Rapid Assessment:

The impact of the conflict in Ukraine as a crisis multiplier in the Middle East and North Africa

IFRC MENA Regional Delegation

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Executive Summary

Overall crisis environment
- 17 MENA countries with 400 million people
- 56 million People in Need (PiN)
- >25% PiN increase expected over the next 6 months

Humanitarian funding
- 19.8% IFRC funding coverage in 2022
- >25% humanitarian funding drop expected over the next 6 months

Civil unrest and conflict potential
- 9 countries report increasing risk of civil unrest and conflict
- Lebanon at risk of becoming a critical crisis

Food Security
- MENA countries source up to 85% wheat from Ukraine and
- 5 million people facing food insecurity
- 1.9 million could slide into hunger

Agriculture
- Water scarcity and extreme temperatures across the region
- 5 MENA countries report reduced agricultural productivity

Health and wellbeing
- Growing gaps in health and wellbeing across MENA
- 9 MENA countries expect this trend to accelerate in the next 6 months

Migration and refugees
- 40 million migrants
- 7 MENA countries expect the situation of vulnerable migrants and refugees to get worse or much worse

Internal displacement
- 14.4 million IDPs
- Risk of conflict and social unrest could trigger new internal displacement

Energy
- Energy and oil-importing countries experience additional social stress
- 25-75% increase of fuel prices
- 25% increase of fuel prices by another 25%

GCC States
- Vulnerable labor migrants and low-income HHs are suffering from increasing food prices
- GCC National Societies have high capacity to advocate for humanitarian funding for MENA

This rapid assessment has the overall goal to contribute to the ongoing analysis and MENA scenario development to anticipate, prepare, and respond to evolving crisis trends in the MENA region, with specific considerations how the conflict in Ukraine is a risk multiplier to existing crisis trends. The assessment was carried out by an external consultant between 25 April and 03 June 2022, using secondary data and a perception survey of 22 representatives of Host National Societies and IFRC Delegations at country level. Key findings of the assessment include:

Overall crisis environment - The MENA region continues to face multiple and complex crises, conflicts, and displacement. The needs of affected populations are increasing in severity and scale and are aggravated by macroeconomic decline, chronic underdevelopment, climate-change, natural disasters, and diseases. Over 55 million people across the region need humanitarian assistance, including more than twelve million internally displaced people.

The assessment confirmed that the conflict in Ukraine intensifies the impact of these pre-existing crises trends and makes countries more vulnerable. The more a country is already affected by multiple, pre-existing crisis factors, the higher the impact of the conflict in Ukraine is expected to be. The assessment also supported the categorization of MENA countries into three crisis categories. The overall impact of multiple, aggregated crisis factors is higher in Syria, Yemen, and Libya ("Critical Crises"), when compared to Palestine, Lebanon, and Iraq ("Chronic Crises"), and Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria, Iran, Jordan, and Morocco ("Contained Crises").

Humanitarian funding - The conflict in Ukraine is bound to push several MENA countries down the priority list for donor governments, international institutions, and global media. For the millions of Palestinians, Lebanese, Yemenis, Syrians, and others who live in countries experiencing conflict, catastrophic economic meltdowns, and increasing humanitarian needs, this would be equivalent to shutting down critical life support. Even before the Ukraine conflict, funding shortages were leading to curtailed programmes and cut rations in responses.

The impact of the conflict in Ukraine on the availability of humanitarian funding is rated as particularly severe in Lebanon, Algeria, Morocco, Libya, and Yemen, and strong in Iraq, Egypt, and Syria. Nine countries already experienced a drop in funding because of the Ukraine conflict. Ten out of twelve MENA countries expect this negative humanitarian funding trend to continue over the next six months, with an expected funding drop of 25% and up to 75% (Egypt).

Civil unrest and conflict potential - The reverberations of the conflict in Ukraine into the MENA region could serve as the catalyst for a next wave of uprisings among fragile states. Similarities can be drawn with the lead-up to the Arab uprisings, where socioeconomic frustrations and a lack of political reform prompted people to take to the streets. With rising food prices and the imposition of taxes, coupled with a general lack of political reform, the latent anger that caused the protests of 2010-2011 may once more manifest in unrest. In nine out of twelve MENA countries an increasing risk of civil unrest and conflict is expected, especially in Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, Tunisia, Libya, and Yemen. These increased risk levels cannot be attributed only to the impact of the conflict in Ukraine.

Each crisis factor has a cumulative effect and is contributing to the overall, complex crises environment. However, the conflict in Ukraine has been one of the most prominent developments over the past three months and could be a major contributor to an increased risk of social unrest and conflict. In that sense, the conflict in Ukraine and its subsequent global economic and security impact could be the proverbial last straw that breaks the camel's back, pushing already fragile countries over the tipping point. The preparedness and response capacity of the National Societies in terms of increasing risks of social unrest and conflict are seen as moderate in seven MENA countries, and high in Lebanon, Algeria, Iran, and Jordan. The capacity is seen as low in Palestine.

Food Security - MENA economies are impacted by the conflict in Ukraine, especially countries who primarily rely on these two countries for their food imports. This increases the risk of a food crisis in the next six months. All twelve MENA countries experienced an increase in the prices for basic food items. The sharpest increase has been reported in Lebanon (75-100%), followed by Iran and Yemen (50-75% increase), while in other countries prices increased by 25-50%. All countries await this negative trend to continue, with an expected price increase of 25-50% during the next six months.

The lack of affordable food is affecting the people in all twelve countries, and most severely in Yemen, Libya, and Syria, but also in Lebanon, which indicates a particularly steep decline of the socio-economic situation in this country. Also in Palestine, food security is worsening at an alarming rate. The effects of the conflict in Ukraine coincide with a severe drought in Iran, Iraq, and Morocco, hampering domestic production. Egypt, the world's top importer of wheat, is planning to expand wheat cultivation by the end of 2024, which does not ease immediate vulnerabilities. Tunisia, whose economy is already under strain, receives nearly 80% of its wheat from Ukraine. As a result, wheat prices are the highest in fourteen years. Jordan and Algeria are less exposed than other MENA countries to the economic impact of the conflict in Ukraine. The preparedness and response capacity of the National Societies in terms of food security is diverse. The capacity is the lowest in Palestine, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Tunisia, and highest in Lebanon, Iraq, and Algeria.

Agriculture - Agriculture production in MENA countries will be severely affected by the combination of disrupted supply chains, increased costs of energy (both impacted by the conflict in Ukraine), and water scarcity, and increasing temperatures (both are climate-change related). The impact of these stress factors on agricultural production are the highest in "Critical Crisis" contexts, and the lowest in "Contained Crisis" contexts. The aggregated crisis factors that are affecting the agricultural production are surprisingly high in Tunisia, reportedly at the same level as Libya.

Ten MENA countries (all except Algeria and Jordan) believe that agricultural production will become worse over the next six months. The preparedness and response capacity of National Societies in terms of agricultural livelihood support is the lowest, when compared to their capacity in other thematic areas, as most National Societies do not focus on this area.

Health and wellbeing - Access to health services is expected to continue deteriorating over the next six months in the MENA region, which is expected to have severe consequences in several countries. The lack of affordable health services is affecting all MENA countries, amplified by the shrinking purchasing power of households because of the impact of the economic crisis, to which the Ukraine crisis is a major contributing factor. The lack of affordable health services has the most severe impact in Yemen, Lebanon, and Syria. The preparedness and response capacity of the HNS in terms of Health support is the highest, when compared to other thematic areas. The capacity is seen as the highest in Lebanon and the lowest in Yemen, Morocco, and Tunisia.

Migration and displacement - The already dire situation in several MENA countries hosting vulnerable refugees and migrants and is expected to deteriorate further because of humanitarian funding shortfalls, especially in Lebanon. The country has absorbed considerable numbers but has been unable to accommodate their needs, and 70% of Syrian refugees have received no assistance since the beginning of 2021. In seven countries the situation of vulnerable migrants and refugees is expected to get worse (Lebanon, Iran, Jordan, Tunisia, and Yemen) or much worse (Algeria and Egypt). The preparedness and response capacity of the National Societies for such a scenario is seen as moderate in six, and high in four MENA countries. Only in Yemen the capacity of the National Society to support vulnerable migrants and refugees is rated low.

It is also worthwhile noting that several Arab countries have large numbers of students in Ukraine, including Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, and Tunisia, many of which were forced to flee from Ukraine, experiencing racism and lack of access to rights and assistance, when compared to Ukrainian refugees.

Internal displacement - The events in Ukraine increase the risk of conflict and social unrest in the MENA region, which could also trigger involuntary population movements. Taking the increase in risk of social unrest and conflict in combination with the projected rise in food insecurity into account, such a development cannot be ruled out as a mid-term scenario for several countries. The risk of new displacement is the highest in Syria, where Turkey announced in May its intention to launch another military campaign in the Northwest.

Another scenario would be that may seek to pressure Turkey with escalation in the Northwest and the threat of a refugee influx. A similar scenario is possible for Libya. In five out of six IDP-hosting countries in the region the humanitarian situation of IDPs is expected to worsen over the next six months. The preparedness and response capacity of National Societies for such a scenario is seen as high in six, moderate in four countries, and very low in Morocco.

Energy - As a direct consequence of the Ukraine conflict, Europe is seeking alternative gas resources to become more independent from n supplies. Regional oil and gas exporters like Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, and Algeria are expected to benefit from higher export earnings in the short and medium term. In contrast, energy and oil-importing countries in the region experience negative outcomes leading to additional social stress, and high prices will increase socio-economic risks. This negative trend is expected to continue over the next six months.

In Syria and Yemen, fuel shortages and lack of electricity already impact severely the delivery of basic services. The compounded crisis trends in Lebanon, including the sharp increase in energy prices resulting from the Ukraine crisis, have the potential to push the country over the tipping point to become again a “Critical Crisis”.

GCC States - As oil and gas exporters, the GCC States will benefit from the increase in oil and gas prices because of the Ukraine crisis. With their small populations, high per capita income, and large grain storage facilities, the Gulf Arab states have more buffers than many other countries protecting them from supply shocks and price increases in agricultural commodities.

GCC National Societies have an important enabler role in dialogue with their governments and other domestic partners to influence their decisions towards funding the Red Pillar. The impact of the conflict in Ukraine on the availability of international funding necessitates more efforts by GCC National Societies to advocate for funding to National Societies in MENA countries.

In addition, the GCC National Societies are also encouraged to investigate opportunities to provide more assistance to vulnerable migrants, guest workers, and low-income households in their own countries. The capacity of the National Societies to mobilize humanitarian assistance to vulnerable communities in the Gulf region and to advocate for more government and private sector funding to address priority gaps in MENA countries is considered very high.

Recommendations for Host National Societies and IFRC Delegations in MENA

Food Security

- Increase Humanitarian Diplomacy to advocate for more funding to mitigate the increasing impact of multiple crisis factors, and to overcome the negative impact of international sanctions (Syria and Iran)
- Conduct more training and capacity building for enhanced preparedness planning
- Improve capacity to identify and assess the needs and gaps for most affected populations
- Scale-up food security programming, including cash assistance
- Invest in logistics capacities and volunteer management
- Carry out contingency planning, and stockpiling of critical relief items
- Provide more livelihood support and economic empowerment

Health and Wellbeing

- Secure funding to continue primary and secondary health services
- Scale up health programmes to reach most vulnerable populations
- Invest more in outreach programs (community health and mobile clinics)

Country-specific priorities:

- Enhance emergency response and first aid, and ambulance services in Libya
- Build the capacities of NS staff in health management; prioritize fundraising for maintaining critical infrastructure in Syria and Yemen
- Provide technical and financial support to keep EMS and BTS and scaling up PHC in Lebanon
- Better quality services and clear programmatic framework for Health and WASH in Algeria
- Basic health mobile units, equipment, physical rehabilitation physiotherapy equipment, ambulances, helicopter spare parts for air rescue in Iran
- Ensure financial sustainability of life-saving interventions like the renal dialysis project in Jordan
- Increase HR, financial and management resources in Morocco

Refugees and migrants

- Develop strategic plans of action, preparedness planning, and fundraising
- Establish Humanitarian Service Points, training volunteers
- Support more regular coordination with Government and other humanitarian actors

Country specific priorities:

- Provide capacity development on integrating migrants in different responses and special programmes for women and children including UASC in Algeria
- Develop more innovative programmes to address increased vulnerabilities and shrinking funding for refugees and migrants, especially from UN agencies in Egypt
- Offer technical support in the fields of Health, WASH, Livelihoods, PGI, DRR, DRM, logistics, CVA, CEA for Iran
- Support Humanitarian Diplomacy, positioning of the HNS in the wider humanitarian community, assist in coordination with different partners in Tunisia

Agricultural livelihoods

- Engage more strategically in this important thematic area
- Conduct preparedness and contingency planning and DRR
- Improve risk assessment capacity and anticipatory programming
- Increase support to irrigation systems, including renewable energy to operate these systems
- Provide more livelihood support to vulnerable rural communities, including equipment, fodder, seeds, and fertilizers
- Use auxiliary role to advocate with government to support vulnerable communities in need, with a specific focus on highly vulnerable groups

Civil Unrest and Conflict

- Provide guidance to Movement on how to handle emerging racism and discrimination evident within communities, institutions, and governments
- Advocate with donors who have provided waivers and exceptions to the assistance they provide to Ukraine crisis that minimizes the usual and cumbersome project requirements
- Preparedness and contingency planning, evaluation of vulnerabilities (VCA), risk assessments
- Capacity building on Humanitarian Diplomacy to be able to maintain neutrality and functionality when confronted with increased conflict risk
- Capacity building to enhance volunteers' capacities
- Establishment of security frameworks for operating in emergencies

Country-specific priorities:

- Prioritize technical, financial, strategic, and operational planning support to HNS in Palestine
- Support the establishment and equipping of specialized emergency response teams in Libya
- Ensure sustained funding coming from PNS to assist HNS to be ready and continue support in Yemen
- Continue supporting the main services EMS and BTS in Lebanon

Internal Displacement

- Respondents in MENA countries that are not (yet) affected by larger-scale internal displacement, but that are witnessing increased risk of civil unrest and conflict, require capacity building in terms of risk assessments and contingency plans

Country specific priorities:

- Humanitarian Diplomacy to assist Palestine to support new IDPs and settlement in new areas
- Humanitarian Diplomacy to overcome barriers to early recovery and return assistance
- In Yemen, the HNS needs more financial and technical support to its IDP community centers
- In Egypt, more livelihood programmes are needed to support the resilience of IDPs and potentially their integration in new communities
- In Iraq, the HNS needs technical and financial support to continue supporting the existing caseload and more support if the number of IDPs is increasing again, in coordination with government and other humanitarian actors

Abbreviations

BTS	Blood Transfusion Services
CEA	Community Engagement and Accountability
CEIP	Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
CVA	Cash and Voucher Assistance
DRM	Disaster Risk Mitigation
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EMS	*Emergency Medical Services*
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
HHs	Households
HNS	Host National Society
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MEI	Middle East Institute
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
PA	Palestine (National) Authority
PGI	Protection, Gender, and Inclusion
PHC	Public Health Care
PNS	Partner National Societies
UN	United Nations
UN-OCHA	UN Organization for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WFP	World Food Program
WINEP	Washington Institute for Near East Policy

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Introduction

Background and objectives

This rapid assessment has the overall goal to contribute to the ongoing analysis (and MENA scenario development to anticipate, prepare, and respond to evolving crisis trends in the MENA region, with specific considerations how the conflict in Ukraine is a risk multiplier to existing crisis trends.

Russia and Ukraine are two of the largest exporters of wheat, making them the world's breadbasket. The expected shortage of wheat supplies is threatening food security especially in vulnerable countries such as Syria, Yemen, Libya, Lebanon, and Egypt. The combination of increase in prices for fuel and food, amplified risk of social unrest and conflict, and the projected decline in humanitarian funding put a substantial burden on economies of several MENA countries that are already distressed up to breaking points.

The objectives of the assessment were to:

- Carry out a comparative trend analysis of key crises factors in MENA countries and how they are affecting the IFRC network and its ability to provide relevant services with maximum impact
- Explore the anticipated impact of the conflict in Ukraine as a risk multiplier on food security, livelihoods, and the increasing risk of conflict and unrest
- Provide recommendations to IFRC on priority issues at country level that can inform the design of anticipatory thinking, scenarios, contingency planning and Humanitarian Diplomacy priorities

Categorization

The assessment clustered the 17 MENA countries into four categories, following the recommended approach from the Terms of Reference (see annex 1):

- **"Critical Crises"** countries experience extreme conditions beyond their normative states (Syria, Yemen, and Libya)
- **"Chronic Crises"** countries where tensions are intensifying but within the parameters of historical precedents (Palestine, Lebanon, and Iraq)
- **"Contained Crises"** countries that are seen as relatively stable but susceptible to escalation (Iran, Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco)

As the Terms of Reference acknowledged, countries can move, sometimes rapidly, from one of these designations to another (see also 'Hypotheses' below). The Conflict in Ukraine could be a main contributing factor that can potentially push countries designated as chronic or contained crises into the higher category.

Considering the specific situation of the five Arab Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries (Saudi Arabia, Bahrein, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, and Qatar) included under the IFRC MENA region, these countries were analyzed separately (see also 'Limitations' below).

Hypotheses

Domain	Hypotheses
Overall crisis environment	• The conflict in Ukraine is a major crisis intensifier in MENA countries • Severity of some crisis factors has intensified over the past three months and is projected to intensify further, also because of the Ukraine conflict • The multiplying impact of the conflict in Ukraine has the potential to accelerate a shift from one crisis designation to the other (for example, Lebanon could turn again into a "critical crisis") • Contained Crisis countries are expected to be affected as well but will be better able to mitigate the multiplying impact of the Ukraine crisis (especially oil producing countries) • Preparedness and response capacity of HNS is relatively limited (by available funding, preparedness, and technical knowledge) and additional IFRC support is required
Humanitarian funding	• MENA countries already experience reduced funding, partly because of the conflict in Ukraine, partly because of other factors • The re-allocation of global humanitarian assistance and funding for relief efforts to the conflict in Ukraine will further reduce funding and support allocated for MENA countries

Domain	Hypotheses
	• Lack of access to donor funding will amplify the humanitarian crisis in several MENA countries
Food Security & Livelihoods	• MENA economies will be negatively impacted by the conflict, especially countries who primarily rely on Ukraine and for their food imports • The global food price index has hit a record high, partly driven by the conflict in Ukraine, leading to a food crisis in the next six months • Food security and livelihoods will be the two most affected sectors, which also negatively affect the public health systems • Access to affordable energy is a key factor contributing to increased crisis levels in MENA countries • The agriculture industry will be severely affected by a combination of disrupted supply chains, water scarcity, and increasing temperatures (climate-change impact)
Health and wellbeing	• Access to health services continues to deteriorate in several MENA countries over the next six months • The consequences for people will be severe in several MENA countries
Civil unrest and conflict potential	• Because of multiple crisis risks coming to effect, the risk of civil unrest is increasing in several MENA countries • The preparedness and response capacity of several HNS is limited, and more focused support by IFRC and Membership is needed
Migration and displacement	• The already dire situation of many refugees and vulnerable migrants in several MENA countries will continue to deteriorate • The events in Ukraine will generate heightened risk of conflict and social unrest, which can also trigger new population movements

Methodology and timeline

The methodology of this rapid assessment included two main sources of information: a review of available secondary data and resources and a quantitative and qualitative survey of primary sources of information at country level. For the secondary desk review, information available in the public domain were collected and analyzed, including over 50 media reports and institutional data (assessments, study reports, and statements by UN agencies, INGOs, and think tanks).

The secondary data analysis found that despite a general awareness of the (current and potential) impact of the conflict in Ukraine on the MENA region, only a limited amount of factual secondary data was available that could be systematically analyzed and compared across MENA countries. Recognizing that hard facts on future trends are difficult to obtain, a perception survey approach was chosen for the interviews to discover opinions on key trends at country level.

An analysis framework and two structured questionnaires were developed (one for 12 MENA countries, and one version for the five GCC countries) and translated into an online data collection tool in Arabic and English languages. Two main primary sources were requested to complete the tools: a) Host National Society representatives and b) Heads of IFRC Delegations or an equivalent position. The data collection took place between 15 and 24 May 2022. In total, 24 individual data sets were received and analyzed.

Triangulation

The key limitations of using perception surveys include: the reliability of the data; representativeness; interpreting the complexity of findings; different types of biases; and understanding that perception surveys measure perceptions. Therefore, data gathered from the perception survey was triangulated with available secondary data. Secondly, ambiguous questions were compared within the survey, by asking several similar questions to test for reliability.

Thirdly, the two sources at country level (HNS and IFRC) did not always express the same views. In case of significant differences between the data obtained from the two sources, the assessment team followed up directly with the respondents to clarify and negotiate. When different viewpoints remained, and unless in contradiction to available non-perceptions data from the secondary data analysis, priority in the analysis was given to the views expressed by the representatives of Host National Societies.

Limitations and recommendations for further assessments

In line with the rapid character of this assessment, the chosen perception survey approach, limited availability of relevant secondary data, the reduced number and type of respondents per country, and the risk of some bias even after triangulation, the findings of this report are limited in its representativeness and comprehensiveness.

It is recommended to follow up on key trends identified by conducting more in-depth follow up research, including focus-group discussions with affected populations, disaggregated by gender. A focus should be given to priority issues that can inform the design of contingency planning and Humanitarian Diplomacy priorities, including the specific impact on young people and their involvement in future solutions and approaches, and how the compounded vulnerabilities are exacerbated by intersections of gender, refugee status, and ethnicity.

For the five GCC States (Saudi Arabia, Bahrein, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, and Qatar) only two data sets were obtained under the perception survey, including one summary analysis of the Gulf region, and one data set for Kuwait. The missing perception data was complemented with secondary information to some extent. Consequently, the representativity of the findings for the GCC states is limited and further investigation of the impact of the Conflict in Ukraine is recommended.

Timeline

The assessment was coordinated by MENA regional office, supported by an external consultant, over a period of seven weeks between 25 April and 03 June 2022, including the following activities:

Activities	**Apr 22**	**May 22**				**June**	
	W1	**W2**	**W3**	**W4**	**W5**	**W6**	**W7**
Draft Terms of Reference, Analysis Framework design							
Secondary Data review							
Finalise methodology and questionnaires							
Finalise and roll out questionnaires							
Primary data collection							
Analysis and report							
Consultation on report and presentation							

Report structure

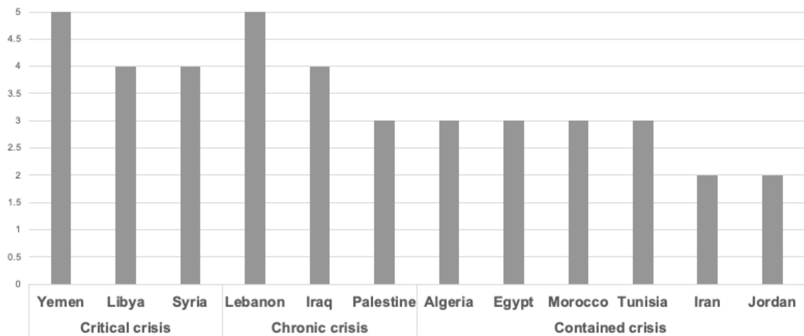
The assessment report is structured into seven sections. The first section investigates the overall crisis environment in the MENA region and unpacks the combination multiple crisis factors at play, including the overall effect of the Ukraine conflict. The next section examines humanitarian funding trends in the region and the impact the conflict has on the funding environment.

The next sections of the report explore the specific situation and the impact of the Conflict in Ukraine in four thematic areas, starting with Food Security and Livelihoods. This section investigates food security, agriculture (as a proxy indicator for livelihoods), and energy (electricity and fuel). The following sections are covering health, the risk of civil unrest and conflict, and migration and displacement. Each section ends with recommendations extracted from the perception survey for IFRC and specifically, the Host National Societies.

The final section of the report summarizes some information how the Conflict in Ukraine is impacting the five GCC states. The Terms of Reference and the initial secondary data analysis are annexed to the report.

How to read the charts

The charts used in this report visualize findings from the perception survey, comparing data sets for countries and designated crisis categories. The respondents were asked to rate the severity or impact of several issues on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 01 (for example, 'no human impact') to 05 (for example, 'severe human impact'). The data are visualized using bar charts, as in the example below. The higher the bar, the higher the perceived impact or severity of a factor (maximum 5).



Overall crisis environment

General

Complex crises in the MENA region are largely perceived as political and economic crises, with the lack of food security and drought being major crisis multipliers

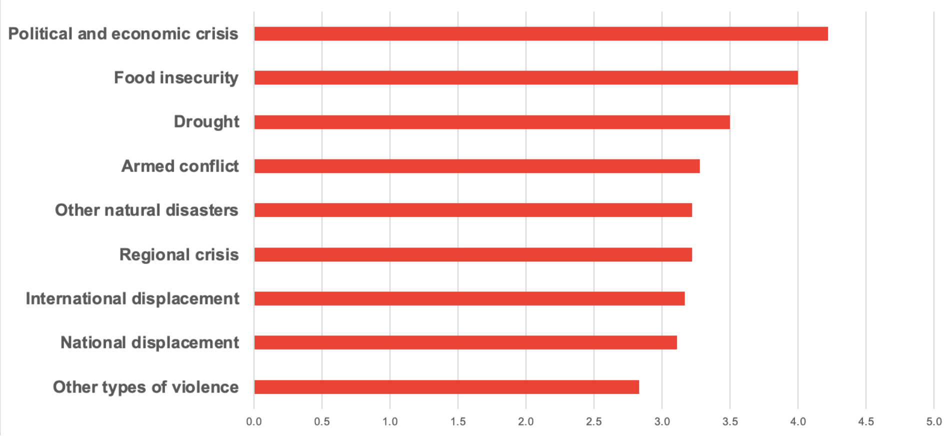


Figure 1: Aggregated crisis factors in 12 MENA countries – by crisis factor (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives). Combined data on a 5-point scale from 01 (no human impact) to 05 (severe human impact)

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region continues to face multiple and complex crises, conflicts, and displacement. The needs of affected populations are increasing in severity and scale and are aggravated by macroeconomic decline, chronic underdevelopment, climate-change, natural disasters, and diseases. Over 55 million people across the region need humanitarian assistance, including more than twelve million people who are internally displaced (UN-OCHA, 2022). Across the region, many countries are battling economic collapse, including soaring food and fuel prices, currency depreciation, limited household revenue, and rising unemployment. Food insecurity and nutrition continue to worsen, with millions of people in Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen on the brink of hunger and resorting to negative coping mechanisms. Famine-like conditions are evident in parts of these countries (UN-OCHA, 2022).

Political solutions to the conflicts in Palestine, Syria, Libya, and Yemen are yet to materialize. As a result, millions of people cannot return to their homes or explore other durable solutions. Food insecurity persists and is expected to deteriorate, particularly in Yemen, Syria, Palestine, and Lebanon. Meanwhile, economic contraction is likely to worsen the standard of living for millions of people who will need additional humanitarian assistance (UN-OCHA, 2022).

The perception survey under this assessment confirmed these general trends. Respondents in twelve MENA countries confirm the combination of multiple, interrelated crisis factors at different levels. When respondents were asked to rate key crisis factors by their severity on a scale from 01 (‘no human impact’) to 05 (‘severe human impact’), the complex crises in the MENA region are largely perceived as political and economic crises, with the lack of food security, climate-change induced drought, and armed conflict being major crisis multipliers.

Syria, Yemen, and Libya are impacted most severely by multiple, compounding crisis factors, but all MENA countries suffer

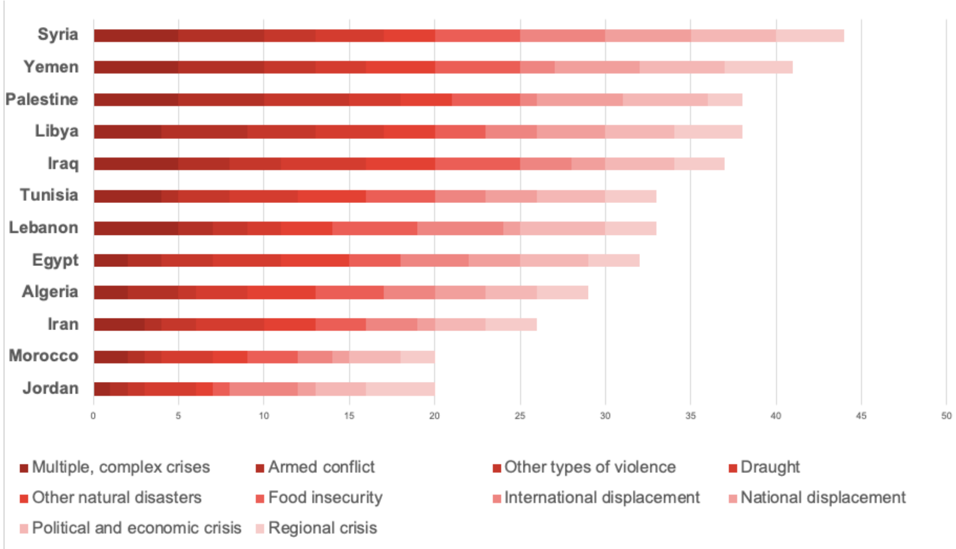


Figure 2: Aggregated crisis factors in 12 MENA countries – by country (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives). Combined data on a 5-point scale from 01 (no human impact) to 05 (severe human impact)

The conflict-affected countries of Syria, Yemen, Libya, and Palestine are facing the most complex and severe crises, closely followed by Iraq and Lebanon. In comparison, the two MENA countries Jordan and Morocco are less affected by the combination of multiple crisis factors. The findings from this assessment also support the categorization of MENA countries into three crisis categories. The aggregated impact of multiple crisis factors is higher in Syria, Yemen, and Libya ("Critical Crises"), when compared to Palestine, Lebanon, and Iraq ("Chronic Crises"), and the situation in Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria, Iran, Jordan, and Morocco ("Contained Crises").

The assessment confirms the relevance of classifying MENA countries in three categories on an axis from critical to chronic and contained crisis situations

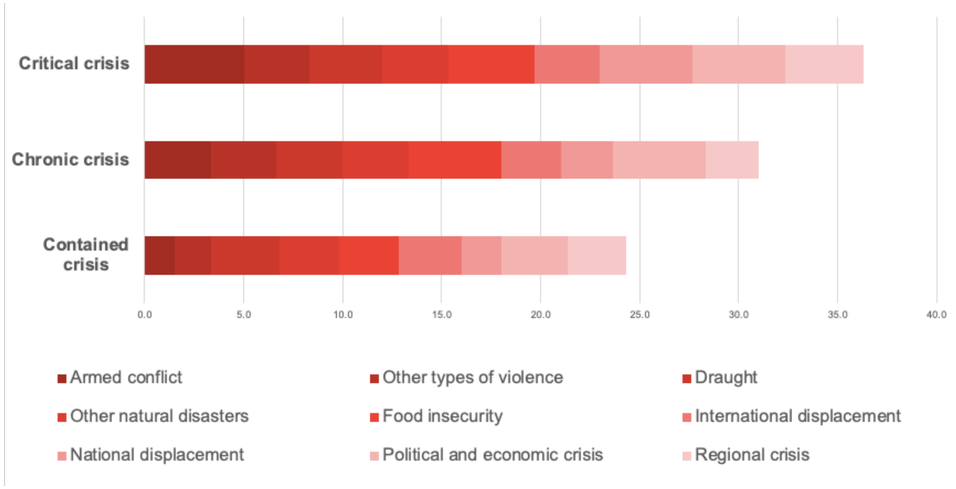


Figure 3: Aggregated crisis factors in 12 MENA countries – by crisis category (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives). Combined data on a 5-point scale from 01 (no human impact) to 05 (severe human impact)

In "Critical Crisis" contexts of Syria, Yemen, and Libya, protracted armed conflicts and the resulting large-scale internal displacement, in combination with political and economic crises, water scarcity, and high levels of food-insecurity, are the most severe crisis factors. There are no prospects for major improvements in either of these three countries that would allow them to move into a lower crisis category. Instead, further deterioration of an already dire situation is expected by the respondents to the perception survey. Signals for further escalation of the complex crises include increasing prices and reduced access to basic food items and fuel.

"Chronic Crisis" contexts of Palestine, Iraq, and Lebanon are largely affected by high levels of food insecurity because of the political and economic crises in these countries. The protracted conflict with Israel is a massive crisis factor in Palestine, while Iran is suffering intensely from the impact of water scarcity as a direct consequence of climate change as well as international sanctions. The severity of the situation in Iraq (especially water scarcity and the impact of climate change) and Lebanon (political and economic crisis) moves the two countries closer to a tipping point where they could potentially escalate again into becoming a "Critical Crises". Respondents to the perception survey saw an increasing risk of social unrest because of political instability and reduced access to basic food items as potential signals in this direction.

In "Contained Crisis" contexts, the impact of drought (particularly in Iran, Egypt, and Tunisia), political and economic crisis (mainly in Tunisia and Egypt), and the situation of vulnerable migrants and refugees (mainly in Egypt and Jordan) are the most impactful crisis factors. An interesting finding from this rapid analysis is the severity of the complex crisis in Tunisia and Egypt, which is expected to further escalate. Signals for such a development would be a continuation of the inflation of prices for food and energy and increasing risk of social unrest and conflict.

IFRC capacity to respond to these developments

In general, respondents rate the overall capacity (including all humanitarian actors in country) to address a potential escalation of multiple crisis factors in the 12 MENA countries as 'moderate' or 'low'. The overall capacity is seen particularly low in Yemen, Algeria, Egypt, and 'very low' in Morocco. In comparison, the capacity of Host National Societies (HNS) is generally seen higher than the overall capacity, especially in Lebanon ('very high'), and Algeria and Libya ('high'). The HNS capacity to respond to a potential escalation of complex crises in country is seen as the lowest in Morocco ('very low') and Yemen (on par with the overall 'low capacity' of all humanitarian actors in country). These findings preliminarily (further analysis below) confirm the hypothesis that the preparedness and response capacity of HNS is relatively limited, especially by lack of funding, and additional support is required.

Impact of the conflict in Ukraine

The findings from this rapid assessment confirmed that the Conflict in Ukrainehas the potential to intensify pre-existing crises trends and makes countries more vulnerable. Respondents in eleven MENA countries expect the impact of the Conflict in Ukraineto be either 'strong' or 'severe' (Libya and Lebanon), while the respondents in Iran believe the impact will be 'moderate'. The likelihood that this development will happen is seen as 'high' or 'very high' (Lebanon and Libya), and 'moderate' in Iran. The main effects are seen in the reduced availability of international assistance, diminishing access to food, and an overall deterioration of the socio-economic situation.

As a trend, the more a country is already affected by multiple, pre-existing crisis trends, the higher the impact of the Conflict in Ukraine is expected to be. This confirms the hypothesis that countries categorized as a "Contained Crisis" are affected as well by the Conflict in Ukraine but will be better able to mitigate the multiplying impact of the crisis, especially oil producing countries.

Multiple negative effects of the Conflict in Ukraine are expected in MENA, especially in "Critical Crisis" contexts

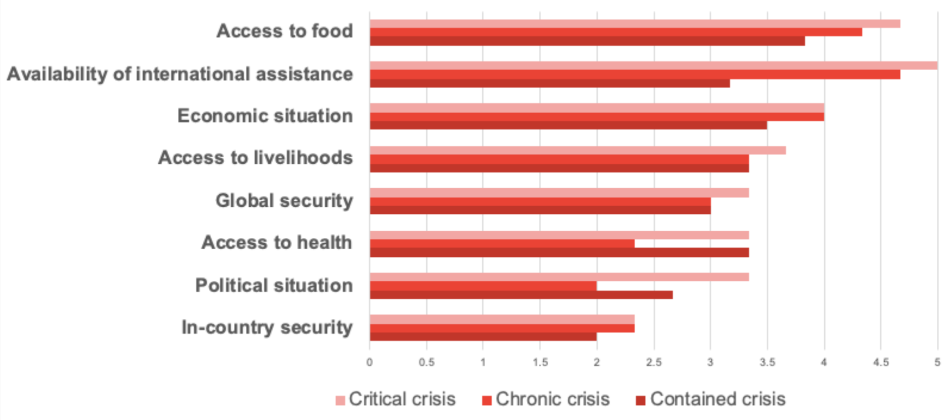


Figure 4: Impact of the Conflict in Ukraine on 12 MENA countries (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives). Data on a 5-point scale from 01 (no human impact) to 05 (severe human impact)

Impact at community level

Several respondents also reported how the impact of the Conflict in Ukraine is perceived at community level. In "Critical Crisis" contexts of Syria, Yemen, and Libya, people witnessed a connection between the escalations of problems in country and the Ukraine conflict, especially in the reduced availability and affordability of wheat, particularly in Syria and Yemen. In "Chronic Crisis" contexts of Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine, the rising prices for basic food items is also felt at community level, leading to occasional eruptions of social unrest. In "Contained Crisis" contexts, communities (particularly low-income households) are already suffering from the severe increase of basic food items and other commodities and believe this is linked to the economic impact of the Ukraine conflict.

Humanitarian funding

General

The growing number of Ukrainian refugees and the inflating costs of post-conflict reconstruction are fueling concerns that critical humanitarian aid may be diverted from the MENA region to address the fallout from the Ukraine conflict. Widespread global attention to the Conflict in Ukraine crisis is likely to lead to less interest in providing humanitarian assistance to the countries in the MENA region. In March 2022, the UN collected only $1.3 billion out of the expected $4.27 billion (Albawaba, 2022).

Diplomatic weariness or donor fatigue have already diminished attention to crises in the region such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Lebanese economic implosion, the growing threat of famine in Syria, or Yemen's humanitarian catastrophe. These crises are likely to draw even less interest from international actors preoccupied with the urgent events unfolding in Europe. For the millions of Palestinians, Lebanese, Yemenis, Syrians, and others who live in countries experiencing conflict, catastrophic economic meltdowns, and increasing humanitarian needs, this would be equivalent to shutting down critical life support. (CEIP, 2022)

Even before the Ukraine conflict, these funding shortages were leading to curtailed programmes and cut rations in responses around the world. The United Nations estimated that a record number of people will need assistance in 2022. Despite relatively high levels of donor contributions in 2021 – 46% of requirements met – the $20.5 billion gap to what was needed was still the largest ever. Syria received less than half (46.5%) required funding in the last year, despite eleven years of conflict and Yemen is set to receive less than 30% of the required funds this year after 7 years of conflict. According to the UN-OCHA, the 2022 UN flash appeal for humanitarian support in Ukraine has already managed to fund 68.2% of the target of $1.14 billion (€1.05 billion). Meanwhile for Yemen, only 2.1% of the UN's humanitarian response plan has been funded (UN-OCHA, 2022).

The perception survey confirmed these bleak trends. Respondents in eight of twelve MENA countries reported that funding hast been reduced (respondents from Palestine, Tunisia, and Libya currently see the same funding levels for their country, when compared to the situation three months ago).

When asked to rate the impact of eight factors contributing to the decline in funding on a scale from 01 ('no impact') to 05 ('severe impact'), the main factor identified was that 'other crises get more attention', followed by a general 'decline in available donor funding', and the 'costs of the COVID-19 response in donor countries'. Interestingly, respondents from countries categorized as "Chronic Crises" (Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine) experienced a higher impact of these factors, when compared to countries categorized as "Critical" and "Contained" crises.

MENA countries are witnessing a decline in humanitarian funding for a variety of reasons

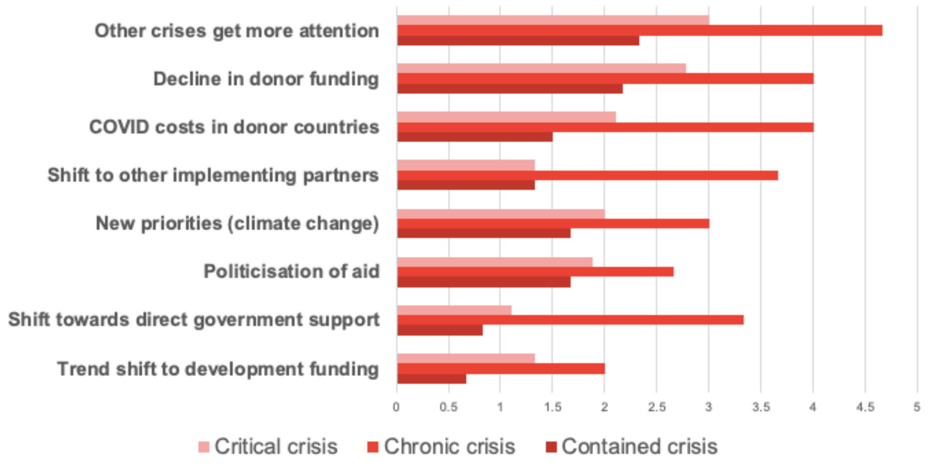


Figure 5: Reasons for decline in humanitarian funding for 12 MENA countries (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives). Data on a 5-point scale from 01 (no impact) to 05 (severe impact)

Impact of Conflict in Ukraine on funding

The conflict in Ukraine is bound to push several MENA countries down the priority list for donor governments, international institutions, and global media. Donors may divert aid flows to ease conditions in Ukraine – creating a major challenge for MENA countries such as Syria, Yemen, and Libya that largely dependent on external assistance (ICG, 2022). When asked to describe the current impact of the Conflict in Ukraine on the availability of humanitarian funding in their country, respondents in five countries rate the current impact as 'severe' (Lebanon, Algeria, Morocco, Libya, and Yemen), while the impact is 'strong' in three countries (Iraq, Egypt, and Syria). Respondents in four countries experienced the current impact as 'moderate' (Palestine, Iran, Jordan, and Tunisia).

Respondents in nine countries reported that they already experienced a drop in funding because of the Ukraine conflict, while respondents in Palestine, Jordan, and Morocco did not yet experience such a drop. Looking forward, respondents in ten out of twelve MENA countries expect this negative funding trend to continue and anticipate a drop in humanitarian funding as a direct consequence of shifting donor priorities because of the Conflict in Ukraine over the next six months (respondents in Palestine and Jordan indicated that this "maybe" happens, noting that humanitarian funding for Jordan is already extremely low). In general, respondents expect a funding drop of 25-50% because of shifting donor priorities due the Ukraine conflict, while Egypt expect a sharper drop in humanitarian funding by 50-75%.

Respondents also noted the need to advocate with major donors who have provided waivers and exceptions to the assistance they provide now to Ukraine and region that minimize the usual and cumbersome project requirements. In line with commitments under the Grand Bargain, similar approaches are also needed for the MENA region.

Food Security and Livelihoods

Food Security

From the secondary data analysis under this assessment, it was hypothesized that MENA economies will be negatively impacted by the conflict in Ukraine, especially countries who primarily rely on these two countries for their food imports, potentially leading to a food crisis in the next six months. The findings from this assessment confirm this assumption.

"Critical Crisis" contexts

Representatives from all twelve MENA countries confirmed that the lack of affordable food is affecting the people in country, albeit at different degrees. In "Critical Crisis" countries, the lack of affordable food has been identified as a 'severe' problem in Yemen, and a 'strong' problem in Libya and Syria due to decreasing purchasing power, reduced availability of food, and the abolishment of subsidies. As a result, people are increasingly resorting to negative coping mechanisms.

Lack of affordable food is affecting all twelve MENA countries at different degrees

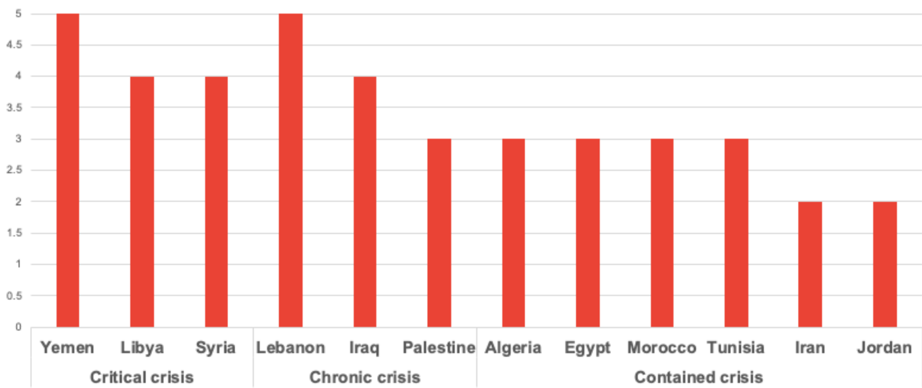


Figure 6: Impact of lack of affordable food in 12 MENA countries (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives) Data on a 5-point scale from 01 (no human impact) to 05 (severe human impact)

In Syria, WFP has warned that further cuts to its programme could materialize by July, driven by global food price rises and stagnant funding levels. This would have a devastating impact. According to WFP, 1.9 million more could slide into hunger, due to the impact of rising food prices and the effects of the Conflict in Ukraine(UN-OCHA, 2022). As one consequence, respondents under the perception survey repprted the trend that an increasing number of people are leaving the country because of the lack of access to income and livelihoods.

In Yemen, steeply risen food prices have left more than half of the population in need of food assistance. Much of Yemen's hard currency supply comes from workers' remittances, which could fall in the coming months given the mounting cost of living in Saudi Arabia, a major importer of n and Ukrainian wheat (ICG, 2022).

Libya imports about 75% of its wheat from either Ukraine or and, with limited wheat reserves, it will be forced to pay a premium to lock in alternate suppliers like Brazil and Argentina. The resulting spike in bread prices puts additional public pressure on the government in Tripoli (CEIP, 2022).

"Chronic Crisis" contexts

Respondents in the "Chronic Crisis" context of Lebanon identified food insecurity as a 'severe' problem, which could become a signal for a significant overall deterioration of the socio-economic situation in country. Lebanon imports more than 80% of its grain from Ukraine and lost about four fifths of its storage capacity in the 2020 Beirut port blast, which destroyed the country's main grain silos. The remaining facilities barely hold one month's worth of consumption.

Also in Palestine, the food security outlook is progressively deteriorating. The reliance on imports and the constraints forced upon them by Israel's continuing military occupation, settler violence, and land grabs are compounding the food crisis. 95% in Gaza and 85% in the West Bank are not able to buy the same amount of food as the previous month and are resorting to coping strategies (WFP, 2022). The INGO Oxfam warned that many households are being hit hard by rising global food prices, and many are struggling to meet their basic needs (OXFAM, 2022). Efforts by the government to curb inflation through price ceilings and VAT removal is avoiding an immediate disaster, however, limited capacity and lack of public national reserve for food commodities will lead to an inevitable significant increase in prices in the medium-term (WFP, 2022).

Iraq imports cereals and sunflower oil from Ukraine and, but unlike some other countries in the MENA region, it is not entirely dependent on either. The effects of the Conflict in Ukraine also coincide with those from a severe drought during the 2021 harvest, when 37% of farmers experienced crop failure, forcing the government to purchase more wheat from abroad. Iraq's inefficient food distribution programs have exacerbated these problems (ICG, 2022).

"Contained Crisis" contexts

In "Contained Crisis" contexts, respondents to the perception survey observed the food situation as 'moderate' (Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, and Jordan) and 'low' in Iran, which is suffering severely from decades-worst drought, hampering domestic production. If this trend extends into 2023, Iran's dependence on imported wheat will grow, raising concerns about the adverse impact the Conflict in Ukraine will have on the country (ICG, 2022).

Egypt, the world's top importer of wheat, sources 85% of its wheat supplies from and Ukraine. Predictably, the disruption in Ukrainian wheat production and export chains, as well as the severe impacts of the sanctions imposed on economic and trading activities, have sent wheat prices soaring. The recent government announcement to expand wheat cultivation to two million acres by the end of 2024. This is a viable medium-term strategy to bolster Egypt's food security. However, it does not ease the population's immediate vulnerability resulting from the conflict in Ukraine(CEIP, 2022).

Jordan has reserves of grain sufficient for nine months, which should buffer the country from the ill effects of global supply chain disruptions because of the Ukraine conflict. Overall, the impact of the crisis on the Jordanian economy has been limited thus far (ICG, 2022).

Tunisia, whose economy is already under strain, receives nearly 80% of its wheat from Ukraine. As a result of the conflict, wheat prices in Tunisia are the highest they have been in fourteen years, making it harder for Tunisian families to afford bread and other staples (CEIP, 2022).

Algeria is less exposed than other North African countries to the economic impact of the Ukraine conflict, because these two countries account for only 3% of its wheat imports. According to the agriculture ministry, national stocks will be sufficient to meet domestic demand until January 2023 (ICG, 2022).

Morocco is also less affected by the grain crisis than most MENA countries, as it imports only 20-30% of its wheat from and Ukraine. Overall, however, the kingdom remains vulnerable to price shocks, as it buys 40% of the wheat its population consumes from abroad and recently recorded an unprecedented drought that has severely curtailed domestic production (ICG, 2022).

Increase in food prices

Respondents in all twelve MENA countries reported an increase in the prices for basic food items over the past three months. The sharpest increase has been reported in Lebanon (75-100% increase), followed by Iran and Yemen (50-75% increase), while respondents in all other countries reported an increase of 25-50%, confirming information from secondary data. Lebanon is the country most affected by price increase of food in the MENA region. Since 2020, food prices across the country have soared by up to 570%, pushing many families to change their dietary habits to cope with the rising costs. The financial crisis in Lebanon also had large impact on Syria, which has seen the price of food rise by nearly 800% since October 2019 (WFP, 2022).

Looking forward, respondents in all MENA countries expect this negative trend to continue (at least another 25-50% increase), which is projected to have a significant impact especially on low-income households in all countries. Consequently, respondents in all twelve MENA countries expect an increase in the number of people in need for humanitarian assistance. Over the next six months, this number is expected to increase by up to 25%, while in respondents in three countries (Iraq, Lebanon, and Libya) expect this number to increase by 25-50%. According to most respondents, this trend will affect people similarly in urban and rural areas, whereas Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen see urban populations as most vulnerable.

Preparedness and response capacity

The preparedness and response capacity of the HNS in terms of food security is diverse. As a trend, the capacity in "Critical Crisis" contexts (Libya, Syria, and Yemen) is 'moderate' or 'low' and varies in "Chronic" and "Contained" crisis contexts, ranging from 'high' (Iraq, Lebanon, and Algeria), to 'moderate' (Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco), and 'low' (Iran and Tunisia) to 'very low' in Palestine. In Iran, IFRC has recently launched an appeal, pegged at about $9.5 million, to help the Iran Red Crescent Society respond to the current drought, but sanctions on Iran continue to be a barrier to aid (IFRC, 2022).

Host National Societies have different preparedness and response capacities in terms of food security

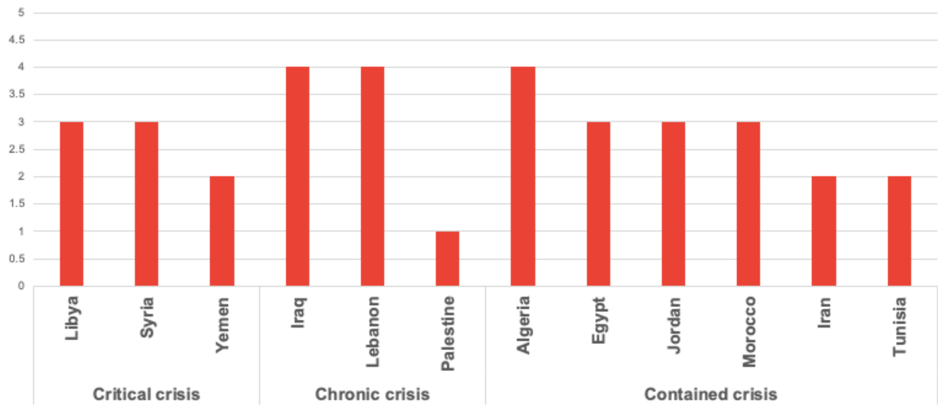


Figure 7: Preparedness and response capacity of HNS in MENA in the field of food security (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives) Data on a 5-point scale from 01 (very low capacity) to 05 (very high capacity)

According to the respondents under this assessment, the HNS need to improve their capacities to:

- Scale-up food security programming, including cash assistance
- Improve their capacity to identify and assess the needs and gaps for the most affected populations
- Invest in logistics capacities and volunteer management
- Conduct more training and capacity building for enhanced preparedness

- Carry out contingency planning, and stockpiling of critical relief items (also to mitigate impact of disrupted supply chains)
- Provide more livelihood support and economic empowerment
- Increase Humanitarian Diplomacy to advocate for more funding to mitigate the increasing impact of multiple crisis factors, and to overcome the negative impact of international sanctions (Syria and Iran)

Agriculture

From the secondary data analysis, it was hypothesized that agriculture production in MENA countries will be severely affected by a combination of i) disrupted supply chains (fodder such as yellow maize, barley, and soybeans, seeds, and fertilizer); ii) increased costs of energy, iii) water scarcity, and iv) increasing temperatures. The finding from this assessment confirmed these hypotheses by and large. When asked to rate the impact of seven problems affecting the agricultural production on a scale from 01 ('no impact') to 05 ('severe impact'), the following picture emerged:

Climate-change related stressors have the biggest impact on agricultural production in the MENA region

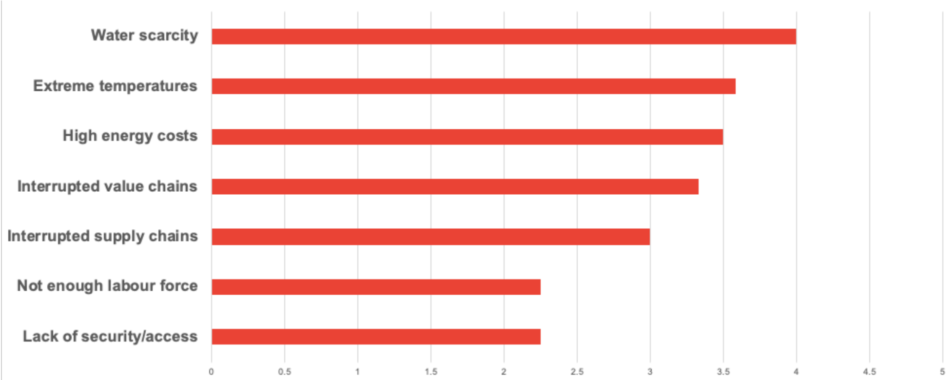


Figure 8: Severity of factors impacting agricultural production in 12 MENA countries (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives) 5-point scale from 01 (no impact) to 05 (severe impact)

Notably, the two climate-change related factors water scarcity and extreme temperatures are the two main stressors for agricultural production in the MENA region. The subsequent three factors (high energy costs, interrupted value-chains, and interrupted supply chains are intensified by the economic crisis triggered by the Ukraine conflict.

Agricultural production in "Critical Crisis" contexts is impacted most severely by the combination of climate-change, conflict, and economic pressures amplified by the Conflict in Ukraine

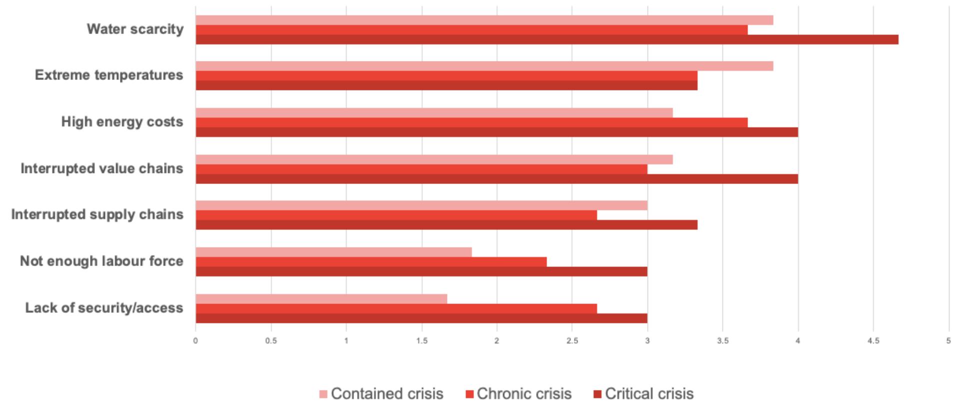


Figure 9: Severity of factors impacting agricultural production in 12 MENA countries – by crisis category (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives) 5-point scale from 01 (no impact) to 05 (severe impact)

As a trend, the impact of these stress factors on agricultural production are the highest in "Critical Crisis" contexts, and the lowest in "Contained Crisis" contexts. The aggregated crisis factors that are affecting the agricultural production are surprisingly high in Tunisia, reportedly at the same level as Libya. While this finding needs further validation, it could be an indicator that a country categorized as a "Contained Crisis" also has a strong potential for escalation, in combination with other crisis factors, which needs to be monitored.

Respondents in five out of the twelve MENA countries (Syria, Libya, Yemen, Iran, and Iraq) reported that agricultural productivity has declined over the past three months. Respondents in ten MENA countries (all except Algeria and Jordan) believe that agricultural production will become even worse over the next six months. This includes the impact of escalating drought in several countries, high temperatures during the summer period, and the aggravating impact of the economic crisis because of the Ukraine conflict.

Respondents in Tunisia are reporting a surprisingly high level of aggregated stress factors impacting agricultural production

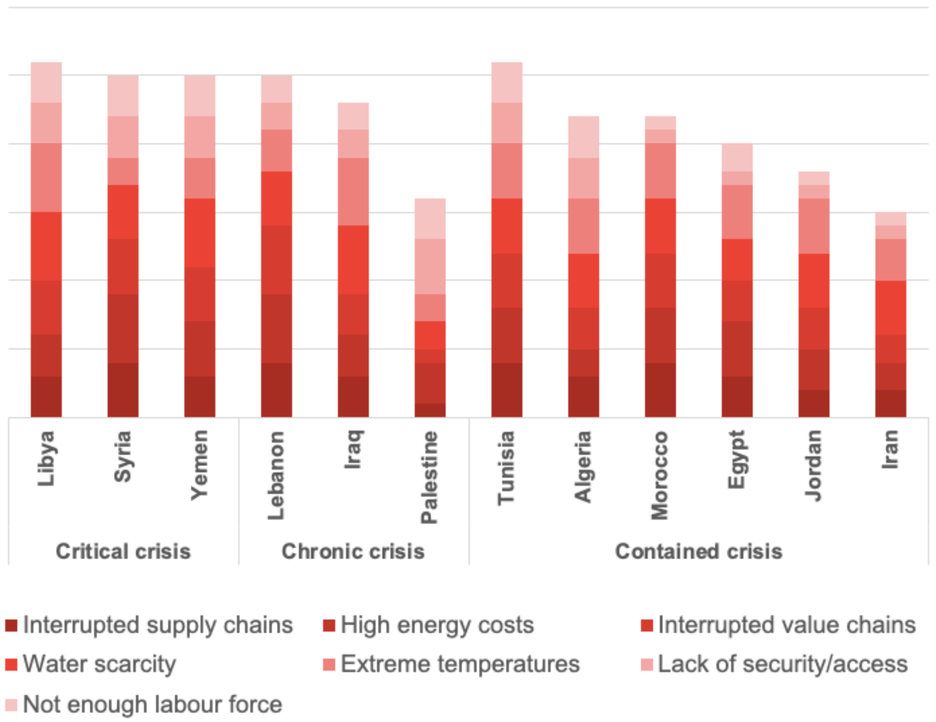


Figure 10: Severity of factors impacting agricultural production in 12 MENA countries – by crisis category and country (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives) 5-point scale from 01 (no impact) to 05 (severe impact)

Preparedness and response capacity

The preparedness and response capacity of the HNS in terms of agricultural livelihood support is the lowest, when compared to their capacity in other thematic areas. The reason is that most HNS do not focus on this thematic area. Respondents in eight out of twelve MENA countries describe the HNS capacity to provide agricultural livelihood support as 'low'. The capacity is seen 'very low' in Lebanon in Palestine, and 'moderate' in Yemen.

According to the respondents, the HNS need to improve their capacities to:

- Conduct preparedness and contingency planning and DRR
- Improve risk assessment capacity and anticipatory programming
- Engage more strategically in this important thematic area
- Increase support to irrigation systems, including renewable energy to operate these systems by providing HNS technical and financial support
- Provide more livelihood support to vulnerable rural communities, including equipment, seeds, and fertilizers
- Use auxiliary role to advocate with government to support vulnerable communities in need, with a specific focus on highly vulnerable groups

Energy

As a direct consequence of the conflict in Ukraine , Europe is seeking alternative gas resources to become more independent from n supplies. Regional oil and gas exporters like Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Libya, and Algeria are expected to benefit from higher export earnings in the short and medium term. In contrast, energy and oil-importing countries in the region experience negative outcomes leading to additional social stress, and high prices will increase economic risks (Albawaba, 2022).

The inflating cost of oil and gas itself have the knock-on effect of raising transport and thus commodity prices across the board, creating inflationary pressures and potentially disrupting supply chains for essential and non-essential goods that will further unsettle already fragile economies in MENA countries. In addition, the rising oil price will force oil-poor countries to lower the exchange rate for their national currencies, further depressing incomes and worsening living conditions (ICG, 2022).

The perception survey confirmed these largely negative trends. One of the initial hypotheses was that the lack of affordable energy is a key factor contributing to increased crisis levels in MENA countries. This was confirmed by the respondents in ten MENA countries, who reported that the lack of access to affordable fuel and electricity is strongly affecting the people in their country (the exceptions are the two oil-exporting countries of Algeria and Iran).

In general, countries categorized as "Critical Crises" are more vulnerable to an increase in costs for fuel and electricity, when compared to "Chronic" and "Contained" crisis contexts. While the oil-exporting countries of Algeria, Iran, and Libya have not experienced a significant increase in the price of fuel over the past three months, all nine other MENA countries did experience such an increase by 25-50%, while the price increased by 50-75% in Lebanon and Morocco. Respondents believe that this trend will continue over the next six months, with an expected further increase of fuel prices by another 25% or more.

The availability and cost of fuel is also impacting access to electricity in MENA countries. Respondents in most MENA countries reported similar access to electricity over the past three months while Lebanon, Libya, and Yemen reported reduced access to electricity during this period. Looking forward, respondents in seven MENA countries expect electricity to become less available over the next six months (‘much less’ in Yemen), while respondents in Palestine, Algeria, Iran, Jordan, and Tunisia believe that access will remain the same.

Lack of access to electricity and fuel has a ‘severe impact’ in “Critical Crisis” countries in MENA as well as in Lebanon

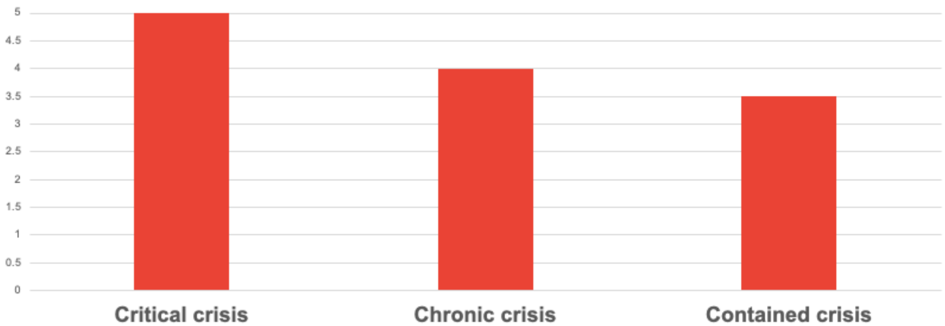


Figure 11: Impact of lack of affordable fuel and electricity in 12 MENA countries (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives) 5-point scale from 01 (no impact) to 05 (severe impact)

“Critical Crisis” contexts

In Syria, the economic crisis in Syria continues unabated. Fuel shortages and lack of electricity impact the delivery of basic services, including in health, education, and water and sanitation. Food and fuel prices are spiraling higher every month, putting the necessities for a healthy and dignified life even further out of reach for millions of people (UN-OCHA, 2022).

Yemen is a major fuel importer. As a result, fuel and wheat prices have already risen across the country. The impact has been particularly severe in areas controlled by the Houthi group, where gasoline prices have risen by more than 50% since early February (ICG, 2022).

In Libya, initial expectations for increased demand for Libyan crude stemming from the conflict in Ukraine have been offset by the projected slowdown in global economic growth, as well as the periodic weaponization of oil flows by Libyan factions (CEIP, 2022). Even though Libya produces crude oil and has its own refineries, there have also been gasoline shortages. Locally refined fuel is insufficient for domestic consumption and, as a result, Libya buys most of its additional needs abroad at market prices, then sells fuel locally at heavily subsidized rates (ICG, 2022).

“Chronic Crisis” contexts

As noted earlier, the compounded crisis trends in Lebanon have the potential to push the country over the tipping point to become again a “Critical Crisis”. This includes the sharp increase in energy prices resulting from the Ukraine crisis, which will have large consequences. Lebanon imports all the oil and gas products it consumes at a cost of nearly $300 million per month. A significant increase in energy prices would generate inflationary pressures that would ripple through the entire economy. One effect would be to increase the price for bread, because gas is needed to fire the ovens. In addition, the machinery in industrial bakeries consumes large amounts of electricity and, as a result, diesel to run generators since the state grid provides less than two hours of electricity per day (ICG, 2022).

In Iraq, the oil market is booming after several oil-importing countries cut off n supplies. This could potentially help the country in the mid-term to mitigate the negative impact of the conflict in Ukraine on the socio-economic situation. In March, Iraq received oil purchase requests from European countries in the wake of the European and US sanctions on the n economy. This enables Iraq to enhance its presence in the European market, which it began losing to years ago. Oil provides 89% of Iraq’s budget, and rising prices have allowed the government to repay foreign debt and to resume projects stalled during the past years due to the financial crisis that hit the country in 2020 because of the decline in oil prices. However, the conflict in Ukraine may also lead Iraq to lose the Indian and Chinese markets, which buy n oil at $30 less than Brent crude, especially considering that Iraq currently exports most of its oil to China and India (MEI, 2022).

“Contained Crisis” contexts

Because of the conflict in Ukraine, Iran has now an opportunity to reclaim prominent roles within the global supply chain, and by extension in regional geopolitics. Iran holds the world's second-largest proven reserves of gas and fourth-largest proven reserves of oil. By accepting a new nuclear deal, Iran could ensure economic sanctions end and move to take over energy market share currently unfilled by - thereby meeting not only national fiscal needs but also cementing trade with energy-hungry economies like the European Union, China, and India. If the negotiators succeed in reviving the JCPOA, Iran's oil would add 1-1.5 million barrels per day to the world market (ICG, 2022).

Algeria is also a major hydrocarbon exporter and rising oil, and gas prices are expected to compensate for the rising food bill (ICG, 2022). Escalating tensions between Algiers and Rabat, however, have halted energy exports through the pipeline that connects Algeria and Spain. The long-standing animosity between Morocco and Algeria offers little hope of a swift resolution – though the Ukraine crisis could prompt stronger European efforts to mediate the dispute. However, Algeria could still provide LNG supplies to Europe or export more gas eastwards through a pipeline to Italy.

Similarly, Egypt's gas producers could be part of the solution while increasing their market share and showing goodwill in the current situation could bring them lucrative contracts in the future. Egypt already increased its LNG supply to Europe (MEI, 2022).

Tunisia is a net importer of gas and oil, leaving it vulnerable to global price increases. While it meets 50% of its domestic gas needs through national production, it purchases the rest from an Algerian company, at market prices and receives 5% as royalty payment for the Trans-Mediterranean Pipeline's passage through Tunisian territory. Tunisia's government has been forced to raise fuel prices monthly, which feeds other inflation as well as public discontent. It has already hiked prices several times by a few percentage points on each occasion (ICG, 2022).

Jordan is not heavily dependent on either or Ukraine, obtaining its fuel mainly from other sources (ICG, 2022). Heating gas, sold per liter, has gone up in price by 6%, while the government has fixed the price of cooking gas. Overall, the impact of the crisis on the Jordanian economy has been limited thus far (ICG, 2022).

Health and wellbeing

The secondary data analysis under this assessment informed the hypothesis that access to health services continues to deteriorate over the next six months in the MENA region, which can have severe consequences in several countries. The findings from this assessment confirm this proposition.

Availability and accessibility of health services are severe challenges in "Critical Crisis" contexts, and quality of services is reportedly an issue in several "Contained Crisis" contexts. However, the lack of affordable health services is affecting all MENA countries. This problem is amplified by the shrinking purchasing power of households because of the impact of the economic crisis in the MENA countries, to which the Ukraine crisis is a major contributing factor.

According to the respondents under the perception survey, the lack of affordable health services has the most 'severe impact' in Yemen and Lebanon. The issue is affecting "Critical" and "Chronic" crisis context similarly and is better in countries categorized as "Contained Crises".

The lack of affordable health services has the most 'severe human impact' in Yemen and Lebanon

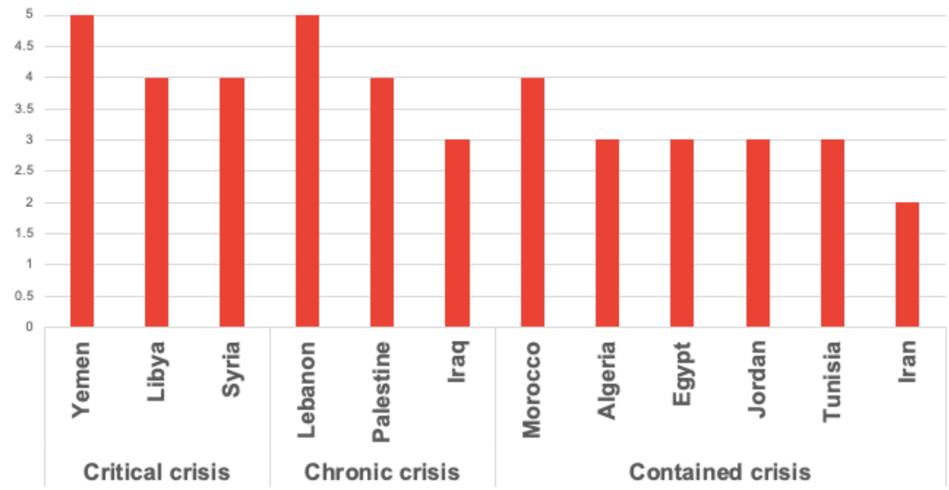


Figure 12: Severity of lack of access to health services in 12 MENA countries – by crisis category (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives) 5-point scale from 01 (no human impact) to 05 (severe human impact)

The lack of affordable health services is 'worse' when compared to the situation three months ago in three MENA countries (Yemen, Iraq, and Egypt) and 'much worse' in Lebanon. Looking forward, respondents in nine MENA countries expect this negative trend to continue, especially in Lebanon, where people are increasingly unable to cover the cost of health services. It is important to note that in this type of food-insecure environment, negative coping mechanisms increase micronutrient deficiencies, which can lead to disease.

Preparedness and response capacity

The preparedness and response capacity of the HNS in terms of Health support is the highest, when compared to other thematic areas. The capacity is seen as the highest in Lebanon, where the Lebanese Red Cross is the lead public health service provider, and the lowest (still at a 'moderate' level) in Yemen, Morocco, and Tunisia.

HNS Health capacity is higher than in other thematic areas, especially in Lebanon

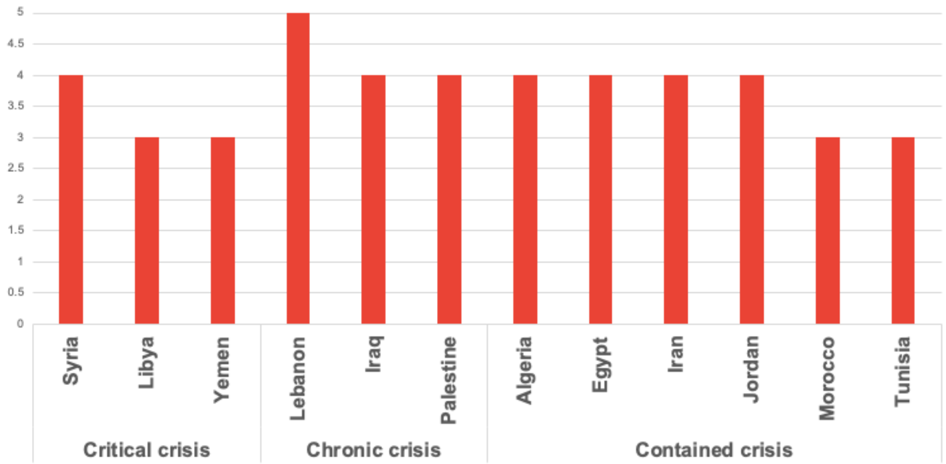


Figure 13: Preparedness and response capacity of the HNS in terms of health support – by country and crisis category (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives) 5-point scale from 01 (very low) to 05 (very high)

According to the respondents to the perception survey, the HNS need to improve their capacities to:

All countries:

- Secure funding to continue primary and secondary health services
- Scale up health programmes to reach the most vulnerable
- Invest more in outreach programs (community health and mobile clinics) (all countries)

Country-specific priorities:

- Enhance emergency response and first aid, and ambulance services (Libya)
- Build the capacities of NS staff in health management; prioritize fundraising for maintaining critical infrastructure (Syria and Yemen)
- Provide technical and financial support to keep EMS and BTS and scaling up PHC (Lebanon)
- Better quality services and clear programmatic framework for Health and WASH (Algeria)
- Basic health mobile units, equipment, physical rehabilitation physiotherapy equipment, ambulances, helicopter spare parts for air rescue (Iran)
- Ensure financial sustainability of life-saving interventions like the renal dialysis project (Jordan)
- Increase HR, financial and management resources (Morocco)

Civil unrest and conflict potential

The reverberations of the conflict in Ukraine into the MENA region could serve as the catalyst for the next significant wave of uprisings among fragile states. According to the International Crisis Group (ICG), it is not implausible that the region witnesses another eruption of social unrest and even conflict because of economic hardship and governments' inability to adequately address it (ICG, 2022). Many similarities can be drawn with the lead-up to the Arab uprisings, where socioeconomic frustrations and a lack of political reform prompted people to take to the streets. In the years that followed, states across the region sought to curtail space for opposition movements to operate, using all manner of technologies of power in pursuit of government survival. With rising food prices and the imposition of taxes, coupled with a general lack of political reform, the latent anger that caused the protests of 2010-2011 may once more manifest in unrest. (DAWN, 2022)

The perception survey confirmed the hypotheses that the risk of civil unrest is increasing in several MENA countries because of multiple crisis risks coming to effect. The survey also confirmed that the preparedness and response capacity of several HNS is limited, and that more focused support by IFRC and Membership will be needed.

Respondents in nine out of twelve MENA countries reported an increasing risk of civil unrest and conflict in their country. This risk is perceived as 'very high' in Palestine, 'high' in five MENA countries (Iraq, Lebanon, Tunisia, Libya, and Yemen), 'moderate' in Morocco, 'low' in Egypt, Iran, and Syria, and 'very low' in Algeria and Jordan.

The risk of civil unrest and conflict has 'increased a lot' in Libya and Palestine

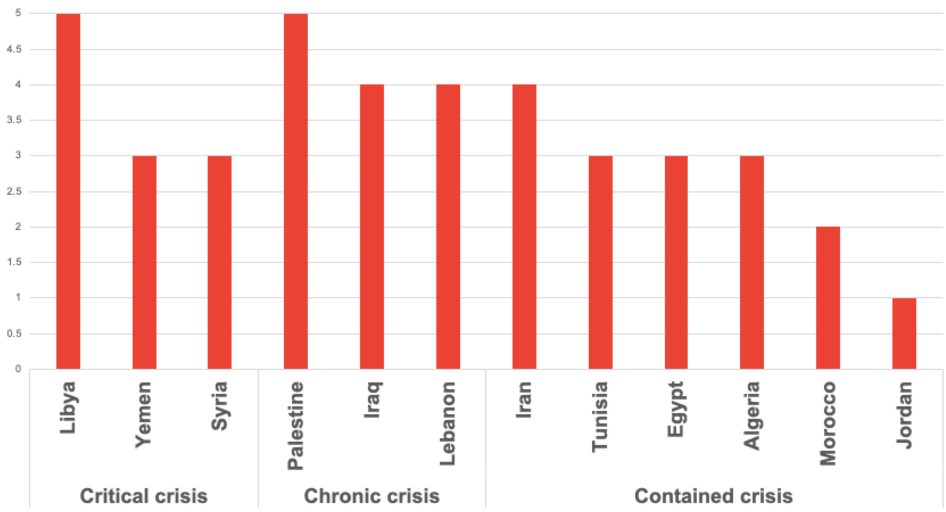


Figure 14: Increase in risk of civil unrest and conflict – by country and crisis category (source: interviews with 22 IFRC and HNS representatives) 5-point scale from 01 (decreased a lot) to 05 (increased a lot)

In the perception of the respondents in Libya and Palestine, the risk of civil unrest and conflict has 'increased a lot' over the past three months, and 'increased' in five other MENA countries (Yemen, Syria, Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria).

It is important to note that these increased risk levels cannot be attributed to one single crisis factor only (for example, the impact of the Ukraine conflict). As noted, each crisis factor has a cumulative effect and is contributing to the overall, complex crises environment. However, the conflict in Ukraine has been one of the most prominent developments over the past three months and it can therefore be assumed that the conflict is indeed a major contributor to an increased risk of social unrest and conflict in the MENA region. In that sense, the conflict in Ukraine and its subsequent global economic and security impact could be the proverbial last straw that breaks the camel's back, pushing an already fragile country over the tipping point into a higher crisis level.

The perceived likelihood of civil unrest and conflict relates with the suggested crisis designations in the MENA region. Notably, and as a trend, the likelihood is seen higher in "Chronic Crisis" contexts (Palestine, Iraq, and Lebanon, when compared to "Critical" contexts (where conflict is already happening), and "Contained" contexts (where government is better able to control the risk of conflict).

As possible signals for such a development, respondents identified an increasing number of protests around the country, voicing their anger about insufficient government policies, and in "Critical Crisis" contexts increasing recruitment into armed groups. Respondents in some countries also fear that the military action of may embolden repressive governments to increase or renew their armed activities against opposition groups or even across borders.

"Critical Crisis" contexts

In Syria, the events in Ukraine generate heightened risk of military escalation between and its antagonists, increased space for Iranian influence (Syria Direct, 2022), and profound complications for foreign diplomacy — a hurdle for the Syrian political process and renewal of the cross-border mechanism. It is now also likely that Turkey will launch another military operation in the Northwest to continue its 30km buffer-zone project.

In Yemen, and with the truce still holding, it may be possible to ward off some of the worst effects of the Ukraine crisis on the cost of living. However, political unrest because of the worsening food and energy crisis is likely. Government-held areas already witnessed a wave of protests in 2021. If the situation in these areas does not improve under the new leadership, more protests can be expected. Although many people in Houthi-controlled areas are frustrated and even desperate over the economic situation, the Houthi leadership operates a security apparatus that does not tolerate, and is capable of suppressing, dissent (ICG, 2022).

In Libya, the conflict in Ukraine has deepened the rivalry between the two claimants to governing authority. Moscow is so far the only foreign capital to officially recognize the Bashagha-led government. European diplomats have expressed concerns about the potential military spillover of this new political alignment. The Conflict in Ukraine could push Moscow to use the assets it controls in Libya in its confrontation with the West, backing the Bashagha government (and Haftar) in renewed fighting for Tripoli, though how much capital Moscow is willing or able to spare in Libya is questionable (ICG, 2022). Political analysts also fear that Moscow could try to put pressure on Europe through a new wave of refugees coming from Libya. If tensions in Ukraine result in further European sanctions on – or other such punitive measures –Moscow may use its position in Libya to retaliate, including by exploiting renewed conflict and increased migration flows to increase pressure on Europe.

“Chronic Crisis” contexts

According to the ICG, the Palestine National Authority (PA) is seen as unlikely to experience major political fallout from the crisis, which will probably exacerbate public anger at an already unpopular leadership. The PA security forces are seen as capable, with Israeli help, of suppressing public unrest (ICG, 2022). This projection from the desk research, however, is challenged by the perception survey, where the respondents indeed see a high risk of escalating conflict in Palestine because of the deteriorating food security outlook.

In Lebanon, the rapid increase in bread prices could considerably worsen discontent. Rising costs of basic goods, declining purchasing power and disruption to the provision of essential services are fueling societal frustrations. The Bakery Owners’ Syndicate has also warned of potential bread shortages due to the unavailability of flour and wheat sparked by exchange rate issues. The absence of a new government will deepen the country’s economic turmoil – including hyperinflation and poverty levels – and drive related protest activity (IFRC, 2022).

In Iraq, protests have already broken out in several southern provinces in April due to price increases in basic food items such as cereals and sunflower oil. As mentioned earlier, a lot will depend on the ability of the Iraqi government to benefit from a surge in oil sales and its willingness to utilize the revenues to mitigate the negative consequences of the economic crisis.

“Contained Crisis” contexts

The strong security apparatus in Egypt means that any organized attempt to challenge government policies is unlikely to succeed, but worsening living conditions could push people to spontaneous rioting. Widespread unrest could even expose existing fractures within the security forces (ICG, 2022).

In Tunisia, in the near to medium term, the worsening of social misery and especially the risk of shortages of basic food items are likely to make people more receptive to the polarizing discourse of pro- and anti-Saïed activists. This situation could pose serious security challenges for the authorities, including in the form of riots and proliferating crime. A quick downturn in the president’s popularity is also possible, isolating him and potentially leading to chronic political instability (ICG, 2022).

In Morocco, Rabat’s diplomatic handling of its relations with and the West means that the Conflict in Ukraine is unlikely to have any immediate impact on the dispute over Western Sahara (ICG, 2022). In February the government issued a statement that although the conflict in Ukraine will affect Moroccan markets, the government has substantial reserves of necessary products to keep the situation under control (WINEP, 2022). However, tensions between the Sahrawi ethnic group and the Moroccan government continue building-up in the military buffer zone in the Southern Provinces since late 2020, and further bouts of violence are expected in the coming months (IFRC, 2022).

Earlier in February, Morocco’s embassy in Ukraine advised nationals to leave the country—a significant warning given that Moroccan students are the second-largest foreign community studying in Ukrainian universities (WINEP, 2022). In this context, it is also worthwhile noting that also several Arab countries have large numbers of students in Ukraine, including Algeria, Egypt, and Tunisia, many of which were forced to flee from Ukraine, experiencing racism and lack of access to rights and assistance, when compared to Ukrainian refugees.

Iran has been roiled by lengthy protests that were triggered at first by economic hardships; water shortages have added to the many grievances. “Food insecurity and a breakdown in societal cohesion are highly likely to follow if increased strains on households and communities are not addressed,” a recent IFRC assessment warns. The Federation has launched an appeal, pegged at about $9.5 million, to help the Iran Red Crescent Society respond, but sanctions on Iran continue to be a barrier to aid (IFRC, 2022).

Preparedness and response capacity

The preparedness and response capacity of the HNS in terms of increasing risks of social unrest and conflict are seen as ‘moderate’ in seven MENA countries, and ‘high’ in Lebanon, Algeria, Iran, and Jordan. The capacity is seen as ‘low’ in Palestine.

The HNS, especially in countries where the risk of social unrest and conflict is high (Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, Tunisia, Libya, and Yemen), need to improve their capacities to:

- Prioritize more technical, financial, strategic, and operational planning support to HNS in Palestine
- Support the establishment and equipping of specialized emergency response teams in Libya
- Ensure sustained funding coming from PNS to assist HNS to be ready and continue support in Yemen
- Provide capacity development in Iraq
- Continue supporting the main services EMS and BTS in Lebanon

All HNS in MENA countries need more:

- Technical training and capacity building, and financial support
- Preparedness and contingency planning, evaluation of vulnerabilities (VCA), risk assessments
- Capacity building on Humanitarian Diplomacy to be able to maintain neutrality and functionality when confronted with increased conflict risk
- Capacity building to enhance volunteers' capacities
- Support in the establishment of security frameworks for operating in emergencies

Migration and displacement

Refugees and migration

The conflict in Ukraine has provoked the most rapid displacement crisis since the end of World Conflict II, placing even greater demands on an already-overtaxed humanitarian assistance architecture. Given this increased demand, humanitarian funding shortfalls are expected to create even more strain on refugee-hosting countries, such as Lebanon and Jordan. International pressure to improve conditions for Syrian refugees is already low and becomes even more flaccid as Ukrainian dislocation becomes the most prominent displacement issue for Western governments. This represents a significant problem given the scale of need amongst Syrian refugee populations in regional host states.

Lebanon, for example, has absorbed considerable numbers but has been unable to accommodate their needs. 70% of Syrian refugees have received no humanitarian assistance since the beginning of 2021, while half the total number of Syrian child refugees in the country are out of school. Assistance to refugees and host communities in these countries often serves as the only safety net protecting impoverished families from utter destitution. Without it, the bottom on social welfare will fall out, with unpredictable consequences (DAWN, 2022).

The perception survey under this assessment confirmed these trends from the secondary data analysis. The already dire situation of many refugees and vulnerable migrants in several MENA countries will continue to deteriorate because of an overall increase of crisis factors, including the impact of the conflict in Ukraine.

Respondents in eleven out of twelve MENA states reported the presence of vulnerable migrants and refugees in their countries (except Palestine, where involuntary population movements are considered by IFRC as internal displacement). The severity of the humanitarian situation of this mixed group is considered 'high' in nine of these eleven countries, and 'moderate' in two (Iraq and Egypt).

When asked how the humanitarian situation of this group has changed over the past three months, respondents in five MENA countries reported that the situation has got 'worse' (Lebanon, Iran, Jordan, Algeria, and Egypt), while respondents in five countries believe the situation has not changed. Looking forward, respondents in seven countries expect the situation of vulnerable migrants and refugees to get 'worse' (Lebanon, Iran, Jordan, Tunisia, and Yemen) or 'much worse' (Algeria and Egypt), while Libya sees a possibility for improvement.

Preparedness and response capacity

The preparedness and response capacity of the HNS in terms of increasing vulnerabilities of refugees and migrants is seen as 'moderate' in six, and 'high' in four MENA countries (Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, and Libya). Only in Yemen respondents rate the capacity of the HNS to support vulnerable migrants and refugees as 'low'.

The HNS need to improve their capacities to support vulnerable migrants and refugees, especially in countries where their situation is expected to deteriorate over the next six months. IFRC can support HNS by:

- Providing capacity development on integrating migrants in different responses and special programmes for women and children including (UASC) in Algeria
- Assisting in translating assessment data into concrete proposals to meet the needs of the target communities; develop more innovative programmes to address increased vulnerabilities and shrinking funding for refugees and migrants, especially from UN agencies (Egypt)

- Offering technical support in the fields of Health, WASH, Livelihoods, PGI, DRR, DRM, logistics, CVA, CEA, recognizing that the Afghanistan population movement appeal is only 28% funded while the demand increases (Iran)
- Supporting Humanitarian Diplomacy, positioning of the HNS in the wider humanitarian community, assist in coordination with different partners (Tunisia)

All countries:

- Support HNS in a strategic plan of action, preparedness planning, and fundraising to address the growing needs of vulnerable migrants and refugees
- Position HNS in establishing Humanitarian Service Points, training volunteers
- Support more regular coordination with Government and other humanitarian actors

Internal displacement

As predicted from the secondary data analysis and confirmed by the perception survey, the events in Ukraine have the potential to generate heightened risk of conflict and social unrest also in the MENA region, which can also trigger the involuntary movement of populations within MENA countries and across borders.

Respondents in six out of twelve MENA countries reported the presence of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in their countries (Libya, Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Palestine, and Egypt). Respondents from "Critical Crisis" countries describe the humanitarian situation of IDPs in their countries as 'bad' (Libya) or 'very bad' (Syria and Yemen), whereas their situation in Iraq, Palestine, and Egypt is considered 'moderate'. The humanitarian situation of IDPs remained at these (low) levels over the past three months. Only the respondents in Yemen reported that the situation has become 'much worse' during this period.

Looking forward, respondents in five out of six IDP-hosting countries in the MENA region believe the humanitarian situation of IDPs will become 'worse' over the next six months (only Iraq is believed to stay at the same level).

No respondent under this assessment indicated the risk of new internal displacement in their countries as a direct or indirect consequence of social unrest or conflict. This was a methodological weakness of the questionnaire under this assessment that did not include a specific question on this subject. However, taking the perceived increase in risk of social unrest and conflict in combination with the projected rise in food insecurity identified earlier into account, such a development cannot be ruled out as a mid-term scenario for several MENA countries.

The risk of new displacement is the highest in Syria, where Turkey announced in May its intention to launch another military campaign in the Northwest to continue its buffer-zone project along the border with Syria. Another potential scenario that could lead to new cross-border displacement would be that may seek to pressure Turkey, a NATO member and critical intermediary in Ukraine, with escalation in Northwest Syria and the threat of a refugee influx. A similar scenario is possible for Libya.

Preparedness and response capacity

The preparedness and response capacity of the HNS in terms of increasing vulnerabilities and potentially increasing numbers of IDPs is seen as 'high' in six, and 'moderate' in four MENA countries (Palestine, Tunisia, and Syria), while the capacity of the HNS in Morocco to respond to internal displacement is seen as 'very low'.

The HNS in the five IDP-hosting countries need to improve their capacities to support IDPs where their situation is expected to deteriorate over the next six months:

- In Palestine, the HNS is prepared to support new IDP movements due to occupation only for a short period of time and cannot support IDPs settle in new areas
- In Syria, early recovery of destroyed areas might get people back to their place of origin, but early recovery is not a priority for institutional donors in a highly politicized funding environment (which requires high levels of Humanitarian Diplomacy)
- In Yemen, the HNS needs more financial and technical support to its IDP community centers
- In Egypt, livelihood programmes to support the resilience of IDPs and potentially their integration in new communities are required
- In Iraq, the HNS needs technical and financial support to continue supporting the existing caseload and even more support if the number of IDPs is increasing again, in coordination with the government and other humanitarian actors
- Respondents in MENA countries that are not (yet) affected by larger-scale internal displacement, but that are witnessing increased risk of civil unrest and conflict, require capacity building in terms of risk assessments and contingency plans

GCC Arab States

Please note: the level of analysis on the impact of the conflict in Ukraine on the situation in the five GCC states is limited by the fact that only two perception data sets (one for the entire GCC region, and one for Kuwait) were obtained during this assessment. To the extent possible, the perception data was combined and triangulated with available secondary information. Consequently, the below analysis is incomplete, and it is recommended to carry out follow-up research and analysis, especially as this relates to the ability of Host National Societies to utilize their auxiliary role to mobilize additional funding to address priority needs in the twelve MENA countries identified under this assessment.

Energy

As oil and gas exporters, the Gulf Arab states stand to reap a windfall from the increase in oil and gas prices because of the Ukraine crisis. Saudi Arabia, for example, needs the price of crude oil to be slightly less than $70 a barrel to balance its budget. After the start of the conflict in Ukraine, the price shot up to over $130 a barrel, before settling at somewhat less than $100, then rising again following the United States' ban on n oil imports. For Gulf leaders, the price increase is welcome, as government income had been shrinking amid the COVID-19 pandemic (ICG, 2022).

Food Security and livelihoods in the GCC region

According to the two respondents to the perception survey assessment, the impact of the conflict in Ukraine on the current situation in the five GCC states (Saudi Arabia, Bahrein, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, and Qatar) is 'moderate' or 'low'.

With their small populations, high per capita income, and large grain storage facilities, the GCC states have more buffers than many other countries protecting them from supply shocks and price increases in agricultural commodities. The UAE, Qatar, and Oman import major volumes of wheat from and Ukraine, but they and their neighbors have much less reason for concern when compared to the twelve other MENA countries (ICG, 2022).

The two respondents in GCC countries under the perception survey believe that conflict in Ukraine will have a 'moderate' impact on food security in the Gulf region, particularly for vulnerable labor migrants and other low-income households that are suffering from increasing prices for basic food items. The reduced purchasing power is expected to result in an increase of negative coping mechanisms of these groups. This includes the fact that health services are becoming less and less affordable, and the two respondents believed that more humanitarian assistance will be required for these target groups.

Humanitarian Funding

National Societies in GCC countries region have an important enabler role in dialogue with their governments and other domestic partners to influence their decisions towards funding the Red Pillar. The two respondents under this assessment recognize the impact of the conflict in Ukraine on the availability of international humanitarian funding for the MENA region and beyond, which necessitates significantly more efforts by National Societies in the GCC region to advocate for more humanitarian funding to National Societies in MENA countries to mitigate the consequences of the worsening socio-economic crisis.

In addition, the National Societies in GCC countries are also encouraged to investigate opportunities to provide more assistance to vulnerable migrants, guest workers, and low-income households in their own countries.

The capacity of the National Societies to mobilize humanitarian assistance to vulnerable communities in the GCC region and to advocate for more government and private sector funding to address priority gaps in MENA countries is considered 'very high' by the two respondents.

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