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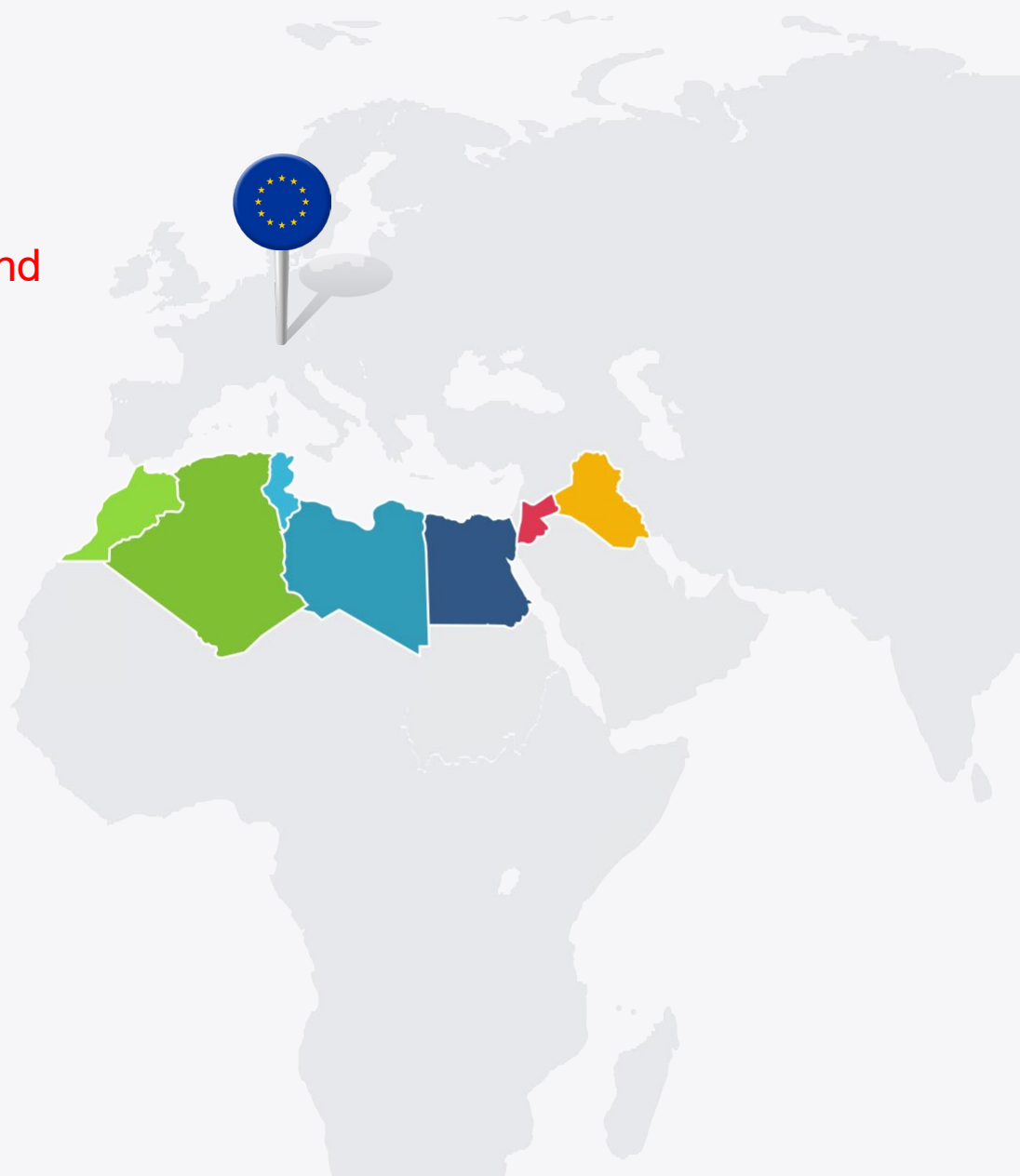
WORKING PAPER SERIES

NUMBER 17

Building Decent Societies? Economic Situation and
Political Cohesion After the Arab Uprisings

Authors:

Pamela Abbott and
Andrea Teti



The Arab Transformations Project is an international research project operating within the European Commission's FP7 framework. The project looks comparatively at attitudes and behaviors in the context of the social, political and economic transformations taking place across Middle East and North Africa since February 2011. The countries covered are Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq.

Ethical approval for the Project was given through the Ethical Review Procedures of the University of Aberdeen. Further details of the project can be found on the project web site at www.arabtrans.eu.

Acknowledgements

The Arab Transformations Project is coordinated by the University of Aberdeen (UK) and includes further 11 partners: Dublin City University (DCU), Dublin, Ireland; Análisis Sociológicos Económicos y Políticos (ASEP), Madrid, Spain; Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale (ISPI), Milan, Italy; Universität Graz (UNI GRAZ), Graz, Austria; Societatea Pentru Metodologia Sondajelor Concluzia-Prim (Concluzia), Chisinau, Moldova; Centre de Recherche en Économie Appliquée pour le Développement (CREAD), Algiers, Algeria; Egyptian Centre for Public Opinion Research (BASEERA); Cairo, Egypt; Independent Institute for Administration and Civil Society Studies (IIACSS), Amman, Jordan; University of Jordan (JU), Amman, Jordan; MEDA Solutions (MEDAS), Casablanca, Morocco; Association Forum Des Sciences Sociales Appliquées (ASSF); Tunis, Tunisia.

The author would also like to acknowledge the World Values Survey, Arab Barometer and Gallup Analytics on whose survey data they draw. We are also grateful to Viola Sanelli and Ilia Xypolia, at the University of Aberdeen, for material they supplied on the history and politics of the region.

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Recommended form of citation

Abbott, P. and Teti, A. (2017). *Building Decent Societies? Economic Situation and Political Cohesion After the Arab Uprisings*. Arab Transformations Working Paper 17. Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen

The Arab Transformation Working Paper Series (ISSN 2398-9106) is published by The University of Aberdeen (Aberdeen, UK).

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2964552>

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1 Abstract

The focus of this paper is the main drivers of the 2010-11 Arab Uprisings across the Arab and draws on data from the ArabTrans public opinion survey, as well as the Arab Barometer, the Gallup World Poll and World Development Indicators. It asks to what extent people think that things are getting better, whether post-2011 regimes are addressing the concerns of their people and delivering a way of life that people have reason to value. The analysis is illustrated by looking at three cases that are generally taken as epitomising relatively stable post-Uprising countries that have experienced different outcomes: Tunisia, Jordan and Egypt. Tunisia is democratizing, while there has been a counter revolution and the reestablishment of authoritarian rule in Egypt and autocratic consolidation in Egypt. People see the main drivers of the Uprisings as concerns about their economic situation and government corruption and they see these as the main challenges facing their countries. However, in 2011 they are relatively optimistic that things will get better but by 2014 if anything they think that the economic situation has got worse and that levels of corruption are remain high and that governments are not really making a concerted effort to tackle the problem. Only a small majority think that 2011 Uprisings were driven by people wanting political rights or that lack of political rights is one of the major challenges in 2011 or 2014. However, people do not trust their governments and are dissatisfied with their performance in office.

2 Introduction

In the decade before the Arab Uprisings, people became increasingly disaffected with corrupt regimes which maintained power by rewarding a political and economic elite while excluding increasing swathes of the population from economic gains and political voice. As structural reforms failed to 'trickle down' and only increased the strength of crony elites, the middle classes joined the working classes in becoming disaffected and politically mobilised. Survey data show that with the unprecedented wave of protests across the MENA region in 2010-11 came a renewed optimism that post-Uprisings governments would bring desired changes but also awareness that socio-economic problems remained as acute as political ones, if not more so. The data also suggest that what drove protesters was a demand for both social and economic rights (e.g. decent jobs, social protection, universal education and health services) as well as political change. Protesters displayed this sense of betrayal in the slogans they used, such as the immensely popular 'Bread, Freedom, Social Justice' (*'Aysh! Horreya! 'Adala al-igtima'eyya!*). People were seeking a decent life and expecting to receive it from a decent society (Abbott et al 2016). The Government of a decent society is one which

- ensures the physical security of its borders and suppresses illegitimate violence and harassment;
- does not favour one fraction of the population over another, whether the fractions be defined in terms of ethnicity, history, religion, gender or other ascribed personal or social characteristics;
- makes it possible for all to achieve a sufficient economic position to do more than just struggle for personal and household survival – to exercise capabilities and take choices;
- provides or regulates insurance against sudden disaster and assures that the needed resources will be available during the difficult stages of the life-cycle – family formation, birth and child-rearing, schooling, old age;
- enforces the rule of law on advantaged and disadvantaged alike, including limitations on the arbitrary power of governments which are respected by the governments;
- regulates commerce and industry, ensuring that they behave in a law-abiding fashion and do not exercise their power to the detriment of other citizens; and
- helps to promote, or at least does not work against, the fundamental shared norm of social cohesion in more than very small groups, that we must be able to trust the stranger – the 'anonymous other' who is the stranger in the area through which we are passing, or the bank clerk or shopkeeper or factory owner or government official or indeed the ruler – to behave fairly rather than promoting only his or her personal interests.

This, it is quite clear, is what people want in their lives and would like to be able to expect from their Government.

Since 2011, people's expectations have been largely ignored on a range of issues from social security to the availability of jobs, trust in governments has declined drastically, the economy remains the single largest challenge (and cause of migration), corruption remains pervasive, unemployment is endemic, political reforms have been either cosmetic or reversed (or, in Tunisia's case, they remain shaky) and people have little faith that things will change. This potentially toxic mix of factors has not been addressed by either regional governments or their international counterparts. Indeed, international financial institutions (IFIs) and Western Governments quickly recast the Uprisings as a struggle merely for formal democracy and the overthrow of autocracy. This made it possible to stress the need for an orderly transition to democracy while continuing the very economic policies that ordinary citizens blamed for the increasingly precarious lives they were leading.

Another factor to be borne in mind is the destabilising effect on democratisation of 'political Islam'. Whatever the truth of the claim that Islam is fundamentally incompatible with democratic forms of organisation – and it is a view that has both fierce proponents and equally fierce opponents who write it off as a myth, a gross distortion for political purposes and a projection of the West's own political struggles – 'political Islam' is the institutionalisation of a contested area, one where religion and authoritarian government are potentially aspects of the same identity. In countries where Islam is the religion of the majority it can in fact give rise to both government and opposition and can range from a liberal political position to an extremely radical one, in internal conflict with each other (Fuller 2003). There is no necessary link between even radical Islam and support for any given political system; survey data from Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Algeria in fact indicate that strong faith does not significantly discourage support for democracy (Tessler et al 2012; Tessler, 2002). However, Islam's political tensions and varying goals constitute another force that works against cohesion and agreement in these countries.

The focus of this paper is the main drivers of the 2010-11 Arab Uprisings across the Arab and draws on data from the ArabTrans public opinion survey, as well as the Arab Barometer, the Gallup World Poll and World Development Indicators. It asks to what extent people think that things are getting better, whether post-2011 regimes are addressing the concerns of their people and delivering a way of life that people have reason to value. The analysis is illustrated by looking at three cases that are generally taken as epitomising relatively stable post-Uprising countries: Tunisia, Jordan and Egypt. The 2011 Uprisings started in Tunisia and in both Tunisia and Egypt relatively peaceful demonstrations led to the overthrow of an authoritarian regime and moves towards more democratic political systems. In Jordan there were street protests but the regime was not overthrown. While Tunisia is still progressing on a shaky path to democracy the post-2011 elected government in Egypt was overthrown by a military coup in 2013, a new constitution agreed and a former army chief Abdul Fattah al-Sisi elected as president in 2014. In Jordan the King responded to the Uprisings by making some political and economic concessions. In Tunisia and Egypt, the first 2011- elected governments were headed by political Islamist parties in Egypt the Muslim Brotherhood and in Tunisia the

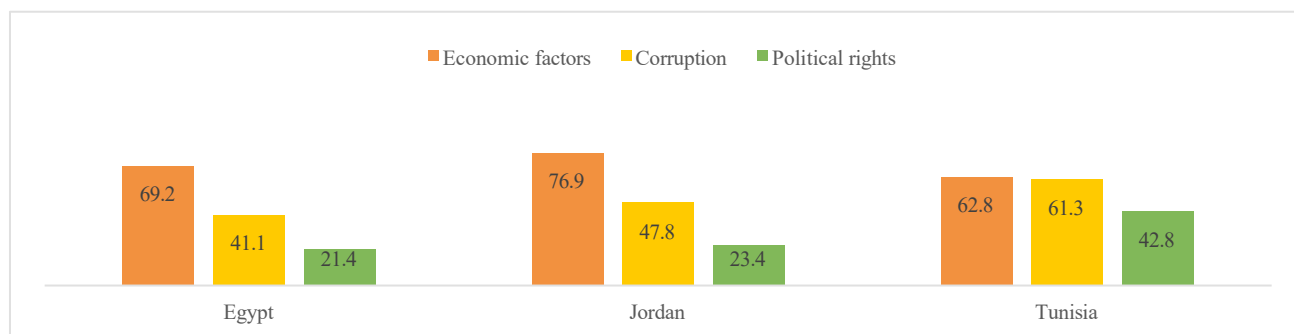
moderate Ennahda party which agreed to resign in 2013 following mass demonstrations. In Tunisia there were demonstrations in 2012 and 2013 by Salafi Islamists who wanted strict Islamic law and there were protests in 2012 against the Islamist-led government's moves to reduce women's rights in the new constitution. In Egypt Mohammed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood was elected president in June 2012 and in December a new constitution that gave a significant role to Islam and restricted freedom of speech was approved in a referendum. Opposition to the new constitution came from secular leaders, women's groups and Christians. Following, popular demonstrations in June 2013 the army overthrew President Morsi and imposed military rule. In December 2013, the Muslim Brotherhood was declared a terrorist group and in January 2014 the new constitution banned religious political parties.

3 Challenges and Hopes in 2011

3.1 Challenges

In the 2014 ArabTrans survey, people in Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan were asked to reflect on 2011 and identify the two most important issues that drove them to protest. Insofar as the answers can be trusted (and there are problems with questions about how people felt in the past), the overwhelmingly most common reason was economic, mentioned by over 60 per cent in two countries (Egypt and Tunisia) and nearly 80 per cent in the third (Jordan). Corruption was mentioned by over 40 per cent of respondents (61% in Tunisia, where it almost rivals economic factors as the most chosen target of protest). Political rights were mentioned by only 20 per cent of respondents, but this is still one person in five, and in Tunisia it is mentioned by twice this percentage. Corruption is difficult to classify because it is a political variable – it involves the behaviour of ministers and public servants – but it is also an attack on social cohesion, because it divides the social world into those who receive and those who are forced to pay or those who are favoured and those who are not (*wasta*). However, what is evident is that the uprising were not mainly motivated by demands for political rights.

Figure 1: Percentage mentioning economic factors, corruption and/or political rights as one of the two main reasons why they protested



Source: data from ArabTrans (2014)

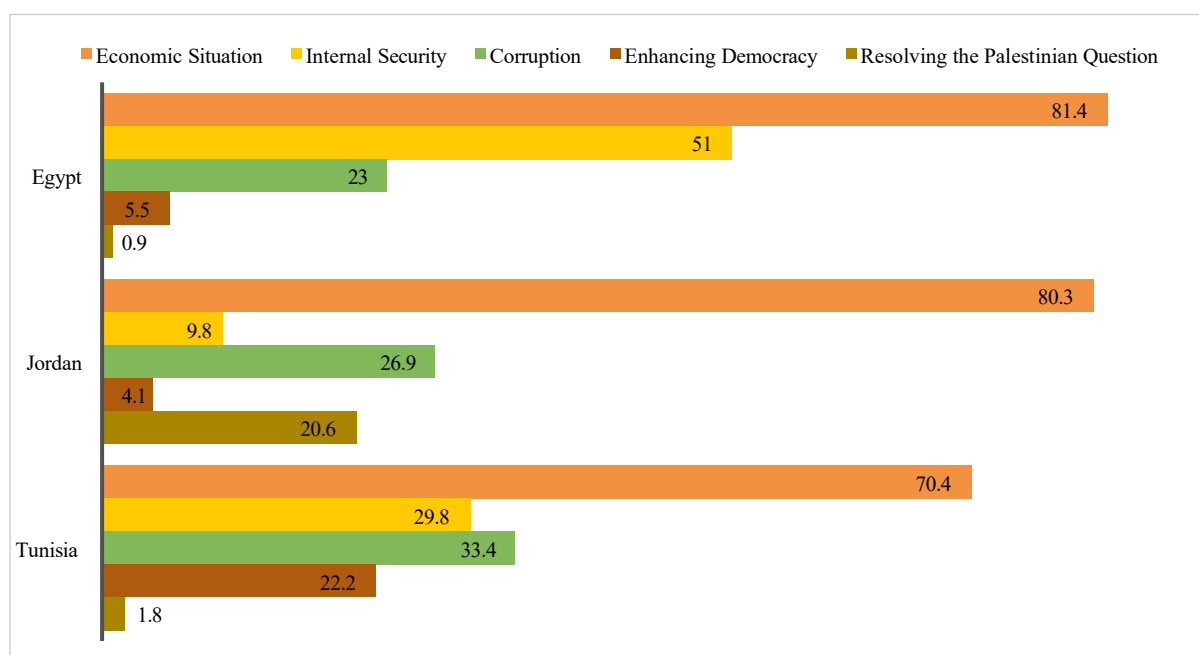
In 2011 the Arab Barometer asked respondents to identify the two main challenges facing their country (the surveys were carried out in June/July 2011 in Egypt, December 2010 in Jordan, and September/ October 2011 in Tunisia). People focused on the economy: 81 per cent of Egyptian respondents nominated the economic situation, closely followed by 80 per cent of Jordanians and 70 per cent of Tunisians. Other significant challenges, albeit noticeably less important, included internal security – mentioned by half of Egyptians, nearly a third of Tunisians, but only 10 per cent of Jordanians – and corruption, mentioned by between a quarter and a third of respondents. In Jordan, Palestine was also seen as an issue by a significant minority, but in the other two countries it tended not to be included as one of the two main challenges. Corruption was not always named as one of the two major challenges, but it was seen as pervasive in state institutions; when asked specifically about it, around 80 per cent of Egyptians and Tunisians and 74 per cent of Jordanians agreed it was a problem. The vast majority of respondents thought it difficult to get employment without connections (*wasta*) and nearly two-thirds in Jordan and Tunisia and nearly half in Egypt thought it difficult to get a job *at all* without them.

Undemocratic government was noticeably low among challenges identified in Egypt and Jordan (Figure 2), although a fifth mentioned it in Tunisia. At the time both Egypt and Tunisia were in turmoil, with concerns about whether the upcoming elections for the Tunisian Constituent Assembly would be fair and free, while in Egypt there was no timeline to elections at all, so respondents may have under-estimated how easy it would be to obtain democracy after their Revolutions. It is also possible that these results reflect a certain amount of ‘democracy fatigue’ in Arab MENA countries resulting from local regimes’ strategy of relying heavily on ‘democracy’ as a rhetorical banner to legitimise their regimes, and Western governments cooperated with the regimes, claiming this would facilitate democratisation; however, none of the social justice or political voice that citizens wanted and which they saw as inherent in the concept of democracy was in fact delivered.

Tunisia and Egypt have long been perceived as at the forefront of the attempts of Muslim-majority countries to develop a secular regime. In Egypt, Islamic organisations played an

important role in opposition since independence, capturing the hearts and minds of many educated young people. In the run-up to the Uprisings the relationship between an Islamic opposition and the authoritarian state remained highly conflictual. In Jordan, similarly, political relations have been characterised by a persistent tension between the monarchy and its Islamic opposition. In Tunisia, a country historically characterised by stronger secular institutions than its neighbours, the rise of an authoritarian postcolonial regime from the 1960s nonetheless led to a significant increase in popular support for traditional Islamic values (Tessler, 1980).

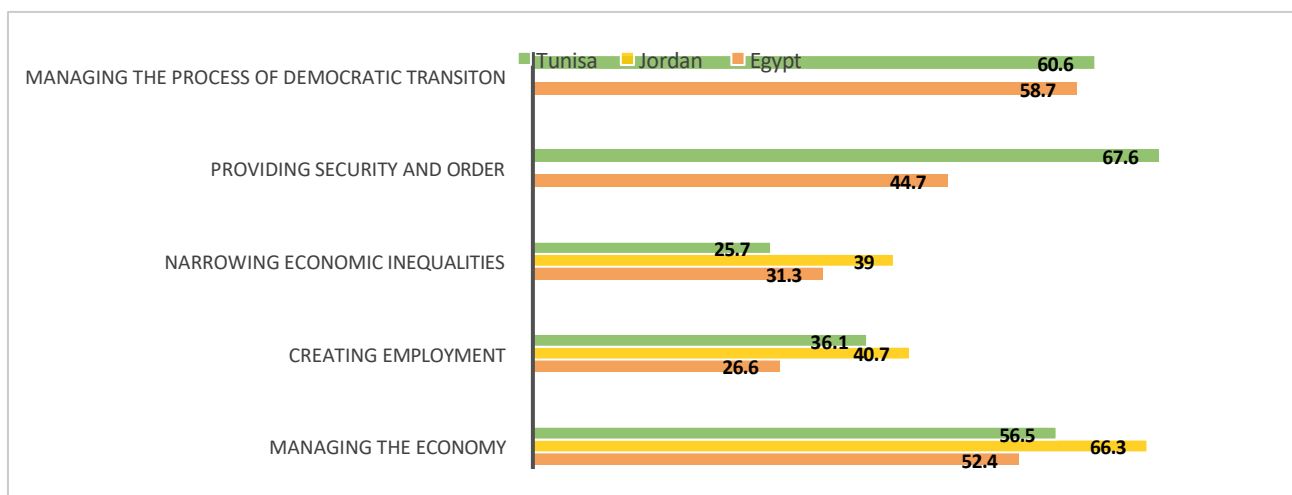
Figure 2: Main challenges facing the country in 2011 (%)



Source: data from Arab Barometer II (2010---11)

People were not sure that Governments in 2011 were actually delivering on the specifics of what they saw as their countries' challenges. In fact, Governments were thought to be performing badly in two of the areas that were seen as major drivers of the Uprisings: job creation and inclusive development (i.e. *all* social groups benefiting from economic growth – narrowing inequalities).

Figure 3: Perception of Government's performance as good or very good in 2011, %



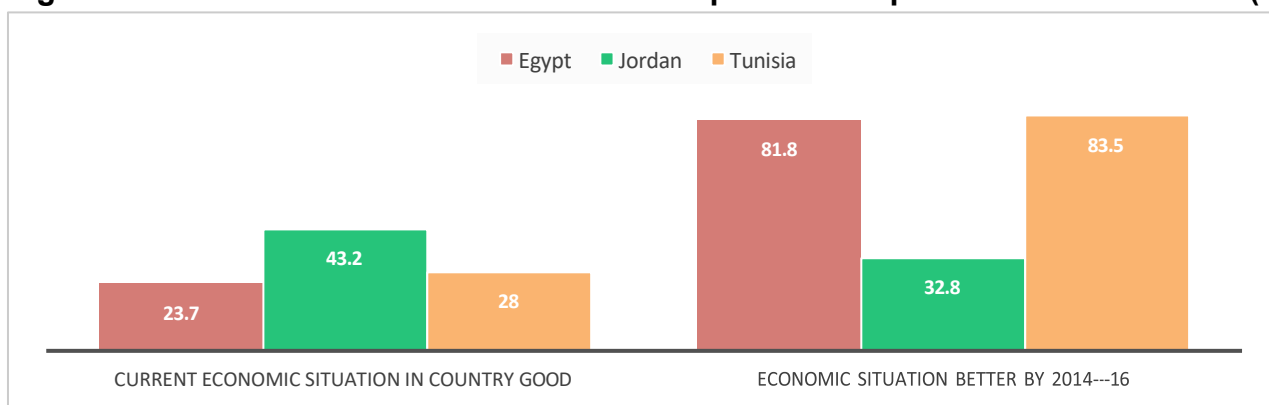
Source: data from Arab Barometer II (2010---11)

N.B.: Questions on Democratic Transition and Providing Internal Security were not asked in Jordan.

3.2 Hopes for the Future

Despite recognising that there were serious challenges, and despite the poor current performance by governments, most people were optimistic that things were going to get better and that by 2016 governments would address the main challenges facing their countries. This optimism peaked in Egypt (81%) and in Tunisia (74%) whereas Jordanians were less certain, with not much more than half being reasonably optimistic.

Figure 4: Economic Situation in 2011 and Prospects for Improvement in 3-5 Years (%)



Source: Arab Barometer II

Many also expressed trust in government (77% in Egypt, 72% in Jordan, and 62% in Tunisia) and a feeling that governments were undertaking far-reaching reforms (76% in Egypt, 69% in Jordan, 66% in Tunisia). Again, Egyptians and Tunisians were particularly

optimistic about prospects for post-revolutionary change: just over 90 per cent of Egyptians and around 85 per cent of Tunisians thought that in coming years they would have better economic opportunities and greater social justice. This optimism was likely due to the fact that, at least in Egypt and Tunisia, people felt that despite the economy being identified as the major challenge it would improve considerably (Figure 4). In Jordan, however, the number of people who expected the situation to be better by 2014-16 dropped over 10 per cent. They were also reasonably optimistic about corruption and trusted that Governments would deal with the problems: for example, three quarters of the Egyptians, two thirds of the Tunisians and just over half the Jordanians did think that the Government was making reasonable efforts at cutting down on corruption.

4 Did the Uprisings Bring Change?

4.1 Material Developments from 2011 to 2014

As with any post-revolutionary period, temporary turbulence in economic as well as political life is to be expected. The key question is whether the socio-economic and political causes of the Uprisings are being addressed in a manner which satisfies the expectations of a majority of the population. To what extent was people's optimism rewarded? Did things change for the better by 2014? How do people see the future?

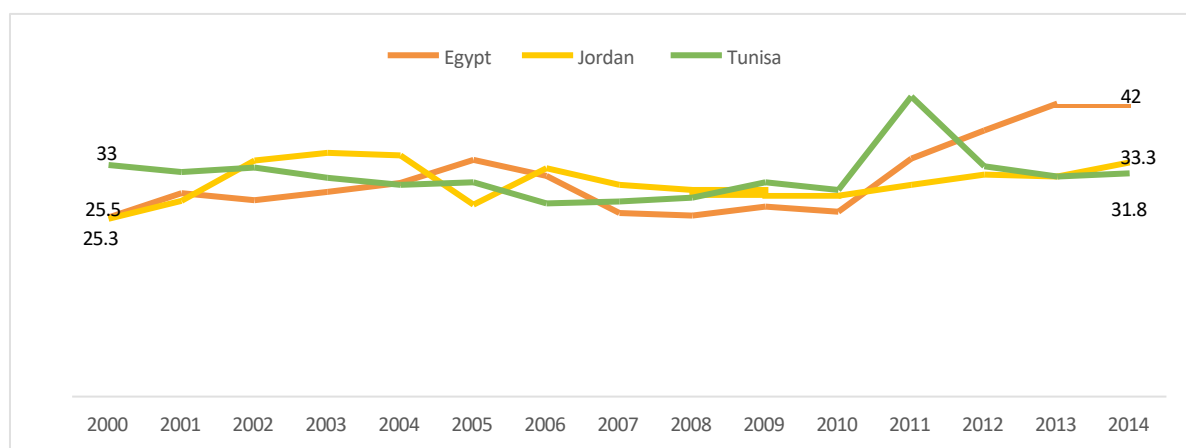
No single pattern captures post-Uprisings developments across MENA, and Jordan, Tunisia, and Egypt epitomise the differences, with markedly different political trajectories. Tunisia undertook a shaky path towards greater formal democracy and human rights. It is seen as the only MENA country on this transition path, although many question both the depth of political changes and whether both secular and Islamist post-revolutionary governments have addressed issues of social justice. In Jordan, the monarchy assuaged discontent by changing governments and making some concessions, achieving a semblance of equilibrium, if perhaps temporary and precarious. In Egypt, the 'January Revolution' was met with successive counter-revolutionary efforts: first a military government (2011-2012), then an Islamist-majority parliament and Presidency (albeit freely and fairly elected), and finally a second Army-dominated government, after the 2013 coup removed the elected President and dissolved parliament (with some popular support). With the partial and qualified exception of Tunisia, post-Uprising governments across the region have not responded proactively to citizens' demands, but rather combined security crackdowns with making the minimal concessions necessary to stave off mass mobilisation.

The relationship between secular and Islamic factions was broadly similar in the run-up to the 2011 Uprisings: sectarian political ambitions were not forefronted as an issue. In Tunisia, urban organised opposition – whether Islamist or secular – followed in the wake of a growing snowball of popular protest, and when organised groups did intervene, they were careful to emphasise unity of opposition across ideological and religious ranks. In

Egypt, popular mobilisation also explicitly attempted to avoid too prominent a role for Islamists, reflecting both the strategies of secular protesters and the Muslim Brotherhood's traditional caution, as did the near-simultaneous protests in Libya, Yemen, Syria, and Bahrain. At an organisational level, movements with religious and/or sectarian support bases were clearly involved to a greater or lesser extent, but they avoided emphasising their sectarian identity both to avoid being targeted by incumbent regimes and in deference to the attempt to build unified opposition fronts.

Unemployment, one of the key drivers of the Uprisings, has remained high. Youth unemployment has remained unchanged in Jordan and Tunisia and has increased in Egypt. Unemployment continues to affect educated young people disproportionately and especially young women. Furthermore, the overall rate conceals the number of people, including the young, who have withdrawn from the labour market altogether or have become demoralised and are no longer actively looking for work. In addition, there are the underemployed, those in poor-quality, poorly remunerated jobs in the informal sector, and those working as unpaid family workers. Precarious employment of this kind inflates the apparent rate of employment, masking the difficulty of bringing about inclusive development.

Figure 5: Official Unemployment Rate (ages 18-24), 2000-2014

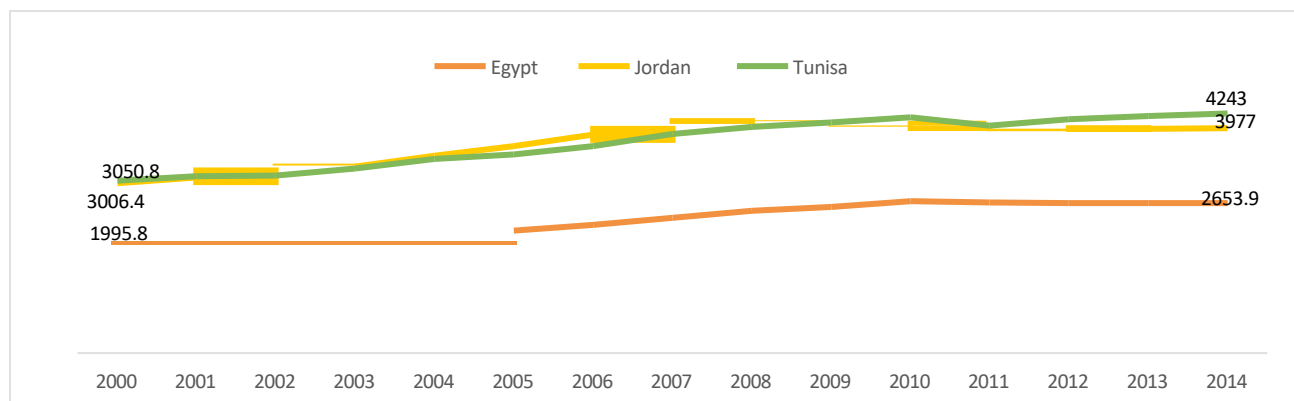


Source: data from World Development Indicators (World Bank)

Given that the resources on which these countries must build their development have not increased, other indicators of macroeconomic health provide cause for concern. Economic growth slowed compared to pre-Uprisings levels, which were already sluggish relative to these countries' 'youth bulges'(Figure 6). The Egyptian economy depends on income sources such as tourism and the Suez Canal, which are vulnerable to political instability, and on hydrocarbons, the price of which has dropped to historic lows. The portion of GDP made up of natural resource rents and tourism receipts declined from 11.7 per cent of GDP in 2010 to 5.4 per cent in 2014 (having already fallen from 19.6% in 2008). Consequently, GDP per capita growth declined from 5.1 per cent in 2010 to 1.8 per cent in

2011 before recovering slightly to 2.2 per cent in 2014. Jordan, where the economy was already in recession in 2010 due to the impact of the 2007-08 global crisis, saw GDP per capita contract by 3.4 per cent in 2010, and by 3.5 per cent in 2011, before showing some recovery by growing 1.3 per cent in 2014. Tunisia saw negative growth in 2011 (-3.5%) before some recovery in 2013 (+2.75%) and in 2014 (+1.3%).

Figure 6: GDP per Capita, US\$ at constant 2010 value, 2000-201



Source: data from World Development Indicators (World Bank)

In real terms GDP stagnated because of high inflation: between 2010 and 2014 the Consumer Price Index increased by 42 per cent in Egypt, 17 per cent in Jordan, and 27 per cent in Tunisia (World Development Indicators)¹. Detailed statistics of the extent to which poverty and inequality patterns changed are not yet available. However, overall, in Egypt poverty increased by 1 per cent to 26.3 per cent in 2012/13 compared to 2010/11², continuing a trend in increasing poverty that started in 1999/2000 (Abbott and Teti 2016). By 2016 it had further increased to 27.8 per cent³. There are no recent poverty data for Jordan, but the influx of Syrian refugees has certainly had a negative impact on the country's social and educational services. As with Jordan there is no recent information on the incidence of poverty in Tunisia, but loss of tourism revenues, decline in mining activities and low agricultural productivity are almost certainly having a negative impact on incomes, particularly in rural areas.

Other economic data are no more encouraging. The external debt stock of the three countries has increased: in Egypt it nearly doubled from US\$14.1 billion in 2010 to US\$24.3 billion in 2014, in Jordan it went from US\$36.54 billion to US\$39.6 billion, while in

¹ Unless indicated otherwise the microdata used in this section is from the World Development Indicators

² <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/capmas-poverty-egypt-increases-263-20122013>

³ <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/278-percent-egyptian-population-lives-below-poverty-line-capmas>

Tunisia it went from US\$22.5 billion to US\$ 26.4 billion. Foreign direct investment (FDI) in Egypt nearly halved, from 3 per cent to 1.6 per cent of GDP; in Jordan FDI declined from 6 per cent of GDP to 5 per cent; while in Tunisia it remained virtually unchanged at about 1 per cent of GDP. Net Official Development Assistance (ODA) in Egypt increased from 0.3 per cent of GNI in 2010 to 2 per cent in 2014; in Jordan it increased from 2.6 per cent to 4.9 per cent and in Tunisia from 5.3 per cent of GNI to 9.2 per cent. Remittances to Egypt increased from 4.8 per cent of GDP to 6.5 per cent, recovering to their level before the 2008 Economic Crisis; in Jordan they declined from 13 per cent of GDP to 10 per cent, and in Tunisia they remained virtually unchanged at just over 2 per cent. The number of Egyptian migrant workers declined between 2010 and 2013 while those from Jordan increased by 6.5 per cent and those from Tunisia by 4.5 per cent. Furthermore, little progress has been made in reforming the economy: in all three countries the public sector remains comparatively large, with little being done to liberalise the private sector; crony capitalism remains untouched, with the government favouring an insider economic elite in return for continuing support; and the IMF's 'liberalising' economic reforms which countries have accepted serve the interest of precisely those client elites. With such a track record, it is little wonder that the IMF itself recently recognised that 'trickle down' economics has not worked (Dabla-Norris et al 2015).

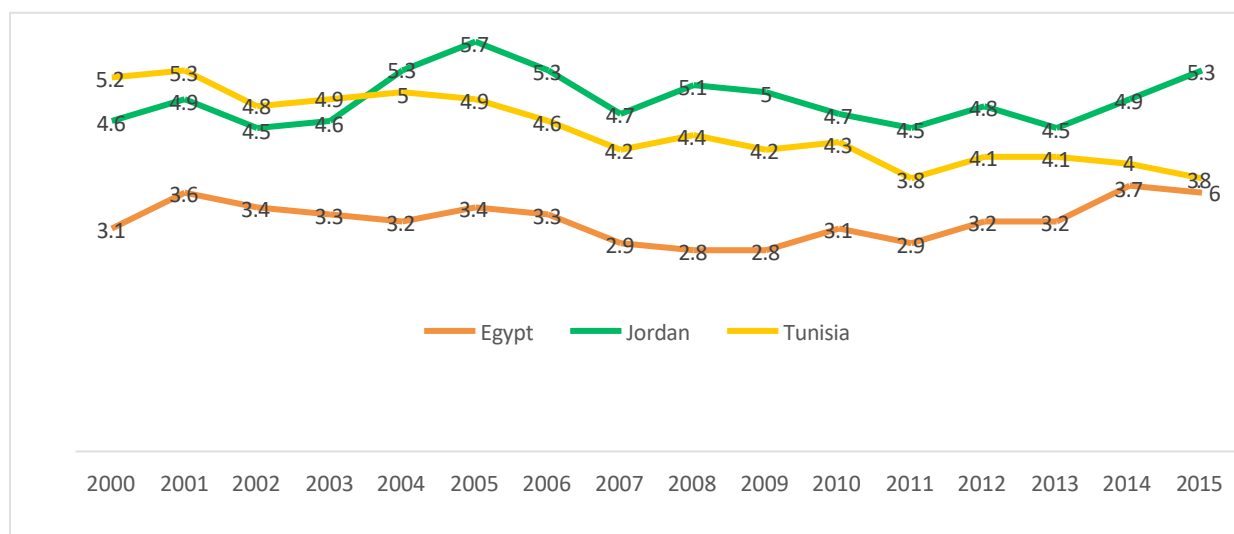
In real terms (constant 2013 prices) Official Development Aid receipts increased by 56 per cent in Egypt, 73 per cent in Jordan and 97 per cent in Tunisia, comparing 2007-10 with 2011-14. In Egypt the relative importance of donors changed, from Western donors heading the list to Arab donors contributing 75.5 per cent of ODA in 2011-14 (compared with 11.9% in 2007-10). Although ODA from the central EU Institutions nearly doubled and that of the EU countries remained much the same, their share of the total declined from 32.7 per cent overall for the period 2007-10 to 23 per cent for 2011-14 (authors own calculations of OECD data). In Jordan, by contrast, the combined contribution to ODA of the EU member states and EU Institutions increased from 27 per cent to 36 per cent while that of the Arab donors increased from 12 per cent to 20 per cent. In Tunisia the combined contribution of EU member countries remained the same, at 65 per cent, while Arab donors' share declined from 12 per cent to 8 per cent. In Egypt nearly a third of ODA was made up of concessional loans, and half in Tunisia, but only 16 per cent in Jordan. However, the entire ODA contribution is not large: in Egypt it is 1.2 per cent of GNI and in Tunisia 2 per cent; it reaches 7.6 per cent in Jordan and while only eight percent of this is humanitarian aid major donors including the US and some EU countries give the country aid specifically because it is having to deal with the refugee crisis.

5 Corruption

Evidence of the existence and negative impact that corruption has had on economic growth and development more generally is coming to the light of public attention and scrutiny. In Egypt, for example, politically connected firms have been shown to have

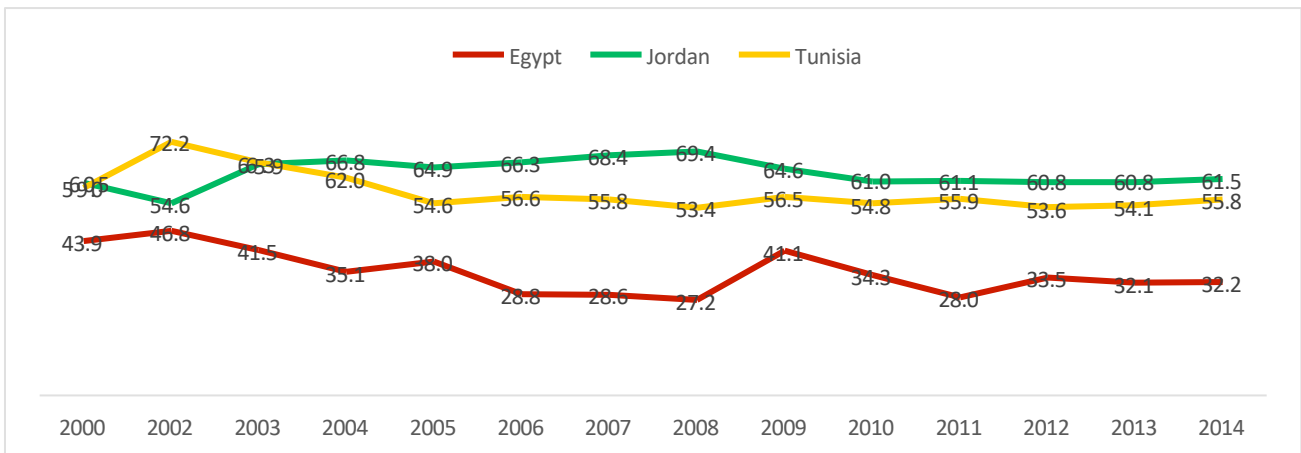
virtually cornered the market in loans, but they employ fewer workers and are less profitable than comparable firms that are *not* politically connected (Abbott and Teit 2016). As assessed by outside experts in the *Corruption Perception Index* (Figure 7), corruption remain high, although it has decreased since the 2010-2011 Uprisings in Egypt (from 3.1 out of 10 in 2010 to 3.8 in 2015, with low scores indicating high corruption), and in Jordan (from 4.7 in 2010 to 5.3 in 2015). However, in Tunisia there was an increase by 2015 from 4.3 to 3.8 out of 10. On the World Bank's *Control of Corruption* measure (Figure 8) a similar picture emerges: Egypt as the lowest but still high in absolute terms, some improvement in Egypt and Tunisia over the long term but deterioration in Jordan, and not much change since 2011 – perhaps some improvement in Egypt from a high point in 2009. According to the World Bank's Enterprise Surveys, 17 per cent of firms which responded to the survey said they had received at least one government request for a bribe when doing business in Egypt, about 13 per cent said this about Jordan and about 10 per cent said it about Tunisia (World Bank 2016). The Egyptian figure appears to be a considerable improvement over 2007, and the Jordan survey suggests the 2013 figure is four times as high as in 2006, but the method of collection is not sufficiently systematic and controlled for us to do more than note the figures.

Figure 7: Transparency International *Corruption Perception Index* 2000-2015, Score out of 10 (10=least corrupt)



Source: data from the *Corruption Perception Index* (Transparency International).

Figure 8: World Governance Indicators Control of Corruption (percentile rank), 2000-14



Source: data from *Worldwide Governance Indicators* (World Bank)

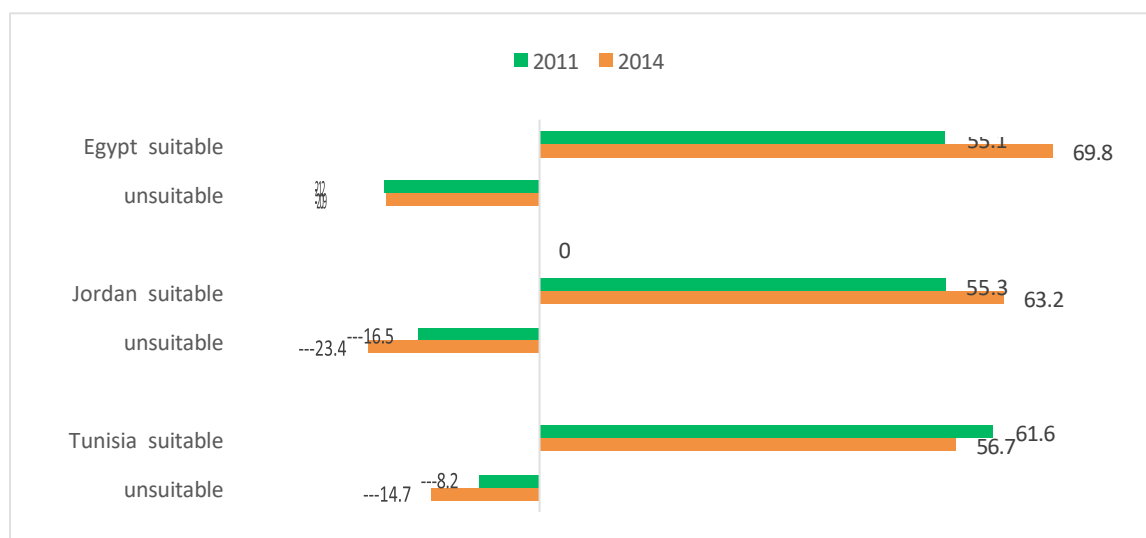
6 Political Alignments

In Jordan the tension between the monarchy and its Islamic opposition, even considering only its ‘moderate’ component in institutional politics, is still high in the country (Clark and Young, 2008a; C. Ryan, 2012). Tunisia and Egypt has long been perceived as being at the forefront of the attempts of Muslim-majority countries to develop a secular regime. In the short term the Uprisings of 2011 led in the cases of Egypt and Tunisia to the victory of Islamist parties. In the post-Uprising Tunisia secularists and Islamists formed a coalition, unlike their counterparts in Egypt. In Tunisia, in addition, the immediate aftermath of the Uprisings saw the emergence of a new wave of gender discourse more compatible with secular than Islamist groups (Gray 2012). On the other hand, the stance of political inclusion adopted by moderate Islamists generated a wave of new radical Islamic groups, coinciding with the exclusion of the lower classes from the benefits of the revolution (Merone, 2015). In Egypt after the 2013 coup the Muslim Brotherhood was banned and excluded from the formal political arena.

In the 2014 ArabTrans survey respondents were asked which of four forms of government were suitable for their country (and multiple answers were possible), and it is clear that there is no consensus in any of the countries. From the pattern of the responses we can see that around 38 per cent of Egyptians and Tunisians (but only a quarter of Jordanians) would prefer an unrestricted democracy with parties of all shades of opinion competing for seats in Parliament. Two per cent in Egypt would restrict eligibility to Islamic parties, but 6 per cent in Jordan and 11 per cent in Tunisia. Seven per cent in Egypt and 13 per cent in Tunisia, but 47 per cent in Jordan, would prefer Islamic rule without a Parliament, and 10 per cent in Egypt and Tunisia (and 6 per cent in Jordan) think an authoritarian leader who overrules parliament is the preferred solution. Forty-four per cent of Egyptians, 28 per cent of Tunisians and 16 per cent of Jordanians expressed no clear preference in their choice of answers. Thus approaching 40 per cent want a parliamentary democracy in Egypt and Tunisia, but in Tunisia there is a substantial minority for Islamic government, and in all

three countries a smaller but still significant minority consider authoritarian rule the most suitable option. Twenty-one per cent thought democracy was absolutely inappropriate for their country, 16.5 per cent in Jordan and only 8 per cent in Tunisia; Egypt has stayed about the same, but those who think democracy very unsuitable have increased to respectively 23 per cent and 15 per cent in the other two countries. Over half thought it suitable or very suitable in 2011 (over 60% in Tunisia), and the proportion has increased in Egypt and Jordan to 70% and 63% respectively but decreased to 57 per cent in Tunisia. It would appear that at least a few people have become disheartened by Tunisia's experiments with democratic reforms since their Uprising.

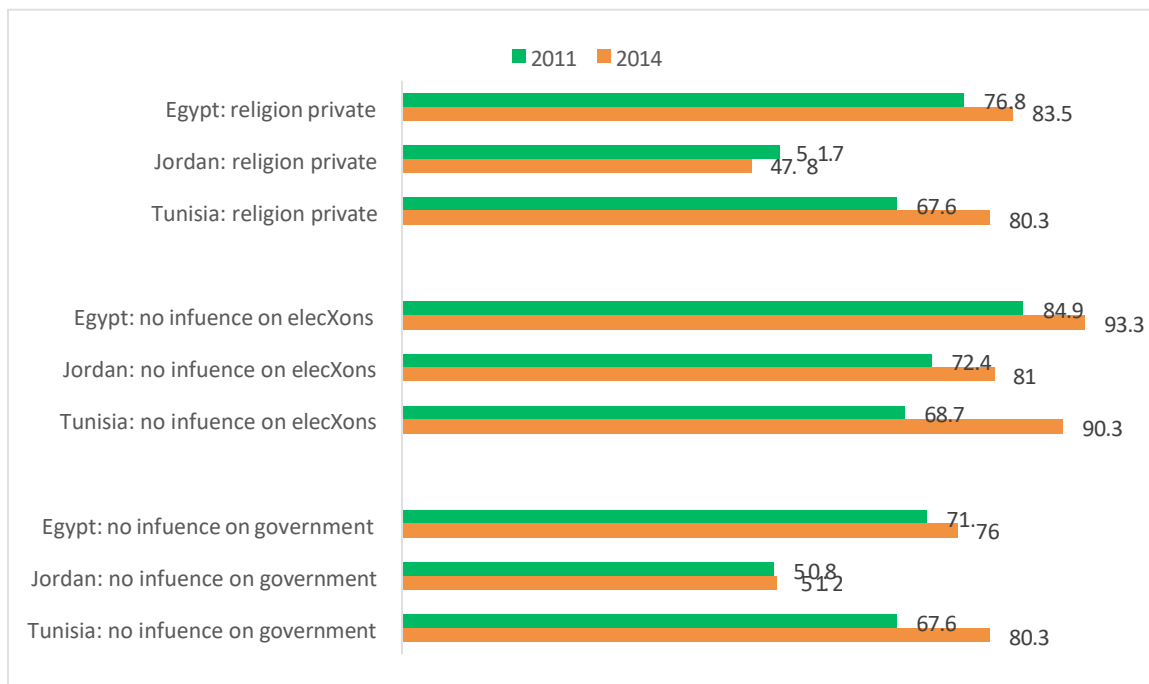
Figure 9: Suitability of democracy for the country, 2011 and 2014, %



Sources: data from Arab Barometer 2 and Arab Transformations Survey. Note: the 'unsuitable' figures have been presented as negative so that they would display on the opposite side of the axis

Popular opinion is nearly unanimous that religious leaders should not try to influence elections (over 90% in Egypt and Tunisia and over 80% in Jordan), and support for this view has increased since 2011 (most substantially in Tunisia but significantly elsewhere). A smaller proportion believe religious leaders should not influence government policies, a bare majority in Jordan, where it has not changed since 2011, but a substantial one in Egypt and Tunisia and increased since 2011, particularly in Tunisia. In 2011 three quarters of Egyptians, two thirds of Tunisians and half of the Jordanians agreed that religious practice was a private matter to be kept separate from sociopolitical life; this has increased to over 80 per cent in both Egypt and Tunisia but has not changed significantly in Jordan.

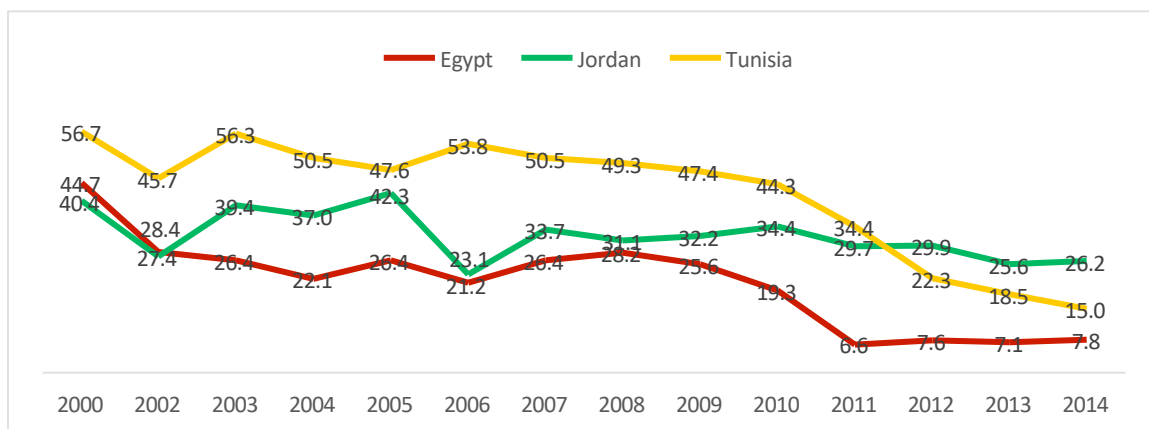
Figure 10: The separation of religion and sociopolitical life (% disagreeing with religious influence), 2010 and 2014



Sources: data from Arab Barometer 2 and ArabTrans

At a more practical level, on the World Bank’s measure of Political Stability and Control of Violence (which might be taken as a general surrogate for the cohesion of the country as a nation state, but also possibly as a correlate of the extent of autocracy in government) all three countries show a decline since 2000 (Jordan perhaps less so than the others) – they have been losing control of the streets. Tunisia falls away markedly since 2011, Jordan also continues its slow decline, but Egypt, again the least in control, appears to be stabilised or even to have improved slightly in recent years.

Figure 11: Political Stability and Control of Violence (percentile rank), 2000-2014



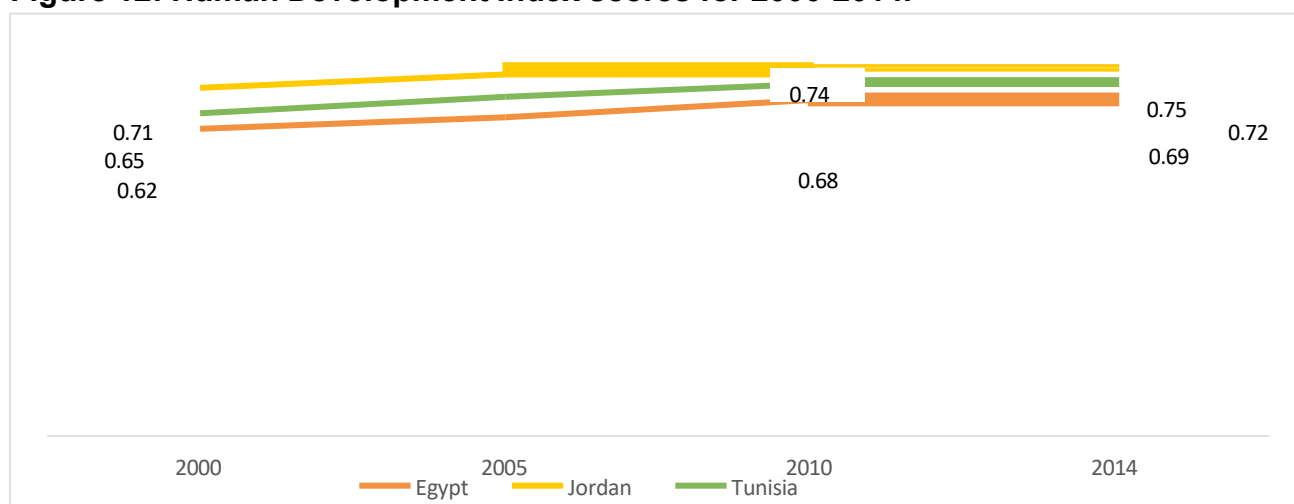
Source: data from Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank)

7 The Decent Society, Wellbeing and Rights

Raw economic data do not capture the full picture of socio-economic life, and it has long been recognised that measures of happiness and wellbeing are needed to provide a more rounded picture. On this count also, however, Jordan, Tunisia and Egypt have a worrying track record. With respect to wellbeing, there is little evidence of any improvement, with subjective satisfaction as measured by the Gallup World Poll moving up only marginally between 2010 and 2014 in Egypt (from 4.7 to 4.9, on a scale from 0 to 10), remaining unchanged at 5.1 in Tunisia, and declining in Jordan from 5.6 to 5.3. For countries experiencing such profound turmoil as Tunisia and Egypt, this in itself could be considered a positive result, but it does suggest that underlying causes of dissatisfaction remain.

On the Human Development Index (Figure 12), which tempers economic information with measures of ‘social goods’ such as education and health, there has been a slight but noticeable increase since 2000 but there was virtually no progress between 2011 and 2014. If we look at data collected to put together the Decent Society Index (Abbott et al 2016), which aims to measure the extent to which societies provide the conditions for decent living, we find that Tunisia ranks 17th out of 121 countries in 2014 and Jordan 24th in the ‘social wage’ domain – the economic contribution the Government makes to welfare. Tunisia spends a respectable 16-17 per cent of GDP on each of health and education provision and Jordan spends a little less on health but 27 per cent on education. Egypt, which ranks only 94th (but there is a great deal of bunching of scores in the middle of the scale) spends only 8 - 9 per cent of GDP on each of health and education, but it has a social security system which is rated below Tunisia’s but above that of Jordan.

Figure 12: Human Development Index scores for 2000-2014.

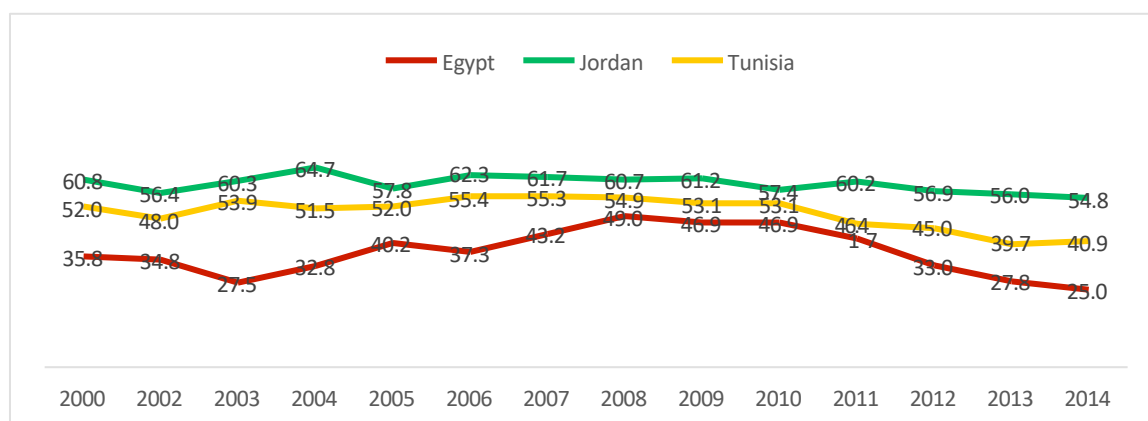


Source: Human Development Index data (UNDP)

‘Regulatory Quality’, on the Worldwide Governance indicators, captures ‘perceptions of the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations

that permit and promote private sector development’ and may be taken as a proxy for the extent to which government makes space for individuals and groups to exercise their capacities. On this measure Jordan and Tunisia were above the half-way mark in 2000 and Egypt distinctly below it. Jordan and Tunisia have declined slightly over the years, mostly since 2011 and to a larger extent in Tunisia. Egypt improved between 2003 and 2008 but since then its performance has declined steeply since 2010.

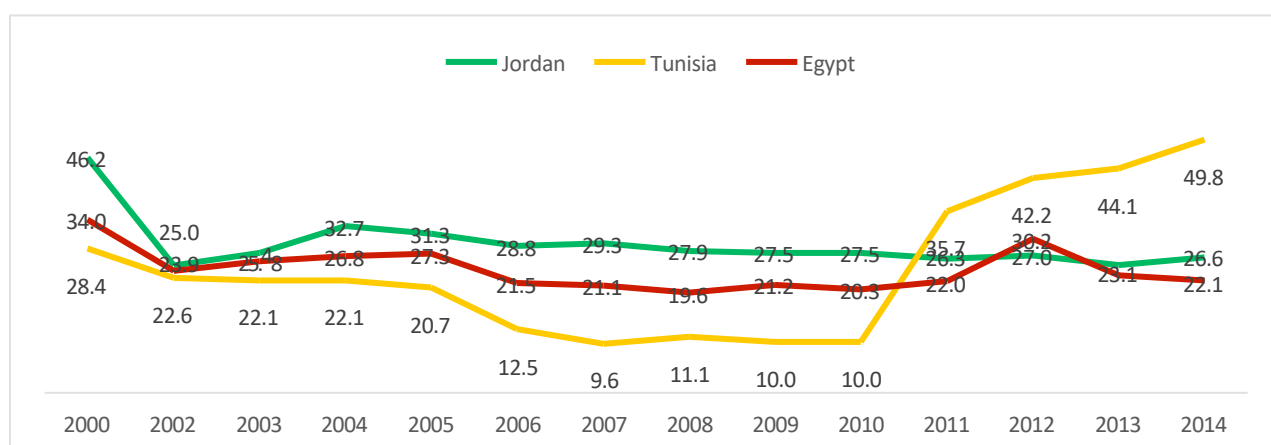
Figure 13: Regulatory Quality (percentile rank), 2000-2014



Source: data from Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank)

A different kind of capability is measured by ‘Voice and Accountability’ – the extent to which residents can take part in their own government and hold the government to account for poor performance. On this measure Egypt and Jordan have shown a low, fairly flat level of performance since about 2002, with no noticeable improvement after 2011. Tunisia, on the other hand, fell very low indeed in the period from 2006 to 2010 but since then has climbed precipitously to about the world mid-point.

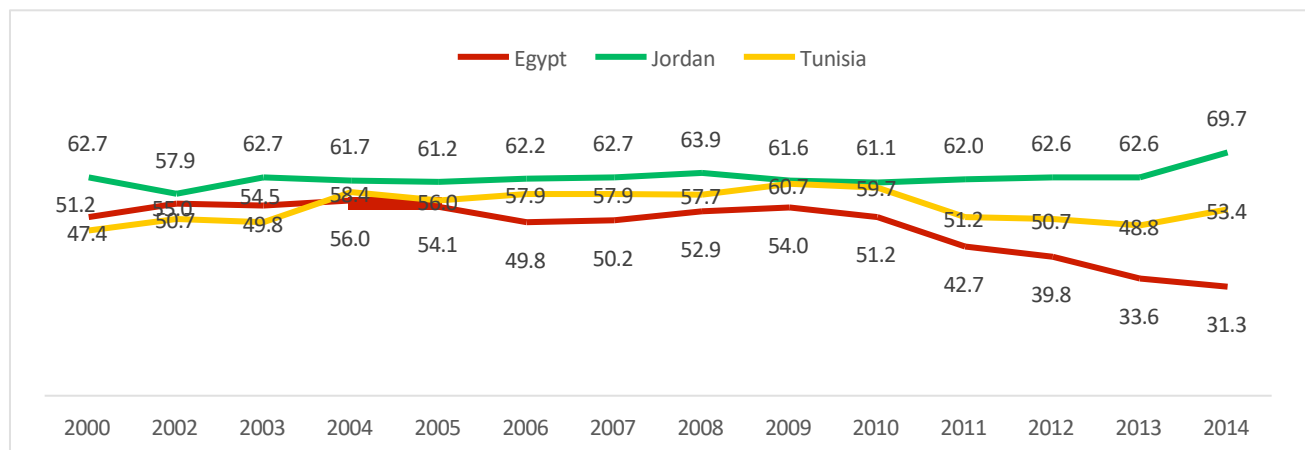
Figure 14: Voice and Accountability (percentile rank), 2000-2014



Source: Data from Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank)

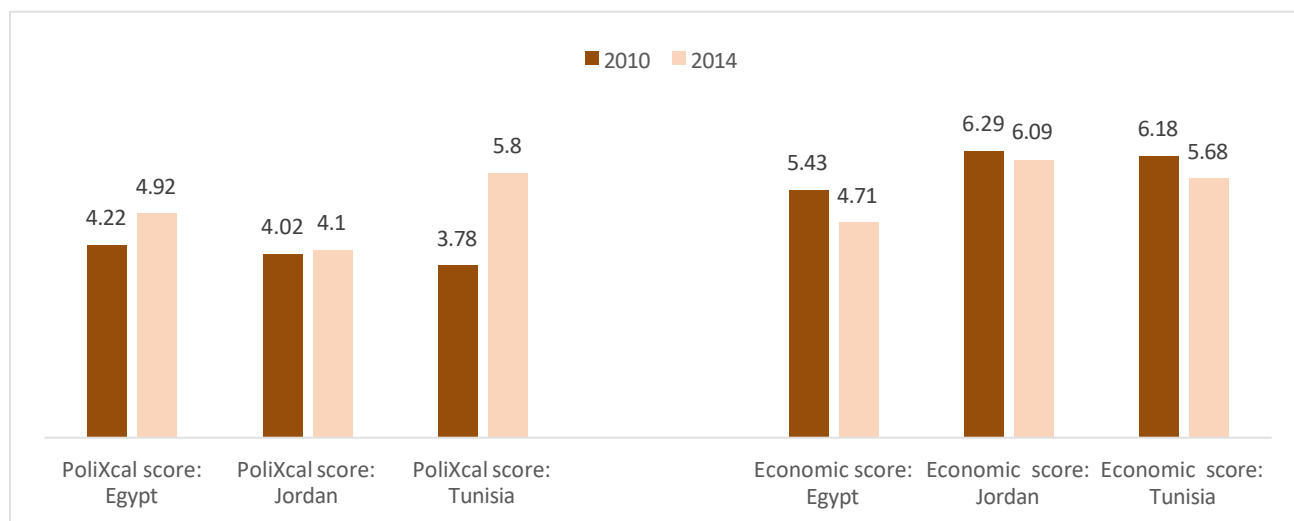
An important element in wellbeing, and the partial guarantor of human rights, is the Rule of Law. For a cohesive society which treats all with equal fairness, where people and the social institutions which they constitute can be trusted to work for the common good rather than just their own, one essential is that the known rules are applied even-handedly to all and all have access to dispute resolution. The essence of Human Rights is that they are rights for all. (This is one reason why corruption is so important: it declares and demonstrates that what can be expected changes according to what you can afford and/or who you know or by whom you are favoured.) According to the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (Figure 15), Jordan is considered to stand quite well in regard to the rule of law, running above the 60th percentile and (very recently) climbing to the 70th. Tunisia started below the 50th percentile and climbed to the 60th by 2009-10 but then fell sharply back to its former level and is only now beginning to improve again. Egypt started just above the 50th percentile and has fallen steadily, more rapidly since 2010, and it now stands only 31. The series of expert judgments encapsulated in the two Bertelsmann sub-indices of *Political Transformation* and *Economic Transformation* (Figure 16) reflect a different and more numinous assessment of a country's approach to governing, taking account of the openness, honesty and fair dealing which underlie governance and are embodied in the institutions that are created and maintained. These indices suggest a definite move towards democratic forms, strong in Tunisia but appreciable in Egypt, and perhaps a very slight movement in that direction in Jordan. However, all three countries are seen as becoming *less* open to western-style markets by 2014.

Figure 15: Rule of Law (percentile ranking), 2000-2014



Source: data from *Worldwide Governance Indicators* (World Bank)

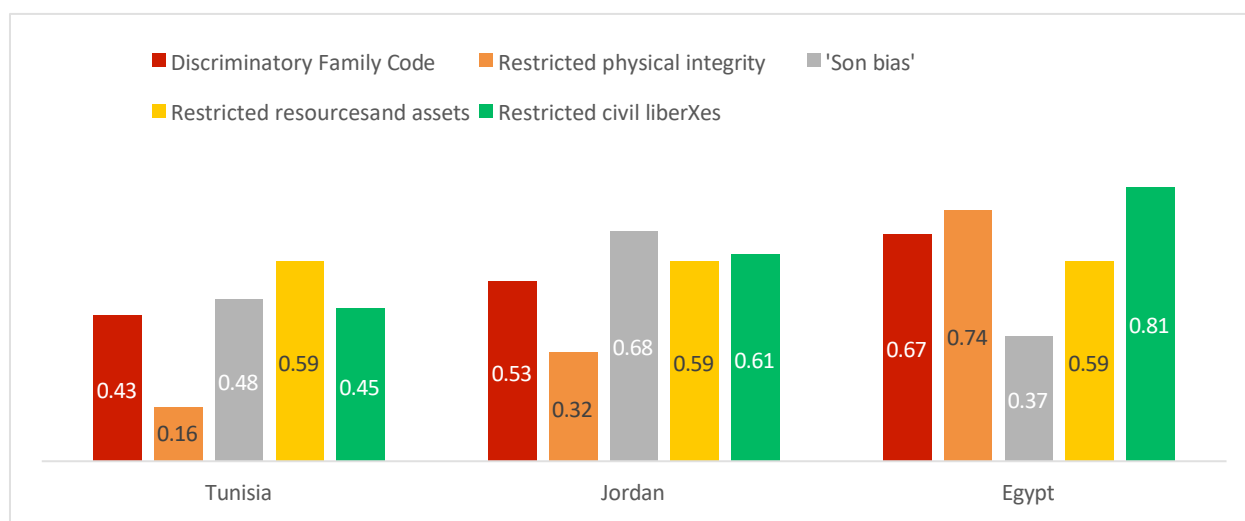
Figure 16: Bertelsmann Political and Economic Transformation Indices, 2010 and 2014 (scores out of 10)



Source: Data from the Bertelsmann Transformations Index

One sign of whether a society is fair to all and promotes human rights without discrimination is whether the women in it are regarded as full citizens and can rely on equal treatment, and this again is an important element of wellbeing – directly for women, and indirectly for men because if a society is capable of gross discrimination in one respect it cannot be trusted to deal fairly in others., which On the Global Gender Gap Index for 2014 (World Economic Forum) all three countries come out much the same, with an aggregate gap between the genders, averaging economic participation, educational attainment, health and political empowerment, of just over 60 per cent, with virtually no change since 2010. The best scoring nations, in Scandinavia, score over 80 per cent in 2014; the worst scoring, Yemen, scores 51 per cent. On the OECD’s Social Institutions and Gender Index, which assesses the extent of structural discrimination, in 2014 Tunisia appears as exhibiting medium discrimination, Jordan high discrimination and Egypt very high. Figure 17 shows the scores on the five subscales, and it can be seen that Tunisia and to a lesser extent Jordan owe their better though still poor scores to a low score for *Restricted Physical Integrity*, their other scores being undistinguished. Egypt scores lower, though still at a level to indicate discrimination, on ‘structural bias towards sons, but highly on Family Code and Physical Integrity and even higher on *Restricted Civil Liberties*. It cannot be said, therefore, that any of these countries have fulfilled any expectations of equality that women may have had at the time of the 2011 protests.

Figure 17: Gender Discrimination: Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2014



Source: data from Social Institutions and Gender Index (OECD)

Note: high scores indicate high discrimination.

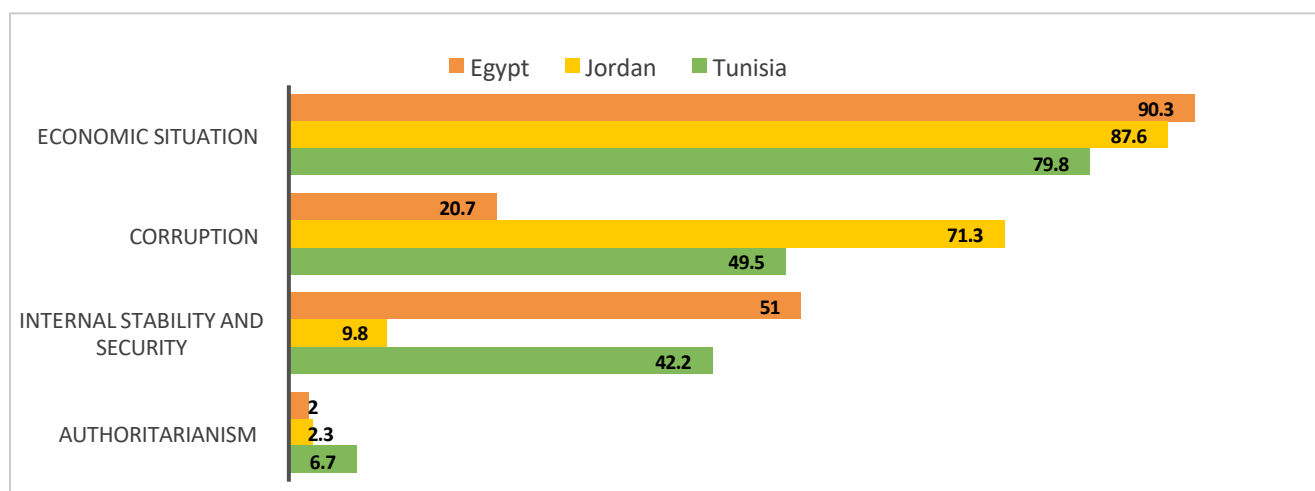
8 Meeting Expectations

The lack of improvement in material conditions was evident in the responses ordinary people gave to the 2014 ArabTrans survey. Despite their optimism about the future in 2011 (see Figure 4 above), only 12 per cent of Egyptians thought the Arab Spring had been positive for their country by 2014, and although the proportion was higher in Tunisia it was still only 31 per cent. Jordanians had been less confident about the future even initially, but even here progress had been less than anticipated, with only 25 per cent thinking that the Arab Uprisings had brought about positive change for their country.

Furthermore, respondents saw the same challenges in 2014 as the ones they identified in 2011, with the economic situation nominated by a far higher proportion of respondents than other challenges in both years. Concern about corruption, nominated as the second highest challenge in both years, had increased by over 2.5 per cent to 71 per cent in Jordan and concern about internal security increased marginally in Tunisia. However, as in 2011, few thought that the nature of the political regime was one of the two main challenges facing the country. Concern centred on the economy and to a lesser extent security and corruption. As in 2011, the overwhelming majority of respondents thought that corruption was pervasive in state agencies and institutions: 77 per cent in Egypt – even though it is not specifically nominated as one of the two major challenges – 88 per cent in Jordan and 85 per cent in Tunisia. Getting a job without *wasta* continued to be seen as difficult, with the proportion that saw it as virtually impossible increasing from about half to three quarters in Egypt, from about two thirds to about three quarters in

Jordan and remaining at about two thirds in Tunisia. People had clearly become disillusioned with government's efforts to crack down on corruption in Tunisia and Egypt: confidence that the government was making at least a reasonable effort to tackle corruption had declined from two thirds to one third in Tunisia and from three quarters to just over half in Egypt. Trust in government plummeted, most noticeably in Tunisia, where it fell from 62 per cent in 2011 to 16 per cent in 2014, and in Jordan, where it fell from 72 per cent to 29 per cent. Although less drastic there was also a significant decline in Egypt, from 77 per cent to 56 per cent. The latter difference is most likely due to the political polarisation which took place between the election of President Morsi (who received 51.49 per cent of the vote in 2012) and the 2013 coup removing him which set Islamists against those supporting Egypt's second post-revolutionary military government. No such polarisation took place in Jordan, while splits between Islamists and secularists in Tunisia have ultimately been recomposed in governments of national unity.

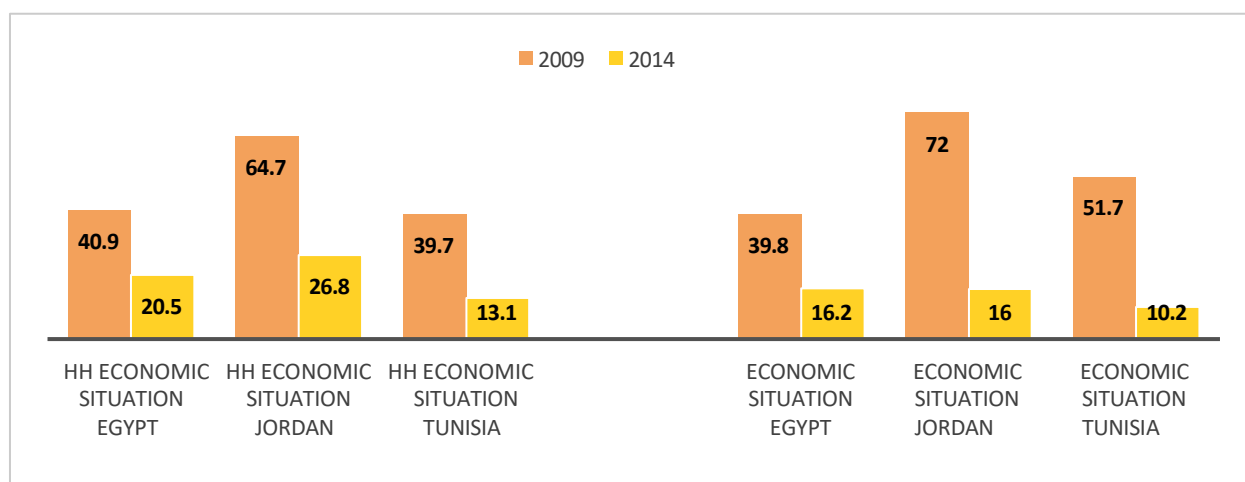
Figure 18: The two major challenges facing the nation in 2014: topics most often mentioned plus frequency of mentioning authoritarian government (%)



Source: Arab Transformations Survey

Thus the main concerns of ordinary people in 2014 continued to be the economic situation. as was the case in the aftermath of the revolution (see Figure 2 above) but with heightened concerns about security. Furthermore, the optimism that people had expressed in the aftermath of the Uprisings that the economic situation would improve had not been met. Asked to compare the economic situation in 2014 with 2009 people felt that their own and the country's economic situation had deteriorated - more so in Jordan and Tunisia than Egypt but to some extent in all three countries. Specific economic concerns included just over 50 per cent of both Egyptians and Tunisians and 28 per cent of Jordanians being worried about a loss of their or their spouse's job. Around 40 per cent of respondents in all three countries were worried that they would not be able to ensure that their children received a good education.

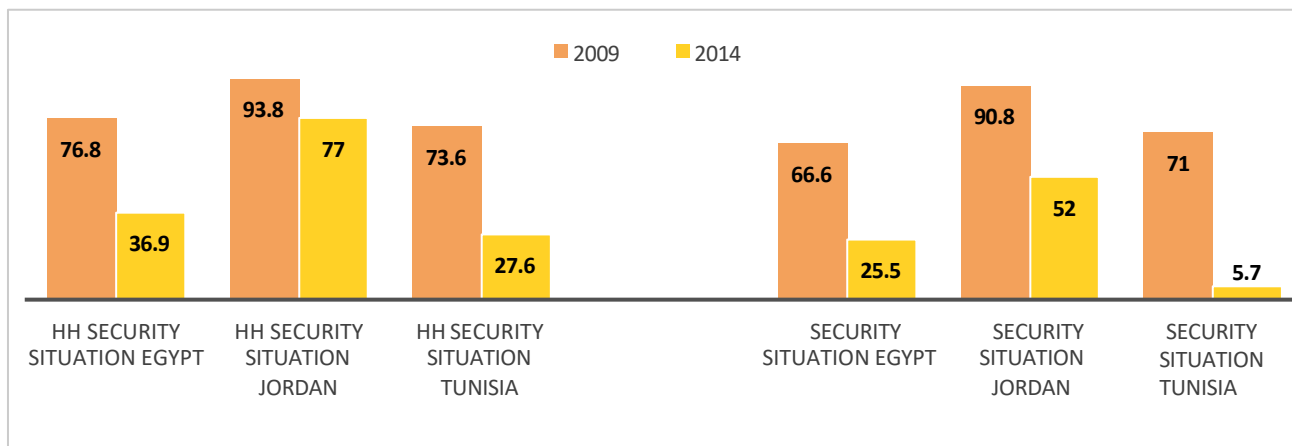
Figure 19: Economic situation of household and country good or very good in 2009 and 2014, (%)



Source: Arab Transformations Survey

Although not often nominated as one of the two main challenges facing the country compared with how respondents remembered the situation in 2009, respondents perceive the overall security situation as having deteriorated alarmingly by 2014. This was the case for both perceptions of security of the country and for the security situation of respondents' own families, although less so in Jordan than in Egypt and Tunisia. Ordinary people were concerned both about the threat of a war involving their country and about internal strife and terrorism. Three quarters of Egyptians and well over three quarters of Tunisians (84%) were concerned about the threat of civil unrest/terrorism, as were 46 per cent of Jordanians. Concern about their country being involved in a war was lower but still high, with 59 per cent of Egyptians, 66 per cent of Tunisians and 40 per cent of Jordanians being worried about the possibility. It should be noted that while Egypt and Tunisia have experienced some spectacular terrorist incidents – including aimed at tourists, with consequent impact on the economy – neither of these countries was ever at serious risk of nationwide insurgency, civil war, or war with neighbours. The perception of insecurity of this kind is more likely to be a measure of the effectiveness of regime propaganda, particularly in Egypt where the government has emphasised the theme of external and internal threats to security. In Jordan there has been less internal instability, but the threat of instability spilling over from Iraq or Syria is much more realistic.

Figure 20: Security situation of household and country good or very good in 2009 and 2014, (%)

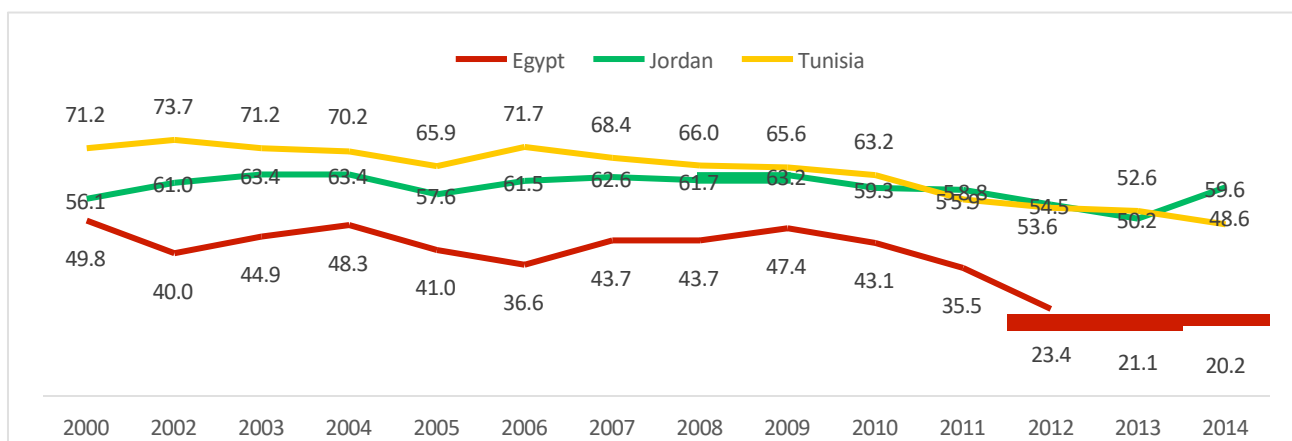


Source: Arab Transformations Survey

9 The Performance of Government

Judged from outside, on general government effectiveness (Figure 21), which includes the ability of governments to deliver basic services, Tunisia and Jordan stand above Egypt by quite a wide margin, though Tunisia has declined over the years; Egypt is seen as less than half as effective in 2014 as in 2000, though the precipitous fall since 2009 appears to be slowing down. (The Bertelsmann rating of management effectiveness contradicts these figures and shows a very slight improvement in their low level of performance between 2010 and 2014 in all three of the countries.)

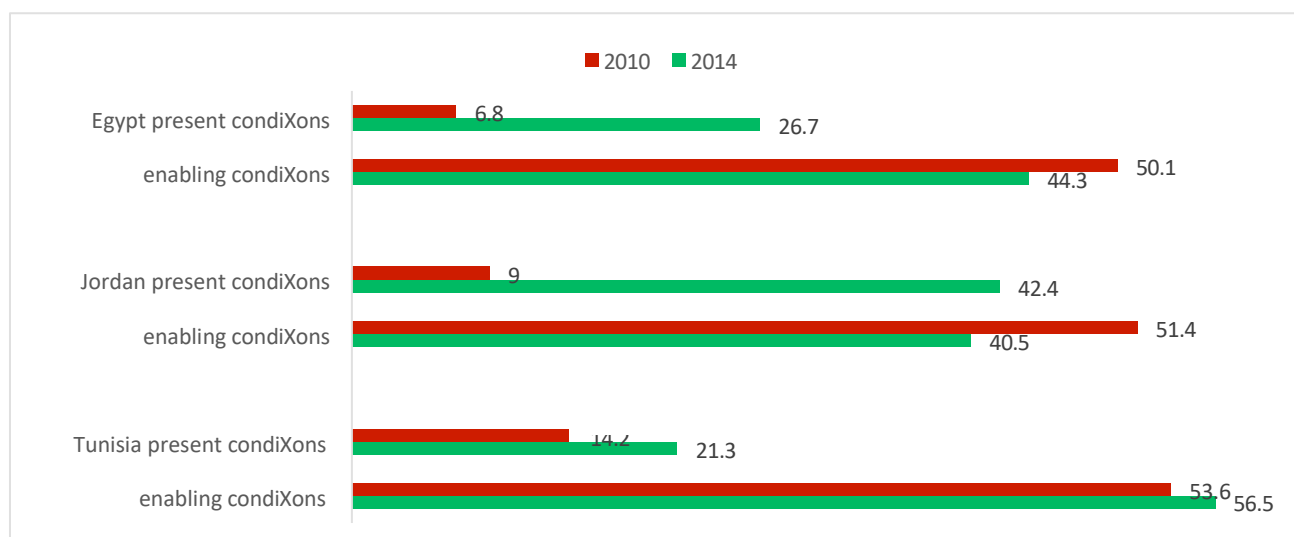
Figure 21: Government Effectiveness (percentile rank), 2000-2014



Source: data from Worldwide Governance Indicators (World Bank)

One interesting economic analysis (Hedrick-Wong and Jarrar 2015) makes the distinction between *Present Conditions* (the ‘output’ of present economic activity) and *Enabling Conditions* (the infrastructure which the government maintains or puts in place to ensure a conducive environment for business and industry), in the context of inclusive development, which is transformation which benefits all parts of the population, not just the poor and certainly not just the rich. They measure Present Conditions through growth in GDP and several measures of equality, weighting the latter heavily as compared to the former. Enabling Conditions are measured by (a) employment and income (GDP growth per capita and growth in useful/decent jobs at different levels of society), (b) access to equal opportunities (measures of education, health, infrastructure, financial inclusion, gender equality etc.), (c) factors which mitigate against or indicate the lack of decent youth employment (the size of the informal sector and the youth unemployment rate as negatives, and the growth of SMEs as a positive) and (d) measures of institutionalised government pathways to doing business and setting up new concerns. The whole is scaled against the performance of a set of ten developed democracies and standardised to range from 0 to 100. The point they make is that Egypt and Jordan have made spectacular gains, on this measure, in terms of present conditions, while Tunisia’s improvements have been much more modest, but Tunisia shares with only UAE and Bahrain in the whole of MENA the distinction of showing growth in the enabling conditions as well as in the present ones. It is this which makes a regime sustainable, because the benefits of growth are shared through the population.

Figure 22: Present economic performance and future enabling conditions (scores out of 100)

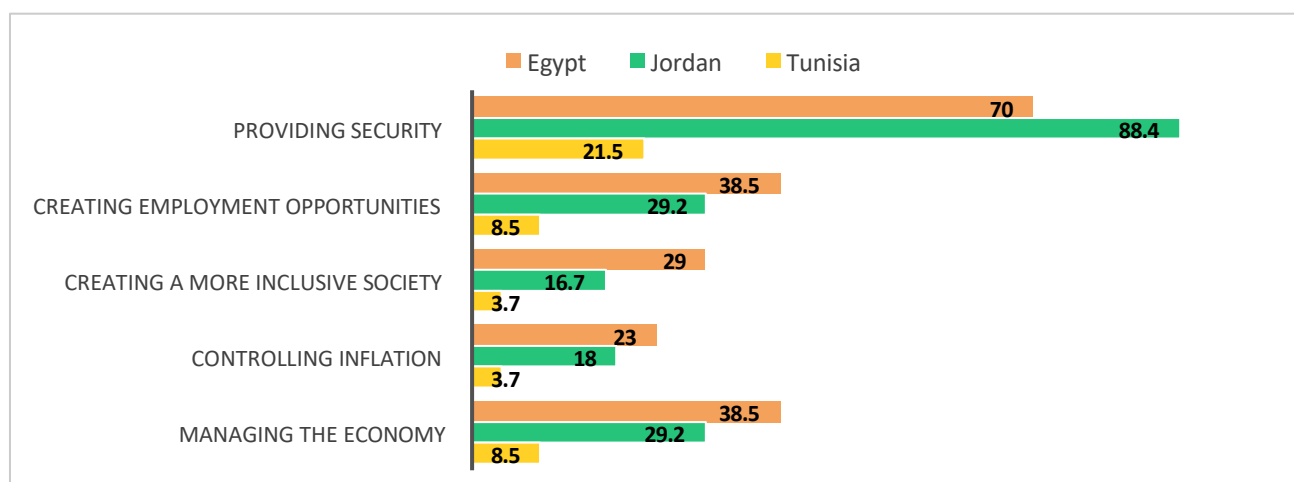


Source: data from Hedrick-Wong and Jarrar (2015: Table 2.1)

From inside, Governments were generally seen as performing badly, especially at implementing economic policy, and to be performing less well than in 2011, when performance had already not been rated very highly (see Figure 3 above). The decline in

the rating of government performance as at least good in terms of managing the economy was noticeable higher in Tunisia (from 56.5% to 8.5%) and Jordan (from 66.3% to 29.2%) than in Egypt (52.4% to 38.5%) but still a significant and large decline in all three. There was also little confidence in governments' performance as regards employment creation, controlling inflation or creating a more inclusive society. By contrast Jordanians and Egyptians thought their respective governments were doing a reasonable job in providing security, unlike Tunisia, where only a fifth thought the government was doing a good job.

Figure 23: Perception of Government performance as good or very good in 2014, %

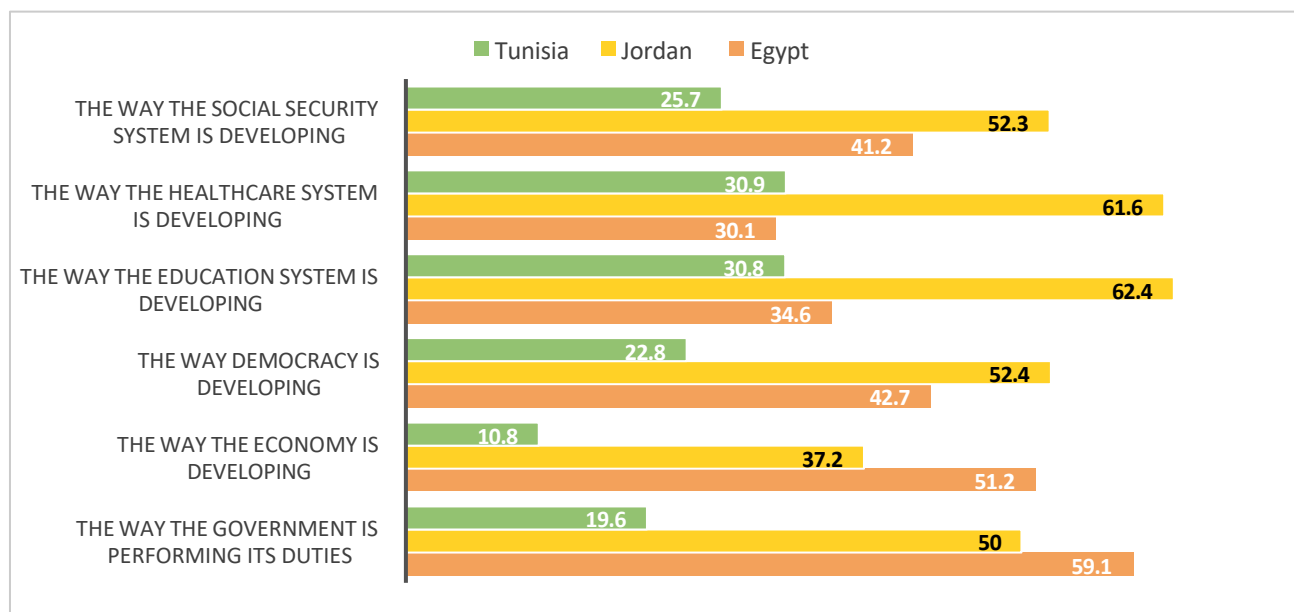


Source: Arab Transformations Survey

Levels of satisfaction with government performance in 2014 varied across the three countries but none scored highly. This contrasts sharply with the optimism of 2011, especially among Egyptians and Tunisians. In Egypt, while a relatively high proportion of citizens rate their government's overall performance highly (59%), noticeably less than 50 per cent of people are satisfied with the way education, healthcare, social security and democracy are developing, with just over 50 per cent being satisfied with the economy. This suggests that despite comparatively higher levels of overall satisfaction with government, structural problems in Egypt remain unaddressed. Indeed, people's expectations have been frustrated: across all three countries, levels of satisfaction with how things are developing in 2014 are much lower than the over 90 per cent who thought things would improve in 2011. Jordan scores noticeably better on the ways in which education, healthcare, social security and democracy are developing, but less than 40 per cent are happy with the economy, and only 50 per cent are happy with the government's overall performance of its duties. Tunisia scores particularly low on all counts. Of particular note are very low levels of satisfaction with government performance (19.6%) with developments in the economy (10.8%) and in social services (25.7%), and while 40 per cent of Tunisians judge government performance in providing basic utilities as being at least good, they are also profoundly disillusioned with their government's efforts at creating a more inclusive society (only 3.7% judge it to be at least good), at controlling

inflation (3.7%), and at creating employment (8.5%). These results suggest how limited post-Uprisings improvements are perceived as being, despite Tunisia’s better track record compared to other countries that experienced uprisings. Furthermore, levels of satisfaction with how democracy is developing – a proxy for how responsive governments are seen to be in addressing the concerns of their citizens – is fairly low, varying from a high of just over half in Jordan to less than a quarter in Tunisia.

Figure 24: Percentage who say they are satisfied or very satisfied with Government performance in 2014



Source: Arab Transformations Survey

10 Conclusions

People in Tunisia, Egypt, and Jordan were driven by both political and socio-economic marginalisation to protest in what became the 2010-11 Arab Uprisings. They were not all young, but the proportion of young people who were involved was unusually high and the access to internet communication among the more affluent/educated of them greatly facilitated recruitment and mobilisation.

It is important to keep in mind that these protests were not ideologically driven and were certainly not party-political or driven by charismatic figures. Rather, they were expressions of mass discontent with the life and prospects which people felt authoritarian regimes had effectively stolen, denying them even the hope of a better future.

Although Islamist parties profited from the Uprisings in the short term in Egypt and Tunisia, the Uprisings were also not about Islam or Islamic government. While religion and indeed the politics of Islam remain an important part of Arab life and a substantial minority would like to see Islam more firmly rooted and entwined in the institutions and practices of government, they are not a majority, and Islamist government is known to its citizens as just as likely to break its promises as any other sort.

The success of these protests did endowed post-revolutionary governments at first with considerable popular trust, but that trust was predicated on expectations of underlying social and economic issues being dealt with as well as the delivery of political reform. Economic data suggests no significant change since 2011, and social and political analysis suggests leaderships are at best sluggish in carrying out reforms. ArabTrans survey results in 2014 show that trust in political leaderships has fallen since 2011, as have expectations of future improvements, and people do not see any great improvements taking place to solve the underlying socio-economic tensions. This suggests not only that pre-Uprisings economic policies contributed to socio-economic dislocation leading to the Uprisings, but that post-Uprisings policies have failed to deliver the promised inclusive growth, leaving countries vulnerable to continued political instability.

Furthermore, the economic and political influence of Gulf monarchies increased in all three countries, including through the provision of development assistance and foreign direct investment. This is especially the case for Egypt which is also dependent on Gulf States providing employment opportunities for migrant workers, a dependency made worse by the unemployment crisis. The EU continues its policy of promoting liberal democracy and tying political rights to trade while ignoring popular demands for economic and social rights, economic security and decent public services. In practice, it also continues to support authoritarian rulers, seen as essential partners in maintaining stability, fighting terrorism, ensuring hydrocarbon supplies, and stemming migration into Europe. This stance has lost the EU any moral authority it had in the region. IFIs, along with the US and the EU, have failed to learn lessons about their economic policies, blaming crony capitalism and authoritarian rulers for the financial bankruptcy of regimes and for their

failure to deliver inclusive social development, rather than recognising the contribution to this result of their own economic orthodoxy.

The current position is that young people can often fail to find a way into their own society; the lack of productive and decent jobs at the level for which they have been educated drives them into the margins of casual and informal labour, family formation is delayed by lack of resource, and people come to feel that they are frittering away their lives and their capabilities to no good purpose. Older people feel let down by a breach of what might be considered an implicit contract; they are not reaping the 'rewards of good behaviour' and their children grandchildren are not enjoying the better future that had been expected. At the same time, little seems to be being done to overcome the historical and cultural tendency to infantilise and objectify women; half the population are still systematically denied at least some of their equal rights – the same rights to which their governments have signed up at the political level – and some of them are well aware of it. If cohesion does develop, it is likely to be a cohesion against government rather than with it.

What is at stake is citizens' trust in their government and their future. The failure of their governments to deliver on their pledges and of their lives to improve mean that people do not have a great deal of trust in government, governmental institutions or government programmes, nor not as much faith in their future as is needed for the societies to develop social cohesion and shared altruistic/impersonal norms. Corruption in particular – bribes demanded, payment for services which have already been funded from taxation, payment for special consideration, the allocation of places at good schools and at universities in return for payment or favours rather than on merit, *wasta* at all levels from getting a job on the docks to getting favourable terms for business loans – corruption and *wasta* in all their forms – marks the lack of cohesion in these societies. The nation is broken into two groups, not necessarily on the basis of class or affluence – if anything, corruption unites disparate fractions of the population – but into the 'favoured' and the 'unfavoured'. What the unfavoured have learned from 2011 is that regimes can be toppled or at least driven to make substantial concessions; what they have learned from the period after 2011 is that concessions do not guarantee that the underlying problems will in fact be tackled.

Social, political and economic policies must include a clear understanding of what people want and of the need to establish a sustainable path into the future. Data suggests a fundamental mismatch between, for example, the EU's liberal 'ballot box' conception of democracy and people's view that social justice and economic rights are integral to it. What is needed is modernising the public sector and ensuring good governance, alongside the promotion of human rights (civil, political, economic, and social). Policy should aim to eliminate elite capture, promote effective government (policy formulation and service delivery), and tackle corruption. Development assistance should be directed towards investment in infrastructure, supporting programmes creating social development and decent employment opportunities for young people. Much of this needs to be done really quite soon, if further turmoil is to be avoided: Hedrick-Wong and Jarrar (2015) suggest that

the world has about five years to assist MENA in moving from elite capture of the economy to inclusive development, with provision of jobs for the young and a fairer sharing out of resource across the population, if decades of political instability, economic collapse and social misery are to be avoided. One major lesson learnt by citizens across the region is that street protest is an indispensable complement and corrective to the ballot box when governing elites do not deliver on their commitments. In 2011 the crowds were mostly unarmed, but this cannot be guaranteed in the future. Authoritarian rulers may have regained the upper hand, but the Uprisings suggest that this 'stability' is precarious and that lasting solutions require fundamental political and economic reforms and the delivery of social justice.

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