

# Egypt-Jordan Migration Corridor

## Co-Investigators

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## Research Context

Egyptian migration has long played a significant role in the political, economic, and social spheres in Egypt. Jordan hosts the largest number of Egyptian labour migrants second only to Saudi Arabia. There are widely varying estimates regarding the number of Egyptians working in Jordan. According to the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in 2017 there were 1,150,000 Egyptians in Jordan. However, the 2015 Jordanian Census placed the number at 636,270 Egyptians. According to CAPMAS, there were a total of 125,277 Egyptians who were issued work permits in Jordan in 2017. These large and varying numbers are likely owing to visa-free travel from Egypt to Jordan as well as geographical proximity between the two countries. Egyptians in Jordan work primarily in the agriculture, construction, and service sectors and migration to Jordan takes place primarily through informal social networks. The inner workings of these informal social networks and the decisions to migrate that are facilitated by them are an understudied aspect of Egyptian labour migration.

The decision to migrate is a significant financial investment made by the migrants, their families, and communities. The majority of migrants to Jordan are young men and are considered important breadwinners for their families. Egyptian migrants who are married, and even those who are not, leave behind children, wives, parents, siblings, and other family members who rely on their remittances to improve their quality of life. According to the Ministry of Manpower, Egyptians living in Jordan sent \$80 million in remittances in January of 2018 alone. This raises questions around whether migrants' families, and children in particular, experience an improved quality of life because of migration. The decision to migrate also raises questions about the socioeconomic and cultural factors that led to migration, and more importantly, the decisions and thought-processes occurring at an individual, familial, and community level. Given that migration is a risky endeavour that can yield highly unequal and variable development outcomes for the migrant and their family, it is critical to understand the factors that lead to migration choices that may come at the expense of emotional or psychological security.

In addition to the expected material outcomes of migration, it is also important to explore the sociocultural consequences of migration and its effects at the individual, familial, and community level. Although Egyptian workers in Jordan seem to face some challenges with housing, salary, and general well-being, they still choose to

migrate despite uncertainty and familial separation. Lastly, the intermediaries that facilitate the migration process, whether informal social networks or formal entities such as government offices, are critical to understanding migrants' and families' experiences.

## **Work Packages**

WP2: Inequalities related to childhood

WP4: Migrant perceptions, knowledge and decision making

WP5: Migration intermediaries

## **Research Questions**

1. How does Egyptian labour migration to Jordan affect family structure and dynamics? (WP2)
2. How does Egyptian labour migration to Jordan impact experiences of inequality among children of migrants and their families? (WP2)
3. What are the individual and community level factors that impact the decision to migrate? (WP4)
4. What are the structural and environmental factors that impact the decision to migrate and/or return? (WP4)
5. What and how intermediaries are involved before, during, and after migration? (WP5)
6. How do intermediaries view and affect the decision to migrate and migration experience? (WP5)

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