CMI World Water Day
Regional Youth Workshop on Water and Migration
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Water, Youth and Rural Migration

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Water, Youth and Rural migration: what are the links?

- One third of all international migrants are youth in the 15-34 age group.
- Around 40% of remittances are sent to rural areas.
- Jobs in the agricultural sector are highly water dependent (95% of agricultural jobs depend on sufficient water supply).
- Extremely poor households are more likely to depend on agriculture and natural resources for their livelihoods and food security (76% of the extreme poor and 60% of the moderate poor live in rural areas).
- Most of people using unimproved sources of drinking water and lacking basic sanitation services live in rural areas.
Key traits of migration in the NENA region
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- **INTERNAL MIGRATION** is larger than international migration
- **RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION** (declining rural population, rural-urban disparities)
- **SEASONAL MIGRATION** is frequent within and across borders

**NENA Population Trends 1960-2017**

- Urban Population (as a % of total population)
- Rural Population (as a % of total population)
Key traits of migration in the NENA region: who migrates?

- Young people tend to migrate more
- Unemployment rate among youth was 24% in 2017, almost double the global average
- Agricultural sector is not considered by youth as attractive (low salaries, precarious jobs, seasonal)
- Youth are underrepresented in social dialogue and trade unions and cooperatives

Source: UNDESA Database
Key traits of migration in the NENA region: who migrates?

- Migration is male-dominated but the number of women migrants is growing.
- In the absence of male members it has been observed that women who are left-behind participate more in agricultural activities with positive and negative outcomes.

Source: UNDESA Database
Remittances in the NENA region

Total personal remittances received (Current USD), 2016

- Largest receiving countries are Egypt, Lebanon and Morocco
- Biggest payers of remittances in the regions are Gulf countries (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait)

Source: World Development Indicators
Water-Rural Poverty-Migration

- **Access to water** for agricultural production can make the difference between **farming for survival** and **farming as a reliable source of livelihoods**

- Growing evidence that **depletion of natural resources**, such as water, can be a major driver of rural migration and prolong, exacerbate and/or contribute to the emergence of conflicts

- In rural areas, the impact of water stress adds up to high levels of poverty, food insecurity, and unemployment. In these conditions, migration can be undertaken as a last resort strategy

- **Serious issue** (major future impacts) **but no systematic link** (multicausality, political and economic variables)
FAO’s work on migration

- FAO works on **all forms of migration**

- FAO pays attention to both **internal and international movements**

- FAO vision: A world where those dependent on rural livelihoods are provided with **sustainable options and alternatives to migration out of extreme needs**, even in the midst of crises, and where migration contributes to the agriculture and rural **development** of countries of origin, transit and destination alike
Increasing vulnerability due to poverty, food insecurity, discrimination, natural hazards, conflicts, environmental degradation, etc.
FAO’s work on migration

- Mitigating the adverse drivers of migration such as the negative impacts of climate change and environmental degradation
- Strengthening livelihoods resilience and people’s adaptive capacity to climate change
- Harness the potential of migration for climate change adaptation in the areas of origin, transit and destination
Mitigating the adverse impact of environmental and climate change

- **Sustainable agricultural development and natural resource management** is essential to increase livelihoods resilience and providing rural people with acceptable alternatives to migration;

- **Increasing investments in rural areas and policy responses to environmental challenges in agriculture** is key to reduce rural poverty;

- **Contribute to social cohesion and economic integration of vulnerable populations, such as migrants, through increased resilience of agricultural based livelihoods and strong food systems**;

- **Coherence and coordination between agricultural, environmental and migration policies and programmes** is critical to achieve sustainable development and leave no one behind
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Enhancing the benefits of migration for sustainable development

- Migration can be an adaptation strategy to environmental and climate stresses through remittances investment in rural development and sustainable livelihoods and transfer of knowledge and skills, including in NRM;

- Capitalize on migrants knowledge and skills – both diaspora contribution to their areas of origin and migrants contribution to natural resources management in host and transit areas;

- Creating the conditions for migrants and diaspora to contribute to sustainable development in the areas of origin - facilitating links between diaspora and agri-business; encouraging mentorship and sponsor of rural youth and providing start-up capitals in green sectors (farm and off-farm); advocating for investments in water infrastructures;
Thank you!

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