlike those who benefited from the 2014 and 2017 operations. Currently, around 7,398 asylum-seekers in Morocco cannot obtain or renew refugee cards (ibid., pp. 34–35).

b. Education

Public schools are obligated to accept migrant children alongside their Moroccan peers, enabling them to benefit from social support programmes such as Tayssir and One Million Schoolbags.[1] Civil society organizations work to overcome administrative barriers, ensuring that migrant children gain access to basic educational services. Additionally, these children benefit from informal programmes to combat illiteracy and reintegrate out-of-school children and youth into the formal education system.

For post-secondary education, migrants and refugees have access to universities and technical higher education institutions upon payment of registration fees. Refugees and migrants with a Moroccan secondary education certificate can enroll directly in universities or higher education institutions. Those who have not earned a Moroccan certificate must follow the procedures to have their foreign secondary education credentials recognized to register at universities or technical schools, with registration fees varying by institution (UNHCR, n.d.d).

c. Health

Morocco ensures migrants' access to the Moroccan health-care system in its various categories. However, a study conducted by Oxfam in Morocco and Handicap International highlighted the inadequacies in addressing the basic health-care needs of migrants in Morocco. The study revealed that key factors impacting the provision of health-care services include the heterogeneity of migrant characteristics, administrative barriers faced by migrants due to their status, social and cultural differences between migrants and health-care workers, and finally, economic challenges due to the low income of most migrants residing or transiting through Morocco (Zoui, 2020).

Since 2013, the Moroccan Ministry of Health has adopted a plan for migrant health, offering support and free care at primary health-care centres, developed in collaboration with IOM (Lmaizi, 2022, p. 18). This was followed by the National Health and Migration Strategy 2021–2025 launch. Despite these initiatives, migrants still face barriers to accessing all tests offered by facilities, health-care units, and district hospitals.[2] Specialized medical consultations are not free, and obtaining them becomes even more difficult when residence permits for

[1] Tayssir Programme is a direct financial support programme for Moroccan families with limited incomes to reduce school dropout rates. It involves providing financial assistance to families with children attending primary and middle school in rural or impoverished areas, provided the child maintains regular school attendance; and One Million School Bags Programme is a national initiative that provides school bags and educational supplies to students in rural and underserved areas. The support is conditional on the children's commitment to regular school attendance.

[2] District hospitals are public health-care institutions located in cities or major urban centres. They are managed by local health authorities under the supervision of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection.

migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers expire. Health services — except for emergencies — require migrants to have a valid residence permit. As for reproductive health, pregnant refugee women receive free prenatal and postnatal consultations, including hospital care during childbirth at public health-care facilities. The Moroccan Association for Family Planning covers childbirth costs and helps parents obtain birth certificates within thirty days of delivery, provided they present the necessary documentation to access medical services and benefit from health coverage (UNHCR, n.d.e; Zaanoun, 2023, p. 35).

d. The labour market

Access to the Moroccan labour market is one of the most formidable challenges confronting migrants and refugees due to the multiplicity of authorities and jurisdictions involved. It is noteworthy that the National Immigration and Asylum Strategy of 2014 undertook to support the employment of foreigners and their integration into the labour market. Over time, efforts evolved, beginning with the abandonment of the principle of national preference in the list of professions outlined by the Moroccan Ministry of Labour in several sectors, such as restaurants, cafes, hair salons, and others, to facilitate the entry of legally residing foreigners into these fields. Employment opportunities for foreigners have further expanded with the regularization of their status, the acquisition or renewal of residence permits, and work permits. Additionally, legally residing migrants have been granted access to training courses offered by the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills and 11 other agencies providing services to legally resident migrants. Furthermore, limited training opportunities have been extended to those in irregular administrative statuses, i.e. those not residing legally in the country (Lmaizi, 2022, pp. 20–21).

It is worth mentioning that the lack of official documentation renders migrants vulnerable to exploitation by employers in various sectors. Consequently, they are often compelled to work under challenging conditions and for meagre wages in fields such as construction, domestic work, or restaurant and café services, as well as other aspects of the informal and unregulated economy. This, in turn, deprives them of all forms of social protection, health insurance, and other benefits accessible through documented contracts for employing regularized foreigners.

In conclusion, it must be highlighted that the gains resulting from the exceptional regularization measures for migrants have led IOM to consider Morocco as pioneering model for the gradual integration of low-income migrants. This initiative has garnered international commendation for its projects aimed at reintegrating migrants into the national economy and ensuring their enjoyment of fundamental human rights (United Nations, 2020, pp. 129–130).

B. The Jordanian experience

Jordan represents a unique model in managing migrants and refugees, with its experience spanning over 70 years of hosting hundreds of thousands of migrants, both voluntarily and forcibly, in successive waves. This began with the *Nakba* (setback) in 1948, followed by the influx of Palestinian refugees after the 1967 war, the migration wave from Iraq after the 2003 occupation, and, most recently, the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis. With a significant number of these migrants remaining in Jordan for extended periods, many have integrated into Jordanian society to varying extents through different mechanisms.

Recalling this reality, alongside the magnitude of successive waves of migration to Jordan — primarily from Syrians since 2011 — one can better understand Jordan's pioneering adoption of a comprehensive approach to addressing the Syrian refugee crisis. This approach combines developmental and humanitarian efforts. Jordan’s long-standing experience in dealing with refugees is further augmented by its early accommodation of large numbers of migrant

workers employed in sectors such as agriculture, construction, and other areas within the informal economy, filling gaps caused by a lack of local workforce interest in these jobs.

Additionally, Jordan's approach to migration has benefited from the expertise of the United Nations. A National Migration Working Group in Jordan was established to coordinate the support provided by the United Nations teams and agencies to the Government of Jordan, non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector, employers' organizations, and trade unions. This coordination ensures the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2018 (United Nations, 2018).

Migration map and policies in Jordan

According to the latest official population census conducted in 2015, Jordanians comprised approximately 69.3 per cent of the kingdom's total population, nearly 50 per cent of whom are originally of Palestinian descent.[3] Syrians accounted for 13.3 per cent, followed by Palestinians and Egyptians, representing 6.7 per cent of the total population, while Iraqis constituted 1.4 per cent. Other nationalities made up 2.6 per cent. It is anticipated that the population will reach 12 million by 2025. A significant demographic and economic threat facing Jordan today lies in the potential relocation of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians residing in the West Bank and Jerusalem who hold either temporary or permanent Jordanian citizenship. Some estimates suggest that this figure could approach one million people.

Should such a relocation occur — whether temporary or permanent — as a result of escalating geopolitical tensions, the ramifications could pose a substantial risk to the Kingdom?[4] By tracking the announced migration and asylum figures, it is evident that Jordan hosted approximately 3.5 million migrants and refugees in 2022, constituting around 31.5 per cent of the kingdom's total population. Of these, over 3 million were refugees and asylum-seekers, representing about 87.3 per cent of the total migrant population in the country.

This section will, therefore, focus primarily on Jordan's policies for integrating and protecting refugees. In fact, successive waves of migration to Jordan have brought numerous political, economic, and social challenges while also serving as catalysts for developmental opportunities. For instance, although migration waves have contributed to the rapid population growth in Jordan, they have also spurred economic growth by integrating migrants into the labour market, especially in sectors less favoured by Jordanian workers.

Despite not being a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, Jordan's long-standing tradition of hosting large numbers of refugees has led to cooperation with UNHCR through a memorandum of understanding signed in 1988. This agreement ensures Jordan's adherence to the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the forced return of refugees or asylum-seekers to countries where their lives or freedom might be at risk. However, in the absence of independent legislation to regulate the treatment of refugees and asylum-seekers, they are subject to the provisions of Law No. 24 of 1973 on Residence and Foreigners' Affairs.

[3] This figure includes Palestinians who acquired Jordanian citizenship following the *Nakba* (setback) of 1948, or more precisely, after the annexation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem to Jordan in 1950, as well as refugees who were displaced to Jordan during and after the 1967 war.

[4] The number of Palestinians residing in the West Bank and Jerusalem who hold temporary Jordanian passports (without a national number) is estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands. The temporary passport serves as a travel document but does not grant its holder full citizenship rights in Jordan, such as the right to work or vote. Conversely, those who hold full Jordanian citizenship and reside in the West Bank are relatively fewer, and their exact numbers remain unclear.

The majority of refugees in Jordan are not traditional refugees but rather Palestinians registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). Most live outside refugee camps, while only about 18 per cent reside in ten camps scattered across Jordanian governorates. These camps are managed by UNRWA, which provides services such as education, health, social security, microfinance, and other essential services. In addition, there are three informal camps where UNRWA does not offer services.

a. Social assistance and protection

UNRWA in Jordan prioritizes addressing the most urgent social and economic needs of the Palestinian refugee community to alleviate poverty, provide aid, empower women and youth, and support individuals with disabilities (UNRWA, n.d.a). Its microfinance services account for 4 per cent of the active market in Jordan, offering loans for education, housing, and small and microenterprise development. These loans are available to both Jordanian citizens and registered Palestinian refugees (UNRWA, n.d.b).

The unprecedented influx of Syrian refugees following the Syrian crisis in late 2011 significantly exacerbated Jordan's refugee challenges, necessitating urgent interventions such as the establishment of shelter camps and mobilization of international humanitarian support. Syrian refugees now form the majority of the 730,000 registered refugees from Iraq, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen, all of whom are under the care of UNHCR alongside Palestinian refugees. Children account for around 50 per cent of the registered refugee population.

UNHCR operates in collaboration with the Jordanian government and a range of national and international partners to provide protection and assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers and the Jordanian host communities impacted by their presence. The agency's activities include helping refugees regularize their status, offering legal aid, and providing financial assistance to the most vulnerable refugees. For example, it regularly delivers cash assistance and livelihood support to over 200,000 refugees living in camps and urban areas.

b. Education

UNHCR, in collaboration with UNRWA, facilitates refugees' access to education. UNRWA operates 169 schools across Jordan, providing basic education services to approximately 121,000 primary and secondary education students. Around 113,000 students follow the Jordanian national curriculum as part of their standard education. Additionally, UNRWA offers refugee students vocational, technical, and higher education opportunities (UNRWA, n.d.c).

c. Health

To enhance health-care provision and foster connections with refugee communities, UNHCR leads various essential health activities and services in Jordan's two largest Syrian refugee camps, Zaatari and Azraq (UNHCR, 2017). UNRWA also operates 24 health-care facilities across Jordan, serving nearly 1.1 million individuals. This figure represents approximately 56 per cent of the refugees registered with UNRWA in Jordan. Among these are a limited number of Palestinian refugees who have not acquired Jordanian citizenship and face obstacles accessing Jordan's public health-care system (UNRWA, n.d.d).

d. The labour market

Jordan's demographic diversity, coupled with its challenging economic conditions, has exerted significant pressure on the labour market. Jordan faces the challenge of managing three distinct labour categories: Jordanians, migrant workers (both regular and irregular), and refugees, most of whom are Syrian. With unemployment rates reaching approximately 21.4 per cent in

the first quarter of 2024 (Al Jazeera News, 2024), the influx of hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees into the labour market has intensified the strain on an economy already burdened by debt and far from achieving optimal employment levels.

Jordan's labour policy aims to balance three conflicting objectives**:**

1. Enhancing employment opportunities for Jordanians.
2. Ensuring decent working conditions for all workers, including migrants.
3. Integrating Syrian refugees into the workforce.

However, most non-Jordanian workers (migrants or refugees) face challenges such as delayed wage payments, unpaid overtime, long and unpredictable working hours, and a reliance on labour-intensive, low-productivity methods. Although Jordan has stringent laws governing migration and work permits, these laws often restrict the rights of migrant workers and refugees. The *kafala* (sponsorship) system places significant control in the hands of sponsors, making it difficult for foreign workers to switch employers. Additionally, the high cost of formalizing economic activities has led to the growth of the informal economy, which employs the majority of foreign workers.

Many foreign workers are deterred from obtaining work permits due to high costs. Some resort to purchasing permits on the black market from Jordanian sponsors without having genuine employment relationships, leaving them to work informally. The primary benefit of a work permit for foreign workers is protection from deportation. However, the sponsor's control over the permit process exposes workers to potential exploitation, such as being coerced into paying bribes to transfer sponsorship.

The continued influx of Syrian refugees has exacerbated social tensions, particularly as they increasingly participate in the informal sector, which has driven wages downward. This wage decline has sparked resentment among Jordanian workers and unemployed youth, who view Syrian refugees as competitors for scarce job opportunities (Razzaz, 2017).

e. The Jordan Compact

Jordan adopted an innovative approach to managing the massive influx of Syrian refugees through the Jordan Compact, an international agreement officially announced in February 2016 during the London Conference. Hosted by Germany, Kuwait, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United Nations, the conference addressed the humanitarian and economic challenges of the Syrian refugee crisis in Jordan. The Jordan Compact exemplified a synergy between international humanitarian and developmental agencies coordinated under Jordan's leadership (Huang and Gough, 2019). It combined long-term humanitarian grants and concessional loans to aid Jordan in coping with the Syrian refugee crisis in exchange for commitments to improve the conditions and integration of Syrian refugees. Key provisions of the Jordan Compact included USD 700 million in annual grants for three years, complemented by concessional loans worth USD 1.9 billion (Barbelet et al., 2018).

Despite the establishment of a three-year timeframe for the implementation of the Jordan Compact and the lack of official reference to its renewal following the completion of its initial term, along with the expiration of some grants and concessional loans that were previously announced as commitments and the extension of others, the principles and commitments outlined in the Compact have continued to regulate the framework of the ongoing relationship between Jordan, donors, and international organizations concerned with supporting Syrian refugees.

f. Challenges and lessons learned from the Jordan Compact experience

Various reports converge on the significant progress made by the Jordan Compact and the implementation of its commitments and pledges in opening a political environment that was increasingly restrictive towards refugees, leading to an increase in the number of Syrians enrolling in Jordanian education, as well as those joining the formal labour market. However, implementation has faced significant challenges that remain unresolved to this day. Therefore, there is a need to assess this Compact and its implementation steps as the first adoption of a new model for integrating migrants that combines humanitarian and developmental funding in order to build on its achievements and learn from the difficulties encountered in planning and executing integration and refugee support policies in similar contexts, including Egypt in light of the ongoing Sudanese crisis, which has led to massive refugee influxes into Egypt. This situation mirrors that of Jordan in the face of the Syrian refugee waves following the outbreak of the Syrian crisis in 2011.

In conclusion, the pledges to integrate Syrian refugees and empower them economically, which were a major component of the Jordan Compact, quickly collided with the harsh reality of the predominance of the informal nature of the Jordanian economy, as well as slow growth rates, a weak foreign investment climate, and high unemployment rates. All these factors, among others, made it even more difficult to offer formal employment to Syrian refugees in Jordan.

The Jordan Compact was followed by what is known as the London Initiative after the expiration of its term, where British Prime Minister Theresa May called for the adoption of the same approach linking humanitarian and developmental support to improve the conditions of refugees, stimulate economic growth, enhance the investment climate, and strengthen the role of the private sector, all to the benefit of both Jordanian society and economy as well as the refugees.

This initiative brought together the Jordanian government, international donors from European countries, the United States, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, private sector representatives, and international organizations and humanitarian support bodies to mobilize both developmental and humanitarian funding to support the integration of refugees as well as bolster the host Jordanian economy and society. It can be said that despite Jordan's experience of a complex context of mixed migration, given that it has historically been a country of destination for migrants and refugees primarily from the Occupied Palestinian Territory and workers from Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as being itself a source country for migration, it presents a unique case in dealing with successive and large waves of migration and asylum.

The international community views the Jordanian approach to handling the refugee issue, in terms of hosting refugees and integrating them into national systems, such as health, education, and the labour market, as successful. It also acknowledges the mobilization of international resources through long-term programmes like the Jordan Compact and the London Initiative, as well as independent agreements and initiatives such as the 2020–2024 agreement with the World Bank and securing financial commitments from the Brussels Conference on Supporting Syrian Refugees (April 2017), the Jordan-European Union Compact (2016–2018), and others (European Commission, n.d.). These have served as exemplary models, enabling Jordan to withstand refugee influxes for about 13 years.

It remains to be said that the situation in Egypt is similar to that of Jordan, yet the response of both countries is different. Both are neighbouring countries to conflict zones (Libya, Occupied Palestinian Territory, and the Sudan in the case of Egypt; Occupied Palestinian Territory and the Syrian Arab Republic in the case of Jordan), and these conflicts have led to

successive waves of forced and voluntary migration, compelling both nations to host hundreds of thousands of refugees, many of whom have settled and integrated into society over the years. The next section delves into Egypt's experience with migration and migrant integration.

V. EGYPTIAN APPROACHES TO MIGRANT INTEGRATION

Egypt is at the heart of the Middle East and North Africa region, making it a primary destination for global migration flows. Throughout history, Egypt has received large numbers of migrants and refugees, and the country continues to play this pivotal role where numerous migration routes intersect. Since ancient times, Egypt has played an important role as a destination for migrants from various origins and cultures. During the Pharaonic era, Egypt was a hub for trade and migration due to its location along the Nile river. Throughout the Islamic and modern eras, Egypt hosted migrant groups from the Levant, North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa, contributing to its diverse cultural and social makeup. In the 20th century, Egypt hosted waves of refugees due to regional conflicts and emerged as a haven during wars and disputes.

The importance of Egypt as a migration destination is attributed to several factors, including its strategic geographical location, its long history of welcoming newcomers, and the existence of social and cultural networks that connect it to many countries. Egypt enjoys a legal framework that governs the status of migrants and refugees, having ratified numerous international human rights treaties. Its new constitution also includes provisions for protecting the rights of all individuals residing on its territory, recognizing the significance of migrants as a workforce and contributors to the economy, and adopting an official rhetoric that emphasizes the necessity of integrating them into Egyptian society. Basic services are provided to all guests of Egypt (regular migrants and refugees), including education, health care, and humanitarian assistance, with the allowance for them to work officially and participate in cultural and social activities in cooperation with international organizations and civil society organizations, within the framework of respecting human rights and combating all forms of discrimination against migrants.

Egypt has ratified numerous international human rights agreements, as well as those related to the regulation of refugee status, such as the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1969 Organization of African Unity Convention that govern various aspects of refugee issues in Africa, along with the 1967 Protocol amending the Refugee Convention. The Egyptian constitution in Article 91 states: "The State may grant the right of political asylum to any foreigner persecuted for defending the interests of peoples, human rights, peace, or justice." In December 2024, the State issued a new law on "Foreign Asylum" to regulate a governing framework for the various rights and obligations of refugees, ensuring the provision of all forms of support and care for those eligible in cooperation with international agencies concerned with refugee affairs.

Despite the importance of Egypt's strategic location and its pivotal role in hosting migrants and refugees throughout history, there is still no comprehensive national strategy to regulate and manage the migration issue. As a result, Egypt continues to face significant challenges in dealing with increasing migration flows, which, in the context of the ongoing economic crisis, exert pressure on infrastructure and services and the provision of basic needs such as housing and food. Security and political challenges also highlight the need for increased investment in these areas to ensure adequate and practical support and integration for migrants and refugees.

According to an IOM report released in July 2022, the number of migrants and refugees in Egypt reached nine million, accounting for 8.7 per cent of the Egyptian population. Of these, 50.4 per cent are male and 49.6 per cent are female. Of this group, 56 per cent reside in five

governorates: Cairo, Giza, Alexandria, Dakahlia, and Damietta. Additionally, 60 per cent of the migrants have lived in Egypt for about 10 years, and 6 per cent have been integrated into Egyptian society for 15 years or more. Furthermore, 37 per cent of them hold stable jobs in established companies. This group of migrants comes from 133 countries, with the largest groups being Libyans, Sudanese, Syrians, and Yemenis. These four nationalities account for 80 per cent of the migrants currently residing there (IOM, 2022).

Regarding refugees, Egypt hosts more than 792,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers from 62 nationalities. As of October 2023, the largest group is Sudanese nationals, followed by Syrians, with smaller numbers from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iraq, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen (UNHCR, n.d.f).

The following outlines the key policies, efforts, and services provided by the Government of Egypt in accordance with the agreements and regulations it adheres to, in collaboration with its local and international partners, for the integration of migrants and refugees across four sectors: social assistance and protection, health, education, and the labour market while highlighting the challenges that migrants and refugees may face in accessing these services.

1. Social assistance and protection

Egyptian governmental institutions, in collaboration with the National Council for Women, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, United Nations agencies, including UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, and international non-governmental organizations such as Save the Children International, provide protection and assistance to migrants and refugees in Egypt.

Civil society organizations such as CARE International, the Egyptian Foundation for Refugee Rights, and Doctors Without Borders also play significant roles in these efforts (UNHCR, 2020). Refugees in Egypt benefit from civil status documentation rights, with assistance of UNHCR legal national partners and structural mechanisms, which include issuing official documents such as birth certificates, guardianship documents, marriage and divorce certificates, death certificates, and more. However, it is important to note that migrants and refugees face similar bureaucratic obstacles encountered by Egyptians, often resulting in delays in the timely and effective issuance of documents.

Other assistance services include facilitating access to health care and education, legal aid, specialized child protection services, support for survivors of gender-based violence, care for persons with disabilities and the elderly, mental health and psychological support for those grappling with displacement challenges, as well as community initiatives aimed at raising awareness and fostering social cohesion. UNHCR, along with its protection partners, also conduct outreach, training, and capacity-building activities for various stakeholders, including prevention initiatives and mobile registration missions in remote areas. The success of these activities relies on the active participation of refugees and asylum-seekers at all stages of planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and refinement.

According to UNHCR, Egypt, as a signatory to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, is bound by Article 9, which acknowledges "the right of everyone to social security, including social insurance." This includes equal social security access for citizens and non-citizens, encompassing refugees, Stateless persons, and asylum-seekers. However, in practice, local Egyptian regulations concerning social assistance often limit the ability of migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers to benefit from these provisions fully.

The key social assistance and protection services include: (1) Financial transfers; (2) social assistance; (3) official document certification; and (4) social insurance. As for the cash transfer system, there are two schemes in Egypt:

1. Takaful programme: This is the primary conditional cash transfer system for families with children.
2. Karama programme: An unconditional cash transfer scheme targeting the elderly, persons with disabilities, and orphans.

The eligibility criteria for both programmes do not specify nationality requirements, as stipulated by Prime Ministerial Decree No. 540/2015. However, the application process often necessitates personal national identification documents, such as birth certificates, and marriage certificates, which are frequently unavailable to many migrants and refugees.

With regard to social assistance, it applies to Egyptian citizens and nationals of countries with reciprocal agreements. It provides monthly or one-off support to vulnerable groups such as families without a male breadwinner, divorced women, the elderly, and orphans. Migrants and refugees may also benefit from emergency assistance in individual cases, provided they present personal national identification or proof of property loss.

The most effective method for foreign residents to access aid, however, is through social assistance programmes delivered by *zakat* institutions,[5] such as the Egyptian House of Zakat under the supervision of Al-Azhar or one of the over 25,000 *zakat* organizations nationwide (Atia, 2011). A recent *fatwa* issued by the Egyptian *Dar al-Ifta* stated that refugees could fall under the categories of "stranded traveller," "poor," and "needy," as outlined in the conditions for *zakat* in the Qur'an (UNHCR, 2021).

Challenges

It is worth noting that the difficulty in accurately identifying migrant populations and the absence of precise data on *zakat* beneficiaries from smaller charitable organizations hinder the organized provision of financial aid. Some studies suggest that approximately 81,000 families benefitted from monthly cash assistance in 2018; however, the data does not confirm whether refugees and migrants were included (Hijazi and Issa, 2018).

Some reports further highlight that migrant workers and refugees faced heightened vulnerability during the COVID-19 lockdowns, with many being pushed out of the labour market. Their limited access to existing social assistance programmes or emergency support measures compounded this, leaving them at greater risk of financial instability and hardship (Centre for Migration and Refugee Studies, 2020; Laessing, 2020).

Article 2 of Law No. 79 of 1975 stipulates that the scope of social insurance in Egypt encompasses employees in both the public and private sectors and citizens of countries with reciprocal treatment agreements. However, the effective coverage of social insurance and national health insurance in Egypt remains limited, with only 45.2 per cent of workers participating in social insurance and 39.3 per cent benefiting from health insurance (CAPMAS, 2020). Within this framework, in cases where a bilateral social insurance treaty exists, the social insurance contributions paid by citizens of the partner country are determined based on the treaty's provisions. As for foreign employees working officially in the private or public sectors without reciprocal agreements, employers must pay 2 per cent of their salaries to cover insurance against work-related injuries (Baker and McKenzie, 2015).

In 2019, the Social Insurance and Pensions Law No. 148/2019 was enacted and came into effect on 1 January 2020, replacing the previous social insurance laws (No. 79/1975, No. 108/1976, No. 50/1978, and No. 112/1980). This law extended coverage to all categories

[5] *Zakat* is an obligatory form of almsgiving in Islam, where eligible Muslims give a fixed portion (usually 2.5%) of their accumulated wealth each year to specified categories of people in need. In Egypt, *zakat* is a private matter in the sense that is not collected by the State or any central agency, but a large number of private organizations collect and distribute *zakat*.

of public and private sector employees, business owners, Egyptians working abroad, informal and irregular workers, and all foreign nationals with regular employment contracts, as specified in Article 3 (Zaghloul, 2020).

One significant amendment concerning migrant workers is expanding social insurance to additional categories within the informal/irregular sector, including domestic workers (Article 2/4). Workers in the informal sector must contribute 9 per cent, while the Public Treasury covers the remaining 12 per cent contribution (Article 19/3). However, the law does not clarify whether this government contribution extends to domestic workers, who are often non-citizens.

Although Egypt is obligated under Article 10 of the International Labour Organization Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention No. 118 to extend social insurance to refugees and Stateless persons without requiring reciprocity, no data is available to confirm whether this obligation has been implemented. Moreover, the proportion of migrant workers benefiting from social insurance cannot be calculated, as the available data is not disaggregated by nationality, as previously mentioned. Nevertheless, the available data indicate that the number of insured workers has increased by 6.4 per cent since 2013 (du Pradel and Youssef, 2015; Roushdy and Selwaness, 2017).

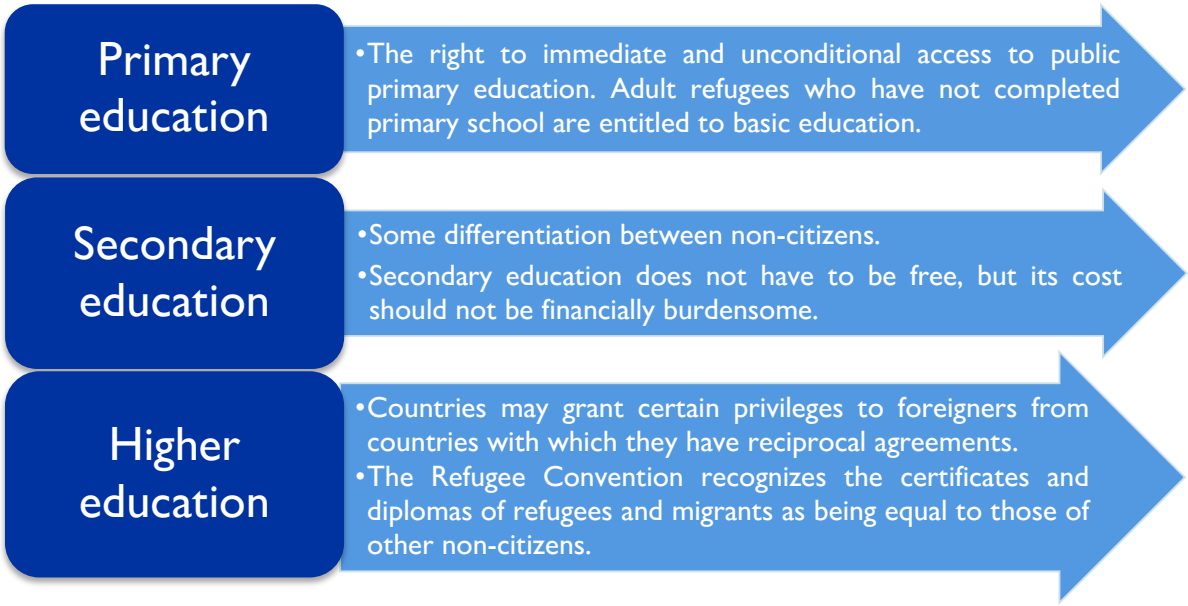
2. Education

Egypt hosts a large group of refugees who require appropriate educational services at all levels due to significant disruptions in their education in their home countries and their displacement to Egypt. In this regard, the Ministries of Education, Higher Education, Youth and Sports, the National Coordinating Committee for Combating Illegal Migration and Human Trafficking, school governing boards, and public and private universities in Egypt work with UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF, and other international organizations as well as civil society organizations (UNHCR, 2020).

Refugees in Egypt enjoy educational rights under the Refugee Convention, international human rights agreements, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention Against Discrimination in Education, and the International Labour and Education Law. These agreements primarily grant rights to children's education, though varying by age. Primary school students are entitled to more comprehensive rights than secondary or university students. Migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers are entitled to access free and compulsory primary education, secondary education, and higher education, with primary education being the only level guaranteed to be free. Secondary and university education may have associated fees, provided that such fees are not exorbitant or discriminatory. The State may differentiate between fees for citizens and non-citizens, provided these policies are not discriminatory based on nationality or other prohibited reasons. However, the agreements allow the State to offer preferential treatment to citizens of countries with special agreements. These agreements also permit countries to request documentation of educational attainment or level placement exams from non-citizens.

Refugees and asylum-seekers who fail to obtain refugee status may receive the same treatment concerning scholarships and academic recognition for the purpose of studying. The law stipulates that all individuals enjoy freedom from discrimination in education, with special educational arrangements required for women, persons with disabilities, detained children, and unaccompanied minors.

Thus, the rights associated with different stages of education can be summarized as follows (Hetaba et al., 2020):



Challenges

Enrolling regular migrants and refugees in any public school in Egypt requires a set of documents that grant exemption from regular tuition fees for international students under Ministerial Decision No. 284/2014. This decision is renewed annually and circulated in all Ministry of Education offices across the country. These documents mainly include a valid residency permit. These foreigners can attend private schools and universities according to the conditions of these institutions, but tuition fees are often very high. The same ministerial decision grants ordinary migrants from the Sudan, Libya, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia who hold valid passports and residency permits access to public schools, though they must pay higher fees than Egyptians.

As for Syrian and Yemeni students, they can attend Egyptian public schools at the same cost and under the same conditions as Egyptian citizens. Additionally, Egyptian law allows citizens of Libya, the Sudan, and Palestinians whose parents worked in Egypt to enroll in public schools, though they are subject to different fees. On the other hand, children of other nationalities do not have access to public schools and often resort to enrolling in community-based schools established by some mosques and churches. Some of these schools follow the Sudanese national curriculum, while others teach in English, which may sometimes not be recognized by the education ministries in their home countries, creating challenges when they return to their countries. This can also result in difficulties advancing beyond primary education, hindering access to higher education.

Furthermore, migrant and refugee children often face challenges accessing these schools, as they may need to use multiple modes of public transportation to reach the nearest community school, which adds a financial burden to already impoverished families.

Although the Government of Egypt has expanded access to education for certain nationalities, such as South Sudanese, Sudanese, and Yemeni children, many families still face significant difficulties in providing the required documents to enroll in public schools, such as valid residency permits, birth certificates, valid passports or national identity documents, school certificates from their country of origin, and letters from the UNHCR. These barriers hinder efforts to provide education for children from incoming families. This situation is compounded

by the overcrowding of public schools with Egyptian children, overcrowded classrooms, a shortage of educational materials, and issues related to the insufficient number of teachers, all of which affect the quality of education and reliance on private tutoring to address gaps in the educational system. Additionally, many refugees face difficulties adapting to the Egyptian dialect and the curricula.

Palestinian, South Sudanese, Sudanese, Syrian, and Yemeni migrants are also treated equally with Egyptians regarding school fees under the aforementioned ministerial decision. This is a temporary measure considering the unstable context in their home countries. Other refugee groups, such as Eritreans, Ethiopians, Iraqis, and Somalis, are allowed to access the private school system, which is under the supervision of the Ministry of Education.

It is worth noting that the Government of Egypt has granted all registered Syrian refugees with UNHCR and other refugees residing in Egypt the freedom to access its public universities on equal terms with citizens due to the Syrian crisis. In January 2016, the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research issued a ministerial decision exempting Syrians who obtained their high school diplomas from an Egyptian school from all tuition fees applied to international students. Syrians holding high school certificates from the Syrian Arab Republic must pay 50 per cent of the tuition fees applied to international students, while Syrians holding high school certificates from any country other than Egypt or the Syrian Arab Republic must pay the regular university tuition fees applied to international students.

During the 2020 and 2021 academic years, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR Egypt Office successfully convinced the Government and the Ministry of Education to abandon the registration rules regarding valid documents and residency permits required for enrollment in public schools. This easing and generous exemption allowed around 45,000 refugee children of school age to enroll in public schools, enabling the registration and continuation of refugee and asylum-seeking children in schools. Nonetheless, key challenges facing migrants and refugees in accessing education remain and include, among others, economic constraints; difficulty in providing required documents; disruption of education due to instability; quality of the educational system; and the need for cultural adjustment to the Egyptian system.

On another note, Egypt's Technical and Vocational Education and Training system is one of the largest vocational training systems in the Middle East and North Africa region. In 2018, more than 2,900 institutions served approximately two million students, offering a wide range of programmes, including pre-university, higher education, and formal and informal education. Generally, the number of migrants and refugees enrolled in technical education remains relatively low, as the vast majority of refugee students prefer to attend general secondary schools in order to qualify for university studies. Additionally, since Arabic is the primary language of instruction, the enrollment of non-Arabic speakers remains low. In 2019, the Ministry of Education published guidelines for international students in collaboration with UNHCR. The term "foreign" is widely used to include various categories of students, including refugee students. A specific section of these guidelines is dedicated to "privileges granted to Syrian refugee students" to facilitate their enrollment. Lastly, it should be mentioned that foreign migrants and refugees in Egypt face the same bureaucratic challenges as Egyptians, including a lack of awareness among administrative staff regarding applicable regulations.

3. Health

The Egyptian Comprehensive Health Insurance Law (No. 2/2018) establishes a mandatory subscription system for all Egyptian citizens (Article 2), with exceptions for approximately 30–35 per cent of the population who cannot afford the costs (Mathauer et al., 2018). Regardless of nationality, formal and public sector employees are automatically covered under

the health insurance scheme, whereby the National Organization for Social Insurance deducts a "sickness insurance" amount from each worker and transfers it monthly to the National Organization for Health Insurance (Article 41). Other groups, such as informal workers and their families, refugees, unregistered migrants, and domestic workers, are required to rely on out-of-pocket payments to cover their health-care expenses.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Population Fund, and the World Health Organization collaborate closely with the Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population, alongside civil society organizations like Caritas Egypt, Refuge Egypt, and Save the Children International, to support refugees and asylum-seekers' access to health-care services in Egypt (UNHCR, 2020).

In this regard, Egypt is committed to a number of international agreements and legislative frameworks governing the integration of migrants and refugees into the health-care sector, including: The 1951 Refugee Convention; ILO 1962 Convention No. 118 on Equality of Treatment (Social Security); The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; The Convention Against Torture; The Convention on the Rights of the Child; The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; and The Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Health and Population and UNHCR in 2016.

Under the above agreements, refugees and asylum-seekers in Egypt enjoy the right to access health-care services on an equal footing with the host community, including primary, secondary, and emergency care. However, due to health-care costs and the limited capacity to provide certain essential health services in public health facilities, UNHCR and its health partners continue supporting vulnerable refugees to supplement primary health-care services and referrals. The basic health rights granted to migrants and refugees are as follows (Hetaba et al., 2020):

- Right to social security.
- Right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.
- Right to access medical services without discrimination.

As for local laws and regulations, the following can be noted:

The Ministry of Health and Population issued Ministerial Decrees No. 217, 337, and 601 of 2012 stipulating those refugees from Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, and Yemen — who represent nearly 85 per cent of registered refugees — should be treated equally with Egyptians in hospitals providing health-care services. In addition, several memoranda of understanding have been signed between the Ministry of Health and Population and the United Nations agencies to promote the integration of refugees and asylum-seekers in national campaigns, including those targeting children under the age of five for polio vaccination, breast cancer screening, and early detection and rehabilitation of hearing impairment, which were rolled out in 1,346 health facilities across Egypt.

Moreover, the National Health Insurance Law No. 2 of 2018, under Article 68 of the Universal Health Insurance System, states that "there is room for consideration of private health insurance programmes covering foreign nationals visiting, working, or residing in Egypt, as well as refugees and asylum-seekers, in consultation with the relevant government agencies (such as the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, and Health)." If this law is applied, migrants and

refugees could benefit from health insurance services through tailored insurance plans designed by the relevant stakeholders.

The Government of Egypt also includes migrants and refugees in national health initiatives and vaccination plans. For example, in March 2019, refugees and migrants of all nationalities were included in the Presidential Initiative "100 Million Healthy Lives" as part of the World Health Organization global action plan to promote healthy living and well-being by accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals toward Universal Health Coverage by 2030. Hepatitis C screening and treatment are part of enhancing Universal Health Coverage. The "100 Million Healthy Lives" initiative is considered one of the largest medical screening campaigns in the world, aiming to eliminate the hepatitis C virus by 2023 and reduce non-communicable diseases.

In fact, data has confirmed an increase in the number of refugee beneficiaries from primary health-care services provided through primary health-care units and centres under the Ministry of Health and Population, rising from 25,000 in 2015 to approximately 100,000 in 2019. This includes reproductive health services, services for children under five, family planning services, health and developmental education, and health awareness programmes to improve the health status of refugee and migrant youth and adolescents through services offered at youth-friendly clinics within primary health-care units.

Additionally, rehabilitation services and prosthetic devices are provided to refugee and migrant students with special needs, alongside the integration of mental health services and preventive care for all residents in Egypt through 4,573 health offices in 27 governorates, offering comprehensive medical screenings upon entry to various educational levels, routine vaccinations, and national vaccination campaigns. Refugees also have access to emergency ambulances and hospital emergency services, with hospital admissions supported by humanitarian partners (Hetaba et al., 2020).

As part of Egypt's migrant and refugee integration policies, a response to the increasing needs of all citizens to combat the COVID-19 pandemic was implemented. The Ministry of Health and Population launched the national COVID-19 vaccination plan in January 2021. This plan aimed to vaccinate every resident in Egypt, including migrants and refugees, through a large-scale national campaign for online registration. In line with IOM Global Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan and the IOM Regional Plan for the Middle East and North Africa, IOM Egypt implemented a coordinated, comprehensive, fair, and timely response plan to halt the spread of COVID-19, mitigate the human and socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic, and prepare communities for long-term recovery (IOM, 2021).

Despite all the efforts and policies implemented by the State, health-care providers in Egypt face increasing challenges due to rising drug prices and hospital care costs. In this regard, all the objectives outlined in this response plan aim to enable refugees, asylum-seekers, and affected communities to access cost-effective primary health-care services related to child and adolescent health, reproductive and mental health care, as well as chronic diseases, emergencies, and referral care management. These activities included in the plan would reduce the basic health-care costs for refugees and asylum-seekers while promoting healthy living and well-being.

Thus, while the law theoretically grants migrants and refugees the right to health, the issue often lies in the lack of implementation and accessibility. In general, three main factors hinder individuals from enjoying their rights: first, when the State lacks the necessary resources to provide services that citizens and migrants can access; second, when there is an abundance of laws and regulations that require review and coordination with one another, making it

difficult for officials to determine which law applies; and third, the absence of accurate data and the geographical distribution of foreign residents benefiting from services.

4. The labour market

Egypt is committed to several international conventions, including the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families, ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age for Employment, and ILO Convention No. 182 on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Egypt also adheres to agreements that outline policies for integrating migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers, addressing their right to fair and favourable working conditions and the freedom to form associations. Additionally, Egypt is a signatory to several bilateral agreements, such as the Freedom of Movement, Residence, Work, and Ownership Agreement between Egypt and the Sudan (the "Four Freedoms Agreement"), the agreement between Egypt and Greece to enhance cooperation in labour matters, and the agreement between Egypt and Jordan concerning workforce cooperation.

At the regional level, Egypt adheres to human rights principles for asylum-seekers, including those who fail to obtain refugee status. Under the African Charter, everyone is granted the right to work under fair and favourable conditions, including equal pay for equal work. However, the African Charter does not explicitly guarantee the right to work but ensures equal access to the labour market without discrimination, guaranteeing certain rights and protection from exploitation and unfair labour practices for those employed.

Despite these conventions, international migrants in Egypt, especially those of working age, face significant difficulties integrating into the labour market. According to a 2021 UNICEF report (Andrade et al., 2021), numerous challenges exist in the practical application of national laws and regulations governing the labour market. Laws and regulations governing the labour market in Egypt include:

- The 2014 Egyptian Constitution
- Labour Law (No. 12 of 2003)
- Minister of Manpower and Immigration Decision No. 305 of 2015 regarding the procedures for work permits for foreigners
- Minister of Manpower and Immigration Decision No. 485 of 2010 regarding the procedures for work permits for foreigners
- Law No. 159 of 1981 concerning joint-stock companies and limited liability companies
- Investor's Guide - Obtaining residency for non-Egyptians
- Investment Law No. 72 of 2017, and its Executive Regulations
- The Labour Unions Law No. 213 of 2017

In fact, the Egyptian Labour Law stipulates that the conditions for employing foreigners in all sectors are subject to the principle of reciprocity with the countries from which the migrants have originated. Therefore, the conditions for foreign workers in Egypt may vary depending on the regulations in their country of origin.

The key rights related to work include the following:

Right to fair and adequate working conditions	Right to join and form trade unions	Right to freedom from discriminatory exclusion from work	Right to protection from forced labour

Generally, the Egyptian Labour Law includes detailed regulations and requirements that foreigners must fulfil to access the labour market. However, certain ministerial decrees and laws exempt certain nationalities, such as Greeks, Italians, Lebanese, Palestinians, and Sudanese, from some of these requirements. Nonetheless, some provisions of Egyptian legislations impose a range of restrictions on migrant workers, limiting their opportunities for securing decent jobs. For example, according to Law No. 159 of 1981 and its amendments, the proportion of foreign workers in the official workforce should not exceed 10 per cent, which forces many migrants to work in the informal sector, such as in restaurants, tourist resorts, and retail shops. This deprives the State of potential social insurance fees, permit fees, and taxes on earned income that could be collected from the business owner, even though such collections may require a number of complex and costly procedures.

In the past two decades, five ministerial decrees concerning the licensing of foreign workers have been issued, which exempt Palestinians, refugees, and Stateless individuals from some procedures, such as the work permit requirement and the cost of obtaining a work permit. Although Ministerial Decree No. 160 of 2019 did not mention or refer to these exemptions (Hetaba et al., 2020), recent studies have confirmed that a number of refugees have successfully obtained work permits under these exceptions. The facilitation introduced by the latest decree includes allowing foreigners without a work permit to obtain one retroactively, provided they pay a sum of USD 955 for each year they worked without a permit (Article 11) after submitting to the competent authorities a list of documents (passport, nationality, and date of entry into the country) (Article 15).

From the previous presentation of the efforts made by the State in cooperation with various partners to integrate migrants and refugees into different sectors, three main challenges that may affect the effectiveness of these efforts and thus hinder the desired integration can be identified and summarized as follows:

Table 1. Challenges to migrants integration in Egypt

Failure to integrate Internationally recognized rights in corresponding domestic legislation	Lack of clarity in domestic legislation	Shortage of resources
The lack of comprehensiveness in domestic legislation.	Confusion in this manner of application.	The inability to implement ideal international standards.
The lack of awareness among government officials.	The lack of awareness among rights holders to claim their rights.	The quality of the economic and social rights provided.

Based on the previous analysis, which reviewed three Arab experiences — Morocco, Jordan and Egypt — in integrating migrants and refugees into various sectors, the key findings reached in this regard can be summarized in the following table.

Table 2. Integration policies in Morocco, Jordan and Egypt

Sector	Morocco	Jordan	Egypt
Social assistance and protection	• Launching strategies to regularize the status of migrants (2014–2017). • Providing legal protection for migrants. • Supporting irregular migrants with temporary residency cards. • Cooperation with international organizations such as UNHCR.	• Providing direct financial support to the most vulnerable refugees through UNHCR. • State supervision of camps and provision of support in cooperation with international donors under the Jordan Compact Framework.	• Partial protection for migrants with a focus on the role of civil society. • Cooperation with UNHCR to provide legal protection and security handling of irregular migration without a specific strategy for integrating migrants.
Education	• Provision of public education for migrants after 2013. • Supporting migrants through civil society organizations and the UNHCR. • Administrative obstacles hindering some migrants' access to formal education and limited higher education available only after the equivalence of qualifications.	• Including refugees within the formal education system. • Providing free or subsidized education in camps. • Direct support for refugee children through programmes such as education in emergencies.	• Limited integration of migrants into public education. • Providing support through UNHCR and civil society, with a greater focus on primary education and the absence of clear policies for higher education.
Health	• Providing free primary health services at public health centres. • Special programmes such as the Medical Assistance Scheme for the Economically Disadvantaged (RAMED). • Cooperation with associations to provide treatment for migrants, with obstacles in accessing specialized health services or in cases of not possessing official documents.	• Comprehensive health coverage in camps and urban areas in cooperation with UNHCR. • Providing direct medical support for children and pregnant women. • Utilizing international funding to expand health services for refugees.	• Providing primary health care in cooperation with international organizations. • Focusing only on emergency services, with the absence of long-term policies to ensure regular access to health-care services.
Labour market	• Allowing migrants who have regularized their status to enter the labour market. • Efforts to train migrants in high-demand professions, challenges related to the renewal of work and residency permits, and increased exploitation of irregular migrants.	• Issuing work permits for Syrian refugees in specific sectors under the Jordan Compact. • Employment support programmes in cooperation with the United Nations agencies, but the restrictions imposed reduce the number of beneficiaries compared to the need.	• Limited access for migrants to the labour market, with a focus on the informal sectors. • Control over the movement of foreign labour with no flexible legal framework to support migrant employment.

Note: The table is prepared by the Research Team.

VI. STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVES ON MIGRANT INTEGRATION IN EGYPT

This study section is based on gathering many views and opinions about migrants' integration. Some in-depth interviews have been conducted with the main stakeholders, including government bodies, civil society organizations, and international institutions concerned with migration and asylum issues. The aim is to understand the perspectives and roles played by these institutions and organizations. To achieve this, in-depth interview guides were designed for government institutions, civil society organizations, and international organizations. Additionally, a questionnaire was also designed in Arabic, targeting focus groups of Arabic-speaking foreigners, and was translated into English and French to include a larger number of nationalities present in Egypt.

It must be said that the term "migrant integration" in the Egyptian context refers to ensuring a safe and stable living environment for migrants in Egypt through their enjoyment of basic rights such as social protection, education, and health until conditions stabilize in their home country, allowing them to return, or until their resettlement efforts in a third country via UNHCR are successful. As clarified before, the term "migrant" in this study also includes refugees. This section discusses four main issues:

1. The Egyptian government's orientation and role regarding migrant integration.
2. The perspectives and roles of international organizations.
3. The perspectives and roles of civil society organizations.
4. Analysis of the questionnaire.

1. The Egyptian government's orientations and roles

The Government of Egypt is concerned about the issue of migrants and their successful integration into host communities. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Immigration and Egyptian Expatriates Affairs coordinates between international organizations and other stakeholders involved in migration policies, acting as the main communication channel between the migrant community in Egypt. Due to the importance of monitoring the situation of migrants and refugees, who are referred to as "guests" in Egypt, the National Coordinating Committee for Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons was established in 2017. It reports directly to the Prime Minister and consists of representatives from all relevant Egyptian ministries, institutions, and bodies concerning migrant issues in Egypt. Its role is to serve as an advisory reference for all national bodies and coordinate State policies and action plans at the national and international levels.

Therefore, it was crucial to meet with Ambassador Naela Gabr, the head of the National Coordinating Committee for Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons, who clarified Egypt's approach to welcoming migrants and refugees. She explained Egypt's commitment to accepting migrants and refugees without imposing restrictions on them and allowing them to reside legally. Egypt does not adopt a policy of isolating migrants and refugees in specific areas or camps; on the contrary, it allows them to live among Egyptians. She emphasized that many ministerial decisions and developmental interventions enable migrants and refugees to access basic services to ensure they enjoy educational, health, and other services despite the high costs Egypt incurs in this regard.

Ambassador Gabr noted the increasing numbers of migrants and refugees in Egypt in recent years due to the tensions and ongoing civil conflicts in many Arab and African countries. Egypt has no longer been just a transit country as in the past; it has become a destination for migration and permanent residence, particularly for neighbouring countries, reflecting significant changes in migration dynamics, especially in the Arab region. She pointed out that this shift in migration flows has had a significant impact on the Egyptian labour market, especially in the informal sector, where migrants are competing for employment opportunities. Despite this, Egypt still offers good job opportunities, if applicants meet the requirements set by the Egyptian labour market.

She further explained that skills need to be improved, and the local labour market met to provide equal employment opportunities for all youth, whether they are Egyptian citizens or migrants. In addition, Egypt has always welcomed its "guests" until stability is restored in their home countries, allowing them to return. Ambassador Gabr affirmed that Egypt is not a country of resettlement but provides all means for integrating migrants into the host society so that they do not feel alienated or discriminated against.

Legal status of migrants in Egypt

In the context of the economic and security challenges resulting from the influx of migrants, Ambassador Naela Gabr explained that Egypt deals with migrants differently based on their legal status. Migrants with legal status, such as Syrian refugees, can buy property and work formally, while irregular migrants are employed in the informal sector. She pointed out that the increase in the number of migrants places pressure on Egypt's economic resources, basic and social services, and security systems, making it difficult to provide the necessary protection for all these migrants, especially those who do not regularize their status. This is particularly challenging given the country's current humanitarian and economic difficulties.

Migrants and international assistance

Ambassador Gabr highlighted that the ongoing Sudanese crisis has resulted in Egypt receiving nearly half a million Sudanese migrants, adding to the 9 million foreigners already residing in Egypt. This, in turn, exacerbates the challenges the government faces in providing services to these "guests," especially since Egypt is reevaluating many subsidised goods, such as bread and petroleum products, due to its economic crisis. Therefore, Gabr emphasized the importance of international support and donor assistance to help Egypt manage these humanitarian operations and provide services in a suitable manner, in addition to assisting with international efforts to prevent irregular migration to European countries.

2. Roles of international organizations

Regarding the estimation of migrant numbers in Egypt, based on estimates from international organizations working in the country, the study adopted the term "migrants" as a practical concept to refer to anyone who has arrived in Egypt, whether voluntarily or forcibly, due to life-threatening circumstances in their country of origin. This encompasses both migrants and refugees, though some representatives of international organizations interviewed preferred distinguishing between these two terms based on their area of focus.

In-depth interviews were conducted with representatives from three international organizations primarily involved in migration and refugee issues in Egypt, namely the Cairo offices of IOM, UNHCR, and UNICEF. All three organizations agreed that estimates of around 9 million migrants had been reported for many years, and the Government of Egypt had also publicly announced this. However, the ongoing conflict in the Sudan has led to an influx of more than 1 million migrants, raising initial estimates to over 10 million. However, not all these migrants require assistance.

IOM provides various types of support, including resettlement and housing for refugees in collaboration with UNHCR. It also offers cash and medical aid, contributes to educational expenses, and provides food assistance. Additionally, IOM is involved in voluntary return programmes for migrants wishing to return to their home countries. IOM typically coordinates with other organizations according to their areas of expertise and needs.

UNHCR representatives emphasized the importance of distinguishing between migrants and refugees to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges involved and to identify the specific needs. They highlighted the lack of accurate data on the number of migrants in Egypt, which requires cooperation between UNHCR and the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) to conduct a migrant survey in Egypt and collect comprehensive demographic, economic, and social data on refugees. As of 3 December 2023, there were 857,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers, most of whom are from Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, and Yemen. UNHCR collaborates with CAPMAS to develop a joint action plan for integrating migrants in collaboration with other relevant organizations. UNHCR provides services such as registration and documentation, refugee status determination, housing assistance, protection, and access to health and educational services. They also work on programmes to enhance refugees' ability to access the labour market, but their services are limited to registered refugees and asylum-seekers requesting international protection.

Representatives from UNICEF confirmed their collaboration with CAPMAS to include migrants in future income and expenditure surveys rather than limiting the research to Egyptians. This survey is considered a significant step towards migrant integration, as it will collect clear data on their needs, providing a scientific basis for policy formulation and program development by international organizations. UNICEF emphasized that the survey

would enhance the government's ability to provide services more effectively rather than creating parallel systems. This approach ensures sustainability in addressing migrants' needs.

Additionally, UNICEF representatives is focused on supporting governmental systems for service delivery and improving infrastructure, particularly water and sanitation in educational and health facilities. The Organization has also worked closely with the ministries of Education and Health to ensure that migrants, especially vulnerable groups like unaccompanied children, receive urgent services such as cash assistance and medical care.

UNICEF representatives also emphasized its commitment to social cohesion and integration by adopting inclusive policies and programmes that facilitate greater acceptance of migrants in host communities. It conducted a field study on Sudanese migrants, focusing on their needs, particularly children's access to education and health care.

Regarding the differences in services provided to migrants and refugees, UNICEF representatives noted that legal status distinctions often dictate the type of aid provided. Refugees fleeing persecution often arrive in Egypt in dire humanitarian conditions, requiring immediate emergency assistance (cash, shelter, and health care), while voluntary migrants may be in better circumstances and require different types of support. UNICEF collaborates with the Government of Egypt to help migrants access educational and health-care services once their conditions stabilize.

Regarding the collaboration between organizations and the Government of Egypt, IOM representatives confirmed its cooperation with several Egyptian ministries to provide comprehensive services for migrants and host communities, particularly those affected by the Sudanese crisis. Their services include helping migrants access basic services, providing humanitarian aid, improving migration governance, and ensuring migrant protection. IOM collaborates with numerous other organizations, such as the UNHCR, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, and the Red Cross.

UNHCR representatives highlighted its ongoing collaboration with several Egyptian ministries to assist refugees and host communities. This includes cooperation with the Ministry of Education to integrate refugee children into schools, provide educational grants, and ensure refugee access to health services through the Ministry of Health. UNHCR also works with the Ministry of Social Solidarity to provide social services to refugees, including job opportunities and income generation. Additionally, they collaborate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to mobilize international support and the Ministry of Youth and Sports to integrate refugees into youth and sports activities.

UNICEF representatives confirmed partnerships with various Egyptian ministries, including Education, Health, Supply, Social Solidarity, and Foreign Affairs, to facilitate service provision. UNICEF and the Ministry of Education work together to improve refugee children's school access. They have also focused on enhancing school infrastructure, particularly water and sanitation, to accommodate more students and training teachers to support migrant students better. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, UNICEF has worked on improving health-care infrastructure in areas with high concentrations of migrants, such as Aswan, and provided vaccination campaigns and emergency medical supplies. In partnership with the World Food Programme, UNICEF also worked with the Ministry of Supply to distribute food packages to the most vulnerable refugees. Regarding the Ministry of Social Solidarity, UNICEF has helped implement social welfare programmes and provided emergency cash transfers. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has played a crucial role in coordinating international efforts to ensure funding for migrant protection.

For the question on access to information, that is how migrants are informed about the services provided, IOM representatives highlighted direct communication mechanisms with migrants through direct cooperation with civil society organizations, while representatives of UNHCR emphasized the role of orientation sessions, the UNHCR's website, and direct contact as important means of disseminating information about the services offered, and UNICEF representatives referred to their role through migrant networks and groups, in cooperation with civil society organizations, to inform newcomers about available services and how to access them, in addition to telephone surveys and discussion groups conducted by UNICEF.

Representatives of the three organizations agreed that the largest group of migrants arriving in Egypt in the past six months are Sudanese fleeing the conflict in the Sudan, particularly families who have been forcibly displaced, as well as young children and unaccompanied minors, alongside Palestinians fleeing Gaza. These groups primarily focus on urgent aid such as cash transfers, medical assistance, and shelter.

For the question of the challenges of migrants' integration:

- IOM confirmed that challenges arise, particularly in employment for those without a work permit.
- UNHCR agreed and added that access to higher education is difficult due to high tuition fees, the high cost of health-care services for refugees, and the lack of stable sources of income.
- UNICEF representatives pointed out the economic crisis in Egypt, which affects everyone but is felt more by migrants, as they are blamed for the rise in the cost of basic goods and rental prices and competing with Egyptians for available job opportunities. They also noted that the length of registration procedures with UNHCR and the subsequent lack of official documentation prevent refugees from accessing health and education services provided by the Government. UNICEF's discussion groups revealed misunderstandings and underlying tensions between host communities, particularly Egyptian citizens and migrants, due to cultural challenges.

For the question of discriminatory practices against migrants, the three organizations indicated that this issue is a grievance everywhere in the world and confirmed:

- IOM has not received any complaints in this regard.
- UNHCR noted that it had received some complaints, either of social exclusion or denial of access to basic services.
- UNICEF confirmed that the Egyptian government's stance is tolerant and that some discriminatory practices stem from the ongoing economic crisis in Egyptian society, which leads Egyptians to blame migrants. However, it must be stressed that the general trend among Egyptians is welcoming migrants, with only isolated instances of discrimination. Furthermore, migrants also face discriminatory practices when requesting essential services.

In light of the lack of accurate information on the geographical distribution of migrants, the question was raised about any knowledge international organizations have regarding areas of concentration for migrants. Responses ranged from general to detailed, with all three organizations confirming that civil society provides a wealth of information about migrants, particularly vulnerable and unregistered groups that need immediate and urgent support. They also emphasized the need for a unified database on migrants and their geographical distribution to facilitate coordination between government agencies and international organizations.

- IOM representatives pointed to its close cooperation with many civil society organizations to reach migrants at their places of residence, such as "Shahab" and "Tadamun," while stressing the need for measures to strengthen migrant integration into the local economy. There is also a crucial need to provide additional funding for the Egyptian economy in order to accommodate the situation of migrants.
- UNHCR representatives confirmed that the majority of refugees are concentrated in Greater Cairo and Alexandria, with an emphasis on the need to provide job opportunities, improve migrants' economic situation, enhance access to social services, and make greater efforts to achieve social cohesion within host communities.
- UNICEF representatives pointed out that Sudanese migrants are concentrated in Aswan, Faisal, Al-Haram, and 6th of October City, while affluent Syrians are found in Al-Rehab and Madinaty. They stressed the necessity of a multifaceted approach to implementing an inclusive policy and conducting field surveys to accurately identify the number of migrants, their demographic, economic, and social characteristics, and their needs.

Finally, one of the key issues for integration that must be addressed is supporting social cohesion through awareness campaigns that foster mutual understanding between migrants and Egyptians and strengthening cooperation between the Government, international organizations, and civil society organizations. IOM representatives highlighted challenges related to cultural differences, which create barriers between migrants and host communities. At the same time, UNHCR and UNICEF representatives emphasized the importance of ensuring access to basic services and sources of income.

3. Perspectives and roles of civil society organizations

Civil society plays a significant role in many social issues, responding clearly to the changes and challenges faced by Egypt. The issue of migration to Egypt, whether as a migrant or a refugee, has attracted the attention of several civil society organizations. Indeed, a number of initiatives have been adopted to support and assist migrants and refugees.

An in-depth interview guide was applied with three civil society organizations actively engaged in providing services to migrants and refugees, namely:

- Future Women Association: Established in 1996 in the Western Monira district in Imbaba, an area classified as one of the slums. The association aims to provide a range of social, cultural, and economic services to the residents of Western Monira, who suffer from poverty and a significant decline in their quality of life. The association later expanded its activities to other areas. The association's vision is to build a happy family, a healthy environment, and a better society. Its mission involves implementing social, cultural, educational, environmental, and health programmes and projects serving women, children, and youth based on the principle of self-reliance using community power and social capital to address societal issues. It operates on the principles of volunteerism and community participation from all segments of society, utilizing available resources to achieve comprehensive development. The association works in various fields, including (social aid and services, educational services, environmental protection and conservation, human rights, social protection, health services, care for special groups and the disabled, care for prisoners and their families, child and maternal care, training, and scientific research).
- Caritas Association: Established in 1967, it operates in various fields, including child protection and care, empowering women and youth, disability, integration, rehabilitation, micro-lending and economic empowerment, refugee and migrant issues, support for vulnerable and marginalized groups, and combating discrimination. The association targets a variety of groups: street children, children before official school

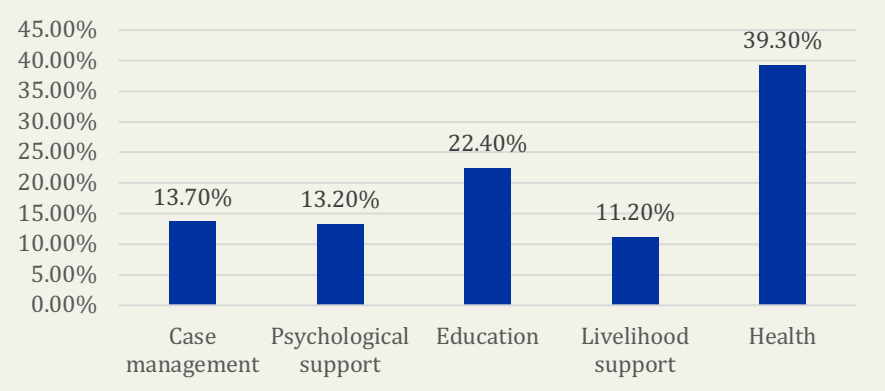
age, women and girls in poor and marginalized communities, especially in Upper Egypt and the Delta, people with disabilities and their families, youth in both university and pre-university education, small and micro-entrepreneurs, refugees and migrants, individuals recovering from addiction, and the poorest families.

- Isnad Association: A newly established association that began as an initiative to help Sudanese refugees under the umbrella of the Arab League. It was founded in the wake of the outbreak of war in the Sudan on 15 April 2024, with the aim of providing urgent humanitarian assistance to Sudanese individuals affected by the war who have been displaced to Egypt. It was later registered as a civil society organization under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Solidarity, focusing its efforts on serving Sudanese refugees. The association has a board of directors that includes Egyptian and Sudanese figures.

a. Services provided by the civil associations under study to migrants and refugees and the geographic scope of services

The Future Women Association runs the "Opportunity for a New Beginning" project, which is aimed at serving refugees and migrants in Egypt, with support from Save the Children. Through this project, the association provides a wide range of services to the refugee community in Egypt, including educational services, health care, psychological support, cash assistance, and medical assistance. The type of service is determined based on an assessment form, which is used to identify the specific service to be provided. The majority of the children and their families receiving services are Sudanese, Eritrean, Yemeni, Somali, and Syrian. The project targets refugee and migrant children in the Faisal area of Giza Governorate, with the aim of supporting their education and providing an appropriate economic environment for them, as well as for their families. Consequently, the sub-goals of the project include strengthening the capabilities of the association's team and the project in order to deliver high-quality and effective services in the fields of education, livelihoods, health, protection, and psychological support for both refugees and migrants, as well as host communities in the Giza area. At the same time, the project aims to ensure that refugees, migrants, and host communities receive effective protection services in a timely manner. The variety of services provided is detailed in Figure 1 and Table 3 below.

Figure 1. Services provided by Future Women Association



Source: Isnad Association, unpublished data, 2024.

Table 3. Beneficiaries of Future Women Association services

Nationality	Beneficiaries	Percentage
Sudanese	3 654	82.5%
Eritrean	728	16.4%
Yemeni	26	0.58%
Somalian	10	0.22%
Syrian	07	0.15%

Source: Isnad Association, unpublished data, 2024.

Caritas Association provides a large and diverse range of services to migrants and refugees, including registration services, primary health care, psychological support, vocational training, legal consultations, and basic assistance. Services and needs assessments are provided based on case studies and field visits, in collaboration with UNHCR, as well as donors and partners. A significant number of services were provided to asylum-seekers, migrants, and refugees during the 2023–2024 period as follows:

- 9,000 individuals received primary health-care services.
- 33,830 individuals underwent initial case assessments.
- 1,579 children received rehabilitation and awareness sessions.
- 278 families, identified as the most in need, received urgent cash assistance.
- 307 awareness sessions were conducted for refugees in their communities.
- 197 individuals received cash grants to implement micro-business projects.
- 3,151 individuals participated in various activities at Caritas Egypt's community support centres.

The geographical scope of providing services is vast, covering:

- Greater Cairo, including the governorates of Cairo, Giza, and Qalyubia.
- The North Coast, including the governorates of Alexandria, Damietta, and Marsa Matrouh.
- The Delta, including the governorates of Sharqia, Dakahlia, and Menoufia.
- The Canal Region, including the governorates of Ismailia and Suez.
- The Red Sea, in the city of Hurghada.
- Aswan, in the city of Aswan.

Isnad Association offers basic services such as food, shelter, health care, and education, in addition to training and employment programmes. The initiative focuses on addressing the urgent needs of Sudanese families displaced by the war. The association targets Sudanese families displaced and affected by the war, who face legal or administrative challenges regarding their stay in Egypt; Sudanese patients requiring expensive treatment, such as dialysis and cancer patients; Sudanese children deprived of education due to economic circumstances; and Sudanese individuals seeking employment or training opportunities to secure their livelihoods. It has succeeded in providing thousands of food baskets and blankets, as well as offering legal support and awareness of residency and registration procedures for those residing in Egypt. The association also provides psychological and moral support to those in need and offers rehabilitation for families wishing to return to the Sudan.

b. Availability of a database for migrants and refugees receiving services

The three associations under analysis focus on building databases of migrants and refugees receiving services from them. The Future Women Association has a database containing service seekers among refugees, categorized by gender, nationality, age, and legal status. Most individuals interacting with the association are registered with UNHCR, but their legal registration status varies between them (refugees, under verification, and asylum-seekers). The same applies to the Caritas Association, which maintains a database of migrants and refugees applying for services. The association provides services to all refugees, whether registered or not, and offers awareness programmes on regularizing their legal status. As for the Isnad Association, it conducted an extensive survey of Sudanese migrants arriving in Egypt and, therefore, has a detailed database of individuals receiving services. The association primarily targets the most vulnerable groups who do not receive assistance from other entities, such as UNHCR.

c. Partnering, funding and supporting entities

The supporting, partnering, and funding entities are diverse and involve international and national stakeholders. Future Women Association relies on financial support from organizations such as Save the Children and CARE International and refers numerous cases to other specialized organizations like Bastek, Egyptians Without Borders, Caritas, and others.

The supporting entities for Caritas Association include the UNHCR, UNICEF Egypt, the European Union in Egypt, the International Labour Organization in Egypt, the German Agency for International Cooperation, the International Organization for Migration, and Catholic Relief Services in Egypt.

Isnad Association relies on donations from Egyptian and Sudanese business people and international organizations such as the World Food Programs and Save the Children. It also partners with the Egyptian Food Bank and the Misr El-Kheir Foundation. Notably, the initiative received a donation from the Egyptian Food Bank to distribute 6,000 food packages to Sudanese families affected by the conflict.

d. Methods for targeting migrants and refugees

The associations employ various methods to reach the most in-need migrants and refugees, including case studies, community visits, and coordination with local associations and centres. This enables a precise assessment of each family or individual's needs to determine the appropriate type of support. Future Women Association reaches them through community learning centres for refugees, offering services to those in need.

Isnad Association employs several mechanisms to reach refugees, such as awareness campaigns in areas with significant concentrations of refugees and coordination with other associations to refer individuals to relevant organizations providing services.

These methods are varied, focusing on areas with large Sudanese populations to deliver group services, such as food distribution, supporting educational centres, and providing aid to critical health cases or the most vulnerable families. The association coordinates with both Sudanese and Egyptian associations and on-the-ground volunteers to reach as many affected families as possible. Specific distribution points are identified in areas like Faisal and October, with regular visits to Sudanese communities to assess their needs.

e. Major issues faced by migrants and refugees from the perspective of the analyzed civil associations

Future Women Association focused on the problems faced by migrant and refugee children, such as housing issues, education, and the lack of basic living conditions, including basic services and infrastructure. In addition, refugees experience a loss of social and human security due to their displacement, exile, and leaving their homeland, which forces them to live in unstable conditions. Isnad Association pointed out several legal challenges, such as delays in government procedures related to work permits or residency.

f. Key challenges faced by civil associations

The three associations unanimously agreed on the insufficiency of financial resources compared to the rapidly increasing number of people fleeing, especially those escaping the civil wars sweeping across the Arab region, with Sudanese migrants currently being the most affected. Logistical challenges were also mentioned, particularly the difficulty transporting aid to remote areas.

Isnad Association confirmed that logistical difficulties exist in distributing aid across a wide geographical area, especially given the limited number of volunteers and staff. Additionally, the lengthy legal procedures related to residency and refugee registration add pressure on both the beneficiaries and the initiative itself.

g. Partnerships established by civil associations with various entities

The associations have formed partnerships with a range of entities, including government institutions, other civil associations, and the private sector. For instance, the Future Women Association has established partnerships with several government institutions, such as the Ministry of Health, to organize medical convoys and free screening campaigns and with the Ministry of Education to facilitate the enrolment of Sudanese children in public schools.

Isnad Association has worked to establish numerous partnerships with the private sector and other civil associations to strengthen the services it provides to Sudanese migrants. It has established partnerships with organizations such as the Egyptian Food Bank and the Egyptian Clothing Bank, and it is seeking to sign memoranda of understanding with other civil institutions to support various programmes aimed at Sudanese refugees in Egypt. Furthermore, the association has signed agreements and partnerships with several health-care providers, such as pharmacies and medical centres, to offer subsidized medical services and medications to those in need. Among its efforts in this regard, the association signed a cooperation protocol with the Egyptian Heart Association to provide free treatment for Sudanese patients and coordinated with the Ministry of Health and the Sudanese Embassy to approve vaccinations for Sudanese children in need.

h. Views of civil associations on enhancing the integration of migrants and refugees into Egyptian society

Future Women Association suggested that the successful integration of migrants into Egyptian society is contingent upon several conditions: The expansion of civil associations in implementing comprehensive integration activities that address various social and cultural dimensions. This integration should include sustained initiatives where refugees and Egyptians interact regularly rather than limiting engagement to one-off events. Additionally, a balanced media message should be directed towards Egyptians to foster greater acceptance of refugees, especially amidst the current economic crisis. Furthermore, both governmental and civil entities should launch campaigns to combat bullying and violence against refugees.

Caritas Association highlighted that refugees' ability to integrate and adapt within Egyptian society heavily relies on their independence in accessing services without relying on external assistance.

Isnad Association noted that Egyptians' inherent hospitality and generosity, along with the strong historical and cultural ties between the Sudanese and Egyptian peoples, significantly facilitate the acceptance of Sudanese refugees into Egyptian society. However, successful integration requires comprehensive programmes supporting education, vocational training, and employment and establishing a legal framework that ensures their rights. When these factors are in place, the likelihood of successful integration is considerably enhanced.

i. Civil associations' perspectives on government policies

Future Women Association acknowledges that, although the Government of Egypt refrains from isolating migrants and refugees in camps or settlements, allowing them the freedom to move and choose suitable places to live, certain restrictions impede their stability. These include recent regulations requiring Sudanese community centres to obtain approval from the Sudanese Embassy, difficulties acquiring official documents necessary for legal work and residency, and the limited availability of health-care services.

Caritas Association commended the government's efforts to balance the needs of Egyptians and refugees amidst the ongoing economic crisis.

Isnad Association recognizes the government's support for migrants and refugees despite their challenges, such as lengthy legal procedures related to residency and registration, which impose additional burdens on families. Furthermore, the high cost of living and limited access to essential services, such as education and health care, remain significant obstacles.

4. Survey on the integration of migrants in Egypt

The study surveyed focus groups comprising Egypt's "guests" (migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers). The questionnaire was translated into English and French to encompass the diverse nationalities residing in Egypt (questions of the survey and analysis of the responses are included in the appendix). The findings were as follows:

Gender: Females comprised the majority of respondents, accounting for 65.1 per cent.

Age: The respondents were primarily in the 20–29 age group.

Educational level: Approximately 50 per cent of the respondents held a university degree or higher.

Marital status: The respondents were nearly evenly divided between those who had been married and those who had not.

Place of residence: The majority of respondents resided in the Cairo and Giza governorates.

To assess the current state of migrant integration, several variables were examined:

- Family accompaniment: Approximately half of the respondents reported that their families did not accompany them to Egypt.
- Family relocation plans: Among those whose families remained in their home countries, the majority expressed no plans to bring their families to Egypt.

More than half of the respondents do not view Egypt as a permanent place of settlement but rather as a transitional station facilitating their migration to another country. Regarding the occupational status of the respondents, 76.8 per cent are not employed, among whom 23.5 per cent are unemployed due to the unavailability of job opportunities. As for the legal status, a small percentage of respondents (7.1%) are in an irregular situation in Egypt. Regarding housing, most respondents have a place to live. Regarding health care, 60 per cent of respondents are allowed to receive treatment in government hospitals, but 40.9 per cent feel they do not receive adequate health-care services.

CONCLUSION

In Egypt's ongoing effort to reassess the presence of approximately 9–10 million migrants and refugees from around 133 countries and to evaluate the country's capacity to bear the economic and social burdens of their presence while seeking ways to benefit from their existence and mitigate further negative impacts, this study aims to analyse the issue of migrants in Egypt and address several research questions. The answers to these questions will clarify Egyptians' perceptions of the presence of migrants in their society and the shape of State plans and strategies. It also explores whether the States and civil society institutions have strategies that align with the noticeable increase in migrant numbers driven by instability in the Arab region and the repercussions of the economic crisis, exacerbated by the spread of COVID-19 in 2021–2022.

The study confirms that, under economic conditions such as the presence of migrants and their growing numbers, competition for opportunities intensifies, sparking debate online that led the Government of Egypt to adopt various measures to address this issue. Despite the challenges, Egypt remains welcoming to these flows and adheres to international conventions. However, the country's ability to support and assist refugees in integrating into Egyptian society is contingent on increased international support to allow the Government to expand and improve the scope of emergency social, economic, and humanitarian services provided to refugees.

The lack of accurate data regarding the number of refugees and their demographic, social, and economic characteristics is one of the main challenges hindering the formulation of evidence-based policies. Therefore, there is a critical need for a specialized national body, specifically the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, to conduct a comprehensive field survey in collaboration with national academic institutions specializing in migration and asylum, as well as international organizations, to assess the scale and characteristics of the phenomenon, identify the most vulnerable groups, and guide policy development.

As part of this study, the Migration Research Unit conducted in-depth interviews with random groups of migrants and refugees to understand their conditions and challenges better. While acknowledging the methodological limitations of the generalizations made in this study, it revealed some significant findings, the most important of which is that more than half of the interviewees do not consider Egypt a permanent place for settlement but rather a "transit" point either for moving to a third country or returning to their home country once the situation stabilizes. The majority of those interviewed were working in various professions, which is typical as most of them were Syrians who enjoy legal status in Egypt. Additionally, most of them had a place to live and received government-provided educational and health-care services, although some complained about the quality of these services. These interviews, however, are not representative and omit those without legal status, highlighting the importance of conducting the comprehensive survey mentioned earlier.

One of the most crucial findings of these interviews is that legalizing the status of migrants is vital for access to services, and improving service quality depends on increased international support and enhanced cooperation between all stakeholders involved in migration: the government, international organizations, and civil society organizations, to better mobilize resources and target the most vulnerable groups for support and assistance.

The study also highlights that improving essential services such as health care and education for migrants and refugees should occur within a broader framework considering the host communities' characteristics. Improving health care and educational services in these communities is essential to reduce social tensions based on the misconception that migrants

compete with Egyptians for services. Improving services, in general, will thus foster higher levels of integration and social empathy for outsiders.

Furthermore, the study focused on gathering perspectives from all relevant stakeholders. Interviews with representatives from three key international organizations working on migration issues (UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR), as well as with representatives from civil society organizations working on migrants and refugees (Caritas, the Isnad Association, and the Future Women Association), led to several recommendations:

1. There is an urgent need for a comprehensive and complete database of migrants and refugees in Egypt. Integration programmes and related policies would be more effective if designed considering migrants' characteristics, duration of stay, and overall economic and social conditions.
2. Increased coordination between service ministries, international organizations, and civil society organizations to improve the quality of assistance and services provided and to reach the most vulnerable groups.
3. Unifying available databases across organizations, refining them, and sharing them to prevent duplicated efforts and resource wastage.
4. Increased efforts to raise legal awareness among migrants about the importance of regularizing their status, which will benefit them.
5. The necessity of international support for Egypt to address the economic crisis, which has impacted its ability to integrate migrants.
6. Providing safe mechanisms for receiving complaints from migrants, regardless of their legal status, through international or civil society organizations, with authority to communicate with public authorities in this regard.
7. Providing services tailored to the specific needs of each group, with particular attention to unaccompanied children.
8. Increasing financial support for civil society organizations working on migration issues.

Finally, this study serves as a scientific step in a long journey that requires accurate information and abundant data to take further steps toward addressing migration’s impact on economic and social conditions in a country that continues to struggle with multiple regional and international crises and to open the door for further serious scientific studies in this field.

APPENDIX

The following pages present the survey questions alongside the analysis of their answers in order to study the relationship between demographic characteristics and the integration of migrants using some bivariate tables.

Table A 1. Responses to "Did the family move to Egypt with you?"

Nationality	Yes	No	Total
Ethiopian	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Syrian	23 (88%)	3 (12%)	26 (100%)
Sudanese	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	4 (100%)
Ugandan	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	3 (100%)
Filipino	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	2 (100%)
Kenyan	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Zambian	0 (0%)	9 (100%)	9 (100%)
South Sudanese	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	5 (100%)
Nigerian	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Tanzanian	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	2 (100%)
Malawian	0 (0%)	3 (100%)	3 (100%)
Mauritian	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Zimbabwean	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Afghan	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Total	**29 (48%)**	**31 (52%)**	**60 (100%)**

Note: Fisher's exact test, $p<0.001$.

We find that nationalities vary in terms of whether the family moved to Egypt with the respondent. For example, we find that most Syrian respondents had their families move with them to live in Egypt, whereas respondents of Zambian nationality did not have their families move with them to live in Egypt.

Table A 2. Responses to "Is your current status in Egypt legal or not?"

Nationality	Legal/Regular	Irregular	Entered with visa	Total
Ethiopian	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
Syrian	17 (81%)	1 (4.8%)	3 (14%)	21 (100%)
Sudanese	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
Ugandan	1 (33%)	1 (33%)	1 (33%)	3 (100%)
Filipino	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
Kenyan	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
Zambian	9 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (100%)
South Sudanese	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)	5 (100%)
Nigerian	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
Tanzanian	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	2 (100%)
Malawian	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	2 (67%)	3 (100%)
Mauritian	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
Zimbabwean	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Afghan	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
Total	**38 (72%)**	**4 (7.5%)**	**11 (21%)**	**53 (100%)**

Note: Fisher's exact test, $p=0.036$.

We also find a difference based on nationality concerning regular status. For example, most Syrian nationals have a regular status, while Zambian nationals have an irregular status.

Table A 3. Responses to "Are you allowed treatment in public hospitals?"

Nationality	Yes	No	Total
Ethiopian	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Syrian	10 (48%)	11 (52%)	21 (100%)
Sudanese	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	2 (100%)
Ugandan	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	3 (100%)
Filipino	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	2 (100%)
Kenyan	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Zambian	9 (100%)	0 (0%)	9 (100%)
South Sudanese	4 (80%)	1 (20%)	5 (100%)
Nigerian	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
Tanzanian	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
Malawian	3 (100%)	0 (0%)	3 (100%)
Mauritian	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
Zimbabwean	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
Afghan	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Total	**33 (63%)**	**19 (37%)**	**52 (100%)**

Note: Fisher's exact test, p=0.004.

We also find that the possibility of treatment in public hospitals varies based on nationality. For example, Zambian nationals are allowed treatment in public hospitals, whereas only about half of Syrian nationals are permitted this.

Table A 4. Cross-tabulation of family relocation to Egypt by highest educational certificate obtained

Did the Family move to Egypt with you	The highest educational certificate you have obtained/received						
	Technical Education	Primary Education	Intermediate Education	Secondary Education	University/Higher Education	Postgraduate Education	Total
No	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (18%)	3 (21%)	24 (75%)	1 (33%)	30 (48%)
Yes	1 (100%)	1 (100%)	9 (82%)	11 (79%)	8 (25%)	2 (67%)	32 (52%)
Total	**1 (100%)**	**1 (100%)**	**11 (100%)**	**14 (100%)**	**32 (100%)**	**3 (100%)**	**62 (100%)**

Note: Fisher's exact test, p<0.001.

We find a difference in whether the family moved with the respondent based on educational level. Those with university education had a higher percentage of families not moving with them compared to other educational levels.

Table A 5. Cross-tabulation of family relocation to Egypt by marital status

Did the family move to Egypt with you?	Marital status				
	Married	Widowed	Single	Divorced	Total
No	5 (18%)	0 (0%)	25 (86%)	1 (100%)	31 (50%)
Yes	23 (82%)	4 (100%)	4 (14%)	0 (0%)	31 (50%)
Total	**28 (100%)**	**4 (100%)**	**29 (100%)**	**1 (100%)**	**62 (100%)**

Note: Fisher's exact test, p<0.001.

Similarly, we find a difference in whether the family moved based on marital status. The percentage of those whose families moved to live with them in Egypt is higher among those who have been married compared to those who have never been married.

Table A 6. Cross-tabulation of settlement intent in Egypt by marital status

Is Egypt a permanent place for settlement or a stopover in preparation for migration to another country?	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
A stopover until we are allowed to migrate to another country	17 (81%)	17 (46%)	34 (59%)
A permanent place for settlement	4 (19%)	20 (54%)	24 (41%)
Total	**21 (100%)**	**37 (100%)**	**58 (100%)**

Note: Pearson's Chi-squared test, p=0.009.

We see that a higher percentage of males consider Egypt a stopover for migration to another country than females.

Table A 7. Relationship between education level and employment among migrants

Employment?	The highest educational certificate you have obtained						
	Technical Education	Primary Education	Intermediate Education	Secondary Education	University/Higher Education	Postgraduate Education	Total
No	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (30%)	8 (67%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	13 (24%)
Yes	1 (100%)	1 (100%)	7 (70%)	4 (33%)	28 (93%)	1 (100%)	42 (76%)
Total	**1 (100%)**	**1 (100%)**	**10 (100%)**	**12 (100%)**	**30 (100%)**	**1 (100%)**	**55 (100%)**

Note: Fisher's exact test, p<0.001.

We find that the employment rate varies based on educational level. For example, the employment rate among those with university/higher education is higher than the employment rate among those with secondary education.

Table A 8. Reasons for not working by gender

Why are you not working?	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
I have children and need to take care of them	0 (0%)	9 (69%)	9 (53%)
I can't find a job	2 (50%)	2 (15%)	4 (24%)
I have health problems	2 (50%)	1 (7.7%)	3 (18%)
I am elderly	0 (0%)	1 (7.7%)	1 (5.9%)
Total	**4 (100%)**	**13 (100%)**	**17 (100%)**

Note: Fisher's exact test, p=0.033.

We find that the reasons for not working vary based on gender.

Table A 9. Access to public hospital treatment by highest educational certificate obtained

Are you allowed to receive treatment in public hospitals?	The highest educational certificate you have obtained						
	Technical Education	Primary Education	Intermediate Education	Secondary Education	University/Higher Education	Postgraduate Education	Total
No	1 (100%)	1 (100%)	9 (90%)	4 (33%)	6 (21%)	1 (100%)	22 (41%)
Yes	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)	8 (67%)	23 (79%)	0 (0%)	32 (59%)
Total	**1 (100%)**	**1 (100%)**	**10 (100%)**	**12 (100%)**	**29 (100%)**	**1 (100%)**	**54 (100%)**

Note: Fisher's exact test, p<0.001.

We see that the percentage of those allowed to receive treatment in public hospitals is higher among individuals with secondary and university education compared to other educational levels.

Table A 10. Access to public hospital treatment by marital status

Are you allowed to receive treatment in public hospitals?	Marital status				
	Married	Widowed	Single	Divorced	Total
No	15 (63%)	2 (100%)	4 (14%)	1 (100%)	22 (40%)
Yes	9 (38%)	0 (0%)	24 (86%)	0 (0%)	33 (60%)
Total	**24 (100%)**	**2 (100%)**	**28 (100%)**	**1 (100%)**	**55 (100%)**

Note: Fisher's exact test, p<0.001.

We find that the percentage of those allowed to receive treatment is higher among those who have never been married compared to those who have been married.

Table A 11. Gender differences in reported quality of health care access among those allowed public treatment

For those who answered yes, can you receive your health-care services properly?	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
Yes	8 (42%)	18 (72%)	26 (59%)
No	11 (58%)	7 (28%)	18 (41%)
Total	**19 (100%)**	**25 (100%)**	**44 (100%)**

Note: Pearson's Chi-squared test, p=0.046.

We note that a larger percentage of females perceive the health-care services provided to them in public hospitals as good.

Table A 12. Family relocation to Egypt by age group of respondents

Age groups	Did your family move to Egypt with you?		
	Yes	No	Total
10–19	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	3 (100%)
20–29	8 (29%)	20 (71%)	28 (100%)
30–39	7 (70%)	3 (30%)	10 (100%)
40–49	7 (88%)	1 (13%)	8 (100%)
50–59	4 (100%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)
60–69	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Total	**28 (52%)**	**26 (48%)**	**54 (100%)**

Note: Fisher's exact test, p=0.002.

We find that the percentage of those whose families moved with them to Egypt is higher among the age group 20 to 29 years compared to other age groups.

Table A 13. Employment status by age group of respondents

Age groups	Do you work?		
	Yes	No	Total
10–19	1 (33%)	2 (67%)	3 (100%)
20–29	3 (12%)	23 (88%)	26 (100%)
30–39	4 (50%)	4 (50%)	8 (100%)
40–49	1 (14%)	6 (86%)	7 (100%)
50–59	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2 (100%)
60–69	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
Total	11 (23%)	36 (77%)	47 (100%)

Note: Fisher's exact test, p=0.043.

We note that the employment rate varies across different age groups.

Table A 14. Reported access to public hospital treatment by age group of respondents

Age groups	Are you allowed to receive treatment in public hospitals?		
	Yes	No	Total
10–19	1 (33%)	2 (67%)	3 (100%)
20–29	20 (80%)	5 (20%)	25 (100%)
30–39	3 (38%)	5 (63%)	8 (100%)
40–49	1 (14%)	6 (86%)	7 (100%)
50–59	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2 (100%)
60–69	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
Total	**26 (57%)**	**20 (43%)**	**46 (100%)**

Note: Fisher's exact test, p=0.004.

We also find a difference in the percentage of those allowed treatment in public hospitals based on age group.

To study the relationship between demographic characteristics and the integration of migrants in general, an integration index was created as follows:

Table A 15. Integration index: scoring framework across six key domains

Description	Points earned
Group One: The family	
The family moved with the migrant to Egypt.	1
The migrant moved to Egypt alone but plans to bring his family to Egypt.	0.5
The migrant moved to Egypt alone and does not plan to bring his family to Egypt.	0
Group Two: Settlement	
The migrant sees Egypt as a place for permanent settlement.	1
The migrant sees Egypt as a stopover for migration to another country.	0
Group Three: Employment	
The migrant is employed.	1
The migrant is not employed due to the lack of job opportunities.	0
Group Four: Legal status	
The migrant's status is legal, or they entered Egypt with a visa.	1
The migrant's status is irregular.	0
Group Five: Housing	
The migrant has a place to live.	1
The migrant does not have a place to live.	0
Group Six: Health care	
The migrant is allowed treatment in public hospitals and perceives that they receive good health-care services.	1
The migrant is allowed treatment in public hospitals but perceives that they do not receive good health-care services.	0.5
The migrant is not allowed treatment in public hospitals.	0

The index was calculated as the arithmetic mean of the six groups, with its value ranging between zero and one.

By calculating some descriptive statistics for the index between males and females and conducting the Wilcoxon rank sum test, we reach the following:

Table A 16. Comparison of integration index scores by gender

Variable	Female N = 41*	Male N = 22*	p-value**
Integration Index	0.75 (0.60, 1.00)	0.60 (0.50, 0.67)	0.002

Note: * Median (Q1, Q3); ** Wilcoxon rank sum test.

This indicates that female migrants are more integrated than males, according to the integration index.

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