Regional Cooperation for the Improvement of Migration Data in the Arab Region

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1. Introduction

The Arab countries are going through dramatic demographic shifts. Demographic transition is occurring in all countries in the region at varying rates. Currently, the Arab region has the world’s second-fastest growing population, after sub-Saharan Africa. The region’s current growth rate represents a doubling time of population of 35 years compared with a doubling time of 61 years for the world’s population.

One consequence of the region’s recent demographic trends is an increasingly notable youth bulge. One in every three people living in the region is between ages 10 and 24 and around one in five people in the region is between the ages of 15 and 24—the age group defined as “youth.” The increase in the proportion of 15-to-24-year-olds in the total population, referred to as the “youth bulge,” combined with the rapid growth in the overall population, has resulted in the most rapid growth in the number of young people in the region’s history. This young population needs training and jobs and also provides momentum for continued population growth in the region, even with declining fertility. The Arab countries are not creating jobs fast enough to match this increase in the working-age population. Absorbing the youth bulge in the Arab region will be a challenge especially with the region’s high unemployment rates.

International migration flows and potential migration from and within the Arab region have increased in magnitude and complexity over the past few decades. Diverse migration flows have been experienced by the Arab region and several of the region’s countries are currently both countries of origin and destination. As a result, migration has become an important policy issue for both the sending and the main destination countries (Al Khouri, 2004; Dumont, 2006; Fargues, 2007; Farid, 2009; McCormick and Wahba, 2001; Nassar, 2008; Saleh, 2005; Zohry, 2003, 2005, 2006).

International migration and mobility reflects not only the social and historical situation of societies, but it is also closely related to the lives individuals lead, the work they do, the environment in which they live and the social and economic role they fulfil. One of the fundamental requirements of the establishment of international migration interventions and for ensuring that they are culturally sensitive and acceptable to people is the availability of basic data on demographic, socio-cultural and economic characteristics of migrants and those intending to migrate. Data are also required on factors that control people’s attitudes and practices which affect their decision to migrate. At the same time, information on life
circumstances and needs of the youth is known to promote better understanding of social, cultural, legal, economic and psychological factors that affect their decision to migrate.

Unfortunately, comprehensive, scientific data regarding the determinants, dynamics and consequences of international migration and the migration intentions of the rapidly increasing young people in the Arab region are not available.

The objective of this paper is to outline the scope and methodology of a new regionally coordinated research programme known as the ‘Mediterranean Household International Migration Survey’ (MED-HIMS). The project originated in the European Commission’s MEDSTAT Programme in 2008 where the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) of 8 of the participating countries (namely—Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia) called for the implementation of a household survey to overcome the lack of data on international migration from the Arab region by collecting reliable and representative data on the determinants and consequences of international migration. Since its initial inception in 2008, the project has gone through a wide preparatory and consultation process with support from the European commission (EC), the World Bank, UNHCR, UNFPA, LAS, ILO and IOM.

The main objectives of the MED-HIMS Programme are:

(i) to study the recent trends, causes, determinants, dynamics and consequences of international migration and mobility, and the inter-linkages between migration and development; and

(ii) to explore scenarios for closer cooperation in the area of migration and development between the MENA sending countries and the main receiving countries.

The objectives and design of the MED-HIMS are guided by the various strategies and recommendations of the United Nations Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), and the vision of the 2004 Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS), the 2009 Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics (DDDS), and the 2011 EC Communication on The Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM).

The MED-HIMS methodology is designed to deal with the main dimensions of international migration and mobility by the collection of representative multi-topic, multi-level, retrospective and comparative data on out-migration, return migration, forced migration and intention to migrate. The strength of MED-HIMS is the use of a common set of model questionnaires, manuals and tools covering the different phases of survey implementation. If necessary, these can be adapted to national circumstances.

2. The Need for Scientific Data on International Migration

At the *macro* level, administrative data in the Arab region on international migration flows, in terms of size and destination, suffer from various limitations such as:

- Data are rarely comparable from one country to another simply because MENA countries have their own definitions of migrants;
- Within a single country, the comparison of various sources often reveals significant discrepancies;
- For obvious reasons, official data sources generally do not take into account undocumented and forced migrants.
Population censuses, continuous population registers, and border or admission data collection systems can collect basic data on the numbers of migrants and a few characteristics, but none of these existing systems collects information on the situation of the migrant prior to migration, which is vital for investigating either the determinants or consequences of migration for international migrants and their households. In particular, the most commonly available source of data on international migration, the population census, usually suffers from using a narrow definition of international migrants; collects very limited information on the characteristics of persons and their households (including nothing on the pre-migration situation); and usually identifies only the stock of lifetime migrants rather than recent migration flows. Household surveys, on the other hand, are usually the main source of information on why, when and how migration has occurred (Bilsborrow, et al, 1997; United Nations, 1998; Cantisani, et al, 2009).

Measuring international migration accurately, however, is a worldwide problem mainly because of data source problems. Emigration is particularly a difficult event to measure. More information is available on the regulated inflows of non nationals and stocks of foreign or overseas born populations using censuses or surveys. Research on improving the sources and reliability of data on international migration, including the vehicles for achieving any such improvements including surveys will be of great interest to the sending and receiving countries.

Over the last two decades, research has moved away from viewing migration merely as a single well-defined movement at a given point in time to understanding the more dynamic and complex reality of “circular migration” between various locations in the Arab region, Europe and other regions of the world. Little is known about the developmental impact of circular migrants in their home countries, be it through permanent return or temporary return. A precondition for better understanding circular migration is the availability of reliable data and information (CARIM, 2007).

The economic consequences of "brain drain" of the best and brightest have long been a common concern for migrant-sending countries in the Arab region. However, while economic theory suggests a number of possible benefits, in addition to costs, from skilled emigration, the evidence base on many of these is very limited (Ozden, 2006). The MED-HIMS Programme will provide data on the extent of the brain-drain from, and the brain-gains to, Arab countries, and will focus on several often-ignored issues such as the choice of destination country, the labour market performance of migrants in their destination countries and the channels through which high-skilled emigration affects the sending country. The results will show the pattern of emigration and of return migration among the very highly skilled; an order of magnitude of the income gains to the best and brightest from migrating; the benefits from migration in terms of postgraduate education; the pattern of labour matching and the extent of brain-waste (over-skilling). Moreover, the circular migration schemes in the receiving countries, such as those supported by the EC GAMM and the WHO Code of Practice on the international recruitment of health personnel, can be better designed if the information on potential emigration from the sending countries is provided.

An important potential benefit from international migration is that remittances may serve as a source to maintain nutritional, health, and educational investments, to adopt new production technologies, and to start new entrepreneurial activities (World Bank, 2006, 2011). While remittances bring numerous benefits to households in sending countries, to date we know very little about how migrants from the Arab region make their remittance-sending decisions. In particular, it is unknown whether migrants desire greater control over how family members...
back home use the remittances they receive. This question is relevant not only for migration studies but also for the large and active literature in development economics on intra-household resource allocation. What's more, a better understanding of these questions could have important impact on public policy, by suggesting policies to further stimulate remittance flows and potentially channel them towards more productive uses in sending countries.

The measurement of remittances is an important area of statistical concern in the field of migration. If informal and in-kind remittances can only be estimated based on household surveys, most countries do not undertake this type of analysis, or use varying methodologies to do so. This leads to a systematic underestimation of remittances in origin countries, the extent of which needs to be further estimated for the Arab region. But even official remittance measurements are not entirely satisfactory, as they rely on the IMF definition of a migrant as an individual that has been absent from its home country for more than one year. Certain remittances such as those sent by seasonal workers, which can reach up to 80% of their income (e.g., in the case of Moroccan farm workers in southern France), are hence excluded.

Compared with international migration flows, greater numbers of individuals do not migrate, even in the face of substantial wage differentials between less- and more-developed areas. There are likely to be large number of potential migrants who are deterred from migrating by a variety of barriers, such as imperfect information on migrant wages and job conditions, imperfect information on one’s own affinity for or returns from migrant work, lack of information on job-seeking procedures, and credit constraints (when migration or job search involves non-negligible fixed costs).

At the moment little is known about the relative importance of these various potential barriers to migration. Credible evidence on the importance of migration barriers has important policy implications as well. A number of Arab countries have enacted policies intended to facilitate and regulate international migration and view such policies as integral components of their overall economic development strategies. If there is a desire to promote migration, it is crucial to understand which barriers are operative and the impact of interventions that are aimed at reducing these barriers. The MED-HIMS Programme will seek to shed light on the relative importance of several potential barriers to migration.

The Arab region also hosts and produces large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), while also accommodating a sizeable stateless population. Complex mixed-migration flows are also prevalent in the region (UNHCR, 2010). Because of its geographical proximity to Europe, Northern Africa has become a region of transit for unauthorized migration to Europe. The MED-HIMS Programme will provide much needed data on forced migration and irregular migration.

While several nationally comprehensive demographic surveys were carried out in most countries in the MENA region in the last two decades, only a few were concerned with international migration. In fact, many of the countries in the region which have significant numbers of their citizens working abroad are precisely those lacking adequate sources of information on international migration (Farid, 2009). The MED-HIMS will generate data that will capture the new trends and development in migration and population movements in the region in the age of migration.

According to the United Nations recommendations, specialized household surveys of international migration constitute the best data collection system to gather the information
needed to study the determinants or consequences of international migration that cannot sufficiently or efficiently be collected by other methods (Bilsborrow, et al, 1997; Groenewold and Bilsborrow, 2008; United Nations, 1998, 2007).

The MED-HIMS Programme will thus aim at filling a serious gap in data availability on migration from and within the Arab region by implementing a multi-component research programme that involves the collection of unique, reliable, comparative and representative data on the determinants and consequences of international migration and mobility in several countries in the region.

Further, international recommendations will be used in the project (where appropriate) such as the UN Recommendations on International Migration. Again the research will illustrate the strengths and any problems in using international definitions, concepts, classifications and questions that can be passed on to European and other destination countries who use these recommendations.

3. The MED-HIMS Instruments

3.1 Strategy

The MED-HIMS includes a programme of specialized national household surveys that aims to capture current and recent developments in international migration and mobility in the MENA region. The main objective of these surveys is to provide estimates with acceptable precision for key international migration and mobility practices and intentions. The key challenge in this research programme will be to provide a holistic framework for searching the large decision space of possible migration options.

The MED-HIMS tools are designed to deal with various dimensions of international migration and mobility with regard to out-migration, return migration, and intentions to migrate, as well as ‘emerging issues’ of international migration for which data are required such as circular migration, migration of highly skilled persons, forced migration, irregular migration, and remittances. Information on socio-economic status of the household and on characteristics of local communities will also be gathered.

3.2 The MED-HIMS Basic Documentation

For all participating countries, the MED-HIMS will provide the following manuals:

- Manual 1: MED-HIMS Model Questionnaires
- Manual 2: Design and Organization of MED-HIMS
- Manual 3: Instructions to Supervisors
- Manual 4: Instructions to Interviewers
- Manual 5: Sample Design
- Manual 6: Editing, Coding and Recode Specifications
- Manual 7: Guidelines for Country Report:
  - Part 1: Statistical Tabulations
  - Part 2: Data Analysis Guidelines

A ‘Manual Panel’ has been established with membership of experts and consultants from Eurostat, MEDSTAT programme, The World Bank, UNHCR, UNFPA and LAS to supervise and develop the above-mentioned MED-HIMS basic documentation. The MED-HIMS
Manuals aim to establish internationally validated guidelines for the design and implementation of household surveys on international migration and to develop standard concepts and procedures for the study of the determinants and consequences of international migration and mobility using survey data.

The Model Questionnaires and Supervisors’ and Interviewers’ Instructions are prototype documents which will be subject to local adaptation. The remaining manuals give guidelines, set forth detailed standards, suggest ways and means of handling problems, and give practical aid. MED-HIMS staff and consultants will work with national directors and their staffs to adapt the prototype documentation. However, the very concept of “coordinated” international migration survey implies that measures will be advised which can be applied from one country to the next. This means that countries participating in the MED-HIMS will aspire to the ideal of international comparability and will, insofar as feasible, utilize the model questionnaires which, it should be emphasized, have been developed in consultation with experts from the NSOs in the eight Arab countries participating in the MED-HIMS.

3.3 The MED-HIMS Model Questionnaires

The Model Questionnaires (MQs) provide the core set of questions needed to obtain population-based estimates of the determinants and consequences of international migration and mobility in the MENA region. The MQs are designed to be manageable, economical, and to intrude as little as possible on the activities and privacy of families who are interviewed.

The target population includes four groups: current migrants, return migrants, non-migrants, and forced migrants. Among the topics covered are: the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of migrants; behaviours, attitudes, perceptions and cultural values of people with regard to international migration; migration histories and the migration experiences and practices; the processes leading to the decision to migrate; migration networks and assistance; work history and the impact of migration on labour dynamics; circular migration; migration of highly-skilled persons; irregular migration; type and use of remittances and their impact on socioeconomic development; migration intentions; the skill-level of return migrants; the overall awareness of migration issues and practices; and mixed migration (migration asylum nexus) and secondary movement of refugees. Information on socio-economic status of the household and on characteristics of local communities in sample areas may also be gathered, depending on the availability of sources of information and other conditions in each country.

The MED-HIMS MQs consist of the following seven questionnaires:

- MQ-1. Household Questionnaire
- MQ-2. Individual Questionnaire for Out Migrant
- MQ-3. Individual Questionnaire for Return Migrant
- MQ-4. Individual Questionnaire for Non Migrant
- MQ-5. Individual Questionnaire for Forced Migrant
- MQ-6. Household Socio-economic Characteristics Questionnaire
- MQ-7. Community Characteristics Questionnaire

The MQs are designed as a series of self-contained modules, with each module dealing with a particular migration-related topic. The MQs are thus designed to collect data that are multi-topic, multi-level, retrospective and comparative:
Multi-topic data. Various aspects of the respondents' lives will be covered by the questionnaires in order to provide the variables needed for the analyses. For example, questions on work experience, family formation, residential mobility (including, of course, international migration) are required to explore both the determinants and the socio-economic changes associated with international migration.

Multi-level data are also needed as migration decision-making is affected by institutional and structural factors operating at the community, regional and national levels. Contextual data are also necessary to study interactions between migration experience and socio-economic changes.

Retrospective data. Most of the MED-HIMS research questions call for dynamic analyses that require dated data. It is firstly necessary to explore the patterns of circulation (the comings and goings of the migrants, the routes they use). To explain migration causes, we also need information not at the time of the survey but just before each migration (Bilsborrow et al., 1997). And to explore the impact of migration on family changes, we need to know the time of migration and to get dated information on marriage or fertility after migration (Anderson, 2004).

Comparative framework. The lack of comparable data is a major handicap to the study of migration from the MENA region. A major objective of the MEM-HIMS survey programme is to attain comparability and harmonization across countries through the use of standardized questionnaires in order to disentangle national specificities and general processes. Such an objective was an aim of the “Push-pull” project which offered data to compare several migrant groups in Italy and Spain (Birindelli, 2000).

Another feature of the MQs is that they have an explicit policy orientation, so that strategic topics and research questions included focus on variables that might potentially be influenceable by policy instruments. The MED-HIMS new research lines are thus strategic in two senses: they pertain to issues crucial for policy-making in both sending and receiving countries, and they offer a theory-based design in which both the participating countries and future new participants will implement new research within a shared framework.

3.4 Concepts and Definitions

The MED-HIMS are specialized single-round cross-sectional surveys with retrospective questioning. A number of key concepts and definitions are adopted for the purpose of this study. The concept of the household and the definition of migration are particularly important in this respect. In addition, the concept of the ‘multi-level eligibility’ has been developed essentially to allow the gathering of data on different migrant groups during different time periods.

Household: In MED-HIMS the usual concept of household is extended to include not only those persons who live together and have communal arrangements concerning subsistence and other necessities of life, but also those who are presently residing abroad but whose principal commitments and obligations are to that household and who are expected to return to that household in the future or whose family will join them in the future. Therefore, both the household and the shadow household are captured within the definition, a necessary extension for migration studies. It should be pointed out that a household which has moved abroad as a whole is no longer accessible to be interviewed in the MED-HIMS surveys which cover only sending countries.
Migration is defined as a move from one country in order to go and reside abroad in another country for a continuous period of ‘at least 3 months’, a period in contrast to international recommendations on migration which draw the line at residing abroad for at least one year. In MED-HIMS, the line has been drawn at ‘more than 3 months’ to allow for the inclusion of seasonal migration across international borders. Therefore, the migration history module in the survey questionnaires asks for those countries in which someone has lived for ‘more than 3 months.’

Reference period: MED-HIMS recommends the use of a reference period of ten years preceding the survey. In the MED-HIMS MQs, a reference period starting from “1 January 2000” is adopted for the purpose of illustration.

Recent and non-recent migrants: A distinction is made between ‘recent’ and ‘non-recent’ international migrants. Recent migrants are those who have migrated from the country of origin at least once within the ‘reference period’ preceding the survey. Consequently, a non-recent migrant is someone who has migrated from his/her country of origin at least once, but not within the ‘reference period’.

Multi-level eligibility: The concept of ‘multi-level eligibility’ has been introduced to allow the administration of different sets of questions to different groups of migrants. For example, in the current migrant questionnaire, a set of questions is administered to both recent and non-recent migrants (e.g. questions on the background and remittances of migrants) while a second set of questions is administered to only recent migrants. In the latter case, there are modules gathering data with regard to the ‘first migration’ that occurred within the reference period and other modules gathering data with regard to the ‘current country of residence.’

3.5 Eligibility for the Model Questionnaires

- **MQ-1. Household Questionnaire:** This questionnaire serves four purposes: (i) to identify the members of the household; (ii) within households, to identify nuclear units, i.e. couples and their own children; (iii) to collect basic demographic information on each of the household members; and (iv) to identify persons eligible for the migrant survey interviews (current, return and forced) and persons eligible for the non-migrant survey interview.

- **MQ-2. Individual Questionnaire for Out-Migrant:** This questionnaire will be assigned for every person who used to live in the sample household and who is currently abroad and aged 15 years or more. This questionnaire will gather data directly from the migrants themselves if they happen to be in the country during the fieldwork period or indirectly from (proxy) respondents who will be asked to provide information about persons who have moved from their household, to whom they are usually related.

- **MQ-3. Individual Questionnaire for Return Migrant:** For every member of the household who last returned from abroad to the country of origin since the start of the reference period (e.g., 1/1/2000) and who was 15 years of age or more on last return.

- **MQ-4. Individual Questionnaire for Non Migrant:** For every member of the household who is currently aged 15-59 years and (i) who never moved to another country; (ii) or has last returned from abroad to the country of origin before the start of the reference period (e.g., 1/1/2000); (iii) or has last returned from abroad to the country of origin since the start of the reference period (e.g., 1/1/2000) but was under
15 years of age on last return. Other criteria for selecting eligible candidates for the non-migrant interview would be considered during the sample design stage.

- **MQ-5. Individual Questionnaire for Forced Migrant**: For every non-citizen identified as potential ‘Forced Migrant’ and who is currently 15 years of age or more. In addition, a targeted sample of around 3000 forced migrants will be selected for interview with the MQ-5 from among the forced migrants registered with UNHCR in each participating country.

- **MQ-6. Household Socio-economic Characteristics Questionnaire**: This questionnaire will be administered to every household in the sample.

- **MQ-7. Community Characteristics Questionnaire**: The migration intentions and behaviour of people may be affected by their personal characteristics, and by the social milieu in which they live, or by some interaction between the individual and the group characteristics. It is therefore recommended to include in the MED-HIMS questionnaires a module to collect ecological or community-level data in rural areas. The term ‘ecological’ is used here to designate supra-individual data about the social environment, delimited on an areal basis. An ecological or a community-level variable is, thus, defined as any characteristic common to all the persons living in the community. The community level questionnaire will gather data on the location of the community, social development indicators, principal economic activities, general migration patterns in the community including common attitudes and intentions.

4. MED-HIMS Outputs and Examples of Data Utilization

4.1 Main Outputs

The main output data of the MED-HIMS may be summarized as follows:

- data on the trend, pattern, determinants and consequences of international migration and the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of current and return migrants;
- data on why, when and how migration has occurred and might occur in the future;
- data on migration attempts: who tries, who succeeds, who fails;
- data on migration histories and the migration experiences and practices;
- data on migration intentions and potential destination;
- data on forced migration;
- data on pre-migration situation and motives for moving abroad;
- data on legal status at migration and migration networks and assistance;
- data on work history before and after migration;
- data on transnational marriages and on reproductive patterns and preferences;
- data on views about social, economic and labour integration and social exclusion;
- data on rights and conditions of migrant workers;
- data on health status of migrants and non-migrants;
data on patterns of circular migration and skills and knowledge acquired by migrants;
- data on remittances and their utilization and how they contribute to local development-oriented initiatives and investments in the country;
- data on the impact of migration on household economic behaviour and practices;
- data on the impact of migration on unemployment and labour dynamics;
- data on the pattern of gender-selective migration and the nature of the consequences engendered for women by male outmigration and its impact on children;
- data on the overall awareness of migration issues and practices;
- data on migrants’ future plans;
- data on the pattern of return migration and reintegration measures;
- data on the processes leading to the decision to migrate;
- data on the qualifications and skills of potential migrants;
- data on the effectiveness of governmental interventions aiming at preventing irregular emigration.

4.2 Examples of Data Utilization

The MED-HIMS output data may be used as evidence-based information for:

- the establishment of a ‘National Migration Profile’ that will allow to identify certain common characteristics of the migration flows to the main receiving countries;
- the development of migration policies and future migration programming;
- the development of scenarios to support circular and managed migration, and to design successful action programmes to be coordinated in collaboration with the main receiving countries, particularly the EU countries through the GAMM mechanisms;
- the identification of priority areas in the field of education and vocational training;
- the development of policy measures on recognition of qualifications and the use of transparency tools for the skills of migrants acquired at home and abroad;
- the development of policy measures on mitigating the adverse effect of brain drain;
- the development of policy measures dealing with forced migration;
- achieving better understanding of how remittances can be used to foster local development, and developing relevant policy measures in collaboration with the main receiving countries;
- promoting ‘migration governance’ from a development perspective and improving the understanding of the development and migration nexus;
- fostering institutional partnership in the field of migration with the main receiving countries; and
- assessing the effects of future legislative measures on labour immigration that might be taken by receiving countries in line with their demographic changes.
5. Organisation and implementation of the MED-HIMS

The MED-HIMS will be a programme of national household sample surveys in 8 countries in the MENA region, namely—Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia. An earlier version of the model questionnaires was used in the Palestinian National Migration Survey in 2010. Egypt and Jordan are implementing the survey in 2013, while the remaining countries will implement the survey during 2014-2016.

The highlights of the design of MED-HIMS at the national level include:

- survey design which provides unbiased estimates for the population of inference through proper frame coverage and the use of a new, ambitious and innovative sampling design that will allow the survey to focus on the target populations;
- survey design that recognizes data needs for decentralised planning and implementation of migration policies, based on the priorities and needs of different regions in the country;
- survey design that recognises and controls sources of non-sampling error as well as sampling error;
- extensive training of national staff and insistence on proper field procedures;
- state-of-the-art data processing;
- analysing the different sets of results in various domains of interest for both policy makers and academics with a view of developing scenarios of policies and measures, supported by evidence, addressing a broad range of challenges and opportunities through dialogue and cooperation between the MENA sending countries and European and other receiving countries;
- disseminating and discussing results and the proposed scenarios with national and international stakeholders and raising awareness about such scenarios through key channels (e.g., comparative studies, expert groups, workshops and conferences) that will impact both policy and future research.

At the international level, the overall organizational responsibility for planning and executing MED-HIMS rests so far with a consortium consisting of the EC (EuropeAid and EUROSTAT), MEDSTAT III Programme, The World Bank, UNHCR, UNFPA, LAS, IOM and ILO, working in partnership with the National Statistical Organizations in participating countries, and in collaboration with other international institutions supporting the programme at national level. The MED-HIMS consortium is mainly responsible for facilitating the provision and use of international funding, supporting the planning and coordination between national surveys, developing further model tools and providing technical assistance to participating countries.

In accordance with the vision of the 2004 ‘Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics’ (MAPS) and its ‘Accelerated Data Program’ (ADP) launched in 2006, the 2009 ‘Dakar Declaration on the Development of Statistics’, and to increase the use and value of the survey data, the MED-HIMS management will arrange with each participating country to make the survey data files available to researchers through the official websites of the National Statistical Office and the ‘International Household Survey Network’ (IHSN).

6. Concluding Remarks
One of the ultimate goals of the MED-HIMS Programme is to establish ‘Migration Profiles’ for the participating countries and to generate ‘Migration Scenarios’, supported by evidence, of policies and measures that address a broad range of challenges and opportunities through dialogue and cooperation between the Arab sending countries and the main destination countries. This is important to a region facing dramatic shifts in its demographics, which will need novel and potentially radical solutions based on dialogue and cooperation.

The above-mentioned examples of the utilization of the MED-HIMS outputs clearly illustrate that the project will provide the necessary flow of reliable, timely, comparable and accessible data that would enable authorities in both sending and the main receiving countries to have the information-base and the necessary evidence to develop and support such scenarios in a comprehensive and balanced manner.

Finally, it can be said that the creation of a new dataset on international migration and mobility from the Arab region and the development of scenarios of policies and measures in the area of migration and development, supported by evidence, addressing a broad range of challenges and opportunities through dialogue and cooperation between the sending and the main destination countries are the foundation stone of the MED-HIMS Programme.
REFERENCES


