

Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen:

The Long-Term Civil Challenges and Host Country Threats from “Failed State” Wars

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This analysis explores several key aspects of the longer-term civil challenges that have curbed U.S. success in its “long wars” in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria — as well as its more limited involvements in Libya and Yemen.

It focuses on the fact that all five states have deep structural problems that make them “failed states” in many similar areas of governance, major social changes, and development. It shows that these failures are so serious that they make the “host country” or national government a key cause of civil unrest and conflict and – in many ways – as much of a threat as the extremist and terrorist movements the U.S. is seeking to defeat.

Looking Beyond Symptoms Like Extremism and Terrorism to Host Countries and Regimes as the Cause of Civil Violence

The analysis warns that these structural problems are likely to shape many new civil conflicts and outbreaks of extremism, terrorism, and civil conflict in the MENA region, South Asia, and Central Asia. It also warns that they will be powerful, enduring destabilizing forces regardless of how successful the U.S., its partners, and the host country are in terms of defeating terrorist movements and insurgencies.

Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya and Yemen — and many of their neighbors — not only have extremely poor governance, and high levels of corruption, they are under intense pressure from increases in population, urbanization, and social change that go far beyond their current problems with any given groups of extremists. These problems are so serious that they are likely to lead to further extremism, and civil conflict for at least the next decade.

They also are so serious that no attempt at dealing with major threats from extremism, terrorism, or insurgency can be successful that only focuses on the security and military dimensions of such threats. The same is true of any efforts that focus on peace negotiations and short-term recovery aid. “Nation-building” does impose massive challenges of its own, but ignoring the forces that create “failed states” will both make any truly successful effort at conflict resolution impossible, but almost ensure the rise or resurgence of terrorism and civil conflict.

This analysis does not attempt to simplify the range of factors involved or to find a single set of main causes of extremism, terrorism, and insurgency. It does not attempt to offer simply or optimistic answers to problems that need far more in-depth analysis, and where it may be impossible to find truly workable solutions until a given state is finally driven to the point where it is ready to help itself. In the real world, the only practical choice may be to contain the threats in given country to its own territory – a form of strategic triage that must give priority to countries that are actually willing to address their civil challenges and have the unity to act.

The goal of this analysis is to demonstrate the full level of complexity involved, and to suggest that that any successful effort must look beyond defeating current enemies, look beyond current military and security trends, and look beyond the more immediate and topical civil causes of extremism like leadership, politics, and extremist ideologies.

The Key Long-Term Forces that Create “Failed States”

This report focuses on exploring the deep structural reasons these five nations have become “failed states,” and comparing the civil trends involved. Its Table of Contents is shown below, and it shows that the study focuses on the civil side of civil-military relations. It attempts to find quantitative metrics that illustrate the importance of each key factor, and it examines key longer-term trends in the following forces that will make Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen enduring problems:

- The enduring civil costs of terrorism, insurgency and civil war, and their post conflict impact.
- The impact of key problems in governance that are often largely independent of a particular leader and the country’s political system – whether democratic or authoritarian.
- The permeating impact of corruption, which along with security and secure employment/income poll as the three key sources of resentment, anger, and loss of confidence in the regime.
- The radical ongoing shifts growing out of demographics, population pressure, a major youth bulge, and shifts in the economy and social structure from agriculture and to service, government jobs, industry, and urbanization.

Military Operations and Tactical Victories Cannot “Win” America’s Current Wars

The analysis indicates that these civil forces are so important that the ability to help a given country deal with these longer-term challenges in civil-military affairs will be as important in achieving any kind of lasting victory and ongoing stability as the goal of military success and dealing with shorter term civil issues like politics and leadership.

It also shows why U.S. military efforts in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan, Libya, and Yemen that focus too narrowly on security, counterterrorism, and counterinsurgency will not lead to real victories in terms of conflict resolution or to lasting favorable outcomes and national stability. The United States cannot win in any of these countries by fighting half a war – focusing on the direct enemy rather than the flaws in the host county it is trying to aid, and by prioritizing the security sector at the expense of the civil one.

More broadly, the forces that helped turn Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen into “failed states” that do not meet the basic needs of their peoples are common to far too many other states in the developing world. While this study does not examine such cases, it is also clear that similar forces have helped shape violence and extremism in a wide range of African states, in Pakistan and several Central Asian states, in countries as diverse as Nepal and Cambodia, and in nations like Columbia and most Central American states. The “failed state” or “failing state” problem is not the function of a given culture or religion. It is a function of broader forces that affect all too many countries throughout the developing world.

If the U.S. is to limit the growth of extremism and terrorism within new civil wars and insurgencies, and promote stability in key states, it must look at Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen as case studies in the causes of instability and such threats to American interests and the American Homeland. It must work with other states to address such civil challenges, both to limit the rise of new threats and limit its involvement in future wars.

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The Enduring Civil Costs of Terrorism and War

The civil impact of the fighting to date in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen is all too apparent from news reports and official sources, and goes far beyond the problems caused by casualties and wartime damage. Any successful form of conflict termination must deal with the damage that has already been done, make the best possible attempt to create a new basis for development, and seek to develop the civil sector in ways that can restore support for the government and create lasting national unity.

The scale of these problems in all five conflict states is already so critical that none can easily recover without massive outside aid, although it is hard to do more than illustrate their present scale. Estimates of direct impacts of the fighting like civilian deaths and injured, refugees and internally displaced persons, and economic losses, are uncertain at best. It is all too clear, however, that such costs are already high.

A number of organizations like the World Bank and IMF, and a variety of NGOs, have attempted to estimate the impact of conflict on development both during the years of fighting and once it is over. Most do not include the many indirect impacts of such fighting in halting or actually cutting development, in destroying key economic facilities and the trading structures that shaped the pre-conflict economy, and creating lasting shifts in the population. They also cannot anticipate what the future and longer-term impacts of war will be. These organizations are in the midst of uncertain wars and equally uncertain peace efforts.

Most such estimates have also been based on the thesis that the state’s goal is to recover from the fighting by rebuilding the past and recreating the prewar economy and then developing the country on that basis – often using highly optimistic estimates of what levels of development are possible. These estimates tacitly assume that an efficient, unified, and honest government will somehow emerge that will be able to act consistently over time and that a peace settlement will be so successful that it can end or overcome the divisions and tensions that led to the extremism and violence that arose from prewar conditions.

Such estimates do not address the structural problems in the economy and demographics, and the deep divisions in the peoples of a given nation, that were forcing major changes before extremism and violence became the most immediate challenge. Short of a miracle, this is little more than optimistic nonsense.

Tracing the Patterns in Violence

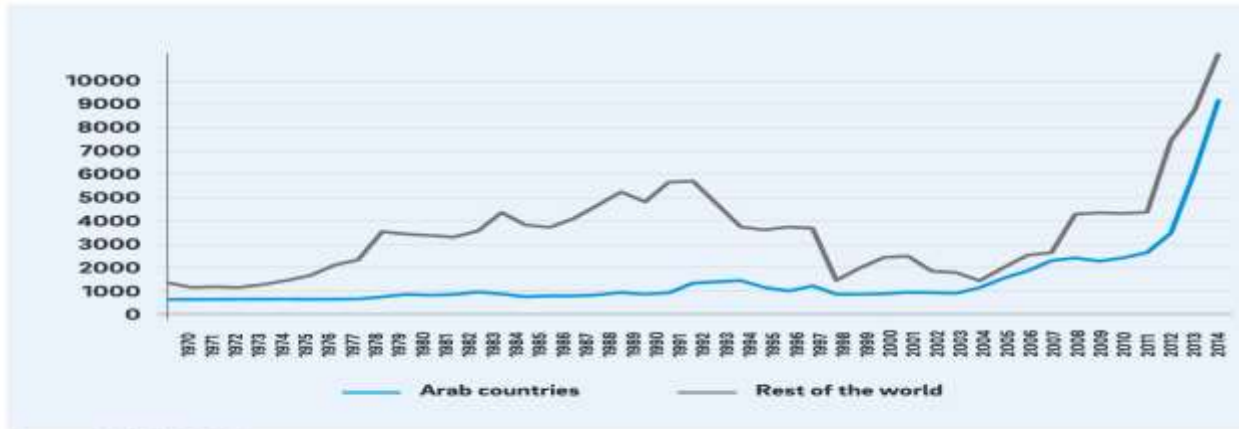
The current U.S. focus on terrorism, and on ISIS and Al Qaeda sometimes ignores the long history of recent wars and terrorism in the region. **Figure One** traces the long history of extremism and terrorism triggered by the Arab-Israeli conflict, but also by the more extreme forms of secular social and nationalism, and by the cult of the leader and authoritarianism —problems that affected many South Asian and other developing states outside the Arab world and MENA region.

Figure Two provides an updated estimate that reflects the peak impact of ISIS, and a shift from political upheavals and low-level conflicts to serious civil wars. It is important to note that 2017-2018 may represented a peak impact of extremism in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen, but there is no reason to assume that it represents the peak of such activity in the developing world.

It is important to note that these summaries were prepared by Arab experts working for the UN, and are not the product of some outside analysis, vision of a “clash of civilizations,” or confusion of religious extremism with mainstream Islam. If anything, the Arab Development Reports, prepared largely by Arab experts for UNDP, provided strategic warning from 2002 onwards of a crisis in the internal politics, economics, and social structures of MENA that led to the explosive upheaval in 2011 and that still shape the region today. They also are the same forces that help make these countries “failed states.”

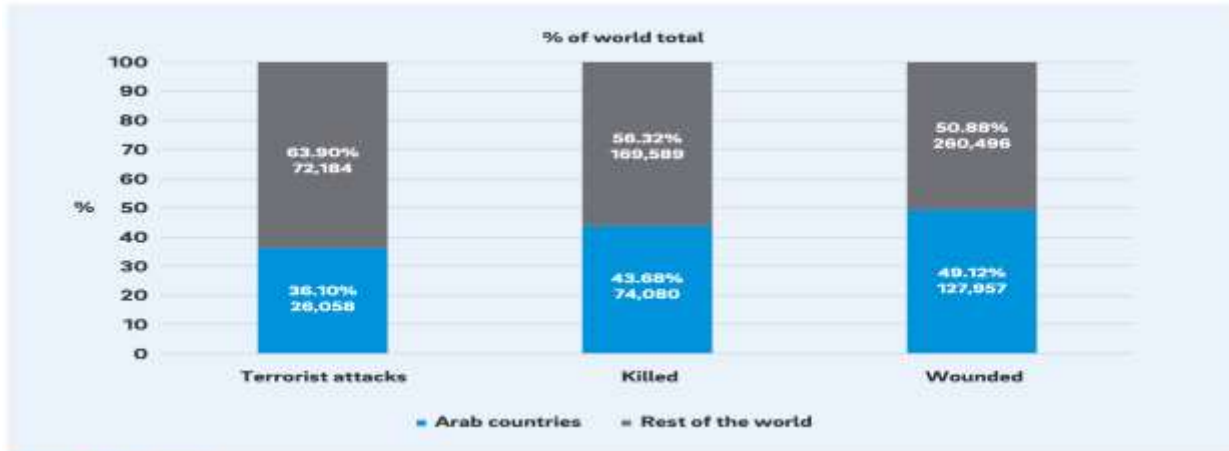
Figure One: Arab Role in Global Terrorism and Violence

Figure 8.3 Number of terrorist attacks, 1970–2014



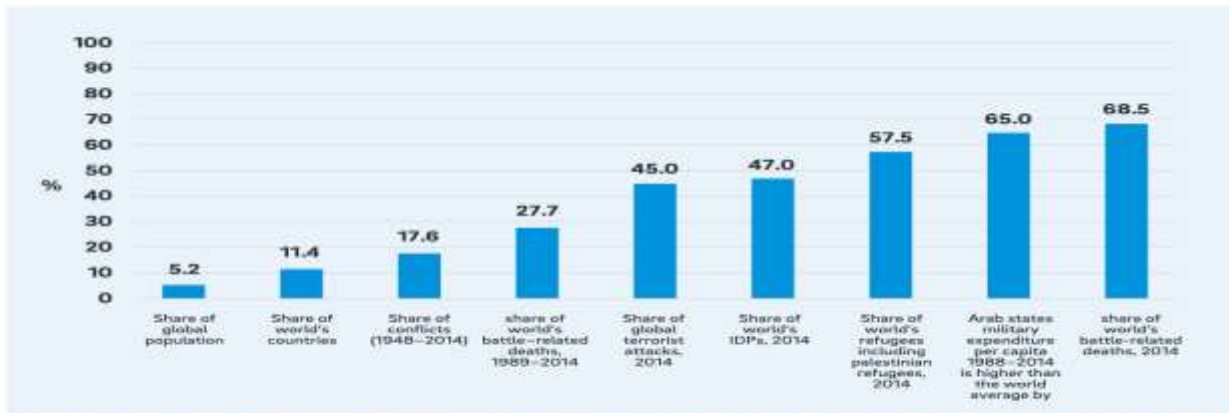
Source: START 2015.

Figure 1.7 Terrorist attacks and their victims in the Arab region versus the rest of the world, 2000–2014



Source: START 2015.

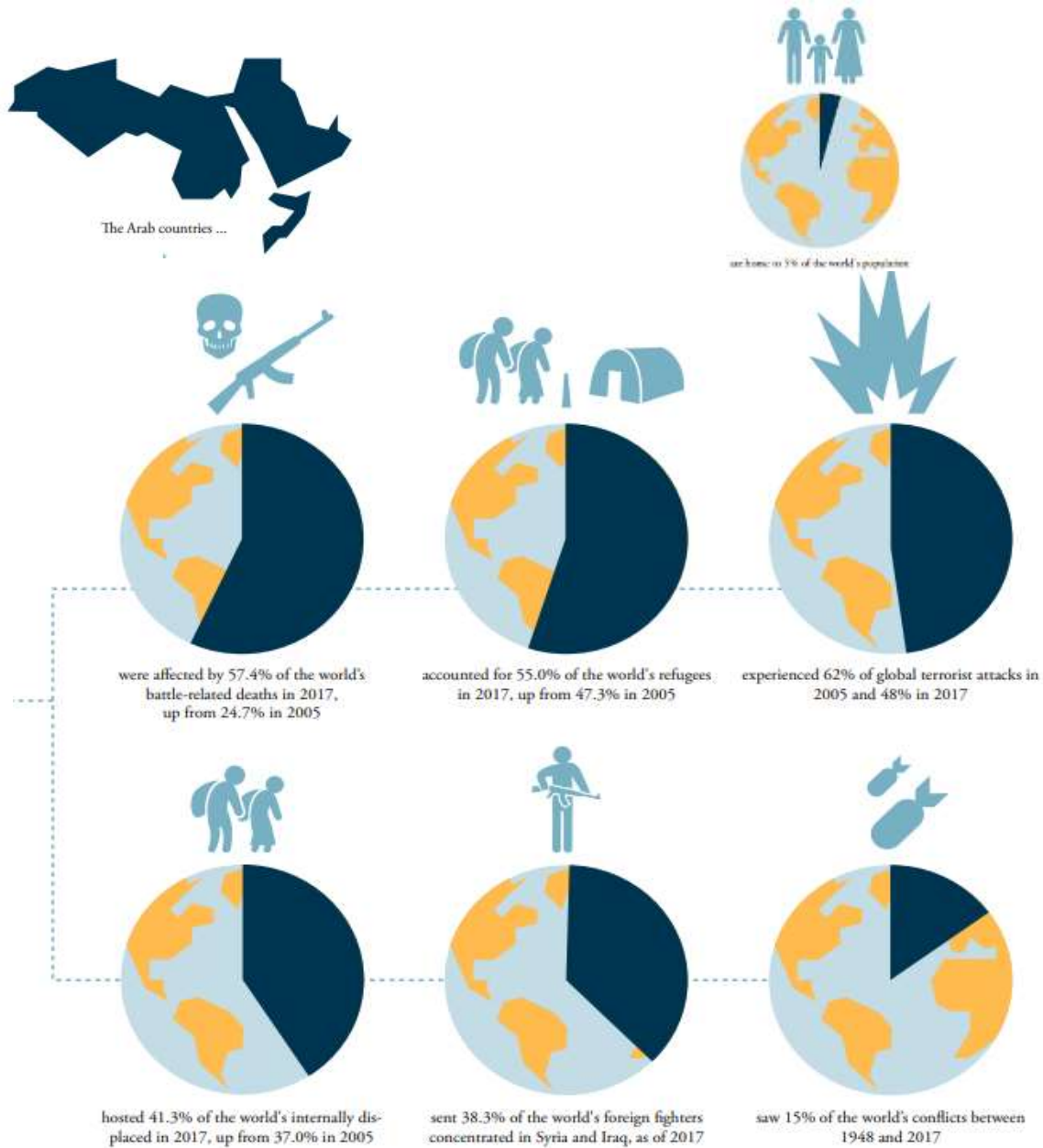
Figure 8.5 The Arab region: Home to 5 percent of the global population, but . . .



Source: Report team calculations based on START 2015, SIPRI 2015, UCDP/PRIO 2015, UCDP 2015, UN DESA 2013, and UNRWA 2015.

Figure Two: The Broader Patterns of Violence within the Arab World Through 2017

The dimensions of exclusions are exacerbated when they overlap, and they tend to overlap in areas affected by protracted conflict and large numbers of displaced populations within and across borders



Source: Uppsala Conflict Data Program Battle-Related Deaths Dataset and Georeferenced Event Dataset for battle-related deaths and number of conflicts; UNHCR Population Statistics Database for refugees and internally displaced persons and UNWRA Annual Operational Reports for Palestinian refugees; Global Terrorism Database for terrorist attacks and the Soufan Group, "Foreign Fighters in Syria" for foreign fighters.

Source: Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Leaving No One Behind, Towards Inclusive Citizenship in Arab Countries*, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2019, p. 26.

The Costs in Killed and Wounded

There are serious uncertainties in all estimates of killed and wounded, and the human cost of war. Such estimates not only draw on extremely unreliable reports and data collection methods, many are politicized by every side in a given case – for anything from humanitarian and political reasons, to efforts to support or oppose military actions by a given side.

For example, an estimate may focus on air casualties and no total casualties, or on extremist inflicted casualties and not those inflicted by governments. The end result is a wide range of different and conflicting numbers, most based on estimates of the initial impact of an event, and not on follow-on deaths or casualties caused by loss of income, shelter, food, forced movement, and lack of access to medical services.

At the same time, it is all too clear that the real costs have already been far too high. In the case of Afghanistan, the UN has made a good faith effort to estimate casualties, but its collection capabilities are limited and it must collect data in areas where witness reporting is often uncertain, or politicized. Even so, the UN data are useful in highlighting trends over a given period. For example, UNAMA estimates that 16,123 civilians died between 2009 and 2018, and 39,056 were injured. (https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama_poc_midyear_update_2019_-_30_july_english.pdf)

UNAMA's detailed semi-annual reports of casualties in Afghanistan differ enough over time to be less suitable as way of estimating total casualties during the entire war. As for outside guesstimates, some put the total number of civilians and combatants killed between 2001 and 2018 at well over 110,000, and the number of wounded at least 30,000. (https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2016/War%20in%20Afghanistan%20and%20Pakistan%20UPDATE_FINAL_corrected%20date.pdf and <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2015/War%20Related%20Casualties%20Afghanistan%20and%20Pakistan%202001-2014%20FIN.pdf>)

In the case of Iraq, Iraq Body Count (IBC), one of the most credible sources of estimates for that war, estimated 183,967-206,642 documented civilian deaths since 2001 as of late September 2019, and 288,000 civilian and combatant deaths (many of the combatants being civilians suddenly thrust into combat roles).

No equally credible estimate of directly wounded and injured was available, but it seems likely the numbers would be at least equal. To put the overall level of uncertainty in the Iraq War in perspective, the *Washington Post* reports that a study called the University Collaborative Iraq Mortality Study issued in October 2013 estimated much higher totals (<https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1001533>)

“From March 1, 2003, to June 30, 2011, the crude death rate in Iraq was 4.55 per 1,000 person-years (95% uncertainty interval 3.74-5.27), more than 0.5 times higher than the death rate during the 26-month period preceding the war, resulting in **approximately 405,000 (95% uncertainty interval 48,000—751,000) excess deaths attributable to the conflict**. Among adults, the risk of death rose 0.7 times higher for women and 2.9 times higher for men between the prewar period (January 1, 2001, to February 28, 2003) and the peak of the war (2005—2006). We estimate that more than 60% of excess deaths were directly attributable to violence, with the rest associated with the collapse of infrastructure and other indirect, but war-related, causes.”

The Syrian War has been the bloodiest of the five wars war to date, and it is the Assad government coalition forces that have dominated the casualties, rather than the Arab or Kurdish rebels or ISIS

forces. Since 15 March, 2011, casualty estimates vary from 371,222 to 570,000. The Syrian Centre for Policy Research estimates 470,000 killed up to 11 February, 2016. The United Nations and Arab League Envoy to Syria estimated 400,000 casualties on 23 April, 2016. Lastly the Syrian Observatory estimated 271,222-570,000 casualties up to 15 March 2019. (<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/a-staggering-new-death-toll-for-syrias-war-470000/>, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/04/staffan-de-mistura-400000-killed-syria-civil-war-160423055735629.html>, <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=120851>)

Estimates for the Libyan and Yemen civil wars seem to have even more uncertainty. Land warfare casualties caused by both government and rebel forces lack consistency as to the time periods involved and source of such data are often not described in the estimate. Estimates of air casualties seem equally uncertain, and vary even more sharply than usual, depending on the political perspective of the source.

The Costs to the Living and Survivors

Estimates of registered refugees seem broadly credible, although some seem to be exaggerated in order to increase outside aid. They do not, however, include unregistered refugees and often do not cover all such movements. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and people at risk often have to be guesstimates since no credible observer or collection source is present in many areas, and such figures cannot estimate the level of suffering of populations that lack the resources or capability to move.

It is all too clear, however, that the number of refugees, IDPs, and people at risk will have far more impact on the quality of conflict resolution and post-conflict stability than the number of dead, as will the number of sick, permanently injured. High as the casualty rates are in cases like Syria, the dead are the dead.

In contrast, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) still estimated in July 2019 that nearly 11.7 million out of some 18 million Syrians still in Syria required humanitarian and protection assistance. UNOCHA also estimated that, there were still 5.6 million refugees outside it, and 5.9 million internally displaced.

Some 2.1 million Syria children were reported to have dropped out of school, and another 1.3 million were at risk of dropping out. In addition to losing education, jobs, farms, and businesses – as well as any capital to use for investment — 22 per cent of Syria's 1,811 health centers were partially functioning and 32 per cent were out of service (<https://unocha.exposure.co/syria-a-crisis-in-its-9th-year-in-9-figures>.)

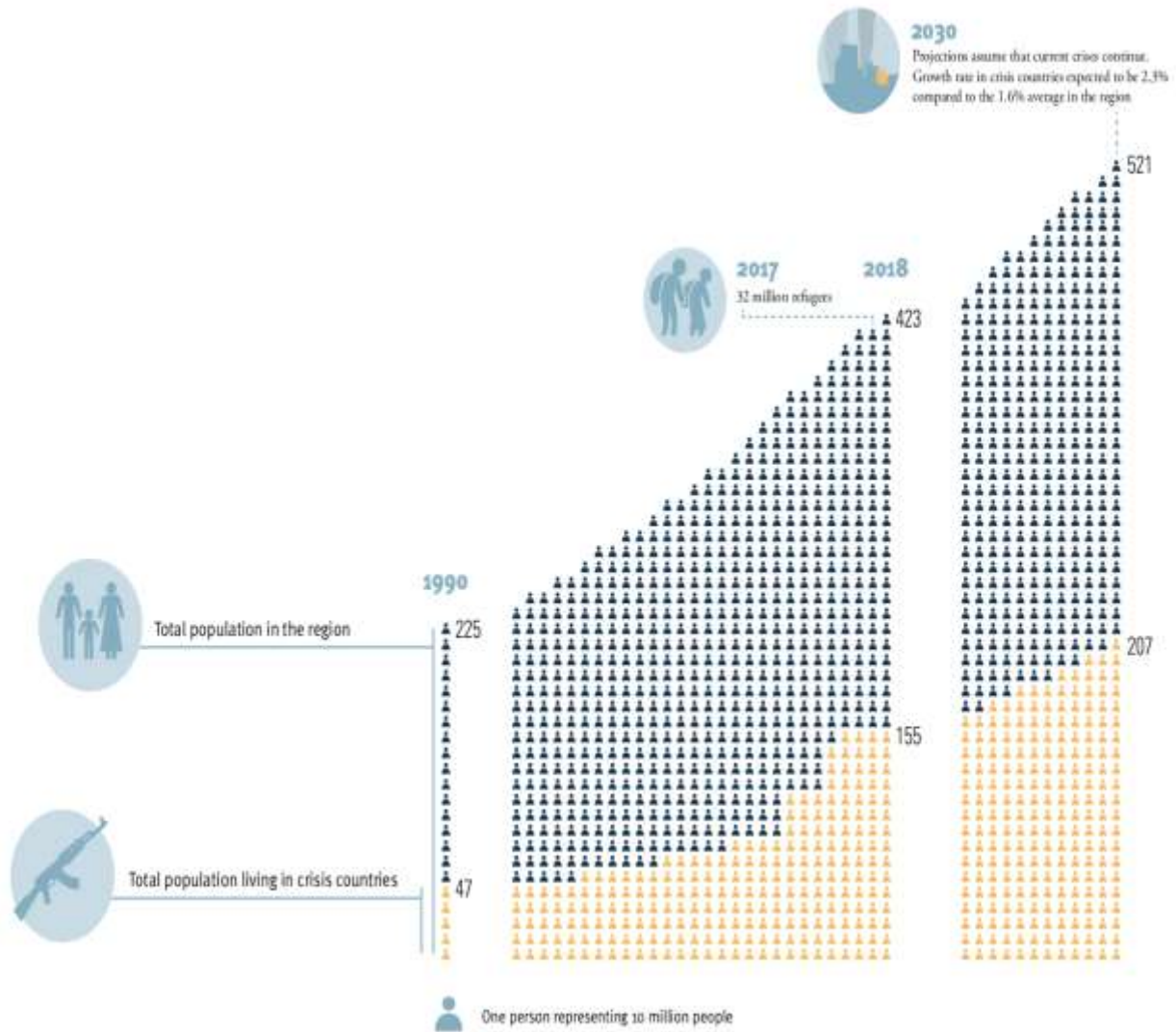
The numbers of Iraqis and Libyans caught up in the longer-term impacts of war are harder to estimate but involve major disruptions of ordinary life, education, and sources of income and employment – as well as forced permanent relocation.

War has sharply increased the rate of urbanization in Afghanistan and the shift of much of its population from farming into marginal service jobs and the equivalent of disguised unemployment. The data on Yemen are even more uncertain than usual, but UNOCHA estimated in February 2019 that 24 million people needed aid to survive, more than 20 million people were food insecure. Some 14.3 million were in acute need of assistance, and an estimated 4.3 million people had fled their homes. (<https://www.unocha.org/yemen/crisis-overview>, and <https://unocha.exposure.co/yemen-responding-to-the-worlds-largest-humanitarian-crisis>.)

- **Figure Two** shows how much these patterns of conflict have increased the MENA region's share of the war's battle deaths, refugees, terrorist attacks, IDPs, and foreign fighters.
- **Figure Three** shows how the "Arab Winter" increased the MENA's share of refugees and IDP.
- **Figure Four** provides data which reinforce the data in Figure Four and does include Afghanistan.
- While it is necessary to read the actual report to get the full meaning of two additional charts, **Figure Five** shows that recent wars have had a major impact on both national and regional human development.
- **Figure Six** shows that they have had a serious impact increasing poverty as well.

Figure Three: Estimated Impact of Continued Conflicts on Total Population of Arab Countries: 1990-2030

If ongoing conflicts are not resolved and demographic projections do not deviate from current trends, 40 percent of people in Arab countries will live in crisis and conflict conditions by 2030

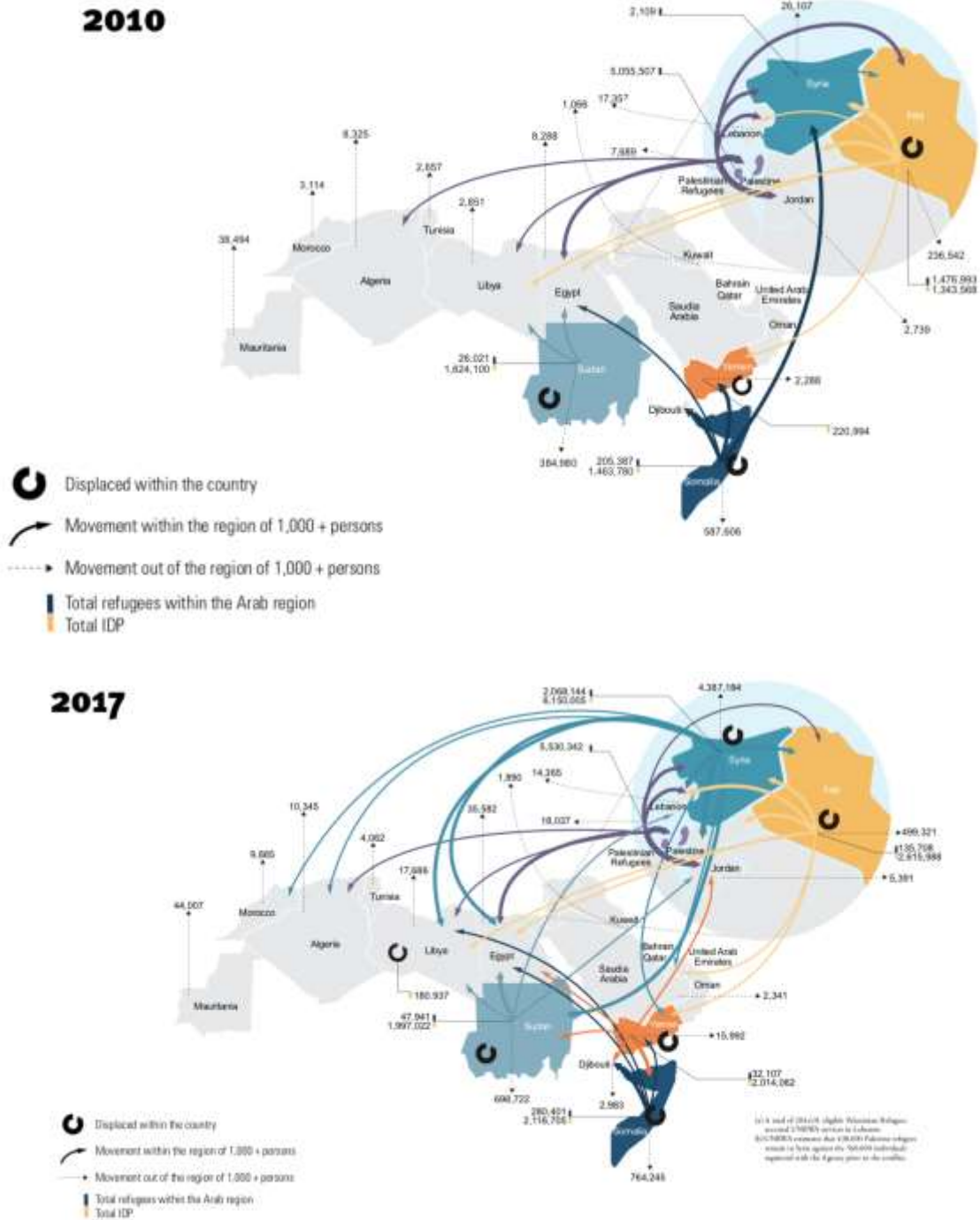


Note: Crisis countries are Iraq, State of Palestine, Somalia and Sudan; Libya and Syrian Arab Republic since 2011; and Yemen since 2014.
 Source: UNDESA Population Division, World Population Prospects 2017.

Source: Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Leaving No One Behind, Towards Inclusive Citizenship in Arab Countries*, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2019, p. 3.

Figure Four: The Impact of the “Arab Winter” on Increases in Refugees and Forced Displacements: 2010-2017

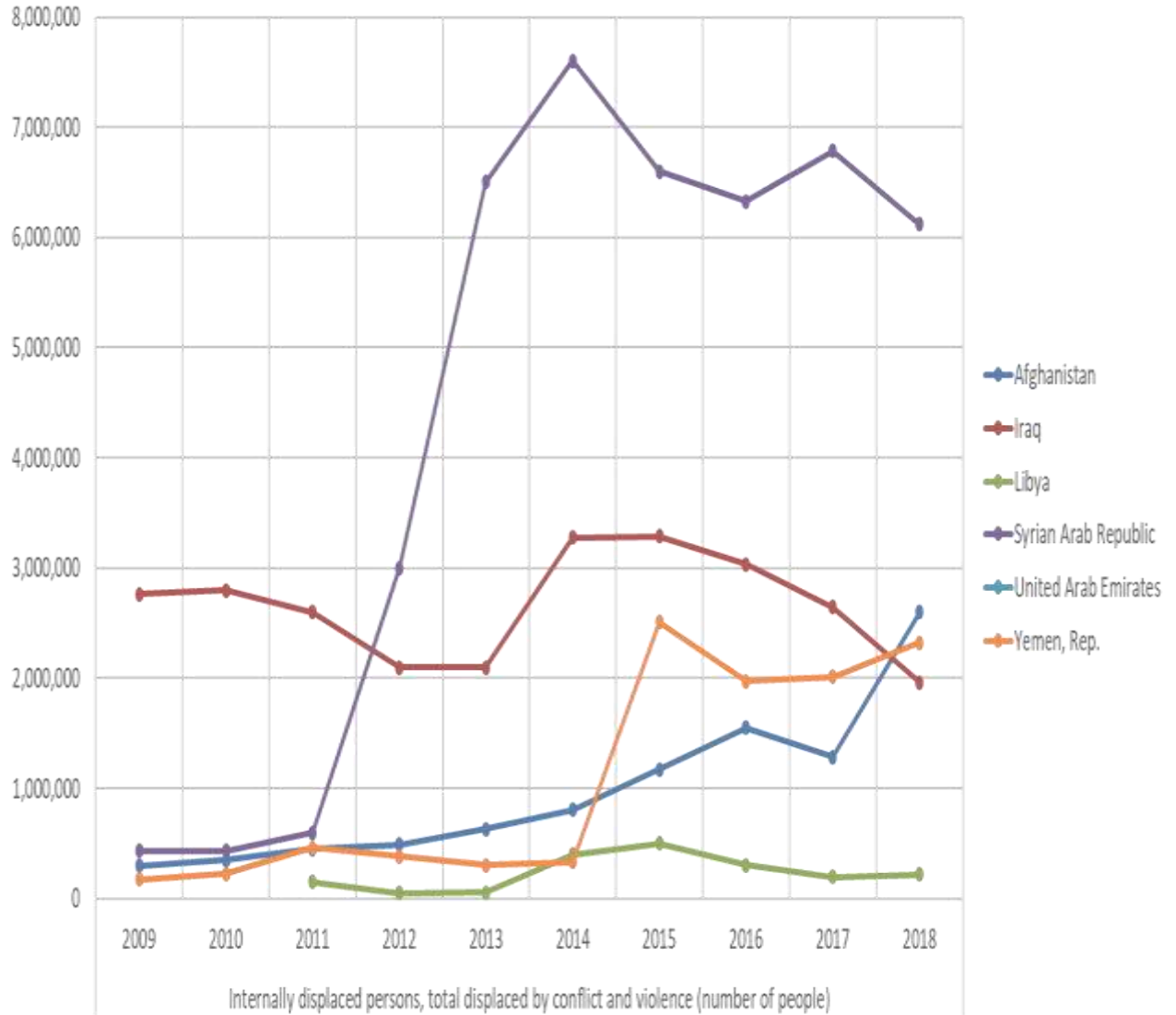
Increase of refugees and populations subject to forced displacement between 2010 and 2017



Source: UNWRA Annual Operational Reports for Palestinian refugees and UNHCR Population Statistics Database for all others.

Source: Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Leaving No One Behind, Towards Inclusive Citizenship in Arab Countries*, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2019, p. 28.

Figure Five: World Bank Estimate of Internally Displaced Persons, Total Displaced by Conflict and Violence: 2009-2018
 (number of people)

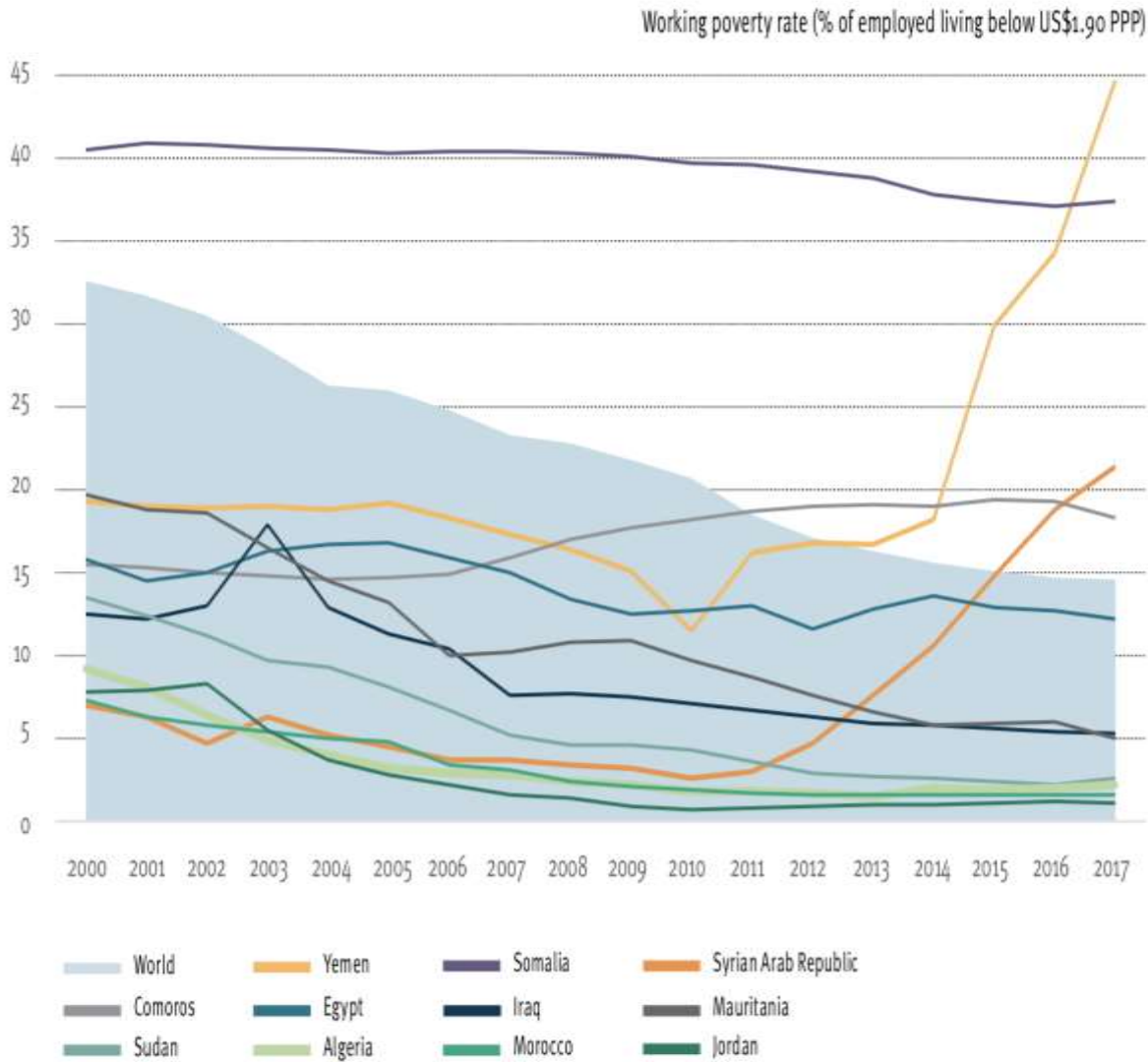


Source: Adapted from World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, July 10, 2019.

<https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators#>

Figure Six: Impact of Violence and Instability on Percent of Working Poor: 2000-2017

Conflict impairs people's ability to sustain their livelihoods: increasing numbers of working poor in Syria, Somalia and Yemen



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

Source: Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Leaving No One Behind, Towards Inclusive Citizenship in Arab Countries*, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2019, p. 27

The Unknown Human Development and Economic Costs of War and Transition to New Paths of Development

The cost of each war in terms of loss of years of potential development, and massive forced changes in the post-war economy, will also have a critical impact. Unfortunately, the UN's human development indicators are designed to compare peacetime progress, and deal with entire populations and not the portion directly affected by conflict or terrorism.

- Nevertheless, **Figure Seven** shows how poorly Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen ranked in human development in 2017 – the most recent year for which there is a comparative estimate.
- **Figure Eight** shows the trends since 1990, and highlights the patterns since the beginning of the major political upheavals in 2011. It shows that in spite of the hope that they would produce an “Arab Spring,” they have actually produced an “Arab Winter.”
- **Figure Nine** attempts to go further and indicate the impact of war on economic development in Iraq and Syria.

Unfortunately, there is no reliable way to make estimates of the impact of extremism, terrorism, political upheavals, and civil war on economic development. Even good faith efforts that attempt to develop suitable methodologies as objectively as possible have poor and unreliable data to work from. And once again, estimates of damage to civil facilities and the economic costs of war are often highly politicized.

The indirect effects of war or civil conflict, and their future impact, are even harder to estimate, and again are often politicized. These effects include rises in loss of housing and shelter, poverty, malnutrition, illness, lack of education, unemployment or loss of business, and the loss of economic productivity and development. They may also include forced changes by ethnicity, sect, and tribe, and forced urbanization or movement to more secure areas.

To put it bluntly, most estimates of so-called recovery costs are little more than rough guesstimates. It is clear from the analyses that attempt to make such estimates that there are no reliable input data or methods for making such estimates. It is also clear that they assume that “recovery” means some kind of undefined return to the past, rather than having to cope with the very different economic, demographic, political, and security conditions that have been created by years of war and create new paths of development.

Simply assuming that peace will lead to stable post-conflict development also borders on the ridiculous. Such estimates are particularly suspect in “failed states” that were not on a success path towards development or a stable political and social order before the war began; where the estimate does not address critical internal differences and tension by region, ethnicity, sect, and tribe, where massive assumptions or guesses have to be made about future outside aid; and where the recovery estimate assumes grossly unrealistic immediate post-conflict improvements in governance and stability. “A miracle occurs” is not a plan.

Figure Seven: Comparative Human Development Estimates in Countries with Failed State Wars

The HDI was created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone.

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable, and having a decent standard of living. The HDI is the geometric mean of normalized indices for each of the three dimensions.

The health dimension is assessed by life expectancy at birth, the education dimension is measured by mean of years of schooling for adults aged 25 years and more and expected years of schooling for children of school entering age.

The standard of living dimension is measured by gross national income per capita. The HDI uses the logarithm of income, to reflect the diminishing importance of income with increasing GNI. The scores for the three HDI dimension indices are then aggregated into a composite index using geometric mean.

The HDI simplifies and captures only part of what human development entails. It does not reflect on inequalities, poverty, human security, empowerment, etc.

Country	World Rank In 2017 (189th is Worst)	Human Development Score 2017	Change in Ranking 2012- 2015	Average Annual HDI Growth (%)
1. Afghanistan	168	0.498	-1	ND
2. Algeria	85	0.754	-3	0.99%
3. Iran	60	0.798	-2	1.21%
4. Iraq	120	0.685	1	0.67%
5. Libya	108	0.706	0	0.15%
6. Somalia	ND	<u>ND</u>	<u>ND</u>	<u>ND</u>
7. Syria	155	0.536	-0.21	0.87%
8. Tunisia	95	0.735	2	0.95%
9. Yemen	178	0.452	-20	0.46%

Source: UN *Human Development Report*, accessed 16.4.19, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/trends>.

Figure Eight: Regression in Human Development Indicators Since the “Arab Winter” Began in 2011

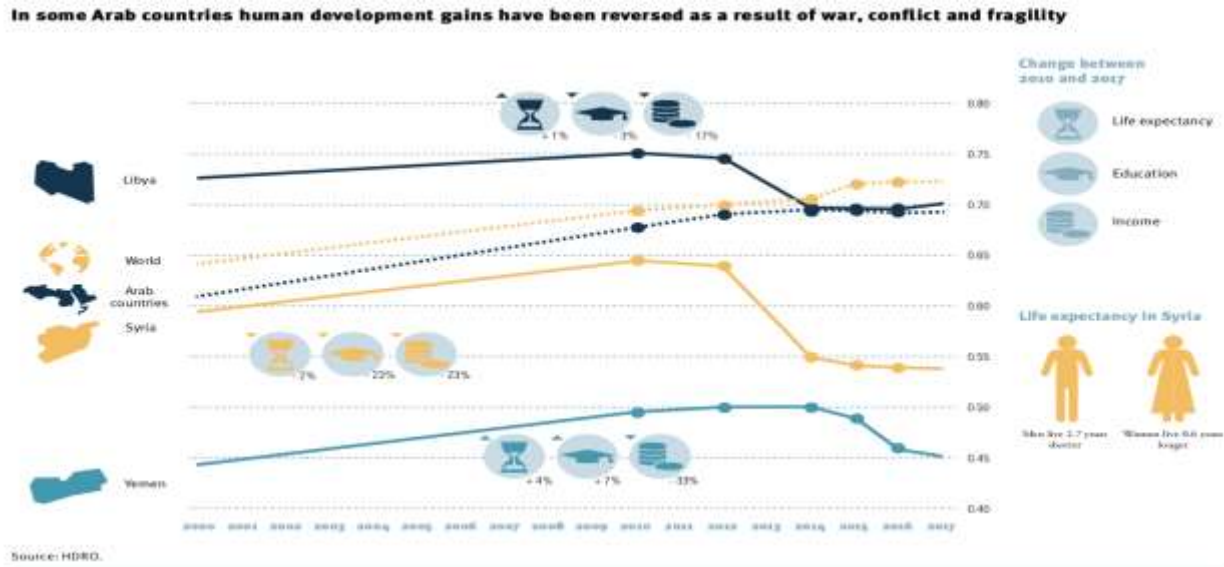
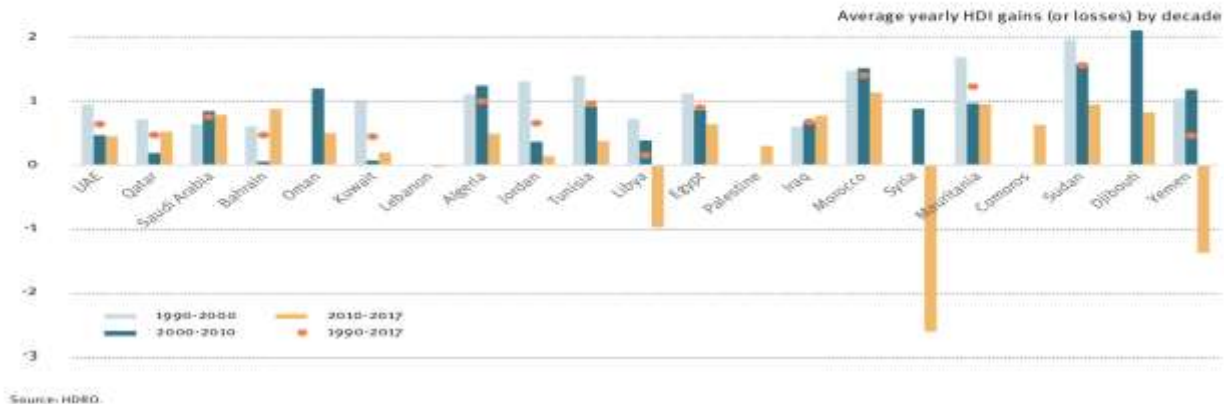


FIGURE 7

Since 2010 nearly all Arab countries have slowed or reversed their average annual human development advances



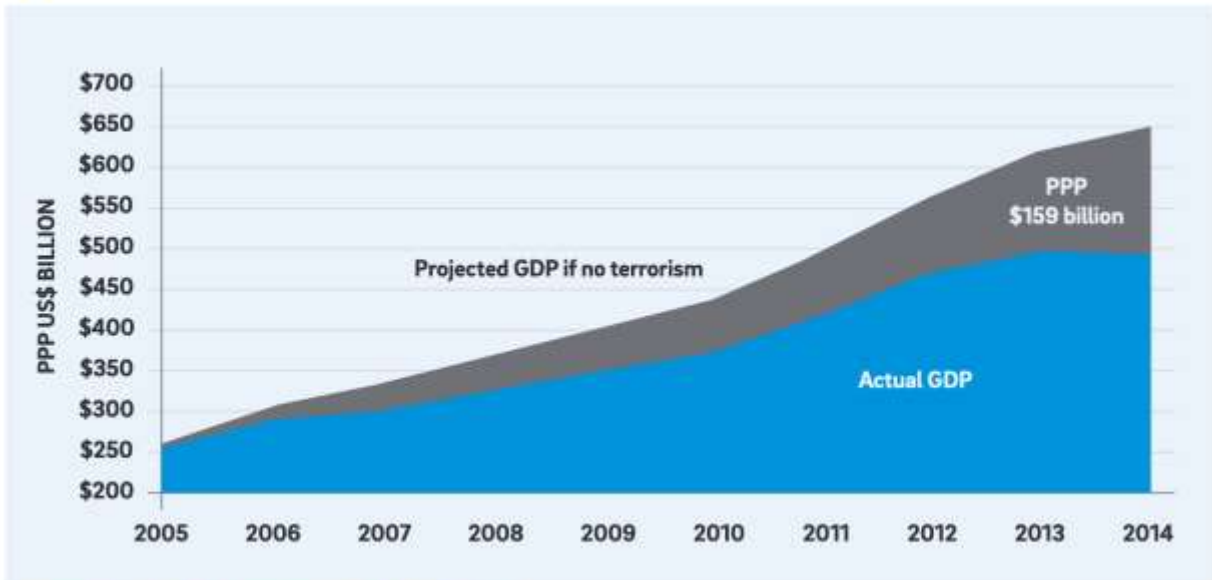
...Since 2010 nearly all Arab countries have slowed or reversed their average annual human development advances. The exceptions are Iraq, slowly recovering from decades of protracted crisis, and Bahrain, the region’s real exception...The Arab uprisings in 2011 raised the alarm about the social unsustainability of the policies in previous decades. How does the undeniable evidence of progress since independence square with unprecedented outbreaks of regionwide discontent? Could the slower pace in human development achievements, experienced in several countries in the region since the beginning of the 21st century, have been interpreted as a sign of depleting resilience in society? One answer is that progress depended heavily on natural resources rents (petroleum) and other strategic positioning, which financed redistributive social welfare programs and services. Over time that proved financially unsustainable,

especially with rapidly growing populations ...Moreover, the gains in human development rarely translated into gains in productivity and growth. Human capital was trapped in unproductive public-sector jobs. Economic advantage was restricted to firms and individuals connected to the state and its ruling elites. And social order was preserved by distributing unproductive politically mediated rents, especially with rapidly growing populations ...Moreover, the gains in human development rarely translated into gains in productivity and growth. Human capital was trapped in unproductive public-sector jobs. Economic advantage was restricted to firms and individuals connected to the state and its ruling elites. And social order was preserved by distributing unproductive politically mediated rents.

Source: Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Leaving No One Behind, Towards Inclusive Citizenship in Arab Countries*, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2019, p. 10.

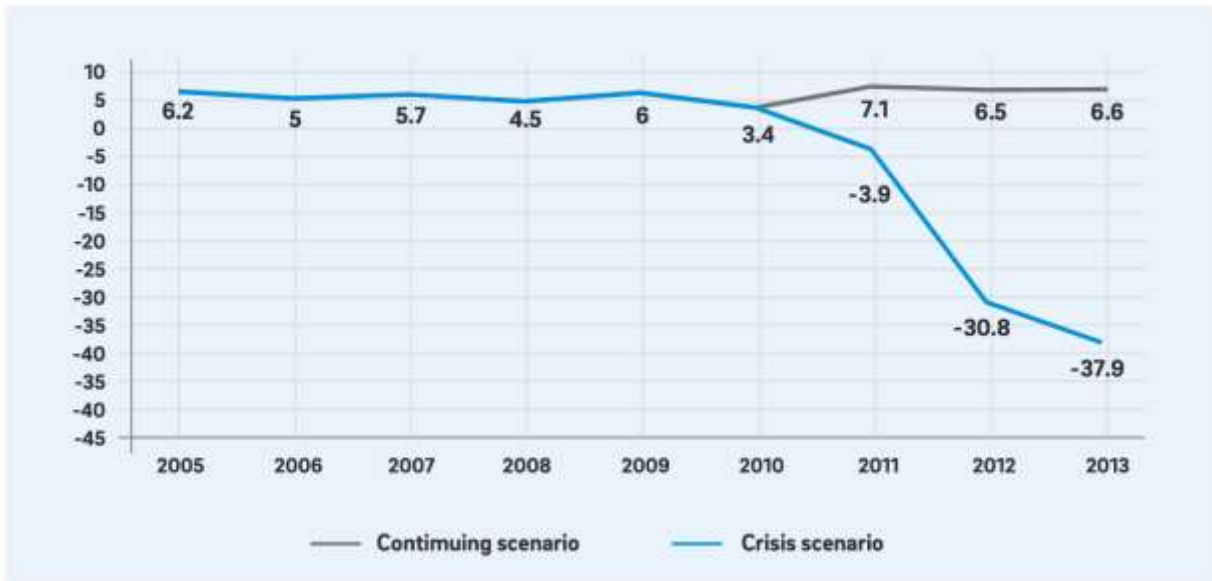
Figure Nine: The Economic Cost of Extremism Before the Most Serious Impacts of the Fighting Iraq and Syria

Total accumulated losses in GDP because of terrorism, Iraq, 2005–2014



Source: Institute for Economics and Peace 2015.

GDP growth rate 2005–2013 in crisis and continuing scenarios (constant prices 2000), Syria



Source: Mehchy 2015.

Regional Bureau for Arab States, Arab Human Development Report 2016: Youth and the Prospects for Human Development in a Changing Realty, UNDP, 2016 p. 175

Looking at Perceptions of Causes

There are some important indicators of how the peoples involved perceive these events, and their cause, and public opinion polls often highlight the extent to which the citizens of a given failed state perceive their own government, and key civil trends as the case, rather than the comparatively limited number of actual extremists and their terrorists and fighters. These polls do have conflicting results and use very different methods and draw on very different samplings. Even so, their broad results seem to be consistent enough to provide some important indicators of how serious the long-term challenges caused by the ongoing conflicts are likely to be.

Figure Ten shows the result of a poll taken from Arab Development Report that shows Arab perceptions of the top social and economic reasons for the Arab uprisings. This poll did not examine the role of sectarian and ethnic divisions, or extremist ideology in causing the Arab uprisings, but it did track closely in many ways with other polls of the reasons for the uprisings and wars the U.S. is now fighting, and it shows that key structural civil problems that shape the extent to which a given government and country can be called a “failed state” help drive internal divisions, extremism, and the rise of civil conflict.

Figure Eleven shows the results of a poll that focuses on the Arab world in 2014, and **Figure Twelve** shows the results from a poll in Afghanistan. There are many similar polls, and all focus as much on the failings of given governments to create a stable path towards development and national unity.

Virtually all of the polls that touch on ideology, sect, ethnicity, and other internal divisions found that they were also key causes of the uprisings and fighting. However, they too found that corruption and employment remained some of the top, or the top, causes of popular concern and distrust of the government. They also found a deep popular distrust of the justice system.

There are key limits to most such polls. They only provide nationwide results, and minimize the impact of key internal divisions by sect, ethnic group, or other faction. Many only cover the more peaceful and open countries in the Middle Region.

A number of less public official polls did, however, attempt to examine at least part of given conflict countries and the differences in popular attitudes by sect, ethnicity, tribe, region, and other key divisions within a given country.

In general, however, the more negative the polling results were towards the structural civil challenges and problems listed in **Figures Ten through Twelve**, the more likely a given group in a given nation was to take an extremist or violent position, and support terrorism and/or insurgency.

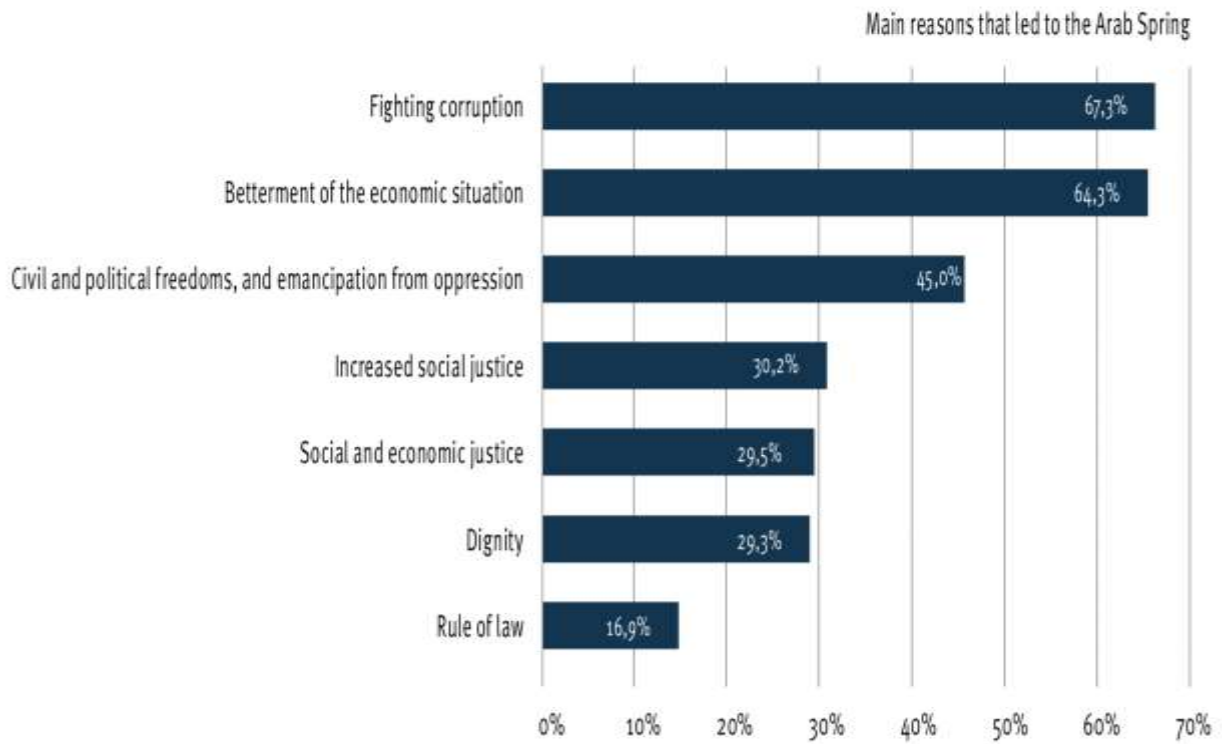
At the same time, it is all too clear from their statements that the leadership of many developing countries that approach “failed state” status in meeting such challenges are unwilling to poll their own people or pay suitable attention to measuring how they divide over given issues and between factions. Authoritarian regimes seem particularly likely to live in denial, and to lie to themselves as much as they lie to their peoples.

Similarly, most data bases on terrorism and extremism focus on non-state actors and organizations. They ignore the feelings of a nation’s people as a whole, and the impact of the failures, violence, and repression committed by governments. Most outside countries, the UN, and organizations like the World Bank and IMF also focus on nationwide trends and metrics, and not on the key internal

differences that both cause internal violence and limit the real-world pace of economic development.

Figure Ten: Perceptions of Reasons for the 2011 Uprisings

Social and economic injustice are among the top reasons for the Arab uprisings



Source: Arab Barometer 2012–2014.

Source: Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Leaving No One Behind, Towards Inclusive Citizenship in Arab Countries*, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2019, p. 23.

Figure Eleven: Arab Perceptions of Key Challenges in 2014

Table 1.1 What are the most important challenges your country is facing today (%)?

	The economic situation (poverty, unemployment and price increases)	Financial and administrative corruption	Enhancing (strengthening) democracy	Achieving stability and internal security	Other
Algeria	76.9	14.9	2.7	3.3	2.2
Egypt	87.6	6.5	1.4	1.3	3.1
Iraq	52.5	32.5	3.5	9.7	1.7
Jordan	81.0	14.0	1.1	0.7	3.3
Kuwait	56.5	25.3	9.4	0.9	8.0
Lebanon	60.6	24.4	3.5	7.1	4.3
Libya	23.1	32.3	2.3	0.7	41.6
Morocco	83.9	9.6	2.1	0.8	3.6
Palestine	50.3	8.7	1.3	3.0	36.6
Sudan	74.2	17.2	2.3	3.4	2.8
Tunisia	88.4	8.6	0.7	0.9	1.6
Yemen	74.6	17.1	3.9	2.8	1.6

Source: Arab Barometer 2014.

Figure Twelve: Afghan Views of Key Concerns and Local Problems by Region

Afghanistan: Biggest Local Problems

	CENTRAL/ KABUL	EAST	SOUTH EAST	SOUTH WEST	WEST	NORTH EAST	CENTRAL/ HAZARAJAT	NORTH WEST
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
SECURITY/CRIME ISSUES	28	33	45	39	42	27	7	26
ECONOMIC ISSUES	15	20	19	19	17	13	22	17
LACK OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	30	34	35	35	31	34	26	31
LACK OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	8	11	11	12	6	11	11	9
GOVERNANCE/ JUSTICE ISSUES	4	11	12	13	7	4	1	6
LACK OF UTILITIES / PUBLIC SERVICES	47	45	33	33	39	52	67	53
LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE	20	17	16	13	17	26	23	26
FOREIGN INTERVENTION	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
LACK OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
CONFLICTS IN THE COMMUNITY	1	3	4	6	2	1	0	1
ENVIRONMENTAL/ NATURAL DISASTERS	8	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
MORALITY ISSUES	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
OTHER	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
NOTHING	3	1	0	0	2	1	1	0
DON'T KNOW	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0

FIG. 1.12: Q-5. In your view, what are the biggest problems in your local area?

Asia Foundation, A Survey of the Afghan People, Afghanistan in 2018, San Francisco 2018, p. 31, 69.

Looking Beyond Religion, Sect, Ethnicity, and a “Clash Between Civilizations”

Finally, it is important to approach these issues by looking beyond religious extremism, sectarian and ethnic differences, and a largely mythical “clash between civilizations.” One other key area where polls agree is that support for religious extremism is all too real, but involves relatively small cadres of activists and does not come close to dominating perceptions in the Arab world or Islam.

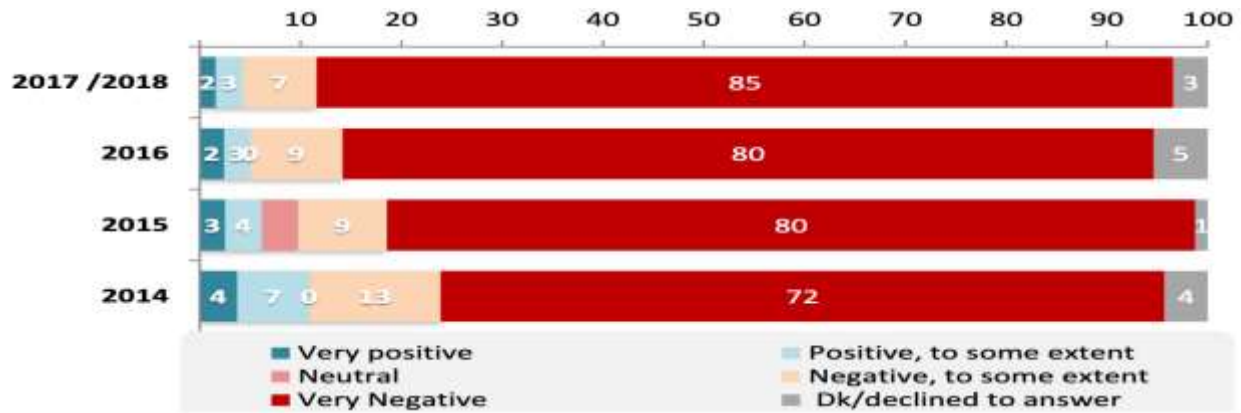
Almost all of the violence and instability summarized in **Figure One** to **Figure Six** represents the results of power struggles for control of a given state or two states. International terrorism and extremism are all too real – just as they have been in the West for most of modern history. Religious extremism is all too real and does cut across national border, but generally takes on a localized or national form. In reality, the so-called “clash between civilizations” now represents token levels of violence outside the MENA region and Central and South Asia compared to the “clashes within a nation” in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen.

Poll after poll has shown that the percentage of support for extremism and violence can peak in a given country, but that the broad mass of the population in MENA region and Central and South Asia does not support such movements, and that such peaks have only limited duration, and most of them are influenced more by an outside event.

Like all such polls, the poll summarized in **Figure Thirteen** has its limits. At the same time, it both shows the lack of broad support for extremism reflected in virtually all such polls since this became a key issue after “9/11.” It also shows the same popular focus on security and domestic issues you might find in the West. The percentage for religion may be higher than in the West, and other polling by the Pew Trust makes this point. At the same time, it is far from clear that a poll in the U.S., Canada, and Europe would find smaller concerns with hardline secular politics and ideologies and even less clear that one form of a tendency towards extremism is better than another.

Nevertheless, this poll does cover overall attitudes towards foreign policy, and support of extremism and perceptions of its causes. It again illustrates the need to look beyond the immediate threat and military situation, current civil tensions and violence, and short-term political and leadership issues. All are important, but ultimately, the U.S. can only “win” in shaping conflict resolution and long-term stability if it can find some way to address the structural reasons that have made countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen into “failed states.”

Figure Thirteen: Arab Views of ISIL/ISIS/Daesh: Part One



Explanations for ISIL recruitment		Tunisia	Jordan	Palestine	Lebanon	Egypt	Morocco	Iraq	Kuwait	Sudan	Mauritania	aggregate
Domestic Reasons	Economic: unemployment, poverty	40	35	27	26	24	19	18	18	18	11	24
	Domestic political concerns	2	4	18	15	24	6	10	16	14	9	12
	Social reasons: inequality, marginalization	2	5	7	11	6	8	5	4	10	7	6
	Domestic Reasons	43	44	51	52	54	33	33	38	42	27	42
Personal Reasons	Extremist individuals	2	3	2	5	8	12	8	7	10	6	6
	Sense of adventure	1	1	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	1
	Personal Reasons	3	4	2	5	8	15	10	7	10	8	7
To Combat External Threats	To fight foreign powers	0	2	4	6	3	5	4	5	12	4	5
	To fight local sectarian militia in those countries	2	0	1	3	1	4	2	2	3	1	2
	External Threats	2	2	5	9	4	9	7	7	14	5	6
Propaganda reasons		17	25	19	15	13	19	23	14	23	9	18
Religious reasons		17	17	18	14	17	13	25	19	7	18	16
Others		3	2			0	1	1			0	1
Don't know/declined to answer		16	6	4	6	5	10	1	15	4	33	10
Total		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Figure 49: Respondents asked to select which statement on the nature of ISIL best represents their views.

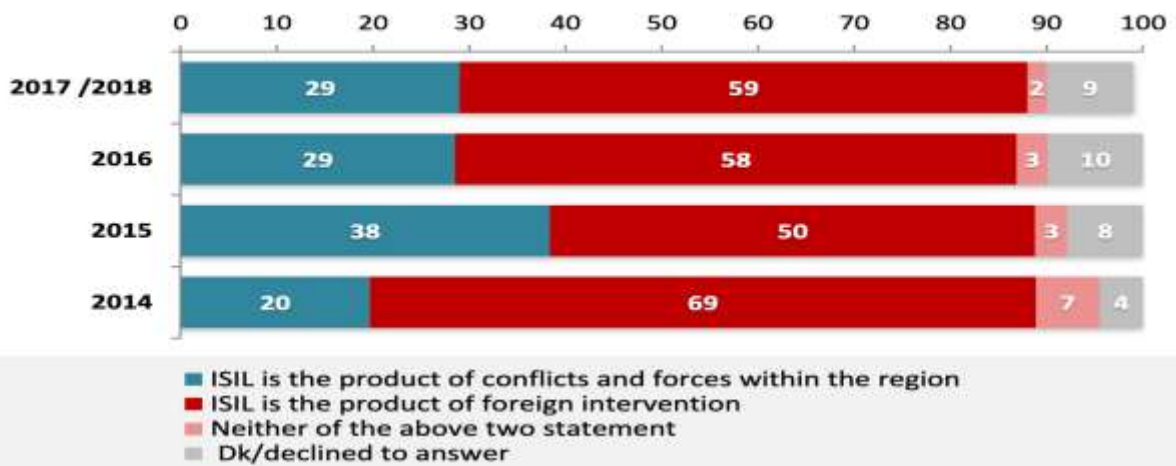


Figure Thirteen: Arab Views of ISIL/ISIS/Daesh: Part Two

Figure 50: Respondents asked to select which statement on the nature of ISIL best represents their views.

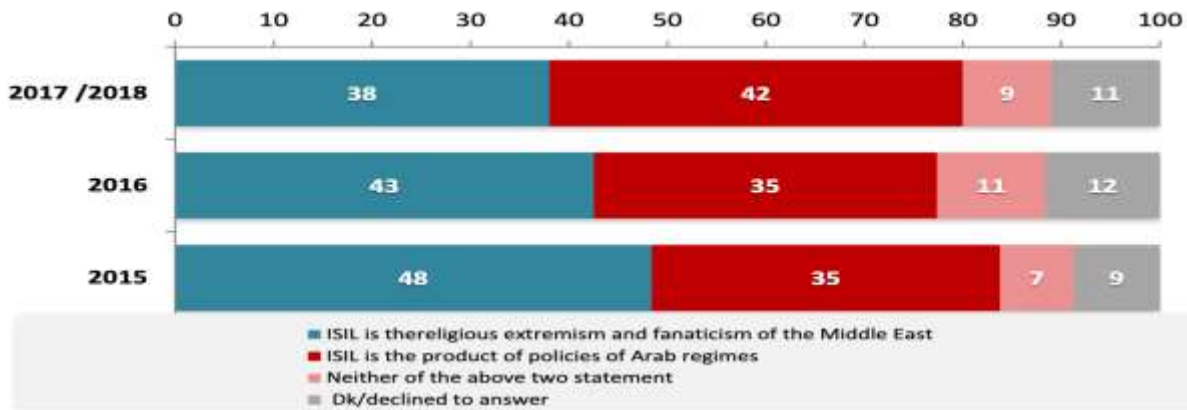
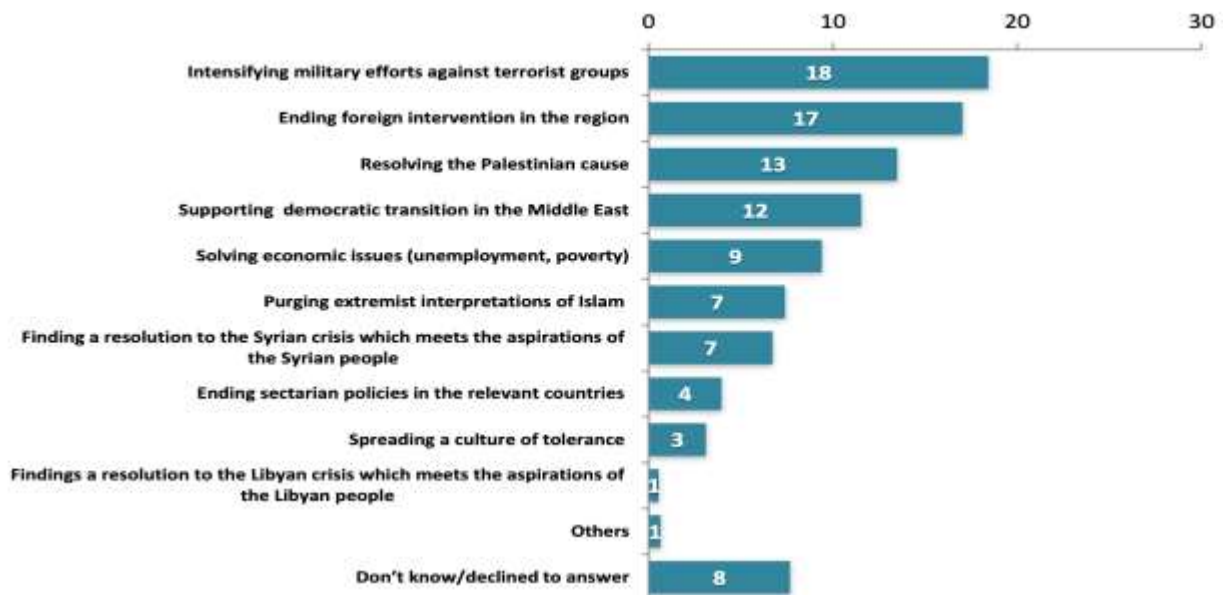


Figure 51: Proposed remedies to ISIL/terrorism more broadly, first choice made by respondents.



The 2017-2018 Arab Opinion Index is the sixth in a series of yearly public opinion surveys across the Arab world. The first survey was conducted in 2011, with following surveys in 2012/2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016. The 2017-2018 Arab Opinion Index is based on the findings from face-to-face interviews conducted with 18,830 individual respondents in 11 separate Arab countries: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco and Mauritania. Sampling followed a randomized, stratified, multi-stage, self-weighted clustered approach, giving an overall margin of error between +/-2 %and 3% for the individual country samples. The overall samples guarantee probability-proportional-to-size (PPS), ensuring fairness in the representation of various population segments. With an aggregate sample size of 18,830 respondents, the Arab Opinion Index remains the largest public opinion survey in the Arab world. The fieldwork was carried out by an overall team of 840 individuals, equally balanced on gender, who conducted 45,000 hours of face-to-face interviews. The team covered a total of 700,000 kilometers across the population clusters sampled.

Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, *The 2017-2018 Arab Opinion Index: Main Results in Brief*, Doha, Qatar, [https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/Lists/ACRPS-PDFDocumentLibrary/2017-2018%20Arab%20Opinion%20Index%20Main%20Results%20in%20Brief%20-%20final%20\(002\).pdf](https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/Lists/ACRPS-PDFDocumentLibrary/2017-2018%20Arab%20Opinion%20Index%20Main%20Results%20in%20Brief%20-%20final%20(002).pdf), 2019 pp. 32, 35, 36.

Governance: Failing the Nation's People at Every Level

A factor-by-factor review of each major structural civil challenge in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen provides further insight into their impact on America's current wars, and the extent to which such factors will continue to both threaten efforts to bring lasting stability to these countries and create new sources of extremism, terrorism, and civil conflict.

As is noted in the introduction to this study, four key sets of challenges are involved:

- The enduring civil costs of terrorism, insurgency and civil war, and their post conflict impact.
- The impact of key problems in governance that are often largely independent of a particular leader and the country's political system – whether democratic or authoritarian.
- The permeating impact of corruption, which along with security and secure employment/income poll as the three key sources of resentment, anger, and loss of confidence in the regime.
- The radical ongoing shifts growing out of demographics, population pressure, a major youth bulge, and shifts in the economy and social structure from agriculture and to service, government jobs, industry, and urbanization.

Governance is a key example – particularly when it is viewed in structural terms. Far too often, the assessment of host countries, and of the extent to which a given country is a “failed state,” focuses on the immediate political and leadership problems that divide a country and that affect the immediate outcome of the fighting against extremism, terrorism, and insurgency. This focus is all too natural. Once again, the ability to survive the present is a vital precondition to having a future.

At the same time, much of the entire structure of government from the top to the local levels in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen was incompetent, divided, and corrupt before uprisings took place, extremist movements became a serious threat, and violence, terrorism, and insurgency led to actual conflict. Failed governments played a critical role in creating the problems that created “failed states.”

This is as true of governments that ruled through authoritarianism and repression, and regimes like the Taliban and the ISIS “caliphate,” as those that attempted to rule through some ill-defined form of socialism or by creating the shell of democracy, and it is all too true of many governments in the developing world that do not face yet face such threats from extremism, terrorism and insurgency.

Comparing Levels of Governance

The Figures in this section compare the level of governance in each country against the relatively high ranking given the UAE. They do have important limits. Any effort to make judgments about the quality of governance, and rank that quality by country, is obviously subjective. Nevertheless, the rankings used by the World Bank are highly respected, and involve a range of sources, and metrics. They also cover substantial periods of time, and provide a way to estimate the impacts of conflict and how much progress a given government has made over time.

The World Bank rankings also examine the full range of governance and performance over time and before and during the current conflicts – including the overall level of repression, the level of violence, how well the rule of law functions, and corruption. These all contribute to popular perceptions of how well as given government serves its people, and can claim their support in dealing with internal threats and extremist movements.

- **Figure Fourteen** draws on the Arab Development Report to show the broad lack of trust in government in the Arab world, the lack of satisfaction with government performance, and far more Arab trust of religious institutions to help reduce poverty than trust in their governments.
- **Figure Fifteen** shows the trends in the World Bank’s overall rating of Afghan, Iraqi, Syrian, Libyan, and Yemeni governance from 2000-2017, and compares these low rankings to a high performing regional government like the UAE. The World Bank states that Government Effectiveness captures perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government’s commitment to such policies. Estimate gives the country’s score on the aggregate indicator, in units of a standard normal distribution, i.e. ranging from approximately -2.5 to 2.5.
- **Figure Sixteen** again compares a high performer like the UAE to “failed states.” It shows the steady declines in political stability, and increase in violence, caused by the government’s inability to provide security in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Yemen between 2000 and 2017. It also highlights the precipitous drop in government capabilities in Libya and Syria after civil wars began in these states.
- **Figure Seventeen** provides similar trend data on the level of control of corruption in “failed states” like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen compared to the UAE. This time the performance of all five failed states was dismal before conflict began, and no meaningful improvement occurred over a seventeen-year period in spite of massive outside aid in fighting corruption in several cases. Syria, Iraq, and Libya all experienced major increases in corruption.

The World Bank notes that Control of Corruption captures perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests. Estimate gives the country's score on the aggregate indicator, in units of a standard normal distribution, i.e. ranging from approximately -2.5 to 2.5.

- **Figure Eighteen** extends the comparison to the Rule of Law. The World Bank states the rule of law indicator captures perceptions of the extent to which agents have confidence in — and abide by — the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence. Once again, all the “failed states” have dismal ratings, and Syria shows a critical decline.

It is important to note that public interaction with authority is likely to raise three concerns. One is the degree to which it is safe to encounter the security forces – police, internal security, and the military. The second is the extent to which the rule of law is effective and honest. And the third, is the level of corruption that will be involved.

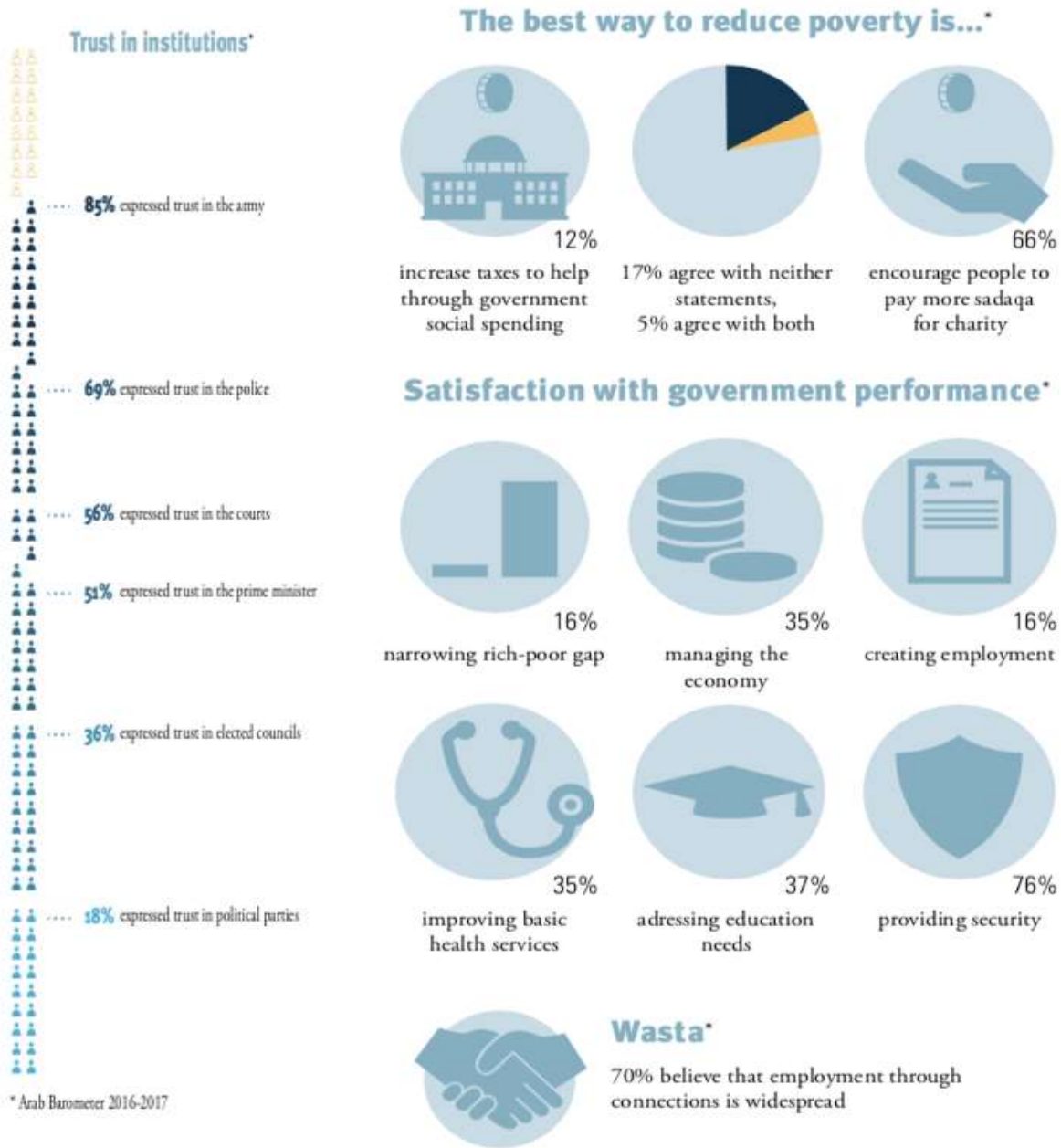
- **Figure Nineteen** shows the trends in the estimate of Voice and Accountability. This estimate captures perceptions of the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media. Estimate gives the country's score on the aggregate indicator, in units of a standard normal distribution, i.e. ranging from approximately -2.5 to 2.5.

Here the scores are low for most countries in the MENA region, and several governments are highly repressive. The data show a serious decline in Yemen, a decline from an already very low rating for Syria, and a temporary rise in Libya after the fall of Qaddafi, followed by a decline as upheavals led to civil war.

- **Figure Twenty** adds "Regulatory Quality" as a sixth indicator of the quality of governance. The World Bank states that Regulatory Quality captures perceptions of the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development. The estimate gives the country's score on the aggregate indicator, in units of a standard normal distribution, i.e. ranging from approximately -2.5 to 2.5.

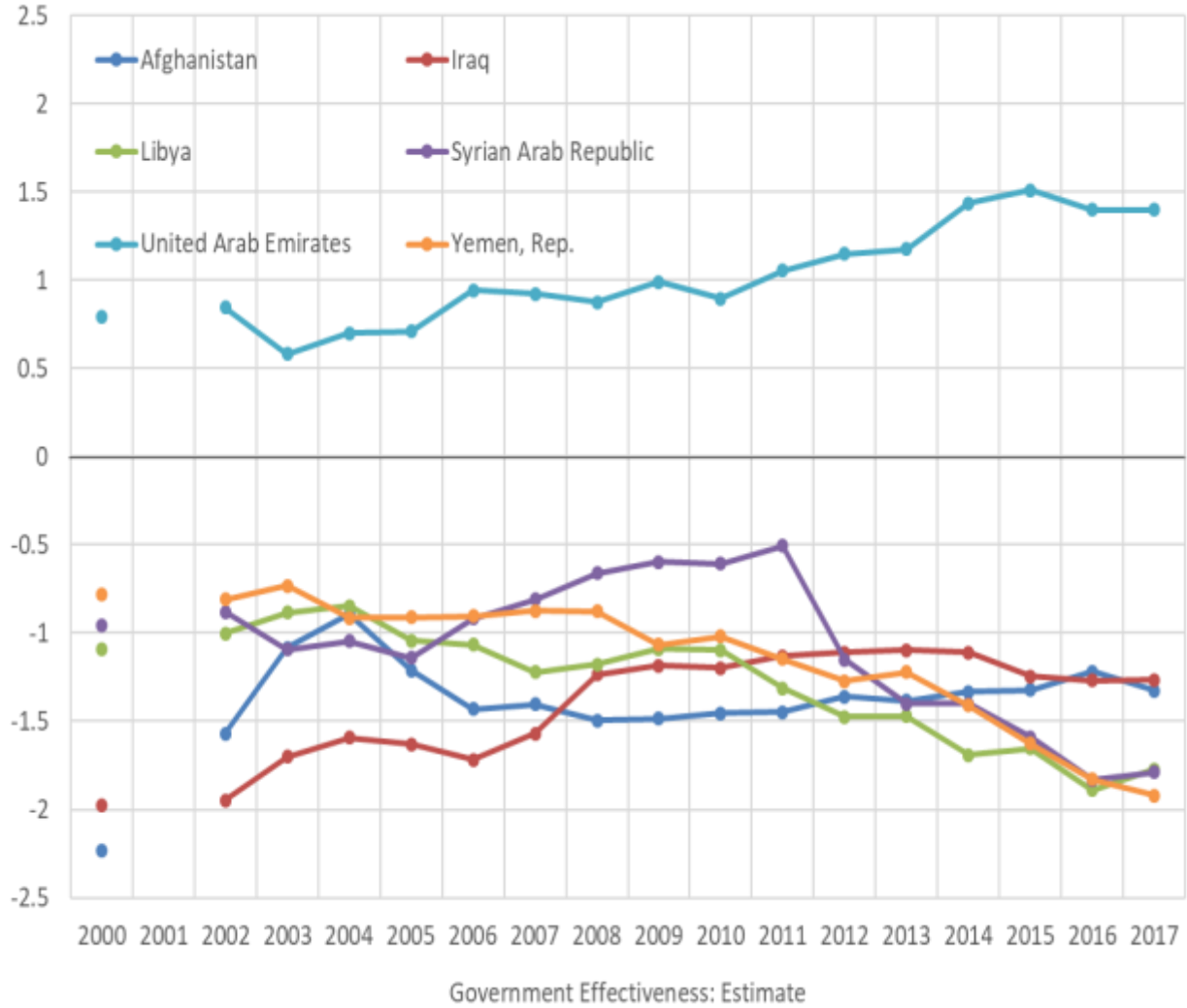
It should be noted that this estimate, like the Bank's ease of doing business index, provides a good indication of how well a given government is now doing to invite development and overseas investment, but seems less directly related to the causes of extremism, terrorism, and insurgencies than the other five.

Figure Fourteen: Perceptions of Problems in Governance



Source: Arab Barometer 2016–2017; Transparency International for Corruption Perceptions Index scores; International IDEA, Voter Turnout database for voter turnout.

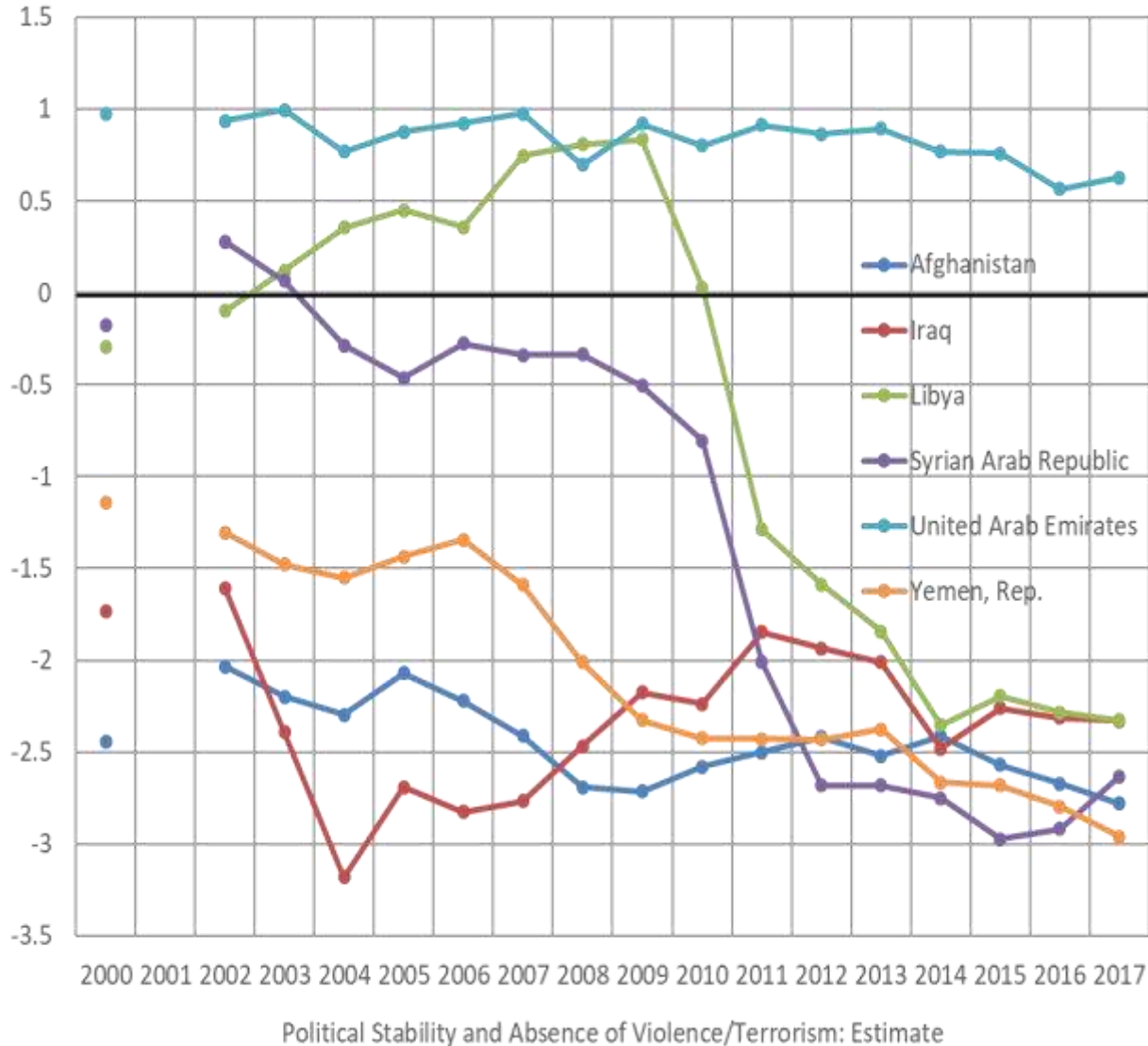
Figure Fifteen: World Bank Estimate of Government Effectiveness in Key “Failed States”: 2000-2017
Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen compared to the UAE



Source: Adapted from World Bank, *Environmental, Social and Governance Data*, July 26, 2019. <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/environment-social-and-governance-data>

Figure Sixteen: World Bank Estimate of Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism: 2000-2017

Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen compared to the UAE

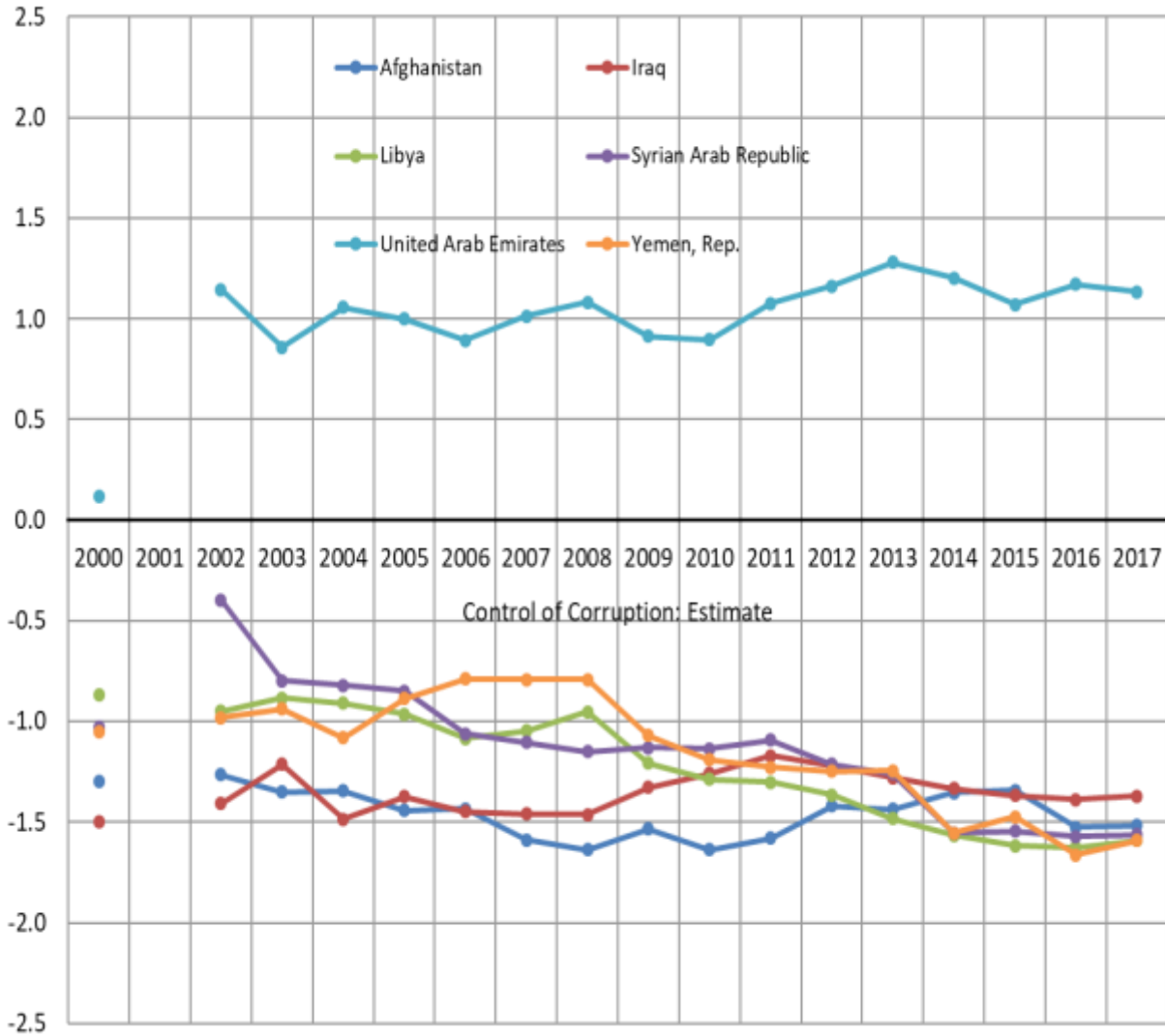


Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism measures perceptions of the likelihood of political instability and/or politically-motivated violence, including terrorism. Estimate gives the country's score on the aggregate indicator, in units of a standard normal distribution, i.e. typically ranging from approximately -2.5 to 2.5.

Source: Adapted from World Bank, *Environmental, Social and Governance Data*, July 26, 2019. <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/environment-social-and-governance-data>

Figure Seventeen: World Bank Estimate of Control of Corruption: 2000-2017

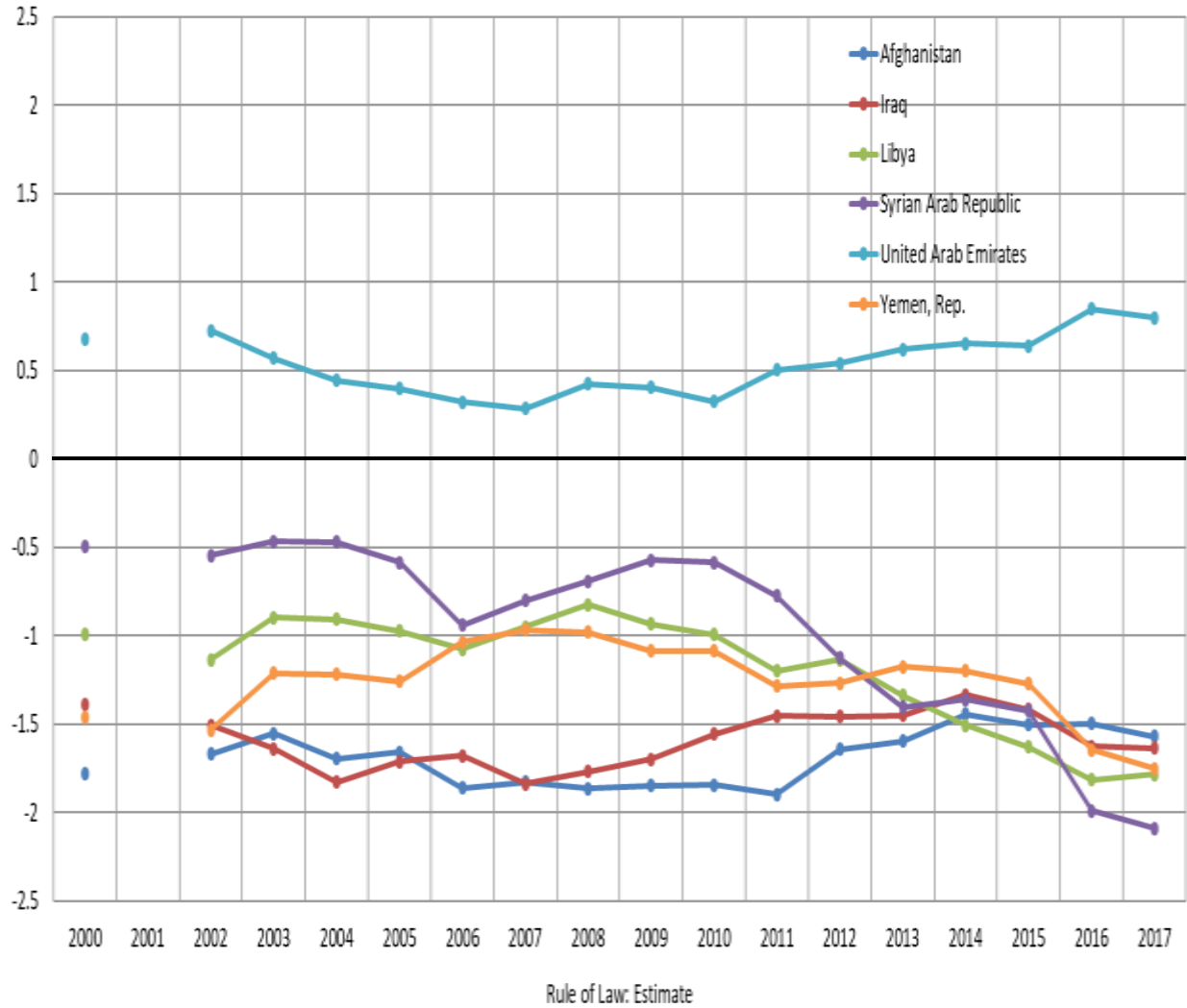
Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen compared to the UAE



Control of Corruption captures perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests. Estimate gives the country's score on the aggregate indicator, in units of a standard normal distribution, i.e. ranging from approximately -2.5 to 2.5.

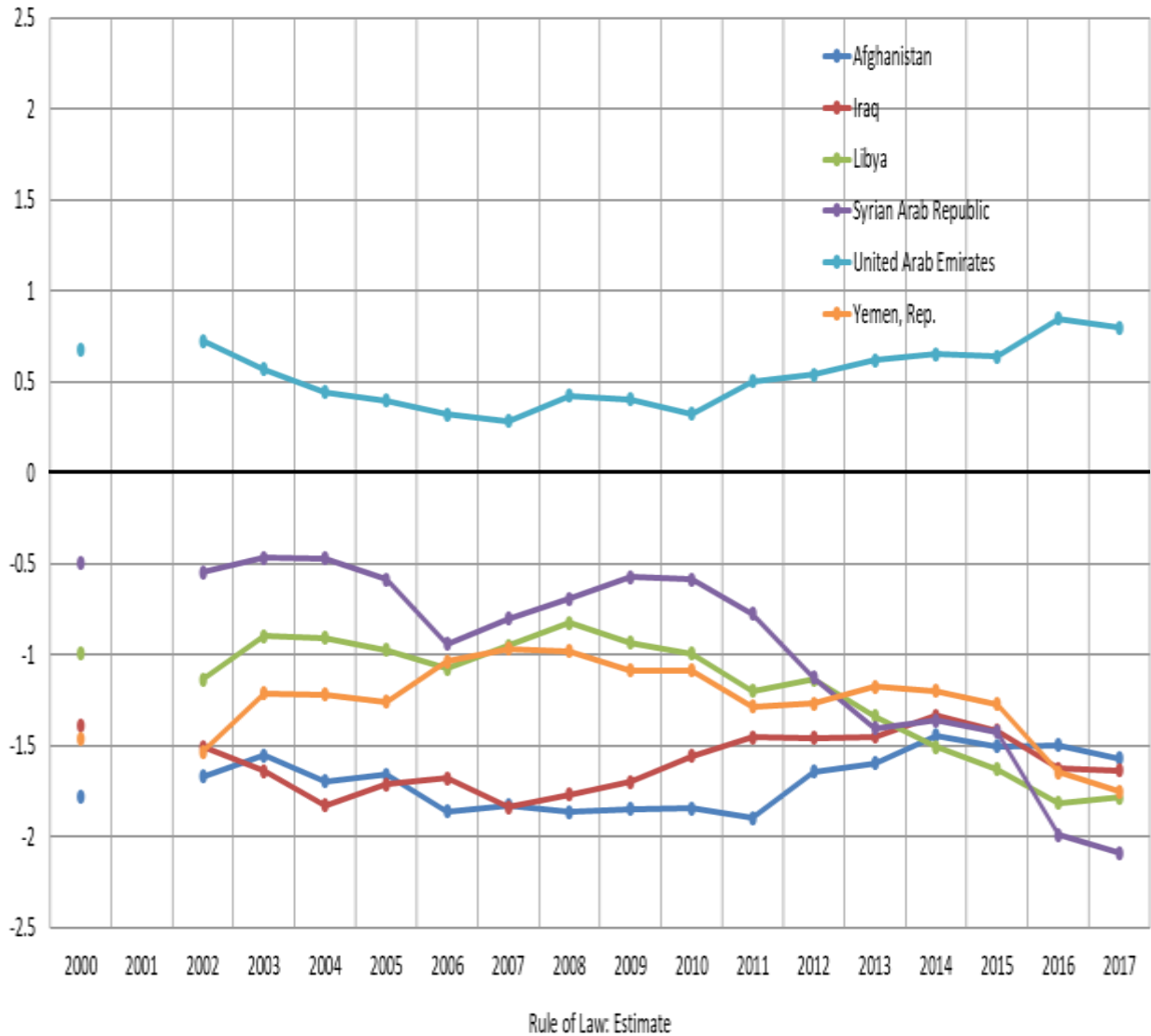
Source: Adapted from World Bank, *Environmental, Social and Governance Data*, July 26, 2019. <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/environment-social-and-governance-data>

Figure Eighteen: World Bank Estimate of Rule of Law: 2000-2017
Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen compared to the UAE



Source: Adapted from World Bank, *Environmental, Social and Governance Data*, July 26, 2019.
<https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/environment-social-and-governance-data>

Figure Nineteen: World Bank Estimate of Voice and Accountability: 2000-2017
Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen compared to the UAE

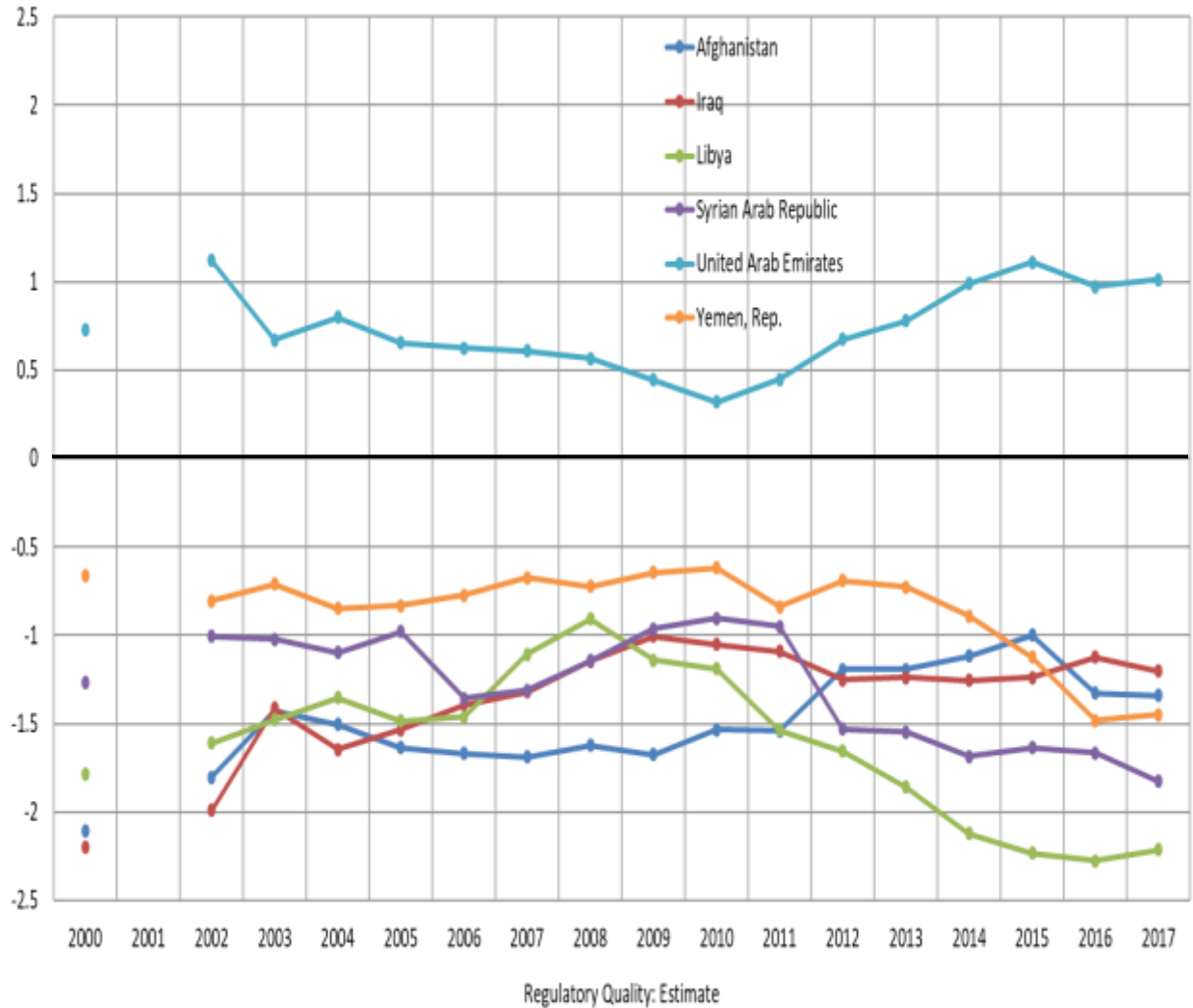


Voice and Accountability captures perceptions of the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media. Estimate gives the country's score on the aggregate indicator, in units of a standard normal distribution, i.e. ranging from approximately -2.5 to 2.5.

Source: Adapted from World Bank, *Environmental, Social and Governance Data*, July 26, 2019. <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/environment-social-and-governance-data>

Figure Twenty: World Bank Estimate of Regulatory Quality: 2000-2017

Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen compared to the UAE



Voice and Accountability captures perceptions of the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media. Estimate gives the country's score on the aggregate indicator, in units of a standard normal distribution, i.e. ranging from approximately -2.5 to 2.5.

Source: Adapted from World Bank, *Environmental, Social and Governance Data*, July 26, 2019. <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/environment-social-and-governance-data>

Corruption and the National Level of Governance: Highlighting the Country-by-Country Challenge

The following Figures show the patterns in governance for the entire MENA region and then highlight for each conflict or “failed state” country. The rankings for every “failed state” are only a little short of dismal in every respect. If one examines the patterns over time they provide a clear set of warnings long before 2011, and they also show that U.S. and other outside aid efforts have so far only had a negligible effect.

These Figures also highlight the rankings for corruption. These World Bank and Transparency International rankings of corruption are particularly important indicators. Polling shows that perceptions of corruption are particularly critical in determining popular support for a government, the extent to which it serves all its people rather than given factions and elites, and to which its security efforts are actually perceived as benefitting its people as distinguished from abusing them or extorting money, goods, and services.

Wasting Aid and “Nation Building Efforts”

In many cases, this corruption also leads to massive waste in the use of foreign military and civil aid, key scandals and critical lack of effective government activity, and the selection of officials who do not and sometimes cannot perform their role in governance. It is also important to note, however, that corruption is often the only path to employment and obtaining the kind of income government officials and officers expect. It is a key part of how the government and economy actually function.

Similarly, citizens must pay the price for dealing with security and law enforcement officials and make what passes for the rule of law actually work in order to get officials to actually function, and to compensate for the many failures in the formal system of governance. In much of the world, corruption is not an abuse of the system government. For good or bad, it is a critical part of the system of government.

At the same time, poor governance ratings – and particularly estimates of high levels of corruption — are a warning as to just how much of a “threat” a given government poses to U.S. counterterrorism and counterinsurgency efforts on both the military and civil sides. As the Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction (SIGIR), the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR), the Lead Inspector General for Overseas Contingency Operations, and other investigators have found, it is amazing how much money that is supposed to go to the war efforts and winning hearts and minds can go missing or be wasted.

A Key Way to Lose “Hearts and Minds”

A wide range of polls in Afghanistan and the Arab States have also shown that corruption is a key factor in measuring popular anger towards the government, a lack of trust in every major aspect of its operations, and the feeling that the government is to blame for a lack of jobs, meaningful career opportunities, and security. There is no direct cause and effect tie between corruption and extremism or terrorism, but all of host nations the U.S. is now supporting in fighting terrorism and extremism have extreme levels of corruption.

- **Figure Twenty-One** shows the World Bank estimates of the trends in all six of its major rankings of governance. It shows that governments in the MENA region only average

moderate to low levels of governance. These averages do, however, act as a key basis of comparison – and as a “control” – to be used to judge the impact of conflict on individual failed states.

- **Figure Twenty-Two** shows the World Bank rankings of governance for Afghanistan – showing both the country’s percentile rank in blue and the margin of uncertainty or possible error in gray. The rankings are consistently dismal and reflect reporting by sources like SIGAR that raises serious questions about governance at the local and district levels as well as the national level.

There were positive trends during the first years after the Taliban was largely driven out of the country. These trends have been reversed since the Taliban’s return, and the government still fails its people in spite of the creation of a democratic government and billions in outside aid. Transparency International rated Afghanistan 172nd out of 180 countries in 2018, making Afghanistan the 9th most corrupt country ranked by the World Bank.

It is far from clear that any legislative or presidential election will change this behavior if no peace accord is reached with the Taliban and even less clear that any peace accord with the Taliban would lead to lasting peace and stability, or make Afghan governance better. Quite aside from the ideological, religious, and political divisions involved; Afghanistan will at best have to cope with a Taliban whose social and economic goals are linked to a mythological past that can never be created in the present, the challenges of obtaining and apportioning outside aid, and Afghanistan’s current heavy reliance on a narco-economy.

- **Figure Twenty-Three** shows the World Bank estimates of all of its rankings of governance for Iraq – showing both the country’s percentile rank in blue and the margin of uncertainty or possible error in gray. Although Iraq is a radically different country from Afghanistan, its governance rankings are again consistently dismal and it is clear that this is as true of governance at the local level as well as the national level.

There were some limited positive trends after 2004, as Iraq acquired a more stable and less repressive mix of governments. This progress, however, was very limited and only occurred in three of six categories. Transparency International rated Iraq 168th out of 180 countries in 2018, making it the 13th most corrupt country ranked by the World Bank.

Today, the central Iraqi government in Baghdad is relatively weak and has so far been ineffective in dealing with the cumulative consequences of fighting Al Qaida, Islamists, and ISIS since 2004. It is not healing the deep divisions between Sunni and Shi’ite or the tensions between Arab and Kurd, and there is no emerging unity among the Sunni, Shi’ite, and Kurdish factions. Unlike Afghanistan, Iraq’s oil wealth allows it to buy its way out of some of its failures as a state, but it cannot meet the estimating needs of its growing population or substitute for the failures in Iraqi governance that now limit its future development even if new rounds of acute internal conflict and tension do not take place.

- **Figure Twenty-Four** illustrates some of these issues by showing the results of a public opinion poll on the accountability of Iraq’s government. Polling is still developing in many countries in the MENA region and banned or impractical in others. Most polling does, however, indicate that the people of the nations involved do share the assessment made by the World Bank in broad terms.

- **Figure Twenty-Five** shows the World Bank estimates of all of its rankings of governance for Syria – again showing both the country’s percentile rank in blue and the margin of uncertainty or possible error in gray. The early years reflect a relatively successful, if ruthless, legacy of authoritarianism and forced stability that allow some economic development – although it provided limited benefits for much of the population.

The political upheavals that took place in 2011 created the bloodiest civil war in the region. It created an Assad regime-led coalition with Iran, the Hezbollah and then Russia that fought a fragmented and Sunni Arab-dominated coalition in Western and Central Iraq. It also created an ISIS “caliphate” that came to dominate north eastern Syria and Western Iraq until it was defeated by a Kurdish and Arab coalition supported by the U.S. and its allies.

Today, the Assad coalition has largely dominated in most of Iraq through some of the worst examples of attacks on civilians, repression, and state terrorism in the recent history of the developing world. There also, however, is now a Kurdish-Arab protostate in part of the East, and still some elements of an increasingly Sunni extremist enclave around Idlib.

The current quality of governance ratings reflect these deep divisions, and Transparency International rated Syria 178th out of 180 countries in 2018, making it the 2nd most corrupt country ranked by the World Bank. At present, there is no way to estimate when *or if* the fighting will end and Syria will reemerge as a unified state – much less more towards some path of stable development

- **Figure Twenty-Six** shows the World Bank estimates of all of its rankings of governance for Libya – showing both the country’s percentile rank in blue and the margin of uncertainty or possible error in gray. The rankings reflect some rises in the quality of governance in the period after the fall of Qaddafi, but the rises are very limited and collapsed after the rise of civil conflict that has now reached the level of an active civil war divided by major factions seeking control of Libya’s main cities and petroleum resources, and competing for status as Libya’s de facto central government while a range of additional tribal and local factions that compete and sometimes fight in other areas.

Libya is a major oil exporter, but its civil war means that it lacks the unity and current resources to buy its way out of its problems. As a result, its divided and fragmented government joins the other “failed states” in this analysis by having some of the lowest rated governance in the world, and much of its structure of governance has been destroyed.

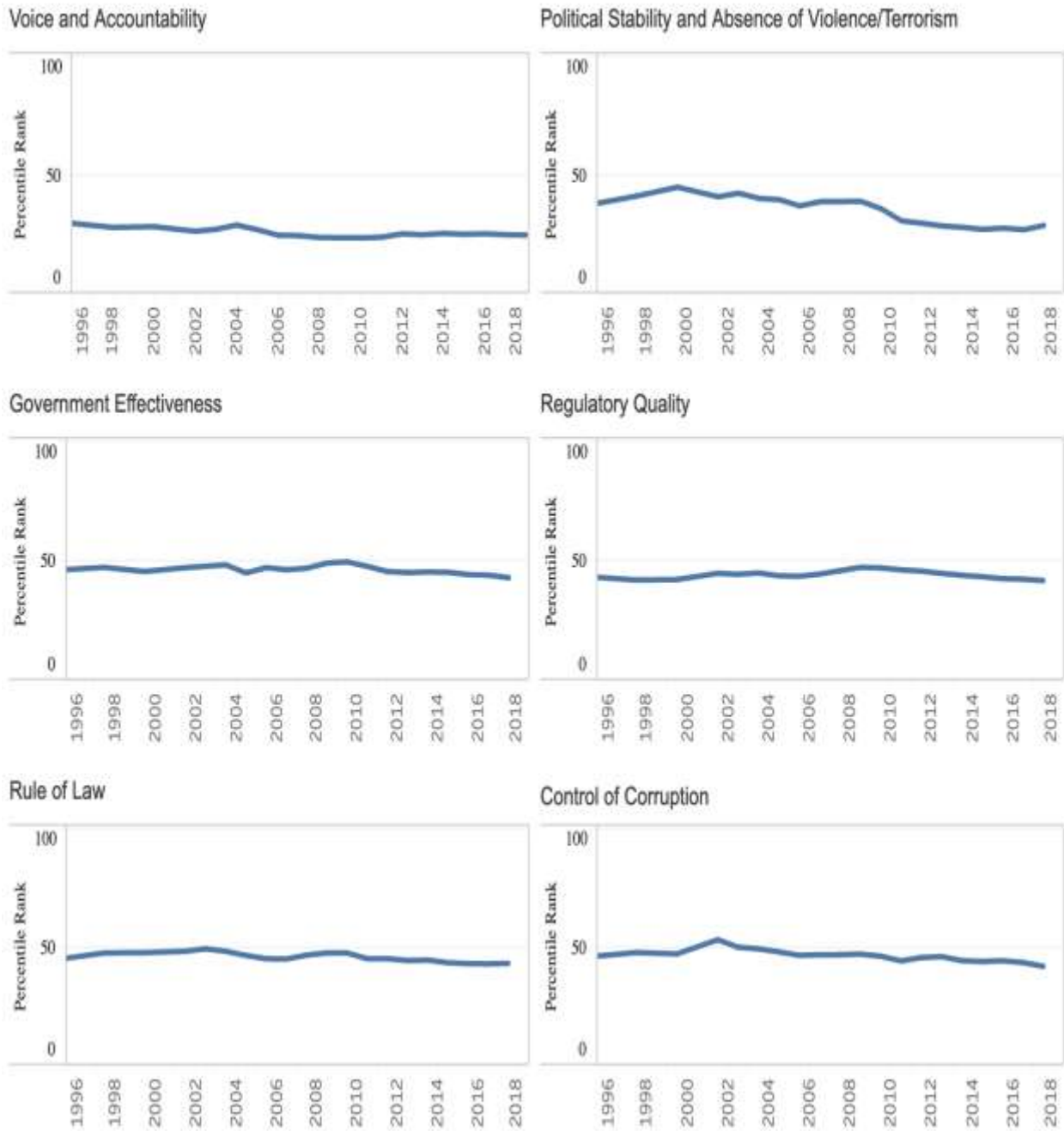
Transparency International rated Libya 170th out of 180 countries in 2018, making it the 10th most corrupt country ranked by the World Bank. As is the case with Syria, there is no way to estimate when *or if* the fighting will end and Libya will reemerge as a unified state – much less more towards some path of stable development.

- **Figure Twenty-Seven** shows the World Bank rankings of governance for Yemen – showing both the country’s percentile rank in blue and the margin of uncertainty or possible error in gray. Long before the current fighting, Yemen faced major challenges from acute population pressure, depletion of its limited water resources, declining petroleum exports, local dependence on a narcotic called Qat, and a lack of any coherent form of economic development.

Yemen's governance rankings have always been low, and modern Yemen is the awkward and uncertain blend of North and South Yemen that came after the government of South Yemen imploded in internal violence. The collapse of the Saleh dictatorship in November 2011 — a government whose leader described ruling Yemen as “dancing on the heads of snakes” — eventually triggered a brutal civil war, a power grab by the Houthi — and a Saudi-UAE invasion with massive air strikes.

The political upheavals, civil war, Saudi and UAE attacks, and a wide range of other fighting in Yemen, have left it with deeply divided regional and local governments. Many factions are now actively involved in local fighting as well as in the war between the Houthi backed by Iran, and the rival Hadi faction backed by an uncertain Saudi-UAE coalition. Transparency International rated Yemen 176th out of 180 countries in 2018, making it the fourth most corrupt country in the world, but Yemen effectively has no clear government.

Figure Twenty-One: Average MENA Regional Governance Indicators

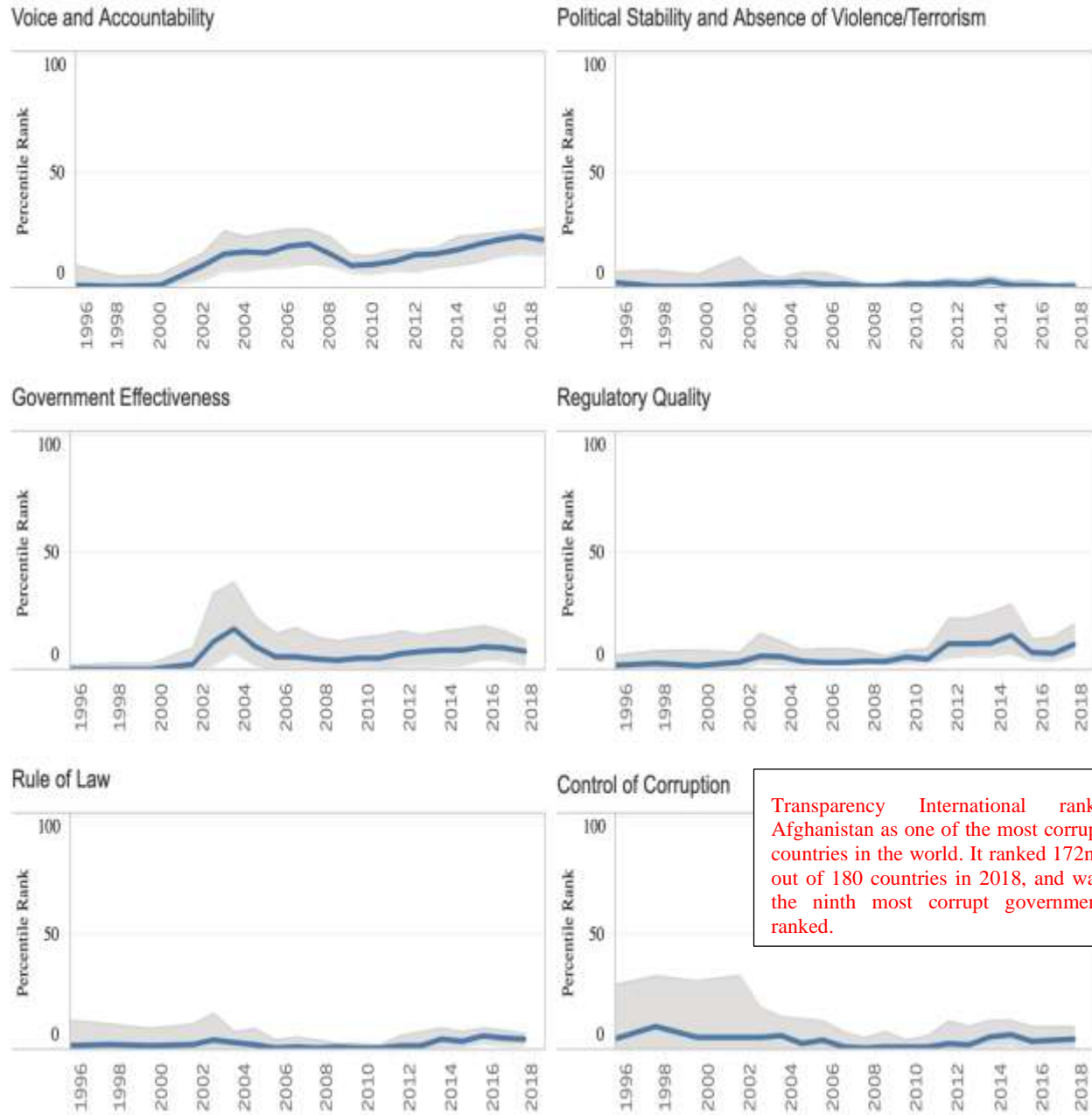


The solid blue line shows the selected country's percentile rank on each of the six aggregate indicators. The grey-shaded region indicates the margin of error.

Source: Kaufmann D., A. Kraay, and M. Mastruzzi (2010), *The Worldwide Governance Indicators: Methodology and Analytical Issues* - https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1682130

Source: World Bank, Governance Indicators, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/Home/Reports>, and Transparency International, <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018>, accessed September 24, 2018.

Figure Twenty-Two: World Bank Governance Indicators for Afghanistan



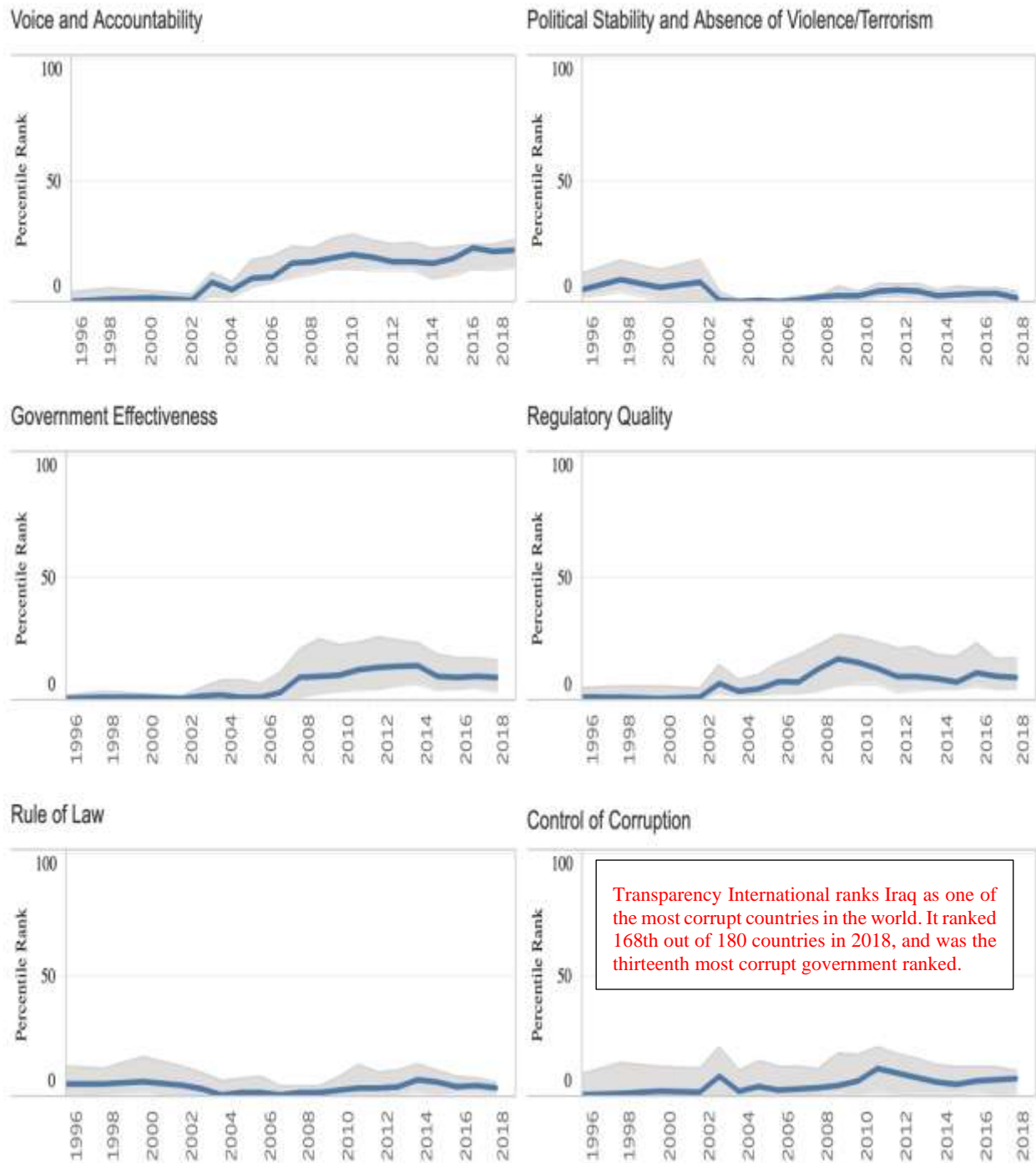
Transparency International ranks Afghanistan as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. It ranked 172nd out of 180 countries in 2018, and was the ninth most corrupt government ranked.

The solid blue line shows the selected country's percentile rank on each of the six aggregate indicators. The grey-shaded region indicates the margin of error.

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Source: World Bank, Governance Indicators, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/Home/Reports>, and Transparency International, <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018>, accessed September 24, 2018.

Figure Twenty-Three: World Bank Governance Indicators for Iraq



The solid blue line shows the selected country's percentile rank on each of the six aggregate indicators. The grey-shaded region indicates the margin of error.

Source: Kaufmann D., A. Kraay, and M. Mastruzzi (2010), *The Worldwide Governance Indicators: Methodology and Analytical Issues* - https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1682130

Source World Bank, Governance Indicators, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/Home/Reports>, and Transparency International, <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018>, accessed September 24, 2018,

Figure Twenty-Four: How Polls May Correlate to Governance Indicators

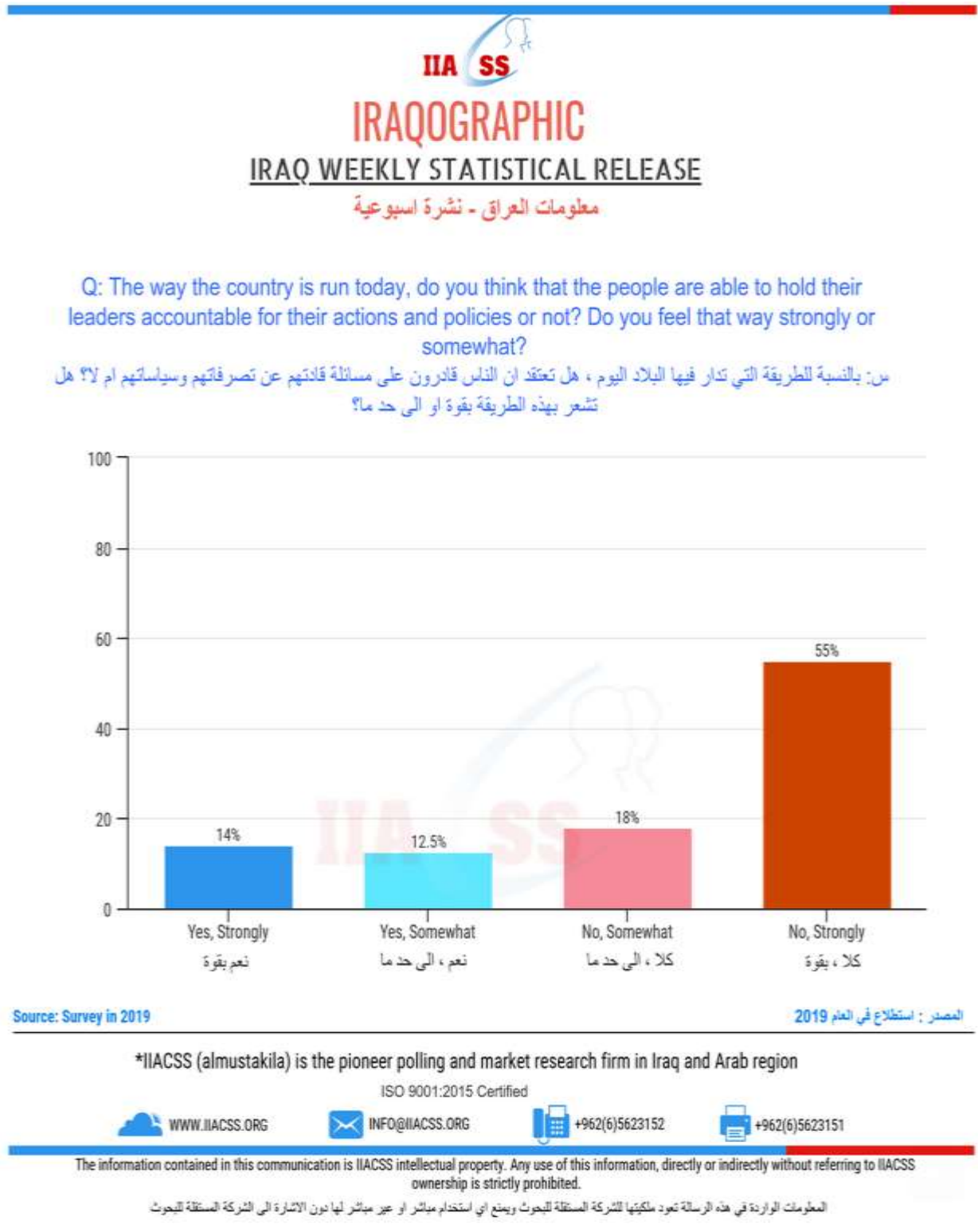
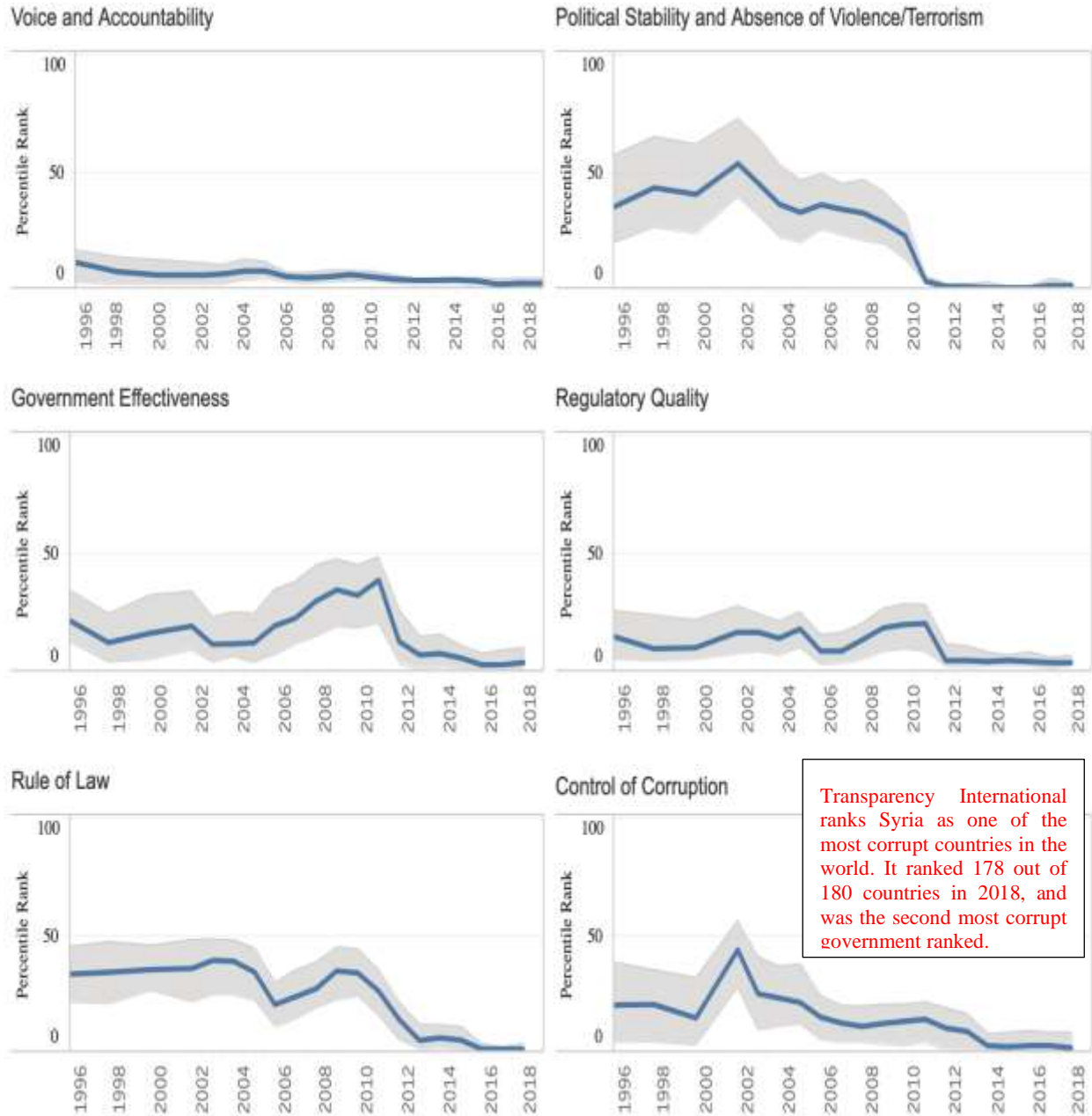


Figure Twenty-Five: World Bank Governance Indicators for Syria

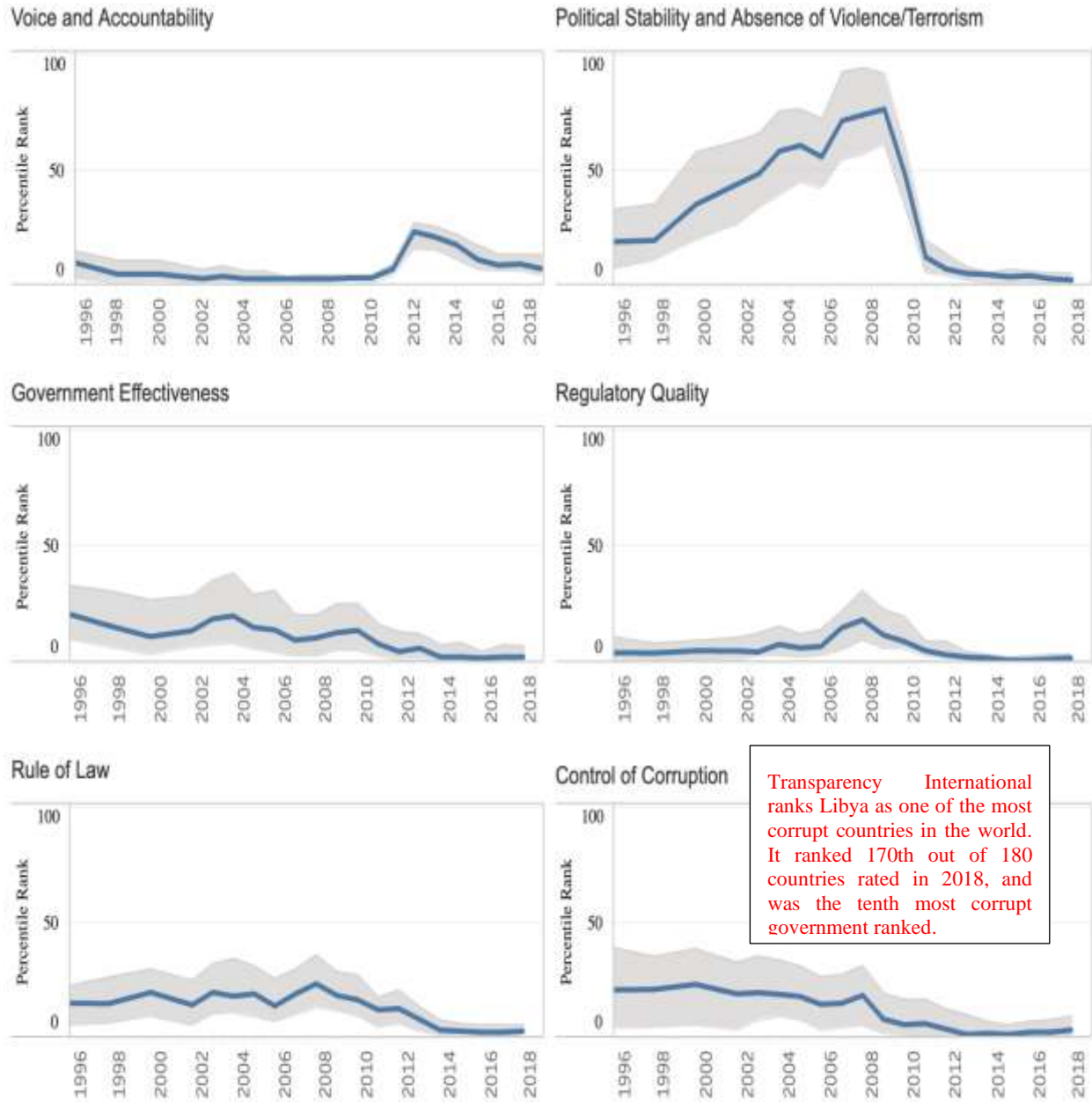


The solid blue line shows the selected country's percentile rank on each of the six aggregate indicators. The grey-shaded region indicates the margin of error.

Source: Kaufmann D., A. Kraay, and M. Mastruzzi (2010), *The Worldwide Governance Indicators: Methodology and Analytical Issues* - https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1682130

Source World Bank, Governance Indicators, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/Home/Reports>, and Transparency International, <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018>, accessed September 24, 2018,

Figure Twenty-Six: World Bank Governance Indicators for Libya



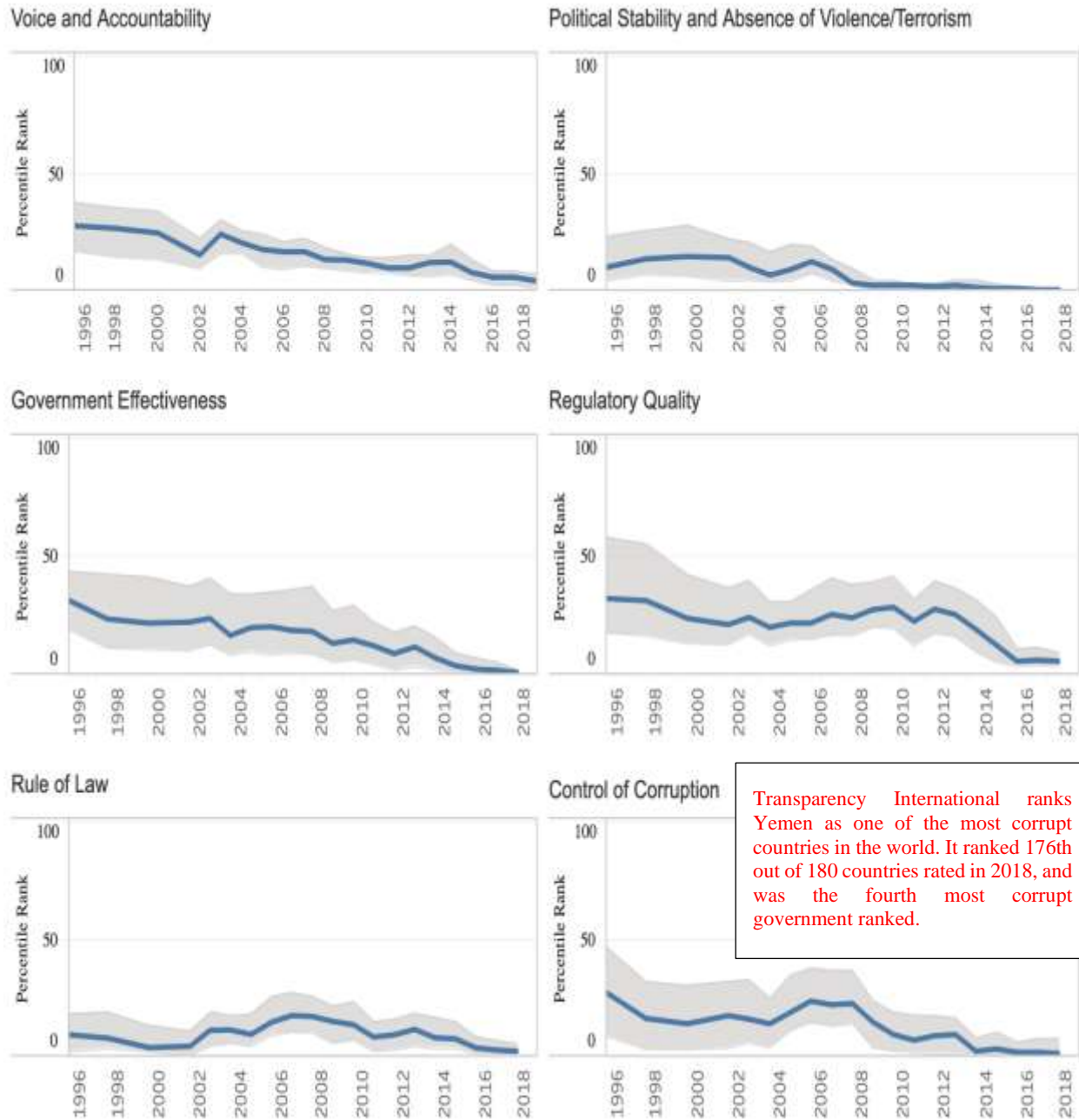
Transparency International ranks Libya as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. It ranked 170th out of 180 countries rated in 2018, and was the tenth most corrupt government ranked.

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Source World Bank, Governance Indicators, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/Home/Reports>, and Transparency International, <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018>, accessed September 24, 2018,

Figure Twenty-Seven: World Bank Governance Indicators for Yemen



Transparency International ranks Yemen as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. It ranked 176th out of 180 countries rated in 2018, and was the fourth most corrupt government ranked.

The solid blue line shows the selected country's percentile rank on each of the six aggregate indicators. The grey-shaded region indicates the margin of error.

Source: Kaufmann D., A. Kraay, and M. Mastruzzi (2010), *The Worldwide Governance Indicators: Methodology and Analytical Issues* - https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1682130

Source World Bank, Governance Indicators, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/Home/Reports>, and Transparency International, <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018>, accessed September 24, 2018,

Demographics and Population Pressure

There is no clear way to prioritize the other key indicators that show the importance of the longer-term civil forces shaping and destabilizing states like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen. They all interact to some degree, and there is no way to establish or weight a clear correlation to extremism, terrorism, insurgency, and other forms of violence. And, it should again be stressed that less quantifiable and shorter factors like religion, ideology, leadership, politics, and the immediate capability to use force play a critical role.

Demographics and population pressures do stand out, however, because the forces involved are so great, and get so little attention. They are key causes of major social change, key employment and economic problems, major shifts in the structure of local societies, and a broad and consistent shift away from once relatively stable rural locations to burgeoning urban areas and jobs based on manufacturing, services, and government employment. They also are forces that have not only put high levels of pressure on each of the countries where the U.S. is now fighting or playing a major military role, but put consistent pressure on the entire MENA region, South Asia, and Central Asia.

Massive Overall Population Pressure

There are many uncertainties when it comes to population estimates, and many of the countries in the Middle East and North Africa, and South and Central Asia, have never had a real census and rely on uncertain methods of sampling and estimation. There is no doubt, however, that a massive increase in population has taken place since 1950, that it still continues, and that it may well continue to 2050 and beyond. Key sources like the UN and the International Data Base of the U.S. Census Bureau also agree in broad terms that a massive increase in population is still underway, and one that presents a critical challenge to virtually every country in these regions.

Figure Twenty-Eight shows the extraordinary rise in the total population of the Middle East and North Africa between 1950 and 2050 – a rise that the U.S. Census Bureau indicates has already reached 5.5 times the figure in 1950, and will be 7.9 times higher by 2050, and where the most probable trends in UN projections agree.

Only the wealthiest oil exporting states in the MENA region have so far been able to cope with this population pressure in terms of job creation, real per capita wealth, government services, and economic and social infrastructure. Even these states are likely to have major problems in the future unless they can carry out diversification policies for their economies, reduce dependence on petroleum exports, and improve their levels of governance.

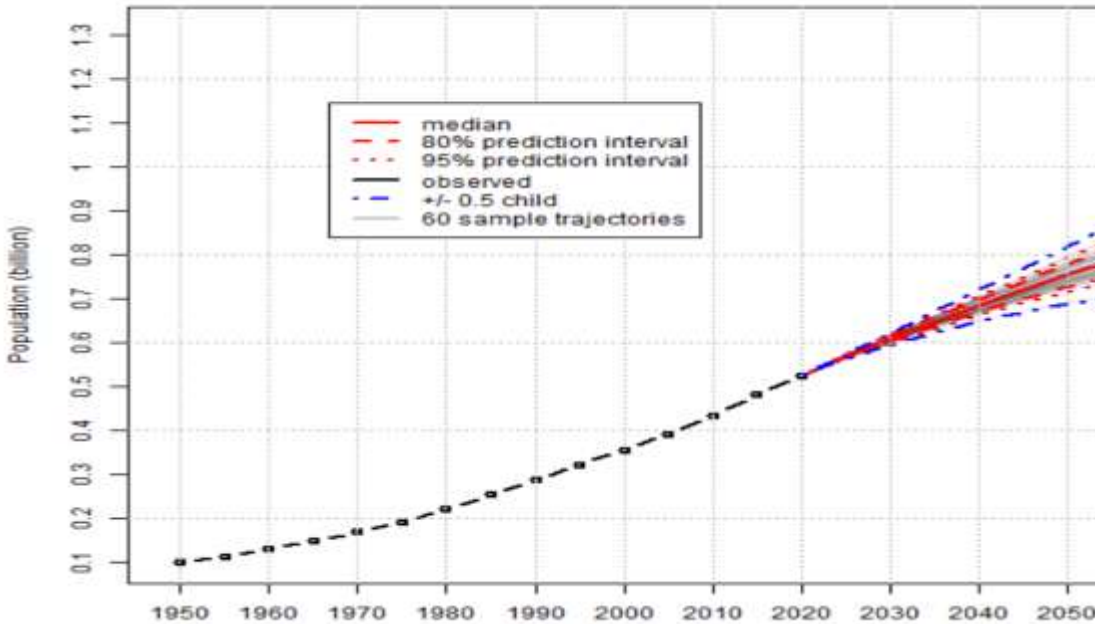
In other cases, this massive increase in population pressure not only puts immense pressure on countries that have a high ratio of desert and mountains to arable land, and limited rainfall and aquifers, but where rapid population growth creates a major “youth bulge” of new demands on education and for jobs. For example, the UN estimates that the population of ages 15-24 in North Africa and Western Asia rose from under 20 million in 1950 to over 83 million by 2019. The trends in Central and South Asia are the same. (<https://population.un.org/wpp/Graphs/Probabilistic/POP/15-24/1833>.)

The IDB and UN projected that this rate of increase will decline with time, but such projections have often overestimated the degree of decline in the past, and both the IDB and UN agree that major further increases will take place in population pressure through at least 2040 and may well

continue after 2050. The end result will be a major challenge to regional stability for at least two decades and one that can lead to further political upheavals, violence, extremism, and civil conflict. (<https://population.un.org/wpp/Graphs/Probabilistic/POP/15-24/1833>.)

Figure Twenty-Eight: UN and U.S. Census Bureau Estimates of the Rise in Population. In the MENA Region: 1950-2050

UN Estimates Total Population in North Africa and Western Asia Grew from Under 100 million in 1950 to over 530 Million in 2019



U.S. Census Bureau Estimates MENA Population Grew from 62.6 million in 1950 to 456.9 million in 2019, or by 5.2 times, in spite of War & Refugee losses

Demographic Indicators	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019	2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
Population																
Midyear population (in thousands)	82,646	106,325	138,407	185,694	253,428	281,269	310,607	342,288	383,801	422,688	456,892	465,263	502,413	536,966	600,379	656,388
Growth rate (percent)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	1.3	1.6	1.9	1.9	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.4	1.2	1.0	0.8
Fertility																
Total fertility rate (births per woman)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	4.9	3.9	3.3	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.3	2.2	2.1
Crude birth rate (per 1,000 population)	(NA)	(NA)	1	0	21	21	25	24	24	24	22	21	19	17	16	14
Births (in thousands)	(NA)	(NA)	87	91	5,201	6,029	7,831	8,353	9,391	10,015	9,879	9,807	9,425	9,242	9,600	9,498
Mortality																
Life expectancy at birth (years)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	66	68	70	71	73	74	74	75	76	77	78	80
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 births)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	59	49	40	33	26	23	21	20	17	15	11	8
Under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000 births)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	83	65	51	42	31	27	24	24	20	17	13	9
Crude death rate (per 1,000 population)	(NA)	(NA)	0	0	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	6	7
Deaths (in thousands)	(NA)	(NA)	21	21	1,069	1,314	1,660	1,741	1,808	1,926	2,048	2,085	2,288	2,575	3,393	4,420
Migration																
Net migration rate (per 1,000 population)	(NA)	(NA)	0	-0	-4	-1	-0	-0	1	0	2	1	0	-0	-0	-0
Net number of migrants (in thousands)	(NA)	(NA)	0	-2	-895	-209	-146	-131	420	141	717	473	80	-32	-117	-150

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base, Afghanistan, <https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/idb/region.php?N=%20Results%20&T=13&A=sepa>, accessed 17.8.2019.

Population Growth in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen

Both the UN and Census Bureau data indicate this youth bulge and the overall rise in population will put intense pressure on the economics, infrastructure, employment needs, and human development capacity of Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen – and their neighbors – through at least 2040 and probably beyond.

Figure Twenty-Nine shows these trends for each country, and such pressures help explain their instability, why part of their population may choose extremism and violence, and the problems they will face even after – and if – they can achieve some meaningful level of conflict resolution.

In spite of decades of war and crisis, Afghanistan's population is estimated to have increased by 4.4 times from 8.15 million in 1950 to 32.6 million in 2019. It has also increased by some 2.4 times since the Russian invasion, and during a period of almost constant war.

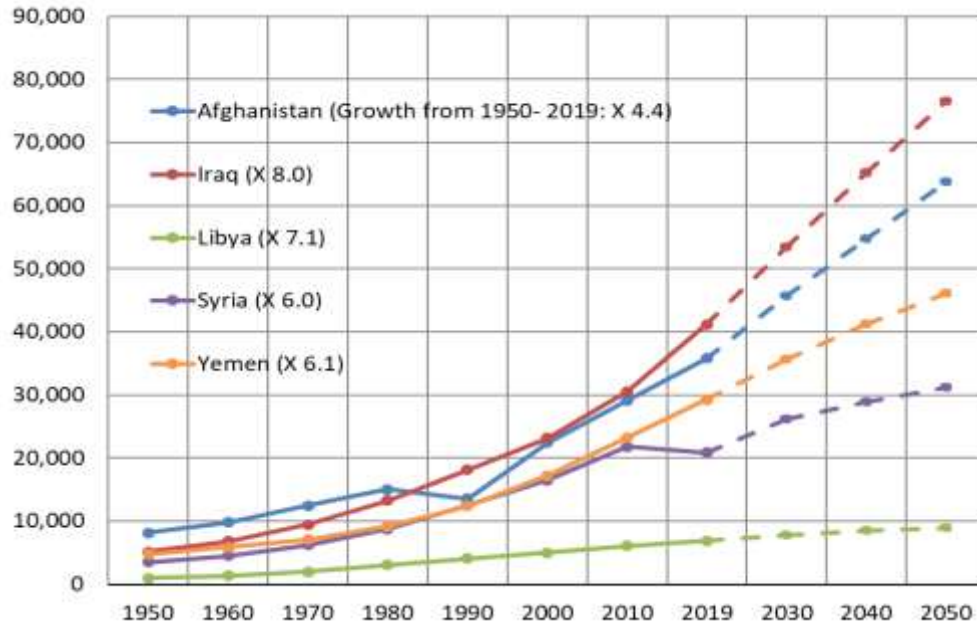
Iraq's population has increased even more sharply. It has increased by 8.0 times from 5.16 million in 1950 to 41.2 million in 2019. It has increased by some 3.1 times since the beginning of the Iran-Iraq War, and in spite of the first Gulf War and the fighting from 2003 to the present.

Syria's population has increased by 6.0 times since 1950 in spite of the flight of over four million refugees since 2011, and is projected to be growing sharply again by 2025. Libya's population increased very rapidly after 1950 in spite of substantial poverty, and is 7.1 times the total in 1950. This growth seems likely return to its past rate of increase once any settlement is reached that will end its civil war.

Yemen is one of the poorest and least developed nations in its region, and its population has increased by 6.1 times from 4.8 million in 1950 to 29.3 million in 2019. It is projected to reach 46.1 million by 2050.

Figure Twenty-Nine: UN and U.S. Census Bureau Estimates of the Rise in Population. In the MENA Region: 1950-2050

Growth in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen: 1950-2050 (Midyear population in thousands)



U.S. Census Bureau Estimates by Country

Demographic Overview - Custom Region - Afghanistan

Demographic Indicators	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019	2025	2030	2040	2050
Population															
Midyear population (in thousands)	8,150	9,829	12,431	15,044	13,568	19,445	22,461	26,335	29,121	32,564	35,780	41,117	45,665	54,717	63,795
Growth rate (percent)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	-5.9	-1.9	3.5	-1.3	3.4	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.0	1.7	1.4

Demographic Overview - Custom Region - Iraq

Demographic Indicators	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019	2025	2030	2040	2050
Population															
Midyear population (in thousands)	5,163	6,822	9,414	13,233	18,140	19,658	23,128	27,538	30,526	37,056	41,204	47,657	53,386	65,148	76,519
Growth rate (percent)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	-2.7	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.3	2.9	2.5	2.4	2.2	1.8	1.4

Demographic Overview - Custom Region - Syria

Demographic Indicators	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019	2025	2030	2040	2050
Population															
Midyear population (in thousands)	3,495	4,530	6,252	8,740	12,534	14,487	16,514	18,614	21,766	17,065	20,894	24,538	26,090	28,938	31,226
Growth rate (percent)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	3.9	2.7	2.5	2.3	1.7	-0.2	6.9	1.3	1.2	0.9	0.6

Demographic Overview - Custom Region - Libya

Demographic Indicators	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019	2025	2030	2040	2050
Population															
Midyear population (in thousands)	961	1,338	1,999	3,060	4,098	4,584	5,025	5,570	6,110	6,412	6,850	7,375	7,773	8,465	8,971
Growth rate (percent)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	2.6	0.7	2.2	1.9	1.8	2.2	1.4	1.1	1.0	0.7	0.4

Demographic Overview - Custom Region - Yemen

Demographic Indicators	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019	2025	2030	2040	2050
Population															
Midyear population (in thousands)	4,777	5,872	7,098	9,133	12,416	14,832	17,236	20,003	23,210	26,737	29,282	32,822	35,660	41,142	46,081
Growth rate (percent)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.5	2.1	1.7	1.6	1.3	1.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base, Afghanistan, <https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/idb/region.php?N=%20Results%20&T=13&A=sepa>, accessed September 28, 2019.

Population Pressure and the “Youth Bulge”

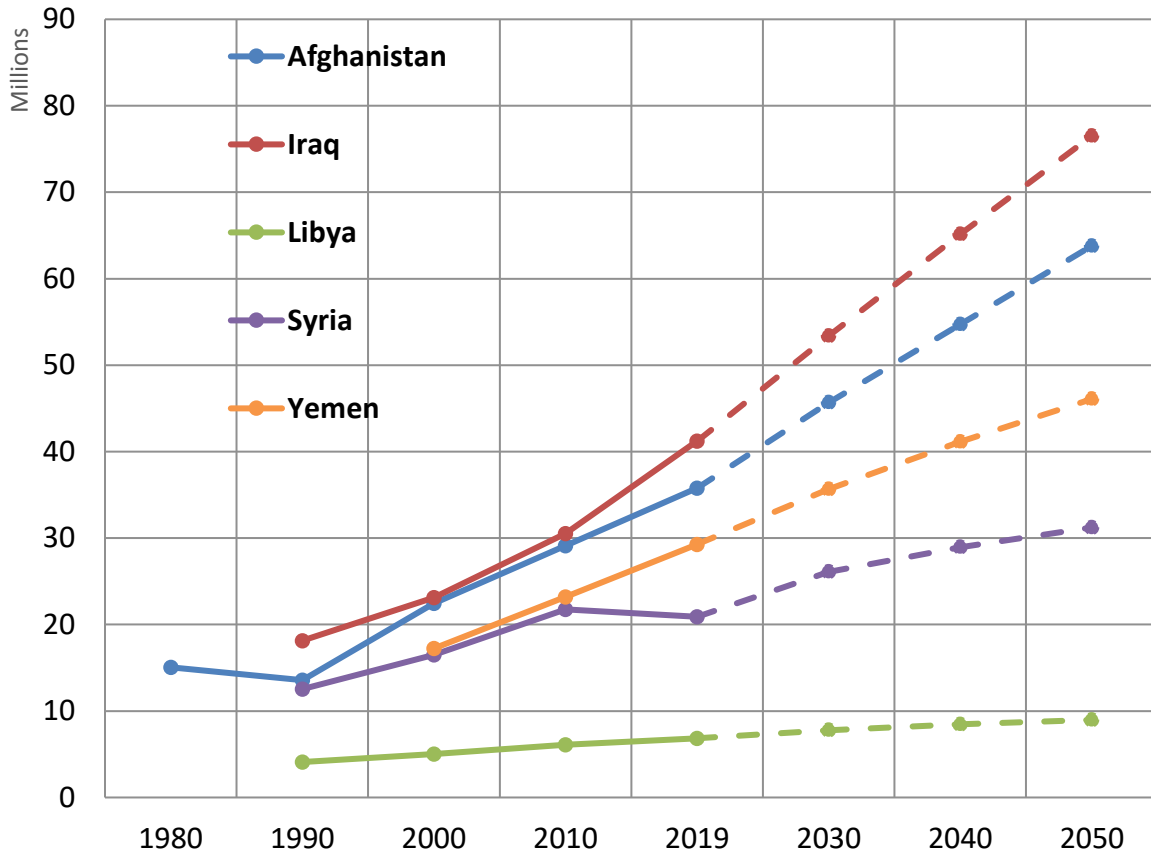
Population pressure also creates a young population. Arguably, this creates a higher percentage of young adults who can be converted to extremism and violent causes, and that are easier to radicalize. What seems to be far more important, however, is that this creates a steadily growing flood of young men and women who are attempting to get an education or entering the job market. This can create a major strain on the ability of a given economy to create enough jobs, and also creates significant levels of youth unemployment in urban areas.

Figure Thirty illustrates these pressures for all youths between 0 and 24 years of age as estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau in its international data base. It should be clear just how serious the growth has already become, although the data do not cover the far more massive increase from 1950 to 1980. It is clear that the increases put a serious burden on the economy since almost all those shown will be dependent on adults and existing workers until they reach their mid-teens, and they will then compete to enter the job market.

Figure Thirty-One only includes young men and women from 15 to 24 years of age, and highlights the impact of this youth bulge on employment—an issue discussed in more depth in the final section of this analysis.

Figure Thirty: UN and U.S. Census Bureau Estimates of the Rise in Total Youth Population. In the MENA Region: 1950-2050

Growth in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen: 1950-2050 (Population in Millions)

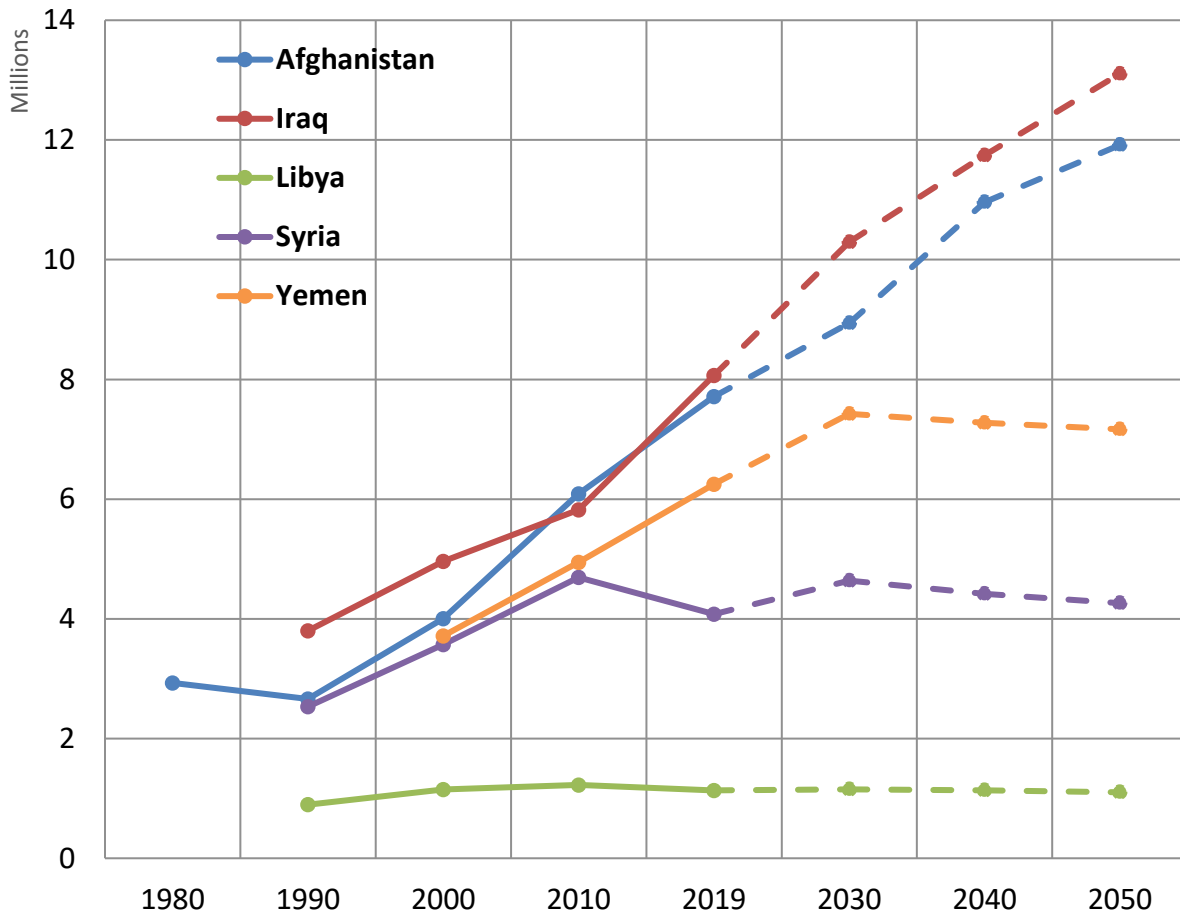


Year	Afghanistan	Iraq	Libya	Syria	Yemen
1980	2,929,732	ND	ND	ND	ND
1990	2,661,065	3,800,877	895,457	2,533,069	ND
2000	4,006,286	4,962,901	1,151,346	3,569,065	3,714,705
2010	6,087,119	5,820,002	1,225,243	4,692,015	4,943,202
2019	7,713,770	8,068,167	1,134,654	4,078,412	6,251,401

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base, Afghanistan, <https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/idb/region.php?N=%20Results%20&T=13&A=sepa>, accessed 17.8.2019.

Figure Thirty-One: UN and U.S. Census Bureau Estimates of the Rise in Youth (15-24) Population. In the MENA Region: 1950-2050

**Growth in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen: 1950-2050
(Population in Millions)**



Year	Afghanistan	Iraq	Libya	Syria	Yemen
1980	15,044,289	ND	ND	ND	ND
1990	13,568,282	18,139,958	4,098,435	12,533,628	ND
2000	22,461,349	23,128,328	5,024,753	16,514,089	17,235,921
2010	29,120,727	30,526,292	6,110,364	21,765,977	23,209,521
2019	35,780,458	41,204,228	6,850,229	20,893,752	29,282,399

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base, Afghanistan, <https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/idb/region.php?N=%20Results%20&T=13&A=sepa>, accessed 17.8.2019.

Uncertain Data on Critical Sectarian, Ethnic, Tribal, and Other Internal Divisions

It is important to note that these population pressures will interact with the existing sectarian, ethnic, and tribal divisions in each conflict state and their regions. The impact of these ethnic, sectarian, and tribal differences on the fighting in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen is all too clear, and population pressure also is shaping key changes in each national economy and social structure in raising the rate of urbanization, ending reliance on agriculture, and changing the basic structure of each “failed state.”

These are difficult forces to quantify in a region where there are almost no reliable census data, and data on their economies and level of urbanization are uncertain. One key problem is the lack of reliable data on the size and location of sectarian groups, including data on the numbers, current location, and distribution of Sunnis and Shi’ites. The same is true of such data on the numbers, current location, and distribution of ethnic divisions like those between Arabs, Kurd, and Berber, and the various ethnic groups in Afghanistan. Tribal affiliation data are even more uncertain.

Figure Thirty-Two provides a CIA estimate of the major sectarian and religious differences in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen. Virtually all experts agree that such differences have been key sources of political tension and violence, and the power struggles between given groups have helped create extremism, terrorism, and insurgent/separatist movements. Tribal divisions are particularly important in Afghanistan, Libya, and Yemen, although they affect all of the “failed states.” Arab-Kurd tensions are critical in Iraq, and important in Syria. Tensions between Sunni, Shi’ite, and minority groups have been serious sources of violence in Iraq, and in Afghanistan, Syria, and Yemen to a lesser degree.

There is little disagreement over the broad scale of the ethnic and sectarian divisions shown in **Figure Thirty-Two**, but the CIA does note that there are serious problems in making exact estimates, and their timeliness. U.S. government experts note that there are no reliable data on the size and location of given sects and ethnicities in most countries in the MENA region, South Asia, and Central Asia, and particularly for smaller minority groups and the composition and location of mixed groups.

These problems are compounded at a different level by a lack of reliable reporting on the ethnicity and sect of the perpetrators and targets in acts of terrorism and violence, and within governments and military forces. It is often clear that some elites are dominated by given sects and ethnicities, and that political and economic discrimination occurs, but the extent of such problems are often hard to estimate.

They note such problems are particularly severe for conflict countries like the “failed states” where the U.S. is now involved in military operations. Some note that the U.S. has been forced to collect more accurate data in specific combat zones, that such efforts have sometimes revealed unanticipatedly serious levels of discrimination and violence, and have had unpredictable results – including significant violence from minority individuals and small action groups in areas dominated by other sects and ethnicities.

Figure Thirty-Two: CIA Estimate of Major Sectarian and Ethnic Divisions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen

Afghanistan

Ethnic groups: Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, other (includes smaller numbers of Baloch, Turkmen, Nuristani, Pamiri, Arab, Gujar, Brahui, Qizilbash, Aimaq, Pashai, and Kyrgyz) (2015) Current statistical data on the sensitive subject of ethnicity in Afghanistan are not available, and ethnicity data from small samples of respondents to opinion polls are not a reliable alternative; Afghanistan's 2004 constitution recognizes 14 ethnic groups: Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Baloch, Turkmen, Nuristani, Pamiri, Arab, Gujar, Brahui, Qizilbash, Aimaq, and Pashai

Languages are Afghan Persian or Dari (official) 77% (Dari functions as the lingua franca), Pashto (official) 48%, Uzbek 11%, English 6%, Turkmen 3%, Urdu 3%, Pashayi 1%, Nuristani 1%, Arabic 1%, Balochi 1% (2017 est.) The Turkic languages Uzbek and Turkmen, as well as Balochi, Pashayi, Nuristani, and Pamiri are the third official languages in areas where the majority speaks them

Religions: Muslim 99.7% (Sunni 84.7 - 89.7%, Shia 10 - 15%), other 0.3% (2009 est.)

Iraq

Ethnic groups: Arab 75-80%, Kurdish 15-20%, other 5% (includes Turkmen, Yezidi, Shabak, Kaka'i, Bedouin, Romani, Assyrian, Circassian, Sabaeen-Mandaean, Persian) Languages are Arabic (official), Kurdish (official), Turkmen (a Turkish dialect), Syriac (Neo-Aramaic), and Armenian are official in areas where native speakers of these languages constitute a majority of the population. These data are a 1987 government estimate; no more recent reliable numbers are available.

Religions: Muslim (official) 95-98% (Shia 64-69%, Sunni 29-34%), Christian 1% (includes Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Assyrian Church of the East), other 1-4% (2015 est.) While there has been voluntary relocation of many Christian families to northern Iraq, the overall Christian population has decreased at least 50% and perhaps as high as 90% since the fall of the Saddam Husayn regime in 2003, according to US Embassy estimates, with many fleeing to Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon.

Syria

Ethnic groups: Arab ~50%, Alawite ~15%, Kurd ~10%, Levantine ~10%, other ~15% (includes Druze, Ismaili, Imami, Nusairi, Assyrian, Turkoman, Armenian) Languages are Arabic (official), Kurdish, Armenian, Aramaic, Circassian, French, English

Religions: Muslim 87% (official; includes Sunni 74% and Alawi, Ismaili, and Shia 13%), Christian 10% (includes Orthodox, Uniate, and Nestorian), Druze 3%, Jewish (few remaining in Damascus and Aleppo). The Christian population may be considerably smaller as a result of Christians fleeing the country during the ongoing civil war.

Libya

Ethnic groups: Berber and Arab 97%, other 3% (includes Greeks, Maltese, Italians, Egyptians, Pakistanis, Turks, Indians, and Tunisians) Languages: Arabic (official), Italian, English (all widely understood in the major cities); Berber (Nafusi, Ghadamis, Suknah, Awjilah, Tamasheq)

Religions: Muslim (official; virtually all Sunni) 96.6%, Christian 2.7%, Buddhist 0.3%, Hindu <0.1, Jewish <0.1, folk religion <0.1, unaffiliated 0.2%, other <0.1 (2010 est.) Non-Sunni Muslims include native Ibadhi Muslims (<1% of the population) and foreign Muslims.

Yemen

Ethnic groups: Predominantly Arab; but also Afro-Arab, South Asian, European. Language is Arabic, but a distinct Socotri language is widely used on Socotra Island and Archipelago; Mahri is still fairly widely spoken in eastern Yemen

Religions: Muslim 99.1% (official; virtually all are citizens, an estimated 65% are Sunni and 35% are Shia), other 0.9% (includes Jewish, Baha'i, Hindu, and Christian; many are refugees or temporary foreign residents) (2010 est.)

Source: Adapted from the country sections of the *CIA World Factbook*, accessed September 25, 2019.

Ending Traditional Societies: Shifts from Agricultural Employment to Services and Industry

Another key aspect of demographic shifts within Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen and other states in the regions where the U.S. is fighting, is the massive move away from societies and economics based on farms, herding, and nomadic agriculture in the 1950s to jobs in the service, business, manufacturing, government, and security sectors – moves which are closely tied to a sharp and steady rise in urbanization and the concentration of political, military, and economic power in larger cities.

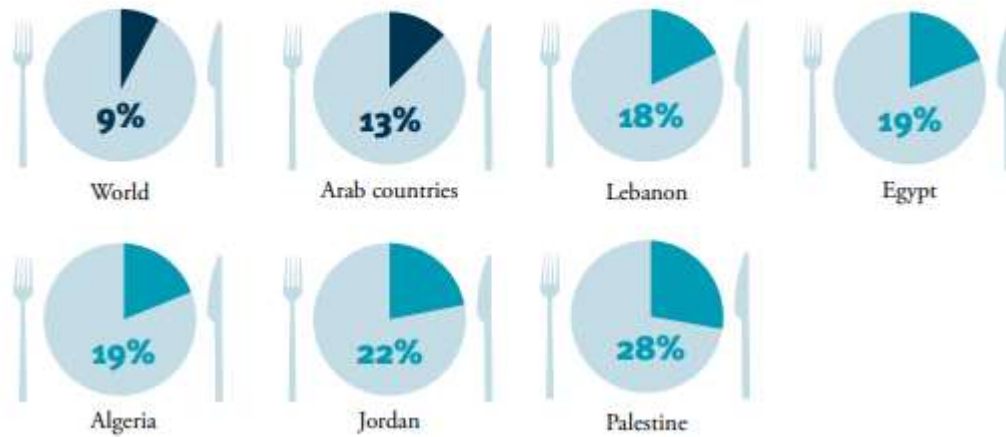
The shift away from agriculture is a function of a wide range of factors. Some are driven by violence and the search for security. Others include massive population increases, sharply limited water and arable land, a lack of stable food processing and marketing services to fund advances in farming. More broadly, they include the fact that increased agricultural productivity is tied to mechanization and investment rather than increases in labor.

- **Figure Thirty-Three** shows the broader forces that are reducing agricultural employment in the MENA region – forces that apply at least as much to Afghanistan and that are compounded by the relative lack of security in many rural areas, and the inability to process, distribute, and market goods efficiently and securely unless they command a high premium as do opiates and other narcotics.
- **Figure Thirty-Four** illustrates some of the trends in the decline of agriculture and the scale of the massive shift towards other forms of employment in more modern economic activities – along with a shift to a market and money dominated economy, dependence on modern governance and services, and exposure to modern communications. It also shows the impact that war has had in several countries in reducing food production and in limiting increases in production in other countries to rates well below the increase in population and national wealth.
- **Figure Thirty-Five** shows that the CIA estimates that formerly rural societies in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen have experienced sharp rises in the size of their services and industrial sectors, and that the percentage of labor still involved in agriculture is often larger than the percentage that agriculture contributes to the GDP, in spite of the fact that increases in productivity and earning power are dominated by investment and mechanization.

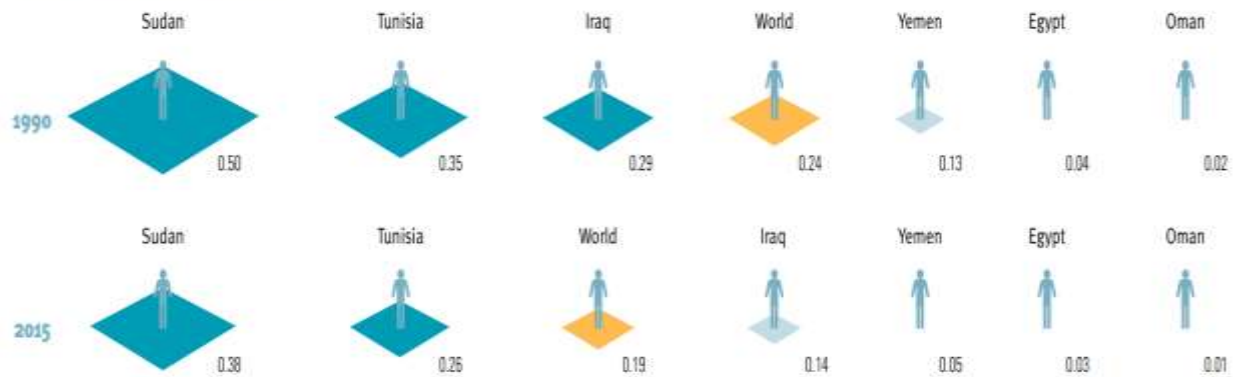
Figure Thirty-Three: Food Imports, Water, and Limits to Arable Land

Water stress and water scarcity affect the majority of people in the region, coupled with scarce and shrinking arable land

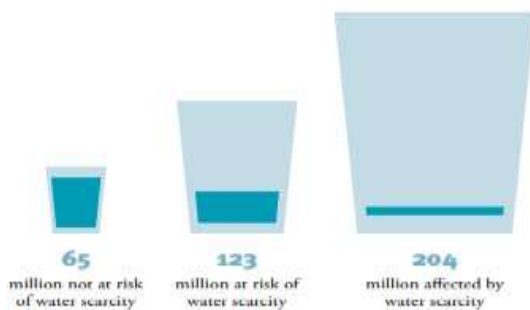
Food imports (% of merchandise imports)



Arable Land (hectares per person)



Population in countries with different exposure to water stress



Top grain importers in the world

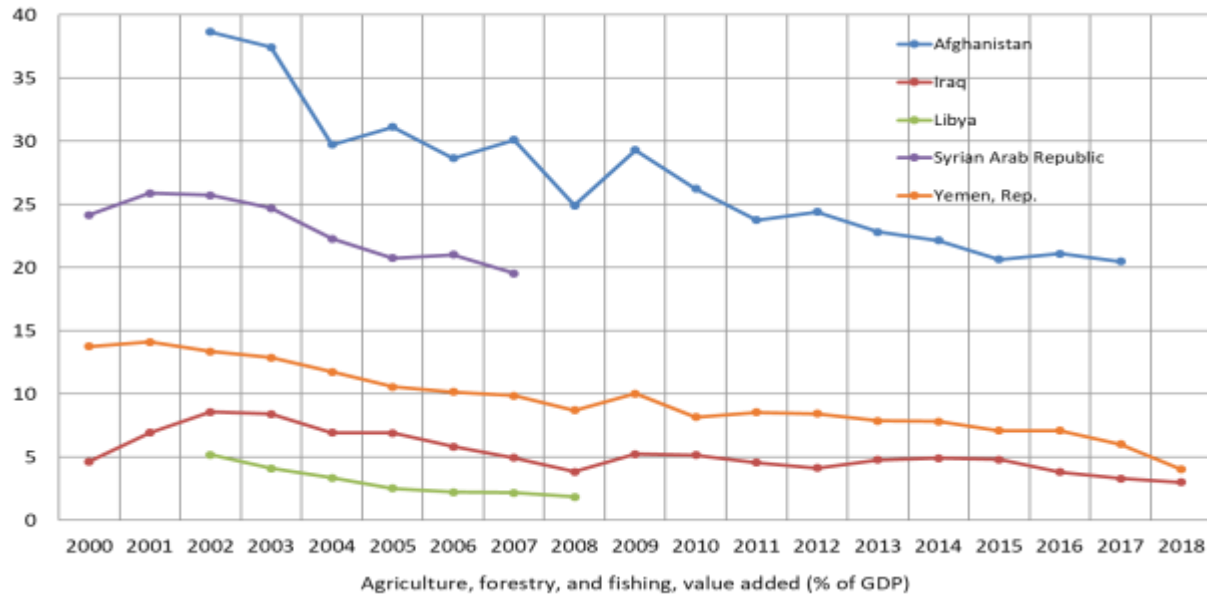


- 5 Saudi Arabia
- 8 Egypt
- 11 Algeria
- 15 Morocco
- 19 Tunisia
- 24 Jordan
- 25 Libya

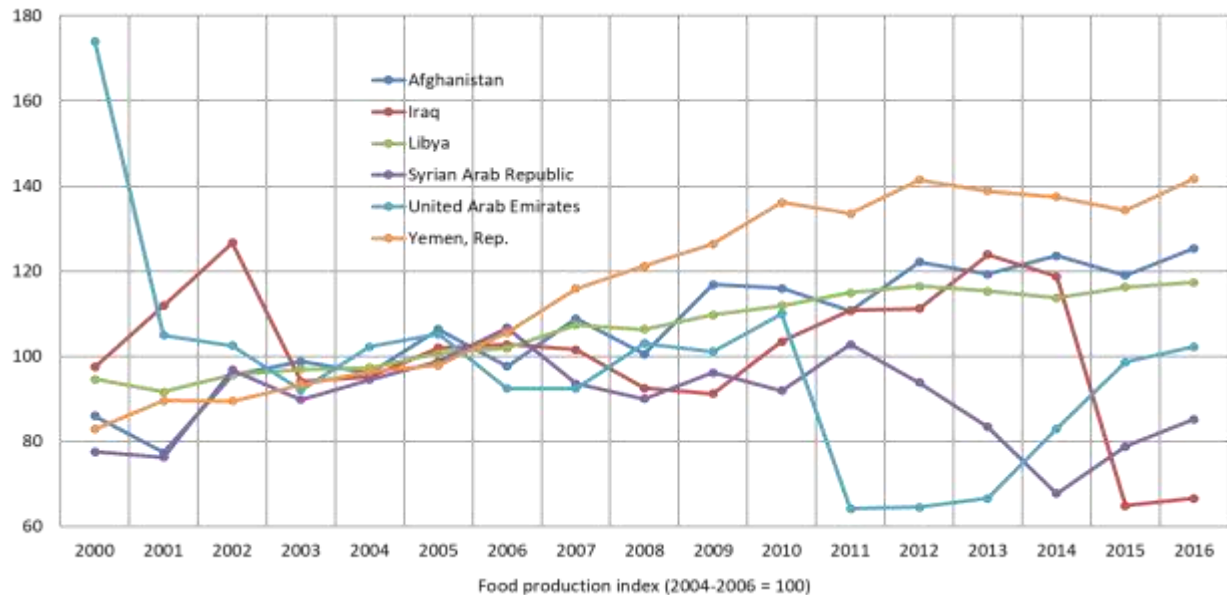
Source: Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Leaving No One Behind, Towards Inclusive Citizenship in Arab Countries*, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2019, p. 24.

Figure Thirty-Four: World Bank and FAO Estimates of the Declining Trend in the Share of Agriculture in adding Value to the GDP, and the Limits to Food Production, in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen

Declining Trend in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing as Value Added to the % GDP – 2000-2018



Slow Rate of Increase or War-Driven Decline in Food Production Index: 2000-2016 (2004-2006 = 100)



Source: Adapted from the country sections of the *CIA World Factbook*, accessed September 25, 2019, and World Bank, *Environmental, Social and Governance Data*, July 26, 2019. <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/environment-social-and-governance-data>

Figure Thirty-Five: CIA Estimate of Share of Agriculture, Industry and Services in the Economies of Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen

Country	GDP Composition by Sector of Origin			Labor Force by Occupation		
	Agriculture	Industry	Services.	Agriculture	Industry	Services
Afghanistan (excludes opium production)	23% (2016 est)	21.1% (2016 est)	55.9% (2016 est)	44.3%	18.1%	37.6% (2017 est)
Iraq	3.3% (2017 est)	51% (2017 est)	45.8% (2017 est)	21.6%	18.7%	45.8% (2008 est)
Syria	20% (2017 est)	19.5% (2017 est)	60.8% (2017 est)	17%	16%	67% (2008 est)
Libya	1.3% (2017 est)	52.3% (2017 est)	46.4% (2017 est)	17%	23%	59% (2004 est)
Yemen	20.3%	11.8%	67.9%	75%.	(——- 25%——-)	

(Most people are employed in agriculture and herding; services, construction, industry, and commerce account for less than one-fourth of the labor force)

Source: Adapted from the country sections of the *CIA World Factbook*, accessed September 25, 2019,

Ending Traditional Societies: The Impact of Urbanization

The most dramatic demographic shift within Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen has been the rising levels of urbanization. The same forces that had led to a decline in agriculture have combined with the modernization of each economy to create strong incentives to live, work, and raise children in urban areas.

The Figures that follow show how this split between urban and rural areas is estimated to have changed relative to the total population from 1950-2050. They show that it has already reached a scale that has shattered the past patterns of population distribution and sectarian and ethnic divisions. This, in turn, inevitably altered and many of traditional aspects of life in given states — although given populations have often adapted their past customs and behavior to urban living, particularly among the poor and less educated.

The end result is not inherently destabilizing, and urbanization can produce significant benefits in states where it is accompanied by suitable economic growth. It does, however, make more and more of the population dependent on formal employment, on cash wages rather than trade or self-sufficiency, and on earning incomes that provide decent living conditions in an urban environment — costs normally far higher than in rural areas and which make the current definition of the poverty line at something close to two dollars a day unrealistically low for much of the population, and that redefine the desired living standards to a much higher level.

Urbanization also raises expectations in poorly performing states like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen. It concentrates the population, breaking down the older patterns that often separate given ethnic groups and sects, heightens the visibility of corruption, exposes large portions of the population to radical groups and indoctrination, and inevitably creates at least some tension over the pace of modernization and social change.

- **Figure Thirty-Six** maps the impact of urbanization in a range of key states.
- **Figure Thirty-Seven** shows the recent trends in urbanization — and rates of urbanization — in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen, and compares them to the rates in the UAE. The World Bank and CIA estimate that urbanization already dominates the population in Iraq, Syria, and Libya. They estimate that it is much lower in Afghanistan and Yemen, but rising quickly. The estimates for the current levels in Afghanistan and Yemen also seem to be too low, and may underestimate the impact of recent conflicts.
- **Figure Thirty-Eight** provides a separate UN estimate of the trends in urbanization in Afghanistan and **Figure Thirty-Nine** highlights a recent World Bank examination of the impact of these trends. It is clear that urbanization already places a high stress on Afghanistan's government and economy, and that it will rise to a high percentage of the total population by 2050.

Afghanistan is still one of the least urbanized countries where the U.S. now has active military involvement. Afghanistan's central government, and the government's control of the population is, however, highly urbanized, and the total percentage of its urbanized population is now roughly twice as high as when the Soviet Union invaded. Almost all of its rapid population growth is occurring in urban areas, and the CIA estimates that 4.1 million of its 34.9 million people lived in Kabul in 2019.

These shifts have radically changed the ethnic, sectarian, and tribal mix of the countries, pushing various groups together that were more isolated and segregated in the past. It has already created a brood pattern of natural tension between urban haves and have nots, given the problems in governance and the economy much higher day-to-day visibility, made demonstrations and violence easier to act out, and created a natural tension between Afghans with traditional values and those shifting to more modern values.

- **Figure Forty** shows UN estimates of the trends in urbanization in Iraq. Iraq has already made the shift from an agricultural society to a largely (70%+) urbanized one. Yet, Iraq still has a comparatively high rate of annual urbanization (3%+). The CIA estimates that six cities have a major portion of its population — 6.643 million in Baghdad (the capital), 1.527 million in Mosul, 1.299 million in Basra, 981,000 in Kirkuk, 821,000 in Erbil, and 820,000 in Najaf (2018).

These cities mix Sunnis and Shi'ites, and Arab, Kurds, and minorities, to very different degrees. Sectarian tensions have been particularly high in Baghdad, and ethnic tensions in Kirkuk. A mix of sustained periods of crisis and conflict since 1980, and terrible government policies that subsidize unproductive and overpaid state industries with high levels of corruption, have created serious tensions over employment, modernization, and support for the government in all of these urban areas. At the same time, equally bad agricultural polies have provided no incentive to stay in agriculture.

- **Figure Forty-One** shows the trends for Syria. It too has become highly urbanized, although the civil war has led to at least a temporary cut in the total urban population. The CIA estimates that 51.8% of its population of 19.4 million were urbanized in 2019, although the remaining levels of civil war have cut the rate of growth to 1.43%. Syria's urban population was concentrated in the West and the capital in Damascus had some 2.32 million, Aleppo had 1.754 million, Homs or Hims had 1.295 million, and Hamah had 894,000 in 2018.

The civil war that began in 2012 led to serious tensions between Alawite, Shi'ite, Sunnis, and smaller religious minorities, separated Syria's Kurds from the rest of the Assad-controlled regions in the country, and created large Sunni extremist elements as well as one of the most violently repressive regimes in the world. The war has also created a series of economic crises in each city, major direct and disguised unemployment, critical dependence on outside aid, and the need to create new patterns of economic development – none of which the government has shown the capability to cope with in any given urban area as of late 2019.

- **Figure Forty-Two** shows the patterns of urbanization in Libya, which has had the most radical increase in urbanization of all the “failed states.” The CIA estimates that 80.4% of its 6.5 million people are urbanized in 2019, and that war and near chaos reduced the annual rate of urbanization to 1.68% in 2015-2020. It also notes that, “90% of the population lives along the Mediterranean coast in and between Tripoli to the west and Al Bayda to the east; the interior remains vastly underpopulated due to the Sahara and lack of surface water.” In 2018, key urban centers included 1.158 million in the formal capital of Tripoli, 799,000 in Benghazi, and 801,000 in Misratah.

Libya's massive shifts towards urbanization were funded by the nation's oil export income, but its patterns of urban life reflect the eccentricities in economics and governance imposed

by its dictator Omar Qaddafi over the nearly half century from 1961 until he was overthrown and killed in October 2011. Since then Libya has been divided by regional, tribal, and armed factions, and has lacked any coherent government, development policies, and basis for creating a stable economy. Income distribution sharply favors narrowly based and corrupt elites in all of the failed states, but the CIA estimates that Libya's citizens actually have one of the lower real per world per capita incomes in the region, that it has something approaching a 30% unemployment rate between Qaddafi's overthrow, and that "about one-third of Libyans live at or below the national poverty line."

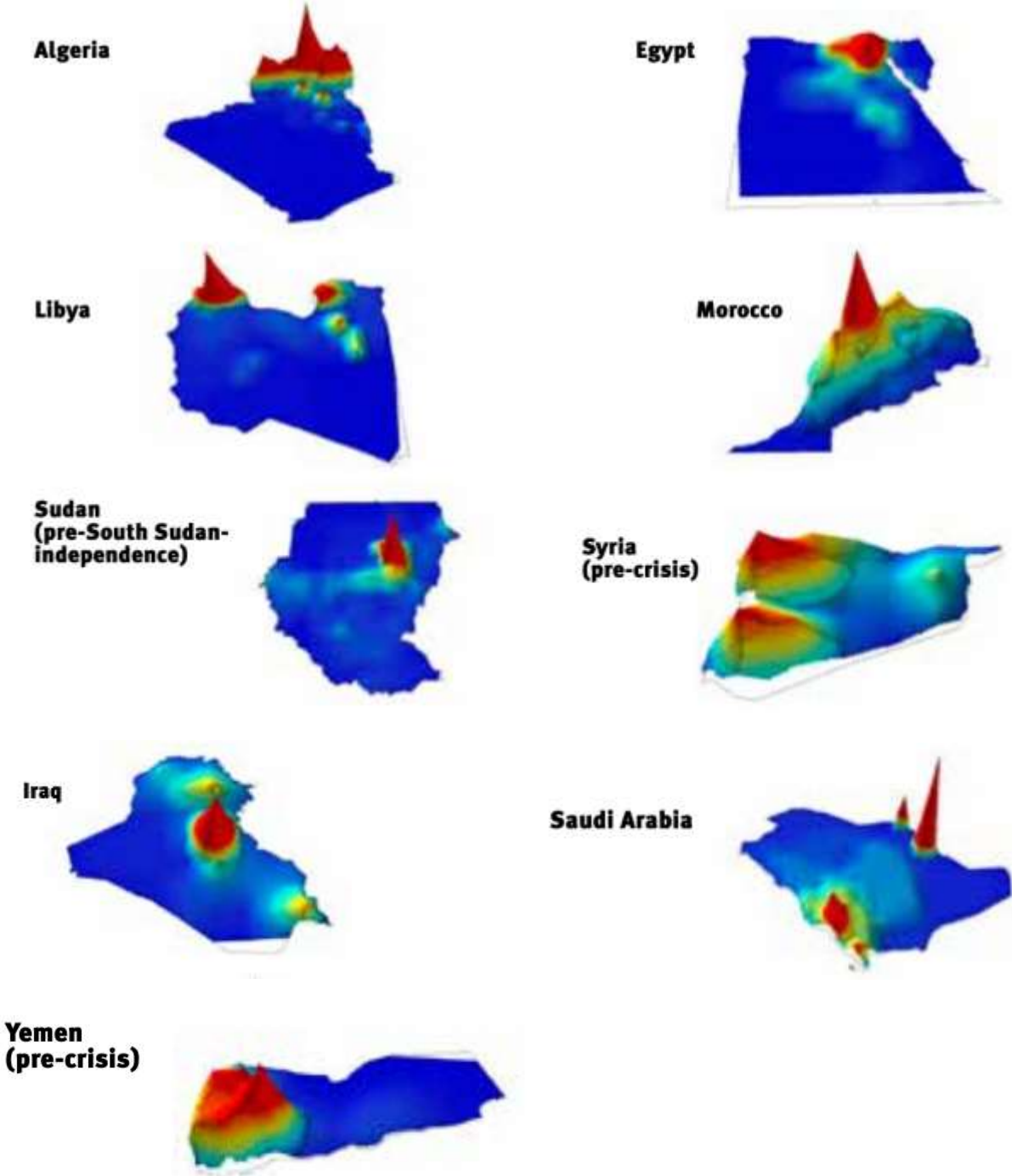
If Libya can be eventually unified, and given a stable level of peace and governance, it will have to develop new patterns of economics, employment, modernization, and urban life.

- **Figure Forty-Three** shows the patterns of urbanization in Yemen, one of the least developed countries in the world, and one with a comparatively low rate of urbanization. The CIA estimates that some 37.3% of its 28.7 million people were urbanized in 2019, although the annual rate of urbanization still averaged 4.06% in 2015-2020. This urbanization still dominated Yemen's politics, governance, and economics, however, and played a critical role in shaping its civil war after 2011. It also had a major impact on non-urban life in its heavily populated West, and the CIA notes that, "the vast majority of the population is found in the Asir Mountains (part of the larger Sarawat Mountain system), located in the far western region of the country." Its two major cities at the capital in Sanaa 2.779 million, and Aden, 922,000.

Yemen has both small elite cadres of well-educated and modern citizens and large areas dominated by tribal and sectarian groups, as well as a history of divisions between "North" and "South" Yemen. Its development has been slow by any standard. Its limited oil and gas exports accounted for roughly 25% of GDP and 65% of government revenue before its dictator, Ali Abdallah Saleh, lost power in 2011. It now not only must deal with the impact of an ongoing civil war, but the need to create a modern economy and stable pattern of social development in spite of both the fighting and a long history of growing structural economic problems that its government has never been able to cope with.

Figure Thirty-Six: Urbanization and the Restructuring of Populations in the MENA Region - Part One

The concentration of economic activity in certain areas is evident in many countries

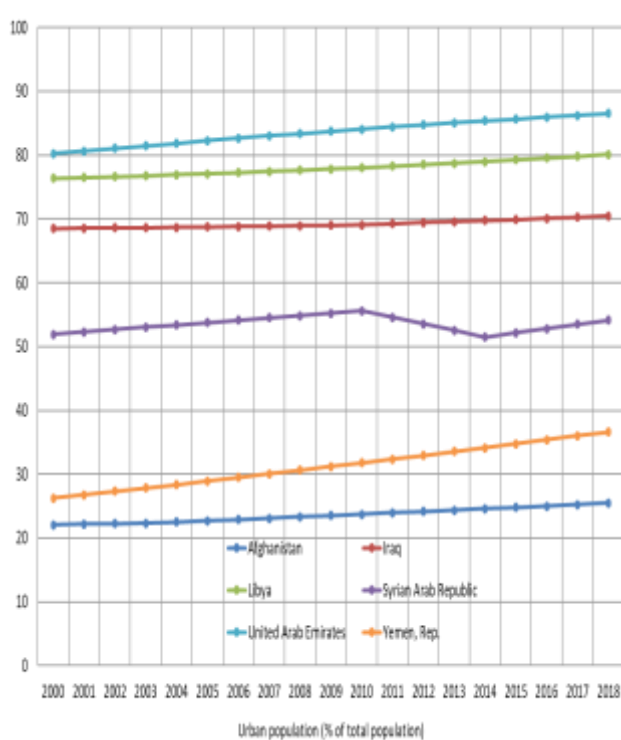


Source: Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Leaving No One Behind, Towards Inclusive Citizenship in Arab Countries*, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2019, p. 19.

Figure Thirty-Seven: Urban Population as Percent of Total Population: 2000-2018

World Bank Estimate in Percent

CIA Estimate in Percent

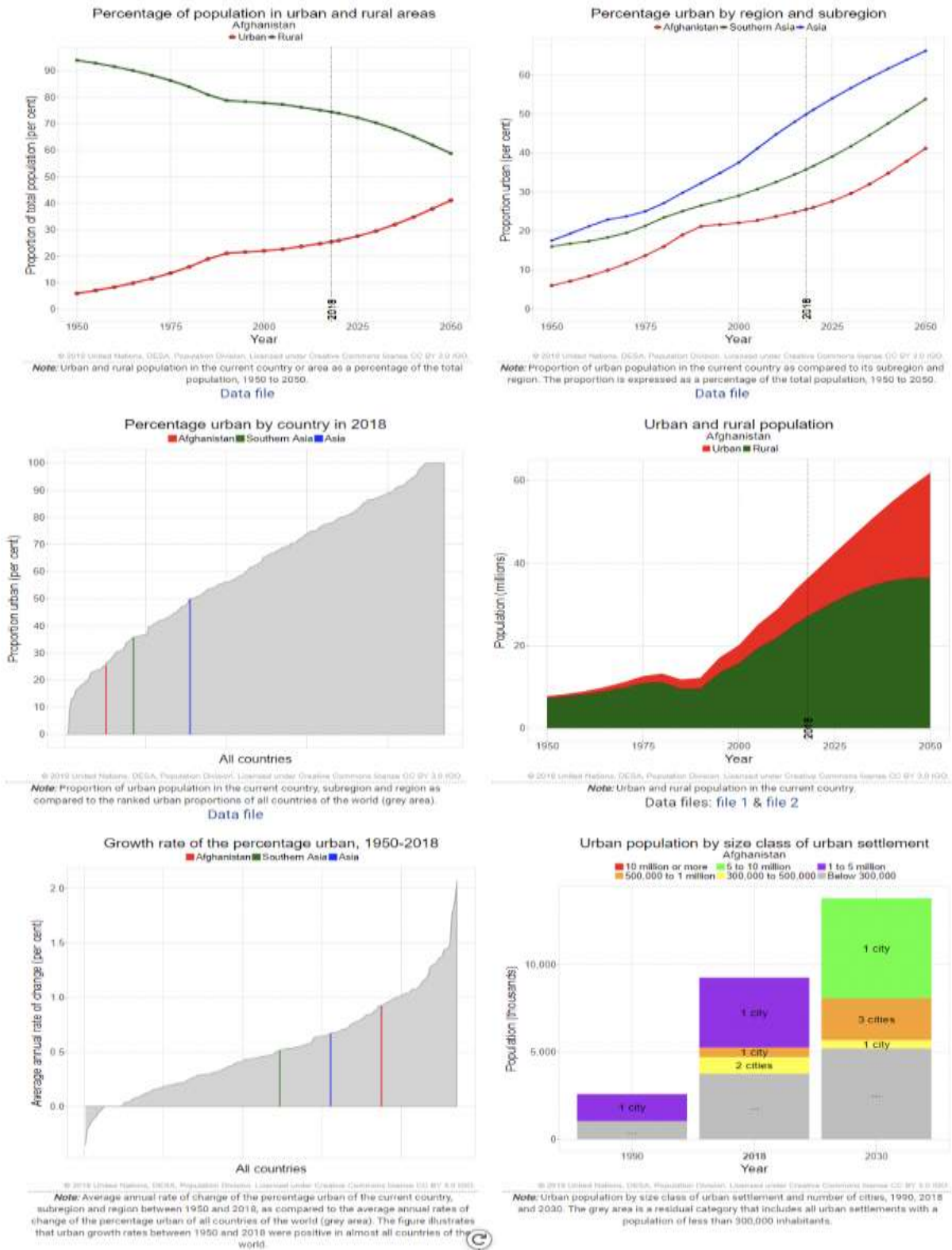


% of Total Population in 2019. Annual Rate of Urbanization 2015-20 Est.

Afghanistan	25.8	3.37
Iraq	70.7	3.06
Syria	54.8	1.43
Libya	80.4	1.68
UAE	86.8	1.71
Yemen	37.3	4.05

Source: Adapted from World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, July 10, 2019. <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators#>; CIA, *World Factbook*, accessed September 25, 2019.

Figure Thirty-Eight: Urbanization in Afghanistan



Source: UN, World Population Prospect, 2019, <https://population.un.org/wup/Country-Profiles/>

Figure Thirty-Nine: World Bank Analysis of Afghan Urbanization Trends

CIA: Population of Kabul is 4.01 million out of total population of 34.94-37.05 million in July 2018. The second-largest city is Kandahar, with less than 400,000 people.

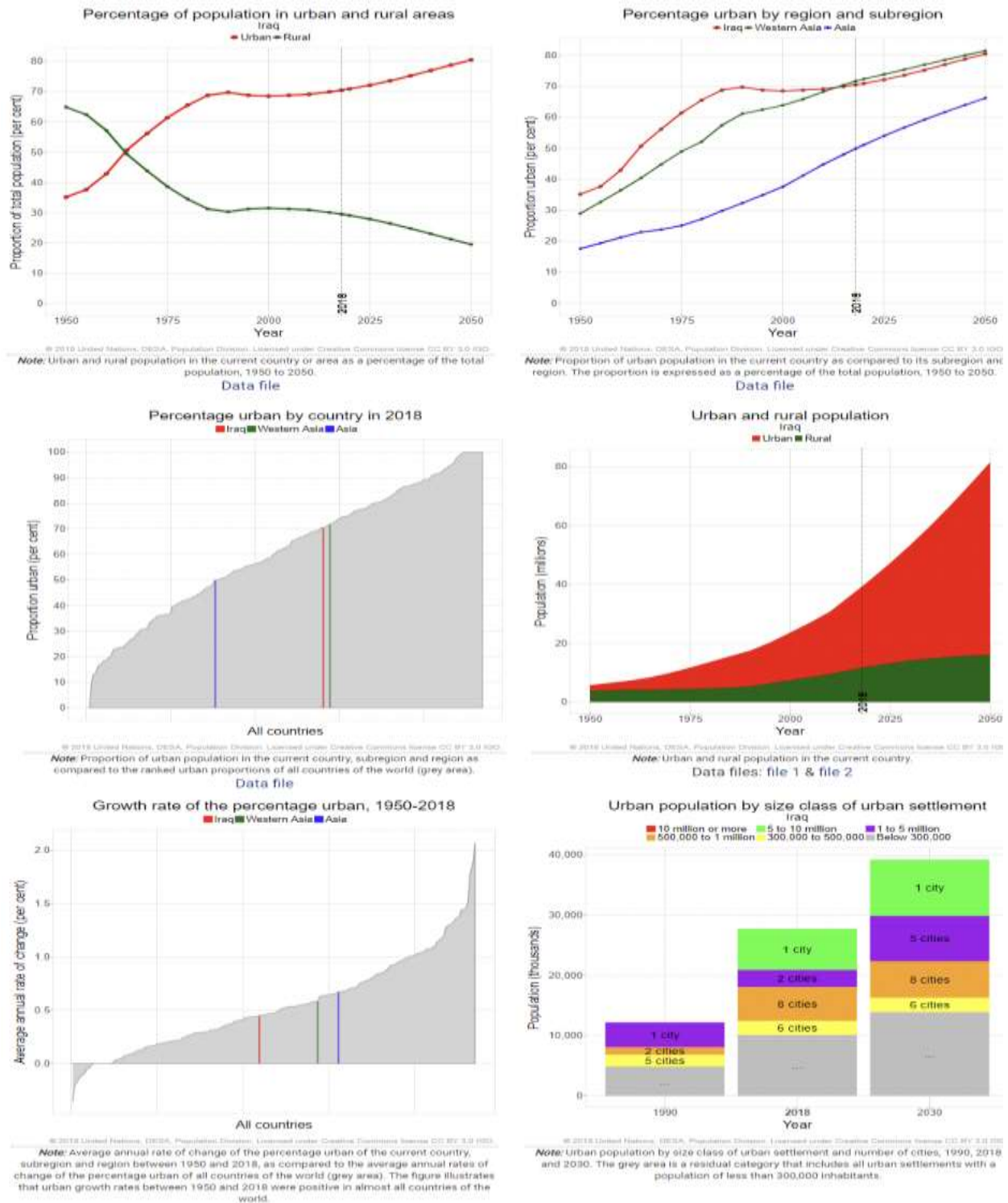
World Bank: Afghanistan is undergoing a rapid urban transition. While the current share of its population living in cities is comparatively low (25.8 percent in 2014 compared to 32.6 percent across South Asia), Afghanistan's urbanization rate is among the highest in the region. Jun 21, 2017.

10 key findings for Afghanistan made in a World Bank report:

- Afghanistan's urban population grew by almost 4.5 percent a year between 2000 and 2010. Within the region, only Bhutan and Maldives experienced faster growth rates of urban population.
- Much of Afghanistan's urban population growth has been attributable to natural growth rather than rural-urban migration. As a consequence, the share of the population living in officially classified urban settlements has been growing at a much slower pace of just over 1.2 percent a year between 2000 and 2010.
- As of mid-2014, there were, according to UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates, 683,000 people internally displaced by conflict in Afghanistan, more than half of which were living in urban areas.
- In 2010, 27.6 percent of Afghanistan's urban population lived below the national poverty line, while, in 2005, almost 89 percent of the urban population lived in slums.
- An analysis of nighttime lights data shows that Afghanistan experienced growth in urban area of almost 14 percent a year between 1999 and 2010, the fastest in the South Asia region. Urban area grew at more than three times the speed of urban population, suggesting an increasing prevalence of lower-density sprawl. The existence of sprawl, poverty and slums reflects messy urbanization.
- According to the Agglomeration Index, an alternative measure of urban concentration, the share of Afghanistan's population living in areas with urban characteristics in 2010 was 29.4 percent. This compares to an urban share of the population based on official definitions of urban areas of 23.2 percent, suggesting the existence of at least some hidden urbanization.
- In Afghanistan, as in Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan, the shift out of agriculture has been associated with a large decline in the proportion of GDP derived from manufacturing. This implies that urbanization in Afghanistan since 2000 has been led by services rather than by manufacturing — something of a departure from expected trends based on the historical experiences of today's developed nations.
- Afghanistan's expanding urban population presents it with a considerable affordable housing challenge. In the best-case scenario in which urban population density remains constant, meeting this challenge will require expanding the amount of developable urban land by 6,959 km² — or just over 350 percent — between 2010 and 2050.
- Analysis of World Health Organization outdoor air pollution in cities data reveals that, from a global sample of 381 developing-country cities, 19 of the 20 with the highest annual mean concentrations of PM 2.5 are in South Asia. Kabul has the most polluted air amongst Afghan cities in the sample, with an annual mean concentration of 86 mg/m³, which is higher than the recorded annual mean concentration for Beijing.
- Afghanistan completed its last census in 1979, and that was a partial count. A lack of data hampers rigorous descriptive analysis of urbanization and related economic trends for the country.

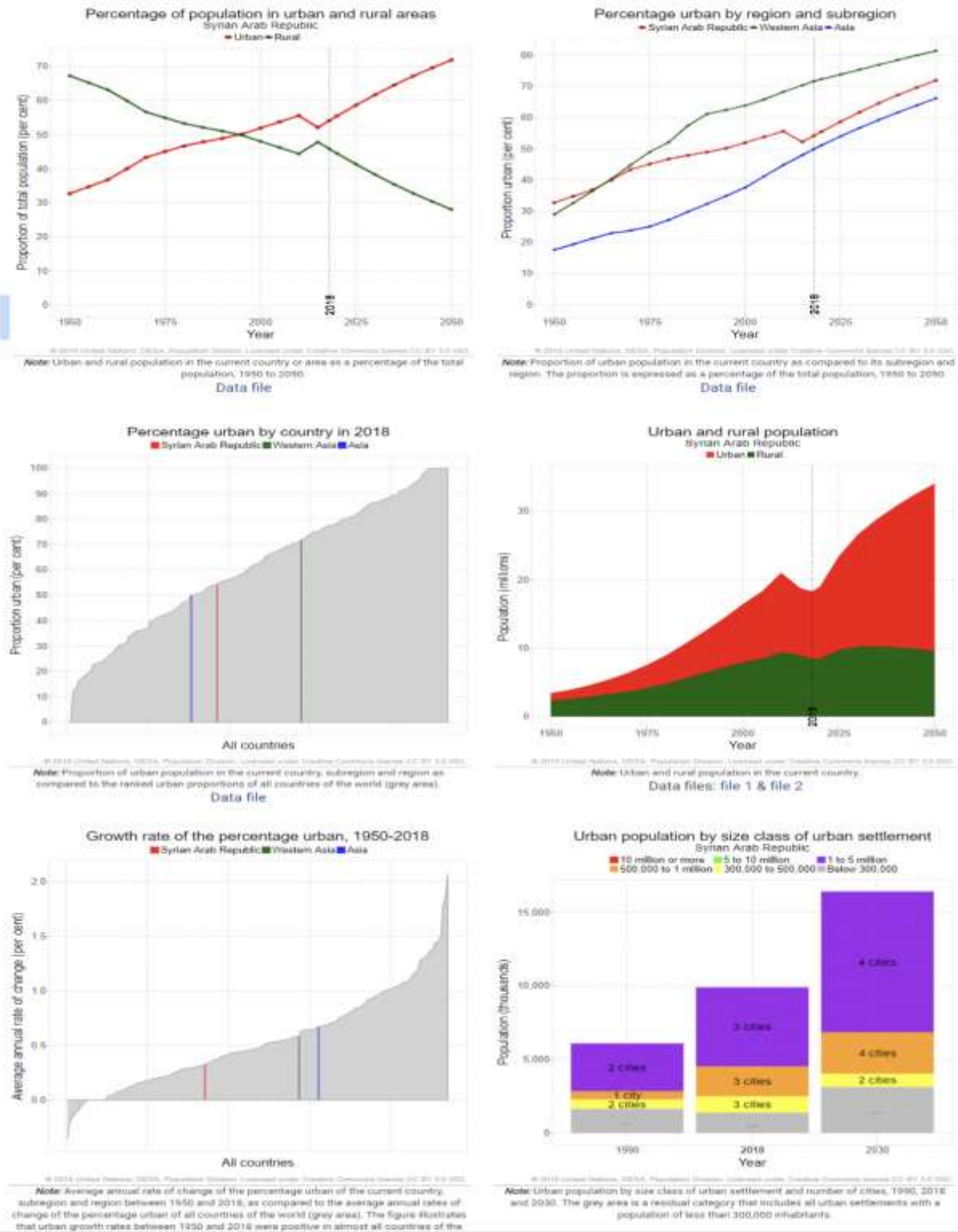
Source: World Bank Group, *Leveraging Urbanization in South Asia: Managing Spatial Transformation for Prosperity and Livability*, www.worldbank.org/southasiacities, 2016| CVIA World Factbook, Afghanistan, accessed April 23, 2019.

Figure Forty: Urbanization in Iraq



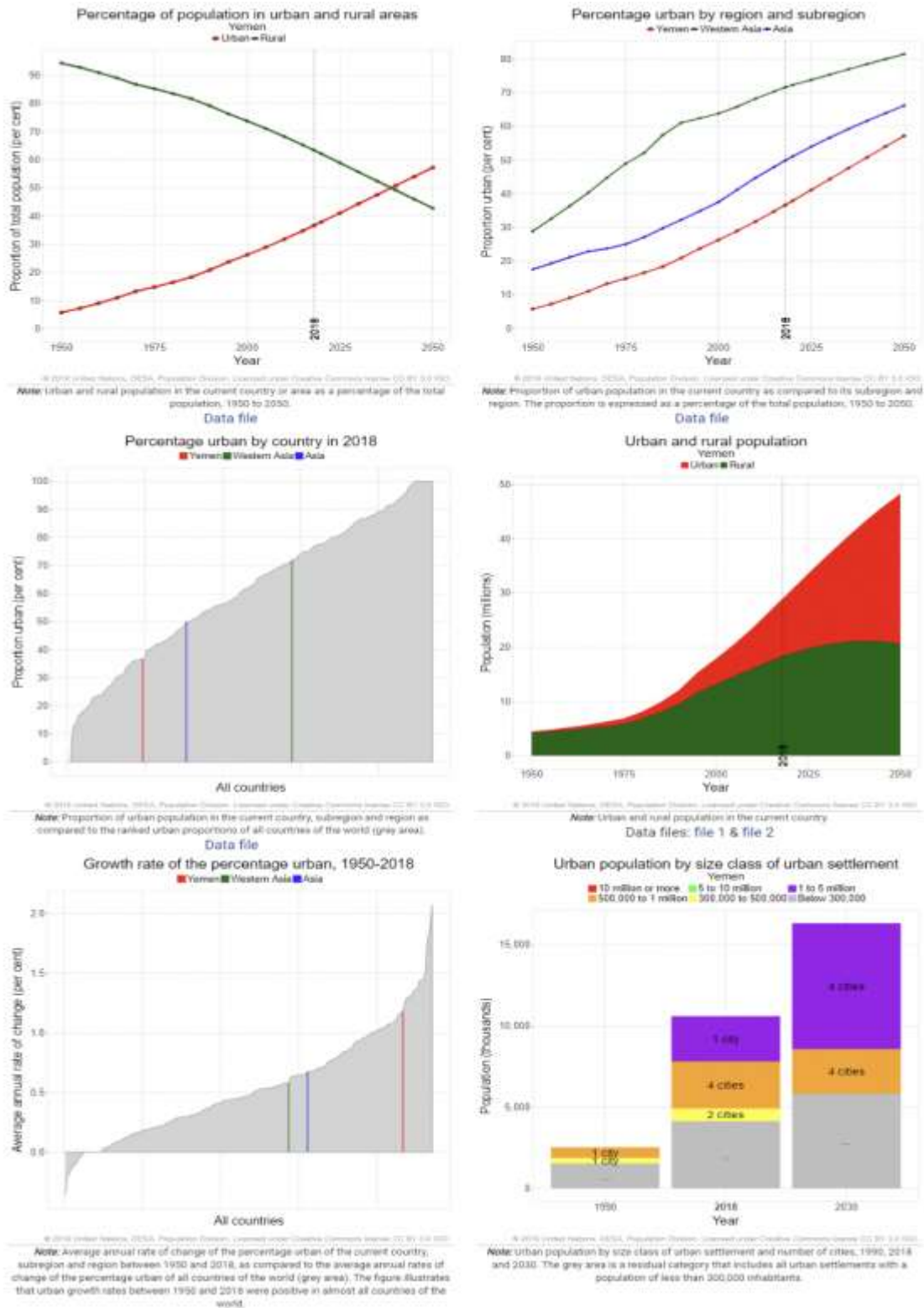
Source: UN, World Population Prospect, 2019, <https://population.un.org/wup/Country-Profiles/>

Figure Forty-One: Urbanization in Syria



Source: UN, World Population Prospect, 2019, <https://population.un.org/wup/Country-Profiles/>

Figure Forty-Three: Urbanization in Yemen



Source: UN, World Population Prospect, 2019, <https://population.un.org/wup/Country-Profiles/>

Economics, Development, Per Capita Income and Poverty

One of the key problems in addressing the civil causes of current and future extremism, violence, and instability in “failed states” like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen is the sheer complexity of the variables that shape these causes. As has been noted throughout this analysis, ideological factors like religion, the immediate problems in politics and leadership, and ongoing violence and conflict are all key variables. They are the most immediate causes of extremism, terrorism, and civil war, and any approach to some form of “victory,” conflict resolution, and post-conflict stability must address them on a case-by-case basis where all of the countries the U.S. is now involved in are strikingly different.

The previous analysis has shown that all of the five states also have critical longer-term structural problems in governance, demographics, and basic shifts in their economic and social structure caused by urbanization and a movement away from agriculture and rural areas. These raise new challenges in each country.

Once again, there is no clear way to assess the interactions between these longer-term variables. Polls do show that poor governance and corruption are perceived as critical problems. They do not show that the citizens of each country perceive population pressure or the massive impacts of urbanization as such problems. They are simply accepted as facts of life, although they create forces that are deeply destabilizing, and is problem that the “failed states” the U.S. is seeking to aid have not been able to properly address.

Economics are another dimension to this list of challenges, and one whose destabilizing effects cannot be judged by whether a given country has a given level of growth in its total GDP, a stable balance of payments, or by other macroeconomic indicators that do not measure the extent to which a given economy meets both popular and factional needs with a reasonable living standard and level of equity.

Poverty and Per Capita Income

Poverty measurements are to some extent a key indicator of equity. Poverty measurements and reporting, however, are of very mixed quality. Many countries do not report credible data or any data, the data they do report set a threshold for dire poverty so low that it does not reflect reasonable definitions of poverty relative to the cost of living in the more developed urban parts of the country.

The truly poor also are rarely the major source of radical opposition, major demonstrations, or extremist and other attempts to attack and overthrow the government. They may feed activities such as insurgency and civil wars once they begin, but it is generally the better educated individuals and ones with sufficient income to be politically active that form the cadres that lean towards active political opposition, active efforts to overthrow the government, and extremist and terrorist groups.

This may help explain why the trends in per capita income – as well as the forces that shape employment, unemployment, and career opportunities that are discussed in the next section of this analysis — are clearer indicators of instability than poverty per se.

- **Figure Forty-Four** illustrates both the strengths and weaknesses in poverty data. The CIA estimates seem to be the most realistic, and are generally the most up to date, but it is clear that sources differ sharply over how to make such estimates, and that such data are hard to collect and turn such data into estimates – particularly for countries that are still fighting or have only recently ended major counterinsurgency and counterterrorism campaigns.

- **Figure Forty-Five** illustrates these weaknesses in a different way. It draws on a World Bank study to compare both the narrative and quantitative data on Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen. It shows that the situation is dire to the failed state level in each country – with the possible exception of Iraq. It also shows that there is no clear correlation between GNP growth and poverty, that poverty can vary sharply by region, and that the definition of poverty in any given country has a critical impact on the percentages of its people that face serious financial challenges. It also warns that none of the five countries – with the possible exception of Iraq – has any near-term prospects for reducing its level of poverty. At the same time, it also shows that even the best sources of such data make no attempt to assess the different sectarian, ethnic, tribal, and regional levels of poverty that have divided the country and been a key source of civil conflict, extremism, and terrorism.
- **Figure Forty-Six** shows the trends in the GNI per capita of each “conflict” state made by the World Bank over the decade between 2007 and 2018, and how they compare with other states in the same regions. These data show trends and a wide range of other countries to serve as standards of comparison. They also correct the tendency of estimates based on purchasing power parity to produce dollar equivalents which are grossly too high and imply levels of development relative to fully developed countries that do not represent a realistic picture of how developing countries perform.

The World Bank notes that, “GNI per capita (formerly GNP per capita) is the gross national income, converted to U.S. dollars using the World Bank Atlas method, divided by the midyear population. GNI is the sum of value added by all resident producers plus any product taxes (less subsidies) not included in the valuation of output plus net receipts of primary income (compensation of employees and property income) from abroad. GNI, calculated in national currency, is usually converted to U.S. dollars at official exchange rates for comparisons across economies, although an alternative rate is used when the official exchange rate is judged to diverge by an exceptionally large margin from the rate actually applied in international transactions. To smooth fluctuations in prices and exchange rates, a special Atlas method of conversion is used by the World Bank. This applies a conversion factor that averages the exchange rate for a given year and the two preceding years, adjusted for differences in rates of inflation between the country...”

Such comparisons have their limits and uncertainties, but they still help illustrate the degree to which comparative poverty may have triggered extremism, insurgency, or civil war. As **Figure Forty-Six** shows, the rate of growth (or lack of it) in each state varied sharply during 2007-2018 – partly because of war and political upheavals, but also because of dependence on petroleum exports and the inherent instability of a “single commodity” economy.

To put these data in perspective, the average GNI per capita for the entire MENA region in 2018 was \$7,651.6, and the highest figures was for Qatar at \$61,190. These figures need to be compared with a low of only \$550 for Afghanistan, \$960 for Yemen, and \$5,030 for Iraq, \$6,330 for Libya. No data are available for Syria, but the last preconflict estimate was only \$1,820. In broad terms, any figure below \$7,500 implies there is a very high level of poverty, that job creation is probably poor, and that salaries and career opportunities will be limited.

At the same time, there is no direct correlation between poverty and low per capita income and the rise of extremism, insurgency, and civil war. The comparative data in **Figure**

Forty-Five and **Figure Forty-Six** show that a number of states have both high levels of poverty and low GNIs per capita which may have not had such major levels of civil conflict – although most such countries in the MENA region, and Central and Southern Asia — did have problems with extremism, terrorism, demonstrations and at least limited political upheavals.

Other Indicators of Causes of Social Tension and Popular Unrest

Figures **Forty-Seven** and **Figure Forty-Eight** provide some additional indicators of poverty and economic stress. **Figure Forty-Seven** shows the high level of malnutrition in “failed states.” **Figure Forty-Eight** provides a warning of the extent to which sudden food price rises can trigger popular discontent and major uprisings in peacetime. The data available on Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen show that major price rises and broad levels of inflation are still serious problems, particularly in conflict areas. They may not trigger demonstration in wartime, but they almost certainly increase criticism of the government and undermine popular support.

Figure Forty-Nine shows the low level of per capita expenditure on health care. Interestingly enough, a range of polls over recent years do not show that such problems lead to a focused level of anger, or are directly perceived as a reason for extremism or opposing governments.

With the exception of the actual distribution of reliable electric power, the same lack of any major impact on popular opinion holds true of actual access to safe drinking water; negative trends in high infant mortality and child death rates, life expectancy and the death rate; and real-world access to education. This may be because much of the population takes poor performance for granted or sees security and sheer survival as a higher priority. It also raises the question as to what extents given classes and groups in a given country lump all of the reasons to support extremism or protests and actions against the government and focus on key areas like corruption, employment, and security.

It also, however, may be because far too much government reporting is misleading as to the scale of the problems involved, uses estimates that deliberately exaggerate success, that ignore the effects of ongoing conflicts, or use categories like potential access or total potential supply rather than the actual level of service provided.

Finally, one key trend also needs flagging that has taken place in spite of the critical economic and poverty problems in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen. **Figure Fifty** shows the increase in the number of individuals using the Internet since 2000, against providing the UAE as a standard of comparison or “best case.” The positive trends in Internet use in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen do not match those in the wealthier and more stable states in the region, but they are still striking given the level of conflict and poverty in each country.

Internet access can have many positive benefits, but it can also be a key channel for extremist, terrorist, and insurgent communication, propaganda, and indoctrination. In spite of the efforts of some regional governments to control the content of the material their citizens can access, anyone with any experience in counting such measures who travels to the region quickly becomes aware how well many young men and women can bypass or defeat such efforts, some of which may actually inspire users to explore what the government is seeking to “hide,” that otherwise would not attempt such access. Like the transistor raid in the 1950s, and satellite television and downloads since the 1980s, it is far easier to pass draconian laws than it is to come close to enforcing them.

Figure Forty-Four: Comparative Poverty Estimates for Countries Involved in Failed State Wars

Country	CIA (%)	World Bank Extreme Poverty (%)	IMF Multi-Dimensional Poverty
1. Afghanistan	54.5% (2017)	ND	56.10%
2. Algeria	23% (2006)	0.4% (2017)	2.11% (2013)
3. Egypt	27.8% (2016)	1.4% (2015)	5.22% (2014)
4. Iran	18.7% (2007)	0.4% (2014)	ND
5. Iraq	23% (2014)	2.2% (2012)	14.6% (2011)
6. Libya	33.3%**	ND	1.97% (2014)
7. Somalia	ND	<u>ND</u>	82.22% (2006)
8. Syria	82.5% (2014)	21.2 (2004)	7.39% (2009)
9. Yemen	54% (2014)	40.9% (2014)	47.77% (2013)

ND= No data. * Poverty level is a real world \$7.30 per person. **CIA rough estimate.

Source: CIA, National Poverty Levels), <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/221.html>, accessed 17.3.2019. World Bank, Piecing Together the Poverty Puzzle, 2018, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/poverty-and-shared-prosperity>. IMF is World Economic and Financial Surveys, World Economic Outlook Database, Table Six: Multidimensional Poverty Index, Developing Countries, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2018/01/weodata/index.aspx>.

Figure Forty-Five: Summary of World Bank Poverty Reporting on Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen: 2018 – Part One

Afghanistan

Although economic activity remains subdued, growth has accelerated gradually over 2016 and 2017 reflecting slowly re-covering confidence and reform progress. Building momentum now appears to be at some risk, with declining business confidence in the context of upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections (scheduled for October 2018 and April 2019, respectively), worsening drought conditions, and an ongoing displacement crisis. Over the medium-term, Afghanistan needs to mobilize new sources of growth in the context of declining aid and stubbornly-high poverty.

...Poverty has increased significantly, resulting in 55 percent of population living below the national poverty line in 2016/17 compared to 38.3 percent in 2011/12 –an increase of 5 million. 55 percent of the population live below the national poverty line in 2016/17 compared to 38.3 per-cent in 2011/12 –an increase of 5 million. A quarter of the labor force is unemployed and 80 percent of employment is vulnerable and insecure, comprising self-or own-account employment, day labor, or un-paid work. With almost half the population below the age of 15, each year, 483,000 to 600,000 Afghans enter the working age population, most with little education and few productive employment opportunities. The impact of slow growth on poverty and livelihoods is compounded by growing insecurity, internal displacement, refugee repatriation, and declining aid. In the past, there has been little relation-ship between economic growth and poverty. Economic growth in Afghanistan has translated to changes in welfare to the top 20 percent of the distribution, whose consumption has increased and fallen with GDP per capita

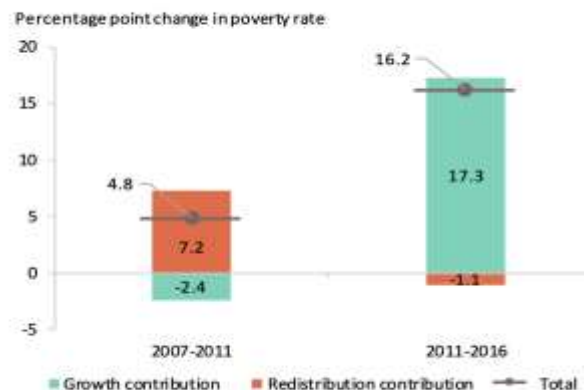
...Recent recovery appears increasingly vulnerable...If the past is any guide, growth will not translate into poverty reduction, at least in the short term, irrespective of the growth rate. Even assuming a distribution-neutral growth scenario, in which everyone’s consumption grows at the same rate (unlike what we have seen in the past), projected growth rates of the next few years are below the average population growth rate of the last 10 years of 2.9 percent and thus poverty will increase. Current and projected growth is too slow to reduce poverty even under best case assumptions.

FIGURE 1 Afghanistan / Real GDP growth and contributions to real GDP growth



Sources: World Bank, Macroeconomics Trade and Investment Global Practice.

FIGURE 2 Afghanistan / Change in poverty rate, decomposition



Sources: World Bank, Poverty and Equity team using ALCS 2016-17.

	2015	2016	2017	2018 e	2019 f	2020 f
International poverty rate (\$1.9 in 2011 PPP)^{a,b}	30.4	42.6	48.2	51.9	44.2	36.4
Lower middle-income poverty rate (\$3.2 in 2011 PPP)^{a,b}	65.6	75.0	78.5	80.6	75.8	71.0
Upper middle-income poverty rate (\$5.5 in 2011 PPP)^{a,b}	87.9	91.8	93.2	94.0	92.2	90.0

Iraq Post-conflict recovery will remain the driving force of the non-oil economy in the coming years while overall economic growth will experience a modest recovery in 2018 before picking up noticeably in 2019 thanks to higher oil production. The durability of the non-oil rebound depends on the quality of the reconstruction process. Higher oil prices will allow space to finance reconstruction, if recurrent spending restraint is maintained. Poverty reached 22.5 percent in 2014 and two million of Iraqis remain displaced.

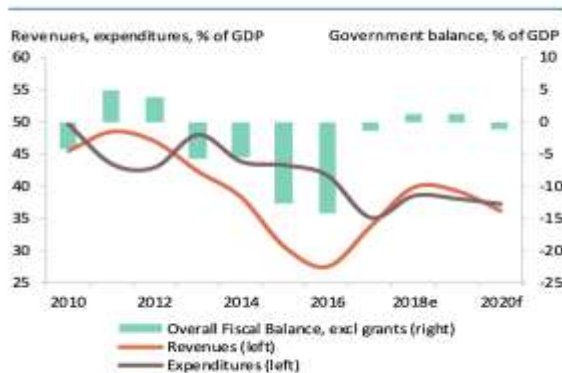
Figure Forty-Five: Summary of World Bank Poverty Reporting on Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen: 2018 – Part Two

With oil prices expected to rise, Iraq’s government will have ample fiscal space to finance reconstruction, provided that the process of fiscal consolidation continues. Relations with KRG are improving after the rupture related to the independence referendum in 2017; the federal government agreed to resume transfers and KRG total revenue is sufficient to pay salaries and pensions. Growth and the budget surplus are estimated to further reduce the public debt-to-GDP ratio from 67.3 percent in 2016 to almost 55 percent. The government also adopted a framework to control the issuance of guarantees, which reached US\$33 billion (or 20 percent of GDP) in end-2016 and these guarantees, most related to the electricity sector, are now believed to be under control.

...The poverty rate increased from 18.9 per-cent in 2012 to an estimated 22.5 percent in 2014. Recent labor market statistics suggest further deterioration of welfare. The un-employment rate, which was falling before the crises, has climbed back to the 2012 level. Almost a quarter of the working-age population is underutilized, i.e., they are either unemployed or underemployed. Many households are prone to adverse shocks; more than a third of the house-holds has experienced an adverse event since the beginning of the crises and one in six households has experienced some form of food insecurity in the month preceding the survey. The universal food ration (Public Distribution System, PDS) remains the most extensive social assistance pro-gram, but people have also turned to friends and relatives and humanitarian agencies for assistance. Internally dis-placed persons (IDPs) have been buffeted by multiple adverse shocks: they have lost much of their wealth through destruction of assets; they have seen family members die, get sick, or become injured at a higher rate; and they have faced loss of jobs or businesses. These shocks have occurred at a time when their capacity to cope with shocks has been further strained. Fewer IDP adults have a job, so each employed adult in an IDP household supports more than six other household members. Some IDPs have lost access to the PDS. The cumulative impact of these developments on IDPs is visible in several dimensions, including a higher risk of hunger.

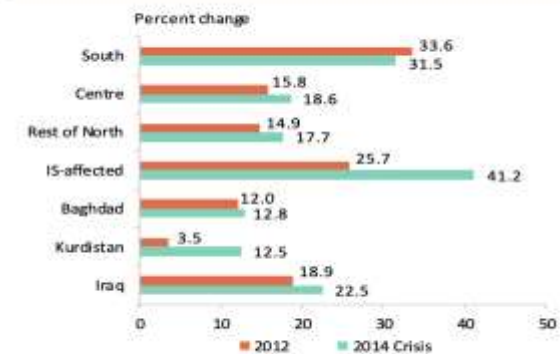
Challenges remain due to political risk, dependency on oil revenue and the regional situation. Continued political uncertainty following the elections could delay economic recovery in the conflict-affected governorates. Absence of a clear commitment in the 2018 budget on wage bill management and subsidy reduction could weaken the fiscal consolidation and absorb the fiscal space otherwise available for reconstruction. The ISIS threat cannot be considered entirely vanquished unless stabilization is also achieved in Syria. Iraq’s capacity to expand oil production and exports remains constrained, further exacerbating risks from a reduction of oil prices. The imposition of sanctions on Iran by the U.S. administration could curb non-oil trade as Iran is the largest non-oil trade partner of Iraq, and result in higher prices of key commodities.

FIGURE 1 Republic of Iraq / Fiscal accounts



Sources: Ministry of Finance; and World Bank staff projections.

FIGURE 2 Republic of Iraq / Regional poverty head-count rates



Sources: World Bank staff microsimulation estimates.

Syria: No Estimate. Country is now too divided, and too deeply involved in civil war, for an assessment

Figure Forty-Five: Summary of World Bank Poverty Reporting on Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen: 2018 – Part Three

Libya: The persistence of violent conflict is generating a heavy toll for the economy and the population as political uncertainties continue to weigh negatively on economic performance constraining it to reach stabilization, let alone recovery. Growth re-mains volatile and inflation is high eroding real incomes. Expenditure inefficiencies are keeping the twin deficits high, resulting in continual pressure on foreign reserves. A political resolution is needed to implement the required reforms for a private sector driven growth and jobs generation, the only path for sustainable shared prosperity.

...the cumulative inflation over the last four years has adversely affected Libyan households who lost almost 80 percent of their purchasing power. This has almost certainly pushed more Libyans into poverty and hardship and worsened inequality.

...Although there is no systematic study on poverty and very little evidence on the current well-being of Libyan households, conditions are inimical to poverty reduction. The sharp decline in oil exports starting in 2011 has severely impacted public services. Worsening conditions also contribute to the erratic power supply and the recurrent food shortages. The parallel currency premium is already reflected in the prices of many products, including essential food and medicine. In contrast, vast rents created by access to dollars at the official rate and to petroleum products at official prices are contributing to inequality and incentives for conflict, while the associated economic distortions spill over to Tunisia.

Yemen:Output is estimated to have contracted by about 50 percent; household incomes have been declining since 2015, poverty has dramatically increased with an estimated 52 percent of the population living below US\$1.90 a day PPP (or 81 percent at an income rate of US\$3.20 a day). UNOCHA estimates that 22.2 million people in Yemen—approximately three-quarters of the entire population—are in need of some kind of humanitarian assistance.

... Much of the public-sector employment failed to provide relief as salaries for public employees were only partly and intermittently paid since Fall 2016. Economic activity in agriculture, traditionally an important source of in-come for poor households, remained also constrained. Furthermore, the commensurate dramatic decrease in government revenues, especially due to the much-reduced oil and gas production, have further contributed to the implosion of the formal social safety nets for the poorer straits of households.

... inflation is estimated to have accelerated to over 40 percent.

... The flow of import and exports is further constrained by the fact that key ports in Yemen are subjected to the conflict at varying degrees, most recently Hodeida due to the intensified fight in the area. These import hurdles are particularly challenging, given that Yemen imports approximately 90 percent of its food.

... UNOCHA estimates that a total of 22 million Yemenis are in need of humanitarian assistance, of which over 11 million are in acute need of assistance to sustain their lives and avoid famine. Chol-era, diphtheria, and other infectious dis-eases have become rampant in a context where health was already poor and mal-nutrition was widespread. Significant damage to vital infrastructure has contributed to a decline in access to basic services, crippled civilian health and education facilities, and has led to an internal displacement of over 10 percent of the population.

...The poverty rate (with the poverty line at a US\$3.20 PPP) is estimated to have increased since 2014 by 32 percentage points to approximately 81 percent today. Poverty was al-ready on the rise in Yemen prior to conflict, rising nearly 14 percentage points between 2005 and 2014.

...little of a such projected growth is to translate into a substantial reduction of poverty. Rather, poverty is projected to remain high at approximately 76 percent in 2019(with the poverty line at a US\$3.20 PPP), or 44 percent of the population living below US\$1.90 a day. Given the bleak outlook, massive foreign assistance would continue to be required to fund recovery and reconstruction in a post-conflict period.

	2015	2016	2017	2018 e	2019 f	2020 f
International poverty rate (\$1.9 in 2011 PPP)^{a,b}	30.4	42.6	48.2	51.9	44.2	36.4
Lower middle-income poverty rate (\$3.2 in 2011 PPP)^{a,b}	65.6	75.0	78.5	80.6	75.8	71.0
Upper middle-income poverty rate (\$5.5 in 2011 PPP)^{a,b}	87.9	91.8	93.2	94.0	92.2	90.0

Source: Excerpted from World Bank, *Macro Poverty Outlook: Country-by-Country Analysis and Projections for the Developing World*, October 2018. <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/macro-poverty-outlook>, pg. 156, 181,184

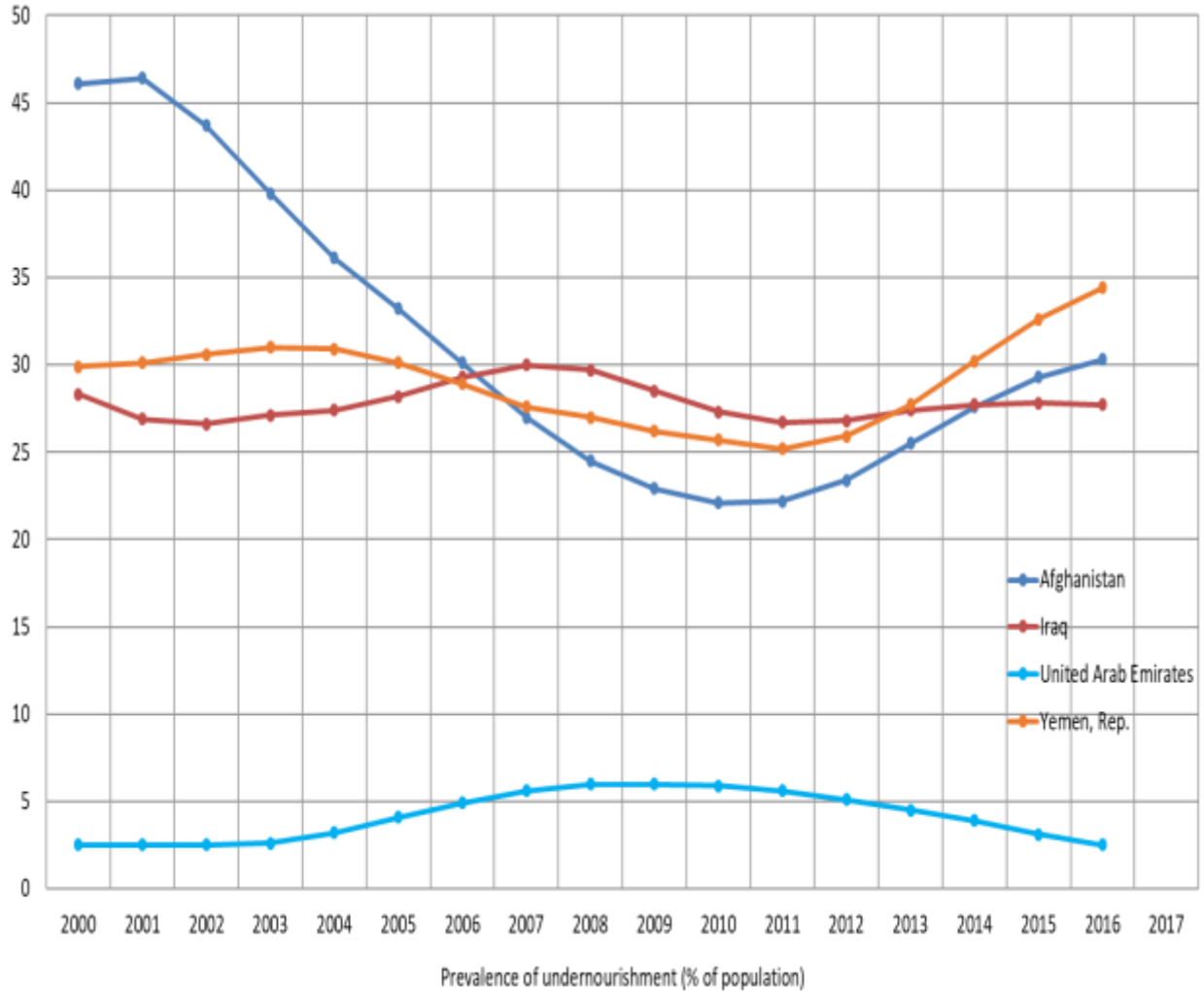
Figure Forty-Six: Comparative World Bank Per Capita Income Estimate

(Based on GNI Per Capita, Atlas Method (Current International \$US))

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Afghanistan	-	-	450.0	510.0	530.0	630.0	660.0	630.0	600.0	570.0	550.0	550.0
Bhutan	1,670.0	1,810.0	1,910.0	2,090.0	2,300.0	2,450.0	2,480.0	2,530.0	2,600.0	2,730.0	2,890.0	3,080.0
Iran, Islamic Rep.	4,270.0	4,950.0	5,520.0	6,200.0	6,860.0	7,140.0	7,040.0	6,550.0	5,400.0	5,520.0	5,470.0	-
Kazakhstan	4,980.0	6,150.0	6,780.0	7,440.0	8,280.0	9,940.0	11,840.0	12,090.0	11,420.0	8,800.0	7,960.0	7,830.0
Kyrgyz Republic	610.0	760.0	860.0	850.0	880.0	1,040.0	1,190.0	1,250.0	1,180.0	1,110.0	1,110.0	1,220.0
India	910.0	1,000.0	1,120.0	1,220.0	1,360.0	1,480.0	1,520.0	1,560.0	1,600.0	1,690.0	1,830.0	2,020.0
Bangladesh	610.0	660.0	730.0	800.0	890.0	970.0	1,040.0	1,110.0	1,220.0	1,370.0	1,520.0	1,750.0
Pakistan	870.0	970.0	1,010.0	1,030.0	1,090.0	1,200.0	1,290.0	1,320.0	1,360.0	1,420.0	1,500.0	1,580.0
Middle East & North Africa	5,453.0	6,340.9	6,536.4	6,950.5	7,359.3	8,283.1	8,767.6	8,749.5	8,104.6	7,711.5	7,290.3	7,651.6
Algeria	3,600.0	4,210.0	4,290.0	4,480.0	4,600.0	5,170.0	5,510.0	5,500.0	4,850.0	4,380.0	3,930.0	4,060.0
Bahrain	19,660.0	20,860.0	18,830.0	18,970.0	18,440.0	19,920.0	21,720.0	21,010.0	22,660.0	21,380.0	21,180.0	21,890.0
Egypt, Arab Rep.	1,530.0	1,840.0	2,120.0	2,370.0	2,560.0	2,840.0	3,030.0	3,230.0	3,360.0	3,460.0	3,040.0	2,800.0
Iran, Islamic Rep.	4,270.0	4,950.0	5,520.0	6,200.0	6,860.0	7,140.0	7,040.0	6,550.0	5,400.0	5,520.0	5,470.0	-
Iraq	2,560.0	3,630.0	4,160.0	4,580.0	4,970.0	6,310.0	7,010.0	6,840.0	5,940.0	5,520.0	4,800.0	5,030.0
Israel	23,930.0	26,080.0	27,270.0	29,640.0	31,530.0	32,220.0	34,330.0	36,030.0	36,160.0	36,460.0	37,440.0	40,850.0
Jordan	2,730.0	3,090.0	3,350.0	3,450.0	3,540.0	3,650.0	3,750.0	3,830.0	3,870.0	3,930.0	4,020.0	4,210.0
Kuwait	47,580.0	51,710.0	45,970.0	42,150.0	43,830.0	50,650.0	53,050.0	51,010.0	41,820.0	35,910.0	31,810.0	33,690.0
Lebanon	5,420.0	6,080.0	6,880.0	7,480.0	7,580.0	7,590.0	7,610.0	7,500.0	7,290.0	7,250.0	7,500.0	7,690.0
Libya	10,400.0	12,200.0	12,090.0	12,380.0	4,690.0	11,550.0	10,750.0	7,610.0	5,690.0	4,560.0	5,330.0	6,330.0
Morocco	2,380.0	2,700.0	2,880.0	2,930.0	3,000.0	2,980.0	3,090.0	3,060.0	3,020.0	2,890.0	2,870.0	3,090.0
Qatar	58,030.0	65,580.0	61,250.0	63,620.0	66,950.0	72,860.0	78,800.0	79,900.0	72,690.0	64,010.0	58,610.0	61,190.0
Saudi Arabia	15,800.0	18,460.0	17,900.0	18,750.0	20,880.0	24,040.0	25,440.0	25,550.0	23,710.0	21,610.0	19,990.0	21,540.0
Syrian Arab Republic	1,820.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tunisia	3,530.0	3,850.0	4,070.0	4,130.0	3,990.0	4,100.0	4,160.0	4,160.0	3,970.0	3,760.0	3,520.0	3,500.0
United Arab Emirates	39,590.0	39,910.0	35,000.0	33,390.0	35,030.0	39,220.0	42,970.0	44,370.0	42,870.0	40,550.0	38,770.0	41,010.0
West Bank and Gaza	1,700.0	1,900.0	2,080.0	2,330.0	2,720.0	3,020.0	3,190.0	3,270.0	3,380.0	3,460.0	3,520.0	3,710.0
Yemen, Rep.	890.0	1,010.0	1,100.0	1,200.0	1,080.0	1,260.0	1,440.0	1,460.0	1,330.0	1,180.0	1,060.0	960.0

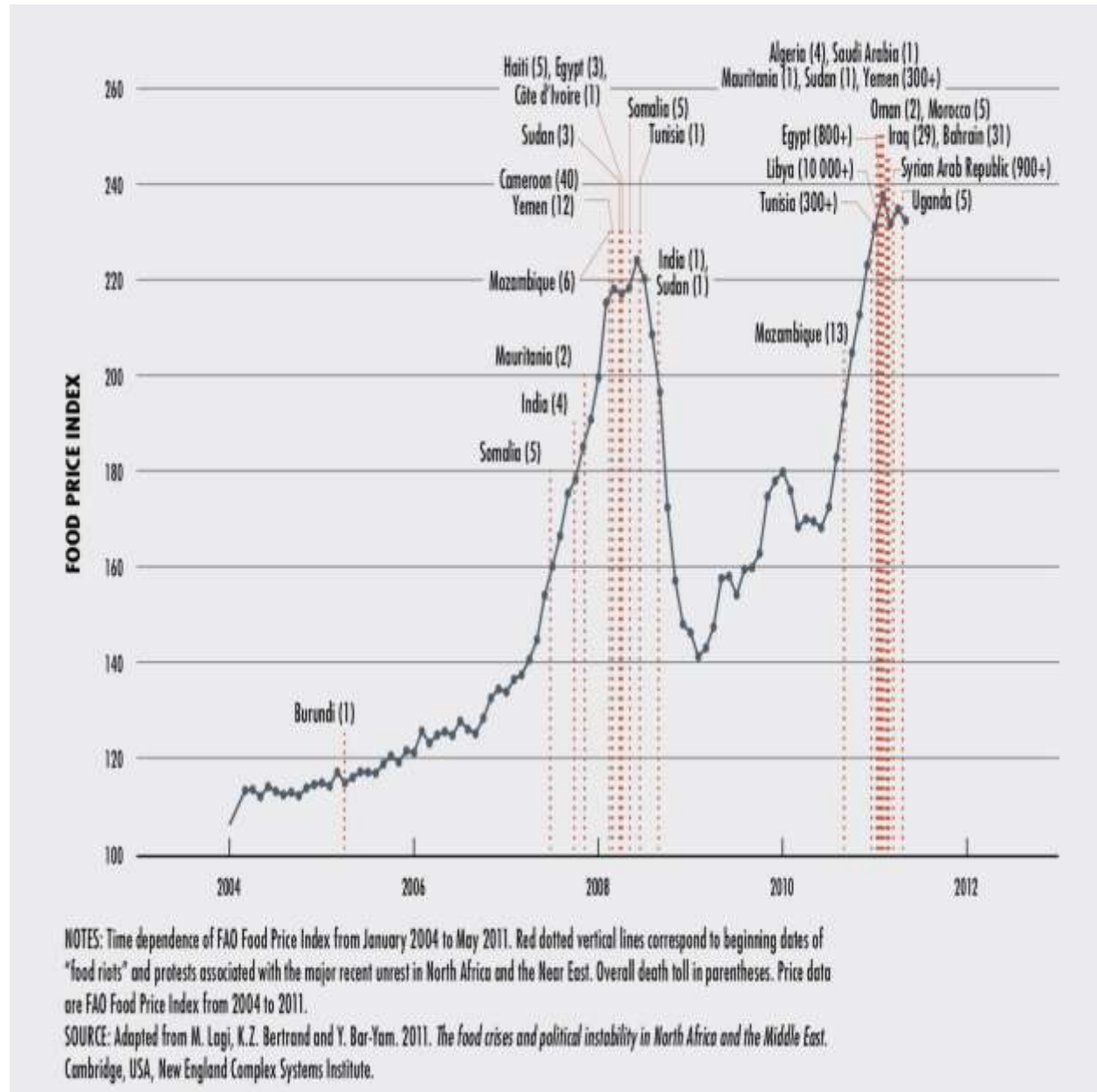
Source: <https://databank.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD/1ff4a498/Popular-Indicators>, accessed 28.8.2019.

Figure Forty-Seven: Prevalence of Undernourishment: 2000-2017
 (% of population)



Source: Adapted from World Bank, *Environmental, Social and Governance Data*, July 26, 2019. <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/environment-social-and-governance-data>

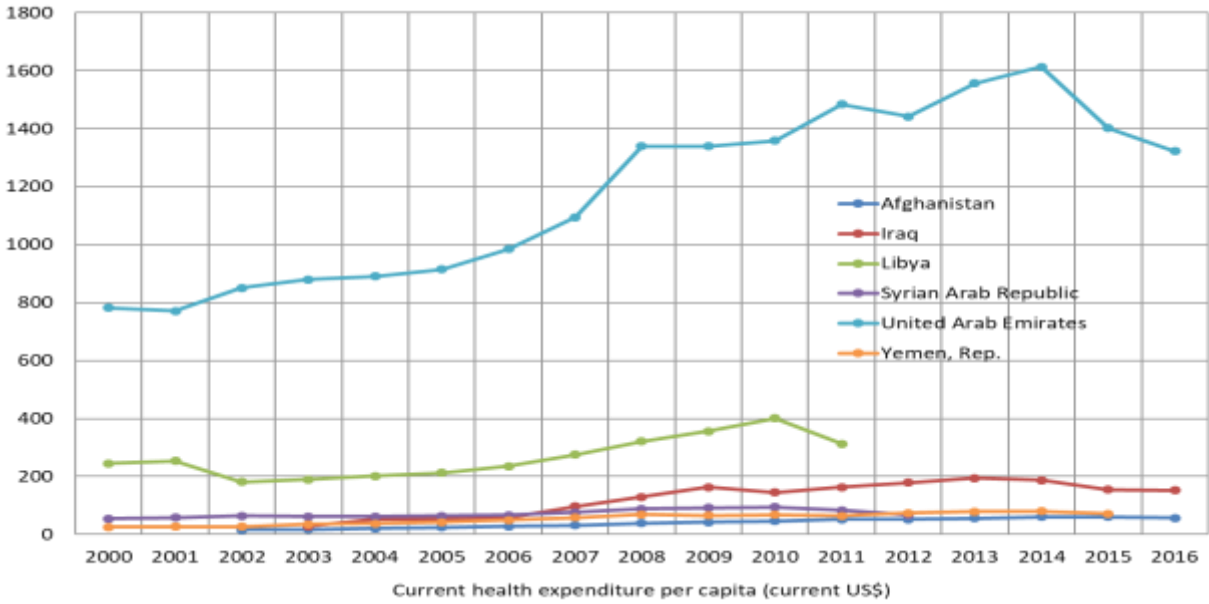
Figure Forty-Eight: Histogram of How Sudden Rises in /Food Prices Have Led to Riots and Demonstrations



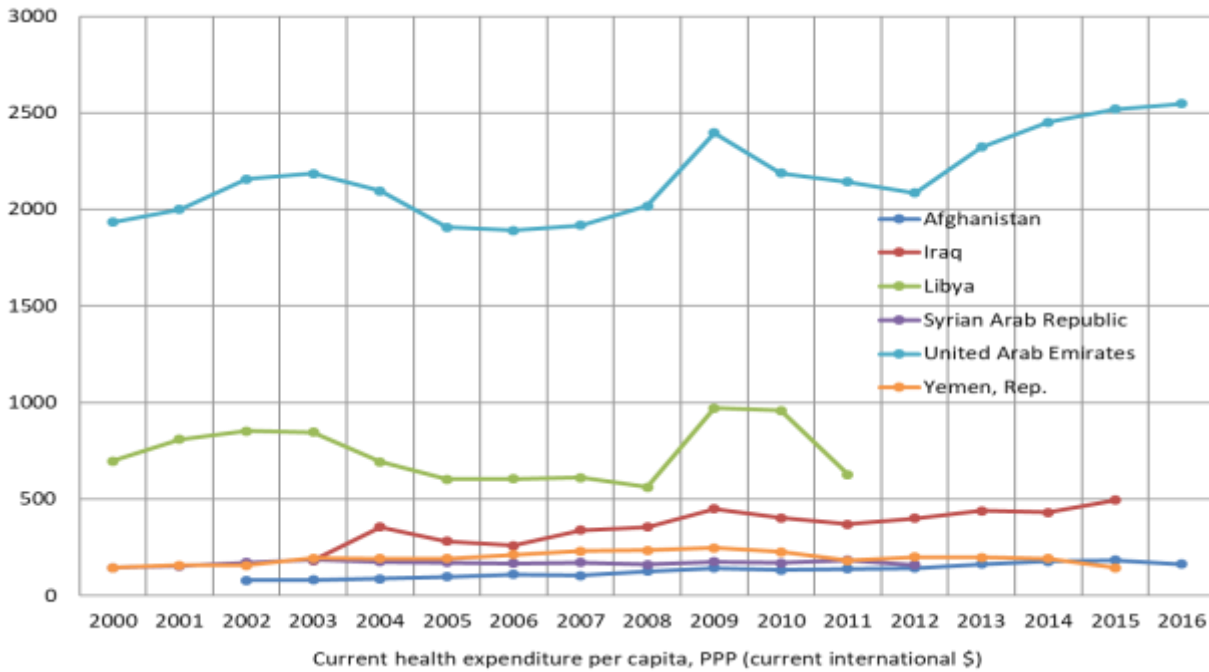
FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2017. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017. Building resilience for peace and food security*, ISBN 978-92-5-109888-2, p. 55

Figure Forty-Nine: Health Services

Expenditure per Capita 2000-2016 (current \$US)



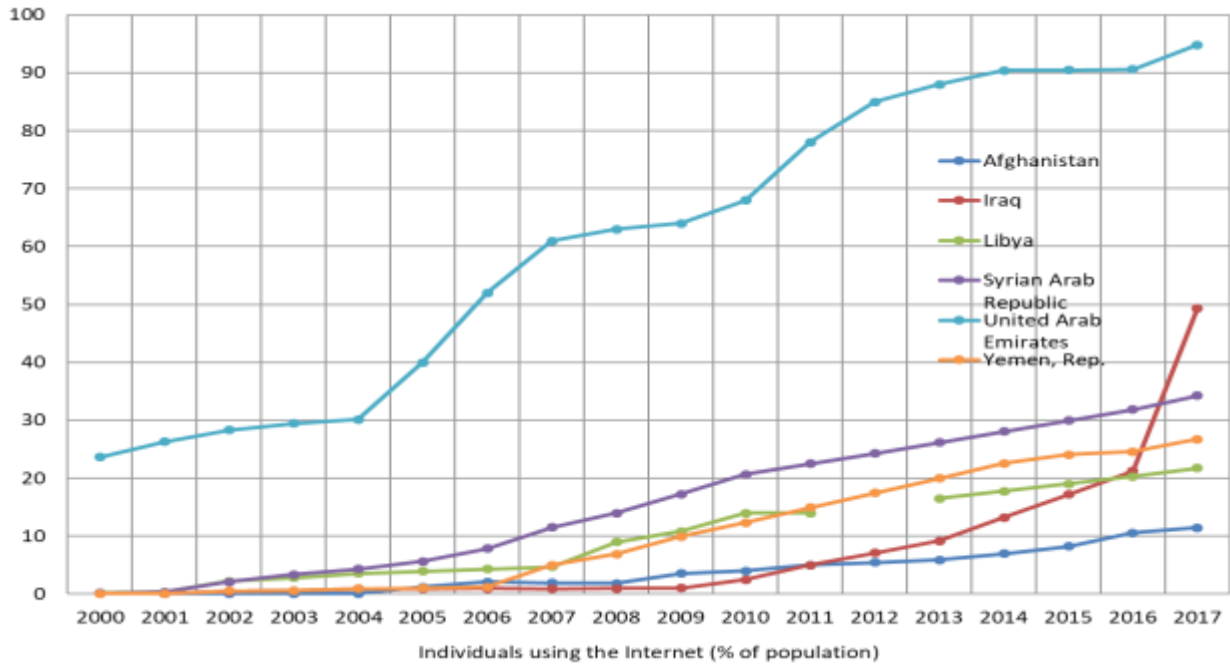
Health Expenditure per Capita PPP: 2000-2016 (current international \$)



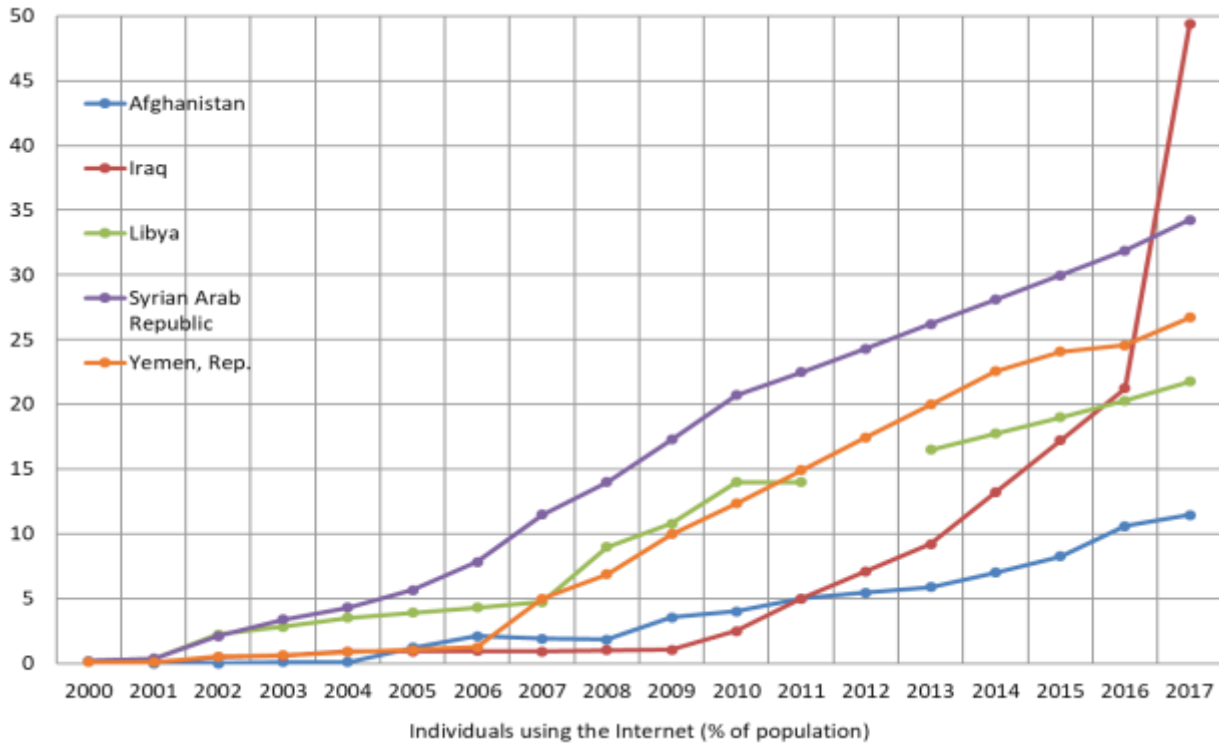
Source: Adapted from World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, July 10, 2019. <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators#>

Figure Fifty: Rising Access to the Internet

Individuals Using the Internet: 2000-2017 (% of population)



Highlighting Afghan, Iraqi, Syrian, Libyan, and Yemeni Use



Source: Adapted from World Bank, *Environmental, Social and Governance Data*, July 26, 2019. <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/environment-social-and-governance-data>

Employment, Dependency, and Demographics

There are many other factors that shape the civil stability of given states, their vulnerability, and the prospects for civil conflict. As the polling results in **Figure Ten** to **Figure Twelve** have shown, however, employment emerges as the last key structural civil issue that drives popular perceptions of the degree to which a given government meets the needs of its people, and can command broad support.

It is also clear from the previous analysis that population pressure and urbanization have shifted employment away from agriculture in the areas that dominate political stability and that are most critical to the control of the government. Rural areas and the land are often the key battleground in the early phases of any insurgency – particularly if a given faction establishes enough control to effectively govern such areas. Ultimately, however, a threat can only find success if it dominates the population, governance, and the economy.

Employment, Corruption, and Entitlement

Figure Fifty-One highlights an example of a poll that reflects a consistent result of polls that touch on this issue. There is a broad feeling in the MENA region, South Asia, and central Asia that job opportunities fall far short of need, job insecurity is high, and that far too many jobs are awarded for political reasons through corruption, cronyism, and nepotism. Polls show this feeling is particularly stronger among younger men and women and is compounded in many countries by discrimination in hiring and promoting women.

The Arab Development Reports, World Bank reporting, and many other sources highlight the lack of confidence that adequate jobs will be available, and that employment and promotion will be made on a merit basis. People do not trust this aspect of “the system” and have no reason to do so. World Bank, IMF, and UN studies all highlight the degree to which governments fail to create effective development programs and waste resources, and jobs are not awarded on a merit basis.

It is also clear that in a number of countries, the best job opportunities are in government or in the security services. This pushes young men into the military or paramilitary forces regardless of their desire to join, or locks them into dead-end jobs in government or state industries. At the same time, it creates a strong incentive to join extremist groups or other violent factions that can pay their “volunteers” and forces. For obvious reasons, this affects the morale and motivation of those who do join the security forces, and breeds broad resentment of those who cannot find jobs or see them go to those they feel have special connections or pay bribes.

Uncertain Data on Unemployment

Figure Fifty-Two and **Figure Fifty-Three** provide some World Bank and CIA estimates that attempt to put the level of unemployment in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen.

Unfortunately, the data on unemployment are often poor to actively misleading. Most such data are badly dated, and no longer apply to conflict countries. With the exception of Iraq, every “failed state” is probably now worse off than it was when the CIA and World Bank estimates were made, and Iraq’s status is uncertain.

Substantial numbers of men and women may well have ceased to seek employment, be supported as refugees, or be finding some way to survive without having any formal employment status. Others wait for years for an opening in government.

Many others will accept jobs and wages that are so low that they effectively become a form of disguised unemployment where the resulting income and productivity is so low that several people may be working at “jobs” that could be done by the equivalent of one person. In cases like Iraq, this can reach the point where some government and state industry jobs have no real function or output.

- As **Figure Fifty-Four** and **Figure Fifty-Five** show, the region is also filled with states that have expanded their number of government jobs to the point where they have no real purpose, and effectively serve as a form of welfare. Iraq, in particular, has created massive government and state industry sectors which pays some of the highest wages in the region, and which have little or no clear function or productivity. The end result is dead-end jobs that may do much to alienate the worker.
- **Figure Fifty-Six** shows the demographic pressures and “youth bulge” described earlier interacting with employment. It is clear that Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen all need massive job creation to avoid alienating their young men while having to deal with steadily better educated and more demand for female entrants to the job market – many of which have every reason to feel discriminated against for gender reasons.

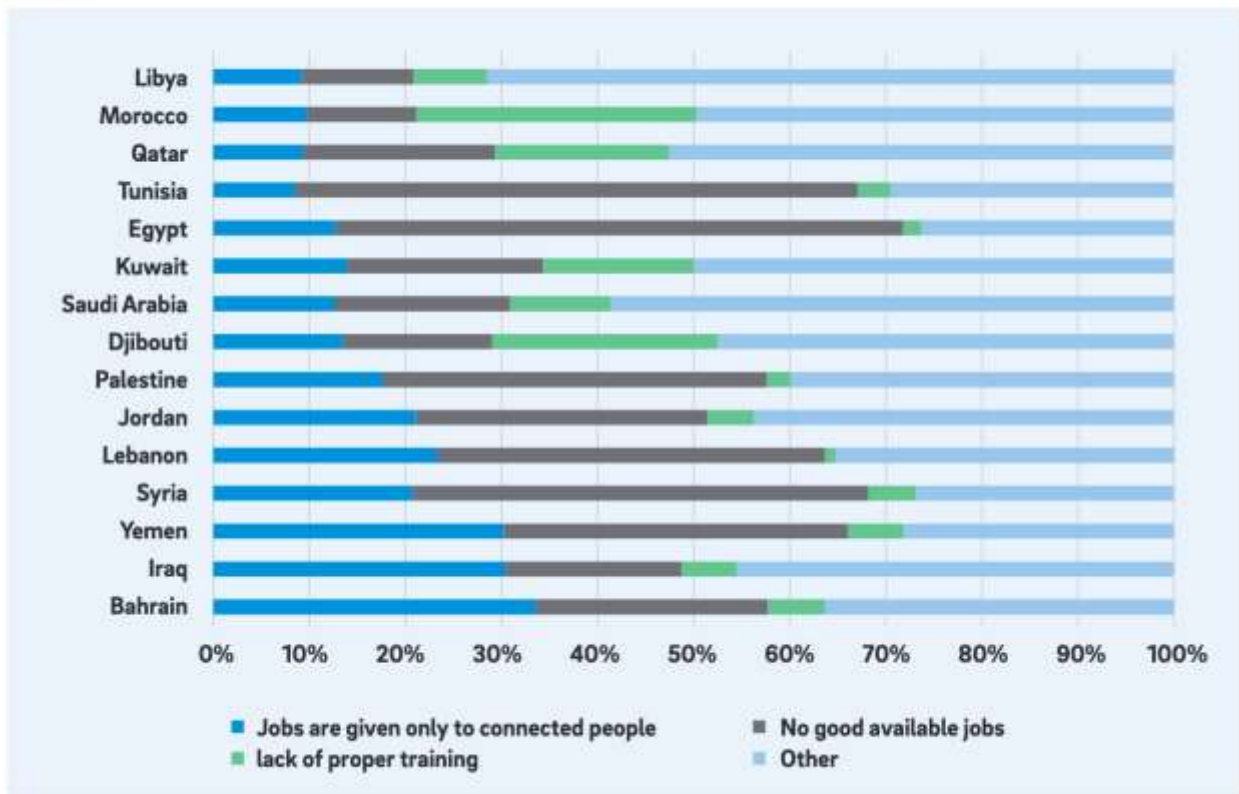
It also warns that the employment situation in each country will come under further pressure because so many children and adults over 65 will be dependent on so few wage earners. These dependency ratios may be as critical in their own way and the pressure the youth bulge creates for added jobs.

- **Figure Fifty-Seven** does indicate that these pressures may ease with time, but such estimates assume that postwar birthrates will decline as people urbanize and seek a higher standard of living while they need fewer children to work and provide care for them as they age. This is likely to occur to some degree, but the projected decline seems to be based on Asian levels of development that may well not apply to the countries in this region.

Finally, the data in **Figure Fifty-Eight** serve as a warning that optimistic projections about future change have proved to be wrong in each “failed state” for all too many years. The World Bank “ease of doing business” rankings are an indicator of the problems “failed states” face in opening up and developing their private sector once a conflict is fully resolved. As the Figure shows, Afghanistan only ranks 167th out of the 190 countries rated. Iraq is even lower at 171st. Syria is 179th. Libya is 186th, and Yemen is 187th.

Figure Fifty-One: Arab and Afghan Concerns Over Employment

Figure 8.1 Perceptions of youth on the constraints to obtaining a job, selected Arab countries, 2013



Source: World Bank 2014b.

Afghanistan: Key Nationwide Economic Concerns

REASONS FOR BEING PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY	UNEMPLOYMENT 24%, BAD ECONOMY 12%, HIGH PRICES 4%
PROBLEMS FACING YOUTH	UNEMPLOYMENT 73%, BAD ECONOMY 14%
PROBLEMS FACING WOMEN	LACK OF JOB OPPORTUNITIES 26%, POVERTY 9%,
REASONS FOR LEAVING THE COUNTRY	UNEMPLOYMENT 52%, BAD ECONOMY 18%, HIGH PRICES 1%

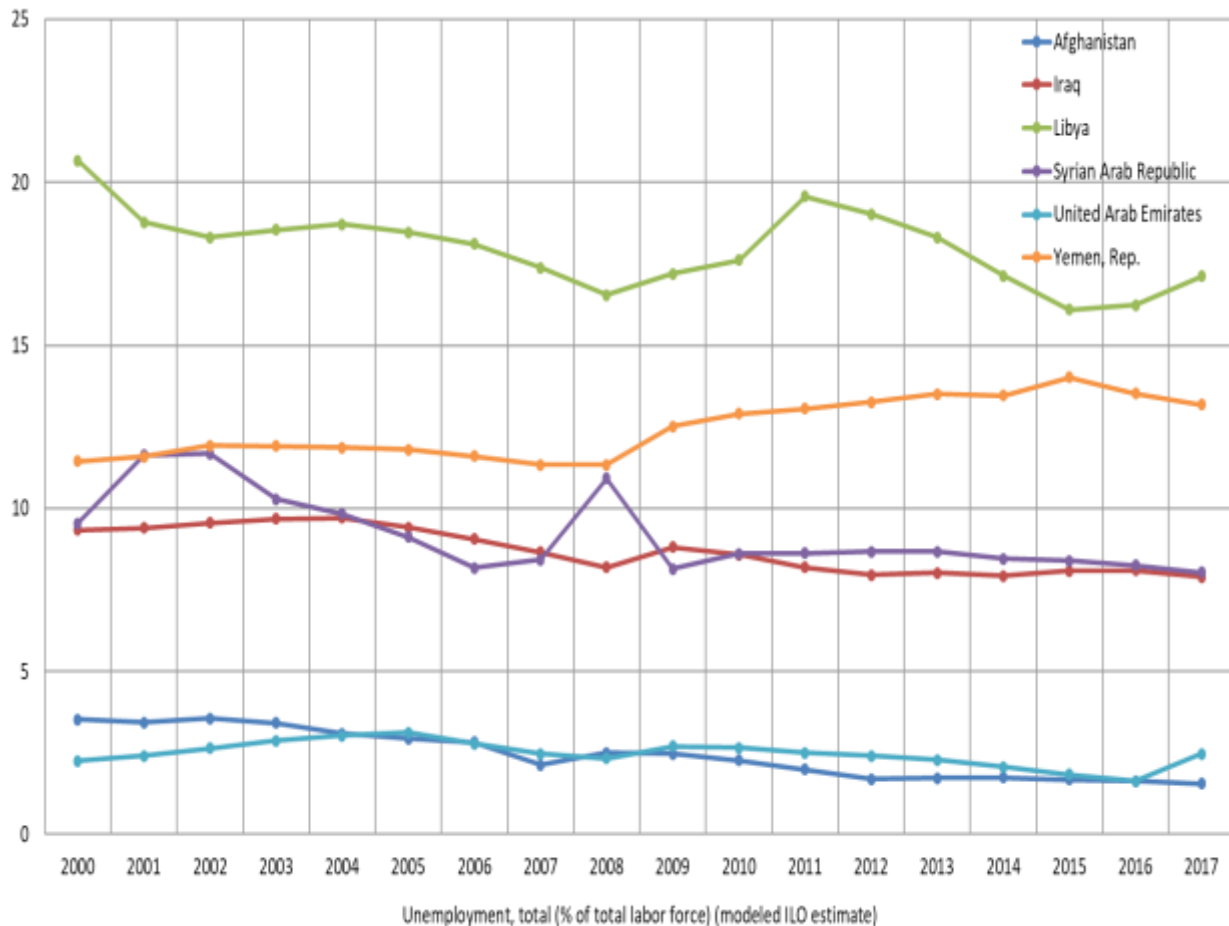
FIG. 3.1: Q-3. (If answer to Q-1 is "wrong direction.") What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the wrong direction? Q-6. In your view, what are the two biggest problems facing youth in your area? By youth, I mean people between the ages of 15 and 24. What is the next-biggest problem? Q-7. What, if anything, is the biggest problem facing women in this area today? Q-83c. (If answer to Q-83a is yes.) Why would you leave Afghanistan?

Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Arab Human Development Report 2016: Youth and the Prospects for Human Development in a Changing Realty*, UNDP, 2016 pp. 26, 172; Asia Foundation, *A Survey of the Afghan People, Afghanistan in 2018*, San Francisco 2018, p. 31, 69.

Figure Fifty-Two: Unemployment: 2000-2017

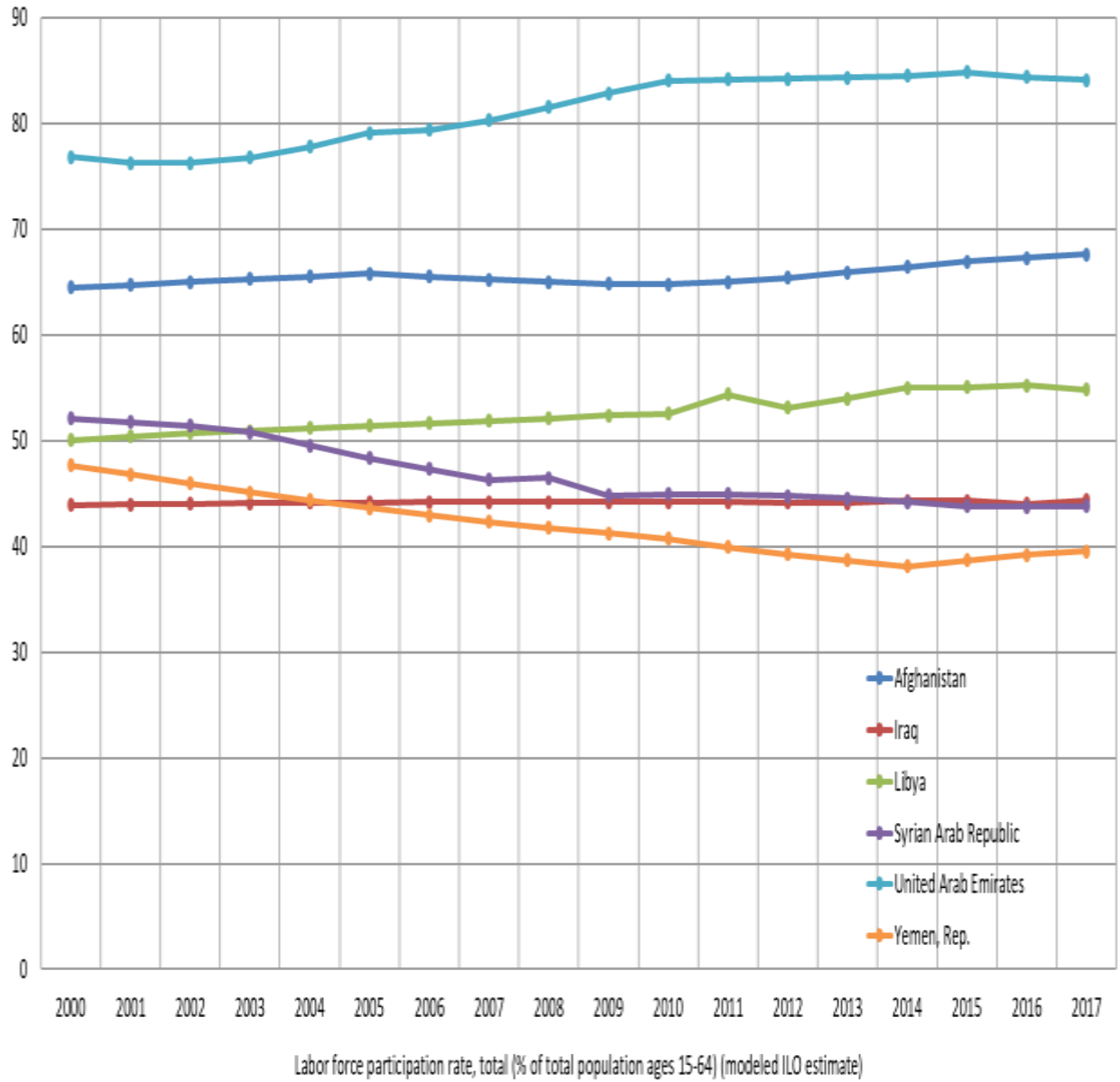
CIA World Factbook Unemployed	World Rank	% Unemployed	% Youth
Afghanistan	194 th worst of 218	23.9% (2017)	ND
Iraq	175 th worst of 218	16% (2012)	ND
Syria	217 th worst of 218	50% (2017)	ND
Libya	207 th worst of 218	30% (2017)	ND
Yemen	198 th worst of 218	27% (2014)	ND

World Bank: (Unemployed % of Total Labor Force)



Source: Adapted from CIA, *World Factbook*, accessed 3 October 2019; World Bank, *Environmental, Social and Governance Data*, July 26, 2019. <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/environment-social-and-governance-data>

Figure Fifty-Three: Labor Force Participation Rate: 2000-2017
 (% of total population ages 15-64)



Source: Adapted from World Bank, *Environmental, Social and Governance Data*, July 26, 2019. <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/environment-social-and-governance-data>

**Figure Fifty-Four: Government Spending as Percent of GDP:
2000-2018**

General government total spending (% of GDP)					
	2001	2005	2010	2015	2018
Syrian Arab Republic	28	28	29	—	—
Libya	38	29	58	182	77
Kuwait	43	28	45	54	46
Oman	38	35	35	51	40
Algeria	31	27	37	46	39
Iraq	—	63	50	43	38
Saudi Arabia	37	28	33	41	36
Djibouti	29	37	37	59	35
Lebanon	39	31	29	27	32
Bahrain	28	25	29	37	31
Jordan	33	40	30	29	30
Comoros	22	20	22	27	30
Tunisia	25	24	25	29	30
Egypt	28	30	31	33	30
Qatar	32	29	31	42	30
Morocco	26	31	31	31	30
United Arab Emirates	25	16	32	32	
Mauritania	—	29	22	33	28
Yemen	30	37	30	19	19
Sudan	10	20	17	12	13
Advanced economies	37	38	42	39	38
Emerging market and developing economies	26	26	29	31	31
Sub-Saharan Africa	24	23	25	22	23

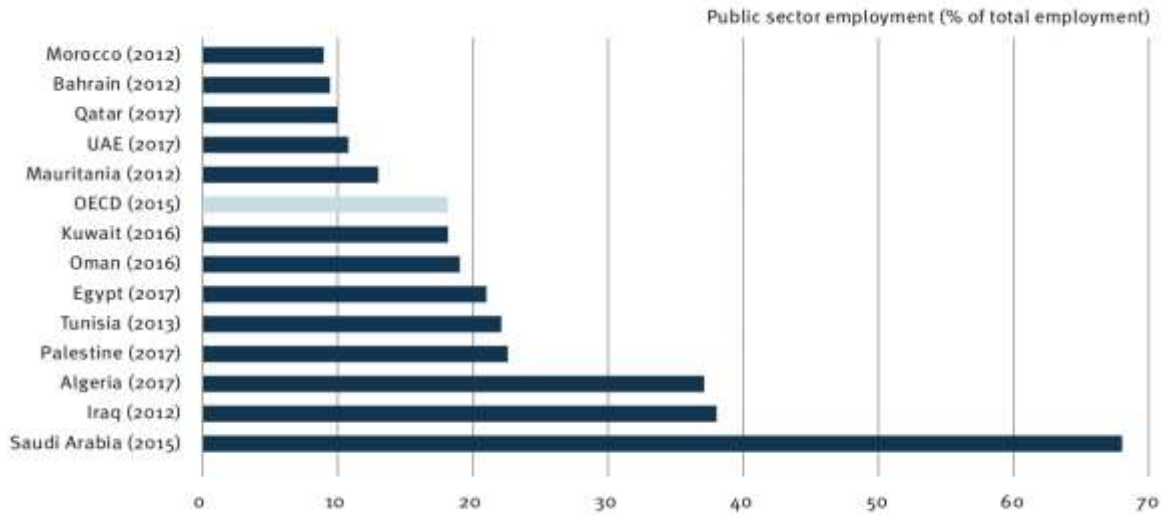
— Is not available.

Source: IMF World Economic Outlook Database, October 2018.

Source: Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Leaving No One Behind, Towards Inclusive Citizenship in Arab Countries*, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2019, p. 8.

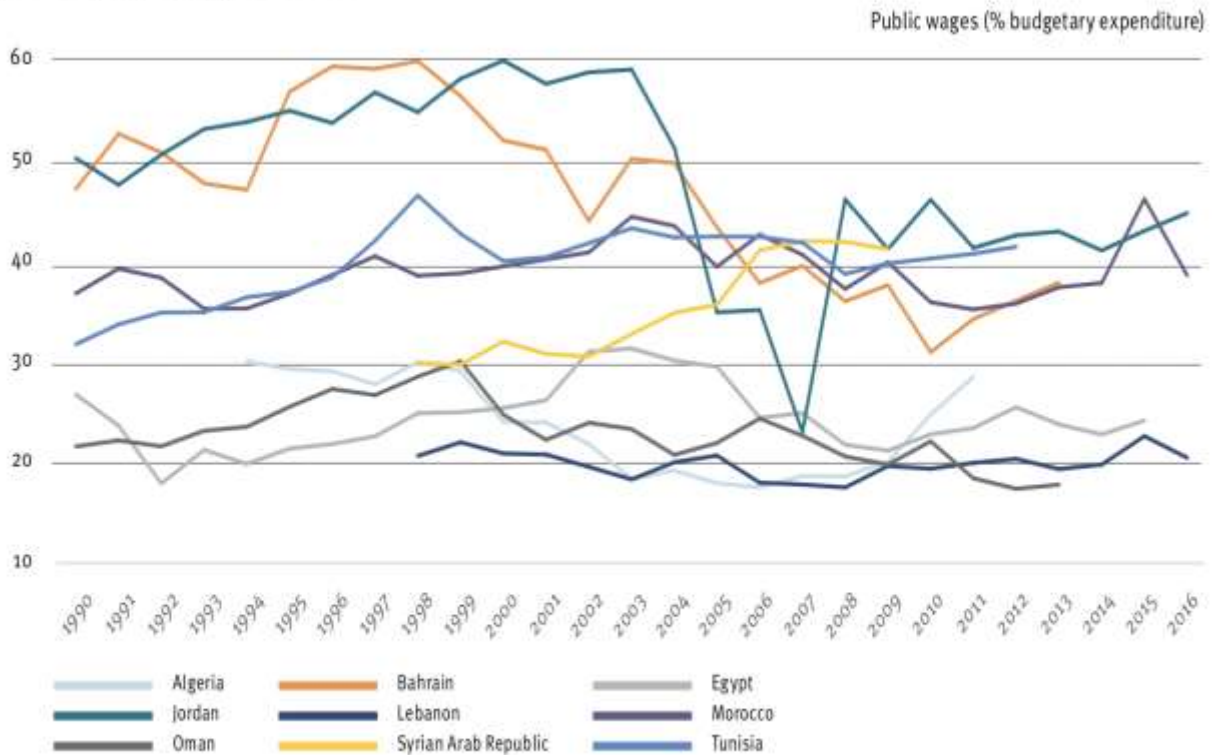
Figure Fifty-Five: Over-Dependence on State Sector Employment

In several Arab countries the government employs more than a fifth of the labour force



Source: OECD Government at a Glance 2017 for OECD public sector employment; ILO Database, ILOSTAT for non-OECD public employment.

... with a significant wage bill to match



Source: IMF Finance Statistics database.

Source: Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Leaving No One Behind, Towards Inclusive Citizenship in Arab Countries*, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2019, p. 6.

Figure Fifty-Six: Youth as a Percent of the Population and Dependency Ratio

Libya

Age structure:

0-14 years: 25.53% (male 882,099 /female 842,320)
 15-24 years: 16.81% (male 582,247 /female 553,004)
 25-54 years: 47.47% (male 1,684,019 /female 1,522,027)
 55-64 years: 5.77% (male 197,196 /female 192,320)
 65 years and over: 4.43% (male 147,168 /female 152,107)

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 49.1 (2015 est.)
 youth dependency ratio: 42.6 (2015 est.)
 elderly dependency ratio: 6.4 (2015 est.)
 potential support ratio: 15.5 (2015 est.)

Yemen

Age structure:

0-14 years: 39.16% (male 5,711,709 /female 5,513,526)
 15-24 years: 21.26% (male 3,089,817 /female 3,005,693)
 25-54 years: 32.78% (male 4,605,059 /female 4,591,811)
 55-64 years: 4% (male 523,769 /female 623,100)
 65 years and over: 2.8% (male 366,891 /female 435,855)

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 75.8 (2015 est.)
 youth dependency ratio: 71.7 (2015 est.)
 elderly dependency ratio: 5.1 (2015 est.)
 potential support ratio: 19.5 (2015 est.)

Afghanistan

Age structure:

0-14 years: 40.92% (male 7,263,716 /female 7,033,427)
 15-24 years: 21.85% (male 3,683,693 /female 3,749,760)
 25-54 years: 30.66% (male 5,456,305 /female 5,263,332)
 55-64 years: 3.95% (male 679,766 /female 699,308)
 65 years and over: 2.61% (male 420,445 /female 491,085)

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 88.8 (2015 est.)
 youth dependency ratio: 84.1 (2015 est.)
 elderly dependency ratio: 4.7 (2015 est.)
 potential support ratio: 21.2 (2015 est.)

Iraq

Age structure:

0-14 years: 39.01% (male 8,005,327 /female 7,674,802)
 15-24 years: 19.42% (male 3,976,085 /female 3,829,086)
 25-54 years: 33.97% (male 6,900,984 /female 6,752,797)
 55-64 years: 4.05% (male 788,602 /female 839,291)
 65 years and over: 3.55% (male 632,753 /female 794,489)

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 77.7 (2015 est.)
 youth dependency ratio: 72.3 (2015 est.)
 elderly dependency ratio: 5.5 (2015 est.)
 potential support ratio: 18.3 (2015 est.)

Syria

Age structure:

0-14 years: 31.39% (male 3,132,619 /female 2,974,394)
 15-24 years: 19.52% (male 1,933,185 /female 1,863,891)
 25-54 years: 39.26% (male 3,807,664 /female 3,829,150)
 55-64 years: 5.52% (male 531,455 /female 542,738)
 65 years and over: 4.31% (male 379,360 /female 459,707)

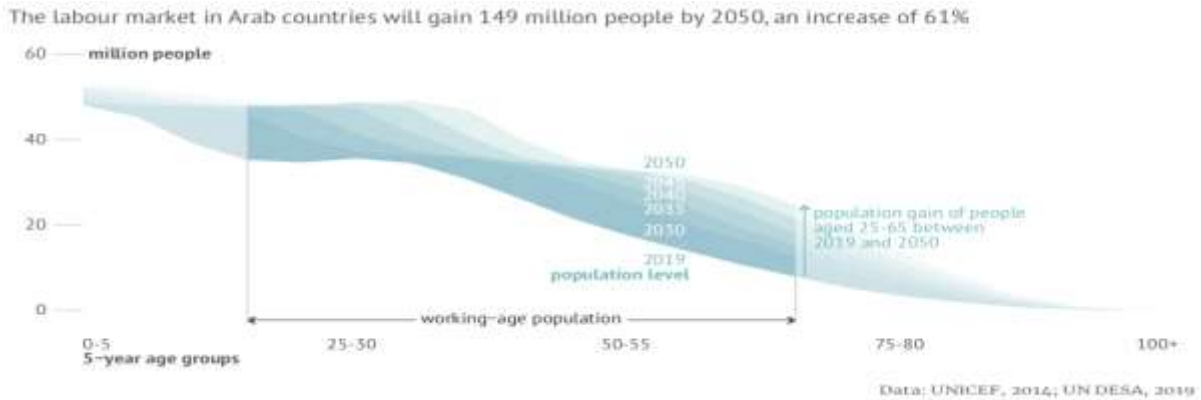
Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 72.8 (2015 est.)
 youth dependency ratio: 65.8 (2015 est.)
 elderly dependency ratio: 7 (2015 est.)
 potential support ratio: 14.3 (2015 est.)

Note: Dependency ratios are a measure of the age structure of a population. They relate the number of individuals that are likely to be economically "dependent" on the support of others. Dependency ratios contrast the ratio of youths (ages 0-14) and the elderly (ages 65+) to the number of those in the working-age group (ages 15-64). Changes in the dependency ratio provide an indication of potential social support requirements resulting from changes in population age structures. As fertility levels decline, the dependency ratio initially falls because the proportion of youths decreases while the proportion of the population of working age increases. As fertility levels continue to decline, dependency ratios eventually increase because the proportion of the population of working age starts to decline and the proportion of elderly persons continues to increase.

Source: CIA World Factbook, accessed 15.8. 2019.

Figure Fifty-Seven: Job Pressure and the Youth Bulge in the MENA Region

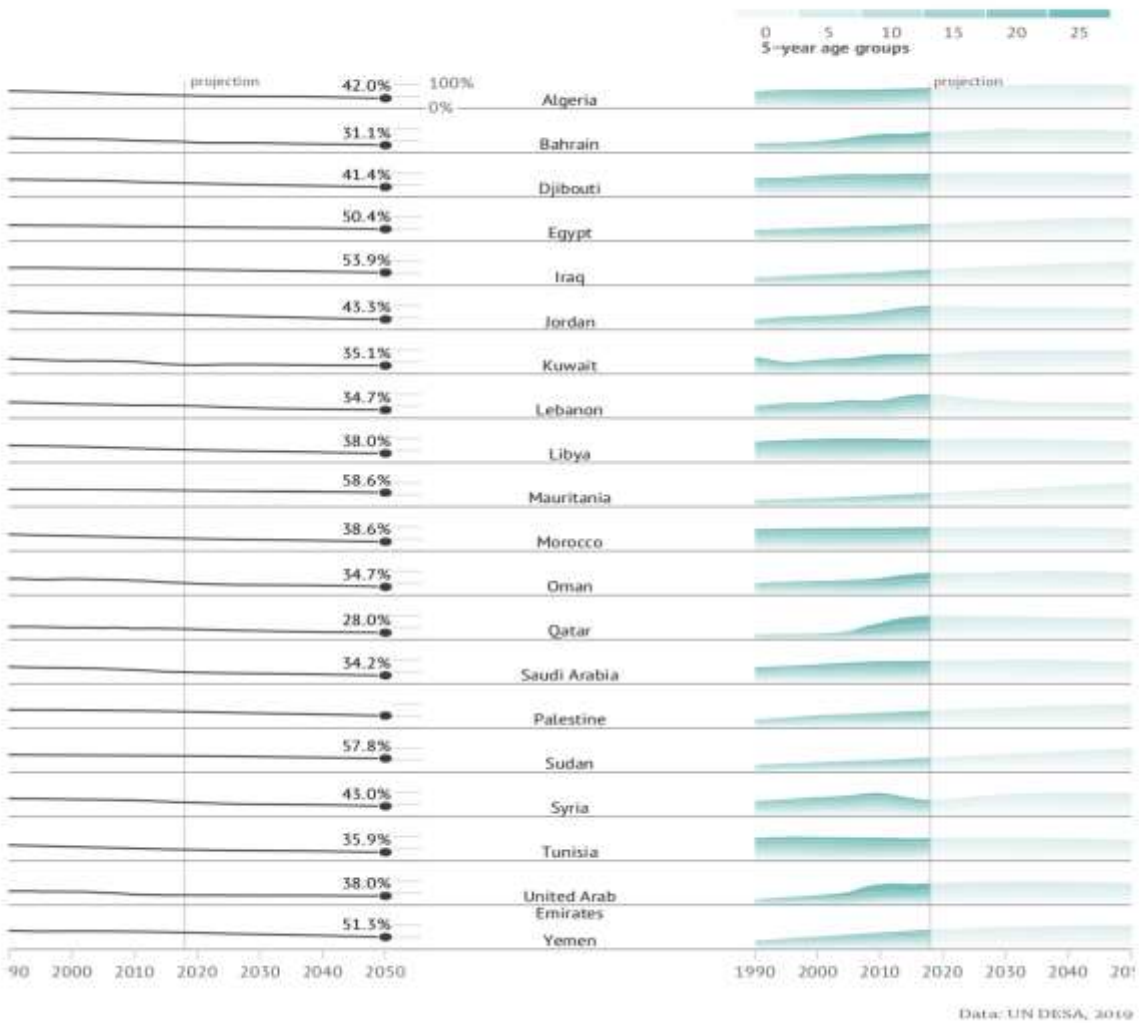


The youth-bulge is un-bulging...

under 25-year-olds as share of total population, 1990-2050, %

...even though there'll be more young people in absolute terms

population under 25, 1990-2050, millions



Florence Gaub, *Arab Futures 2.0: The Road to 2030*, Chaillot Paper 154, September 2019, pp. 48-49.

Figure Fifty-Eight: Some of the Worst World Bank Ratings of Ease of Doing Business – Part One

✓ Reform making it easier to do business ✗ Change making it more difficult to do business

AFGHANISTAN		South Asia		GNI per capita (US\$)		570	
Ease of doing business rank (1–190)		Ease of doing business score (0–100)		Population		35,530,081	
✓ Starting a business (rank)	49	✓ Getting credit (rank)	99	Trading across borders (rank)	177		
Score for starting a business (0–100)	92.04	Score for getting credit (0–100)	50.00	Score for trading across borders (0–100)	30.63		
Procedures (number)	4.5	Strength of legal rights index (0–12)	10	Time to export			
Time (days)	8.5	Depth of credit information index (0–8)	0	Documentary compliance (hours)	228		
Cost (% of income per capita)	6.4	Credit bureau coverage (% of adults)	0.0	Border compliance (hours)	48		
Minimum capital (% of income per capita)	0.0	Credit registry coverage (% of adults)	1.3	Cost to export			
				Documentary compliance (US\$)	344		
Dealing with construction permits (rank)	184	✓ Protecting minority investors (rank)	26	Border compliance (US\$)	453		
Score for dealing with construction permits (0–100)	34.54	Score for protecting minority investors (0–100)	71.67	Time to import			
Procedures (number)	13	Extent of disclosure index (0–10)	8	Documentary compliance (hours)	324		
Time (days)	199	Extent of director liability index (0–10)	1	Border compliance (hours)	96		
Cost (% of warehouse value)	73.0	Ease of shareholder suits index (0–10)	9	Cost to import			
Building quality control index (0–15)	3.0	Extent of shareholder rights index (0–10)	9	Documentary compliance (US\$)	900		
		Extent of ownership and control index (0–10)	9	Border compliance (US\$)	750		
Getting electricity (rank)	168	Extent of corporate transparency index (0–10)	7	Enforcing contracts (rank)	181		
Score for getting electricity (0–100)	44.51	✓ Paying taxes (rank)	177	Score for enforcing contracts (0–100)	31.76		
Procedures (number)	6	Score for paying taxes (0–100)	43.27	Time (days)	1,642		
Time (days)	114	Payments (number per year)	19	Cost (% of claim value)	29.0		
Cost (% of income per capita)	2,448.3	Time (hours per year)	270	Quality of judicial processes index (0–18)	5.0		
Reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index (0–8)	0	Total tax and contribution rate (% of profit)	71.4				
		Postfiling index (0–100)	4.46	✓ Resolving insolvency (rank)	74		
Registering property (rank)	186			Score for resolving insolvency (0–100)	51.78		
Score for registering property (0–100)	27.50			Time (years)	2.0		
Procedures (number)	9			Cost (% of estate)	25.0		
Time (days)	250			Recovery rate (cents on the dollar)	26.5		
Cost (% of property value)	5.0			Strength of insolvency framework index (0–16)	12.0		
Quality of land administration index (0–30)	3.0						

IRAQ		Middle East & North Africa		GNI per capita (US\$)		4,770	
Ease of doing business rank (1–190)		Ease of doing business score (0–100)		Population		38,274,618	
Starting a business (rank)	155	Getting credit (rank)	186	Trading across borders (rank)	181		
Score for starting a business (0–100)	76.55	Score for getting credit (0–100)	0.00	Score for trading across borders (0–100)	25.33		
Procedures (number)	8.5	Strength of legal rights index (0–12)	0	Time to export			
Time (days)	26.5	Depth of credit information index (0–8)	0	Documentary compliance (hours)	504		
Cost (% of income per capita)	38.8	Credit bureau coverage (% of adults)	0.0	Border compliance (hours)	85		
Minimum capital (% of income per capita)	16.6	Credit registry coverage (% of adults)	1.1	Cost to export			
				Documentary compliance (US\$)	1,800		
Dealing with construction permits (rank)	103	Protecting minority investors (rank)	125	Border compliance (US\$)	1,118		
Score for dealing with construction permits (0–100)	67.64	Score for protecting minority investors (0–100)	46.67	Time to import			
Procedures (number)	11	Extent of disclosure index (0–10)	4	Documentary compliance (hours)	176		
Time (days)	167	Extent of director liability index (0–10)	5	Border compliance (hours)	131		
Cost (% of warehouse value)	0.3	Ease of shareholder suits index (0–10)	5	Cost to import			
Building quality control index (0–15)	5.5	Extent of shareholder rights index (0–10)	8	Documentary compliance (US\$)	500		
		Extent of ownership and control index (0–10)	3	Border compliance (US\$)	644		
Getting electricity (rank)	126	Extent of corporate transparency index (0–10)	3	Enforcing contracts (rank)	143		
Score for getting electricity (0–100)	61.73	✓ Paying taxes (rank)	129	Score for enforcing contracts (0–100)	48.02		
Procedures (number)	5	Score for paying taxes (0–100)	63.55	Time (days)	520		
Time (days)	51	Payments (number per year)	15	Cost (% of claim value)	28.1		
Cost (% of income per capita)	436.8	Time (hours per year)	312	Quality of judicial processes index (0–18)	1.5		
Reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index (0–8)	0	Total tax and contribution rate (% of profit)	30.8				
		Postfiling index (0–100)	21.43	Resolving insolvency (rank)	168		
Registering property (rank)	113			Score for resolving insolvency (0–100)	0.00		
Score for registering property (0–100)	57.74			Time (years)	no practice		
Procedures (number)	5			Cost (% of estate)	no practice		
Time (days)	51			Recovery rate (cents on the dollar)	0.0		
Cost (% of property value)	7.0			Strength of insolvency framework index (0–16)	0.0		
Quality of land administration index (0–30)	10.5						

Figure Fifty-Eight: Some of the Worst World Bank Ratings of Ease of Doing Business – Part Three

YEMEN, REP.		Middle East & North Africa		GNI per capita (US\$)		791	
Ease of doing business rank (1–190)	187	Ease of doing business score (0–100)	32.41	Population			28,250,420
Starting a business (rank)	175	Getting credit (rank)	186	Trading across borders (rank)			189
Score for starting a business (0–100)	67.01	Score for getting credit (0–100)	0.00	Score for trading across borders (0–100)			0.00
Procedures (number)	6.5	Strength of legal rights index (0–12)	0	Time to export			
Time (days)	40.5	Depth of credit information index (0–8)	0	Documentary compliance (hours)			no practice
Cost (% of income per capita)	118.8	Credit bureau coverage (% of adults)	0.0	Border compliance (hours)			no practice
Minimum capital (% of income per capita)	0.0	Credit registry coverage (% of adults)	1.3	Cost to export			
				Documentary compliance (US\$)			no practice
Dealing with construction permits (rank)	186	Protecting minority investors (rank)	132	Border compliance (US\$)			no practice
Score for dealing with construction permits (0–100)	0.00	Score for protecting minority investors (0–100)	43.33	Time to import			
Procedures (number)	no practice	Extent of disclosure index (0–10)	6	Documentary compliance (hours)			no practice
Time (days)	no practice	Extent of director liability index (0–10)	4	Border compliance (hours)			no practice
Cost (% of warehouse value)	no practice	Ease of shareholder suits index (0–10)	3	Cost to import			
Building quality control index (0–15)	no practice	Extent of shareholder rights index (0–10)	5	Documentary compliance (US\$)			no practice
		Extent of ownership and control index (0–10)	4	Border compliance (US\$)			no practice
		Extent of corporate transparency index (0–10)	4				
Getting electricity (rank)	187	Paying taxes (rank)	83	Enforcing contracts (rank)			139
Score for getting electricity (0–100)	0.00	Score for paying taxes (0–100)	74.13	Score for enforcing contracts (0–100)			48.52
Procedures (number)	no practice	Payments (number per year)	44	Time (days)			645
Time (days)	no practice	Time (hours per year)	248	Cost (% of claim value)			30.0
Cost (% of income per capita)	no practice	Total tax and contribution rate (% of profit)	26.6	Quality of judicial processes index (0–18)			4.0
Reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index (0–8)	no practice	Postfiling index (0–100)	96.34				
				Resolving insolvency (rank)			157
Registering property (rank)	81			Score for resolving insolvency (0–100)			25.89
Score for registering property (0–100)	65.18			Time (years)			3.0
Procedures (number)	6			Cost (% of estate)			15.0
Time (days)	19			Recovery rate (cents on the dollar)			19.1
Cost (% of property value)	1.8			Strength of insolvency framework index (0–16)			5.0
Quality of land administration index (0–30)	7.0						

Note: Most indicator sets refer to a case scenario in the largest business city of an economy, though for 11 economies the data are a population-weighted average for the two largest business cities. For some indicators a result of “no practice” may be recorded for an economy; see the data notes for more details. In starting a business, procedures (number), time (days) and cost (% of income per capita) are calculated as the average of both men and women. For the post filing index, a result of “not applicable” may be recorded for an economy.

Source: World Bank, *Doing Business 2019: Training for Reform*,

https://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/doingBusiness/media/Annual-Reports/English/DB2019-report_web-version.pdf.

Conclusions: The Need for “Strategic Triage”

It is always tempting to go from an analysis of key problems to possible solutions. This analysis, however, has not only highlighted the seriousness of the problems it addresses, it has highlighted the problems in the quality of the data available to quantify and prioritize them, and it has repeatedly warned that long-term structural problems cannot be separate from the need to deal with more immediate security problems, religious and other forms of extremism, and short-term civil challenges like leadership and politics.

If there is any one key lesson from America’s “failed state” wars, it is that focusing on part of the problem and pursuing optimistic solutions is unlikely to produce any lasting effort at conflict resolution and peacemaking, and that failing to realistically address the longer-term structural civil-challenges is likely to end in new forms of extremism, terrorism, and civil war. There are no lasting tactical military or security solutions to civil-military conflicts without such efforts, there are no strategies that will end in stable and successful conflict resolution, and there are no grand strategic solutions that will lead to a lasting peace.

At the same time, it is far from clear that outside efforts can help a country that is not willing to help itself. In a world where such outside aid is also limited, hard and sometimes brutal choices also need to be made between providing such aid and containing the threats posed by “failed states” to their own territory and region. There is no moral or ethical obligation to attempt the impossible, and there are many states that are not “failed states” that have failed to the point where outside aid cannot make a lasting difference. In many cases, the practical solution may have to be strategic triage – helping those countries that do have the capabilities to help themselves if such aid is made available.

The scale of the problems exposed in this study illustrate the need for the U.S. and other outside powers to be grimly realistic in assessing the extent to which countries are divided against themselves, regimes have failed to the point where aid cannot salvage them, and letting hope triumph over experience (and reality) will not produce probable success. This is as true of optimism about the impact of peace negotiations and over-simplistic solutions to post conflict development as it is of optimism about the ability to deal with extremism, terrorism, and insurgency by repression or the use of military force. Delaying the crisis by making it worse is not a solution. Neither is defeating the symptom without addressing its causes.

Appendix A: Understanding the Limits to the Data Used in This Study

This analysis displays a range of data on the longer-term trends and forces that the U.S. has often effectively ignored, but that shape the prospects for success in dealing with the civil dimensions of war, and finding some lasting approach to conflict resolution and stability. It illustrates the range of key elements that must be considered in any realistic assessment of future U.S. options in both a given country and in shaping U.S. involvement in future fights against terrorism and insurgents.

The analysis can only quantify some of these factors. Data are missing or clearly unreliable in many key cases. Such problems include providing an accurate picture of the ethnic, sectarian, tribal, or other internal differences that trigger or contribute to extremism, terrorism, and insurgency. They include reliable data on employment problems and challenges, poverty and economic inequity, and key details in problems shaping economic development.

There are enough broadly reliable data, however, to show that there are clear correlations between the states with the lowest levels of performance and capability – the practical equivalent of “failed states” and the rise of violence and conflict. It is also clear in virtually every major case that the country’s government did fail large portions of its people, and was a key factor shaping the rise of such violence and civil war.

It should be stressed that no effort is made to try to weight the comparative importance of given trends, that there are many other factors that create and sustain a given nation’s status as a failed state, and that the focus of this analysis is on illustrating the scale and importance of the problems in the key civil developments in given countries and conflicts and not on attempting to provide possible solutions.

It should also be clear that nations at war often cannot produce reliable data, and that many developing countries provide extremely erratic and uncertain statistics in peace time. The ability and willingness of any country to collect and report accurately on civil problems and issues is often limited. As a result, data are often reported which are based on very limited sampling and sometimes are simply invented. In many cases, the method of estimating (or “guesstimating”) is unclear, as is the validity or uncertainty of the data. Data also are sometimes reported for years in which serious conflicts were underway and the country involved could not possibly obtain accurate data.

Regardless of efforts to achieve international statistical standardization, the data submitted by given countries are not truly comparable, have major gaps, or are not reported at all. The data on civil development can also be highly political and be manipulated accordingly. There also are often a wide range of different ways of estimating the same data, and estimates by different international organizations, official national sources, and NGOs can vary significantly from source-to-source. As might be expected, these problems are often most severe for “failed states” – the countries with the worst governments and lowest levels of development.

Every effort has been made in this analysis to present data that seem broadly accurate and/or reveal trends that act as a valid warning that serious civil problems exist that will shape the course of current and future conflicts, as well as the prospects for conflict resolution and lasting stability. This choice often, however, has to be a judgment call, and gaps or uncertainties remain in many areas of key concern. These include data on income distribution, real-world employment and unemployment, poverty, health and malnutrition, life expectancy, education, and many other areas.