

# The Arab Transformations

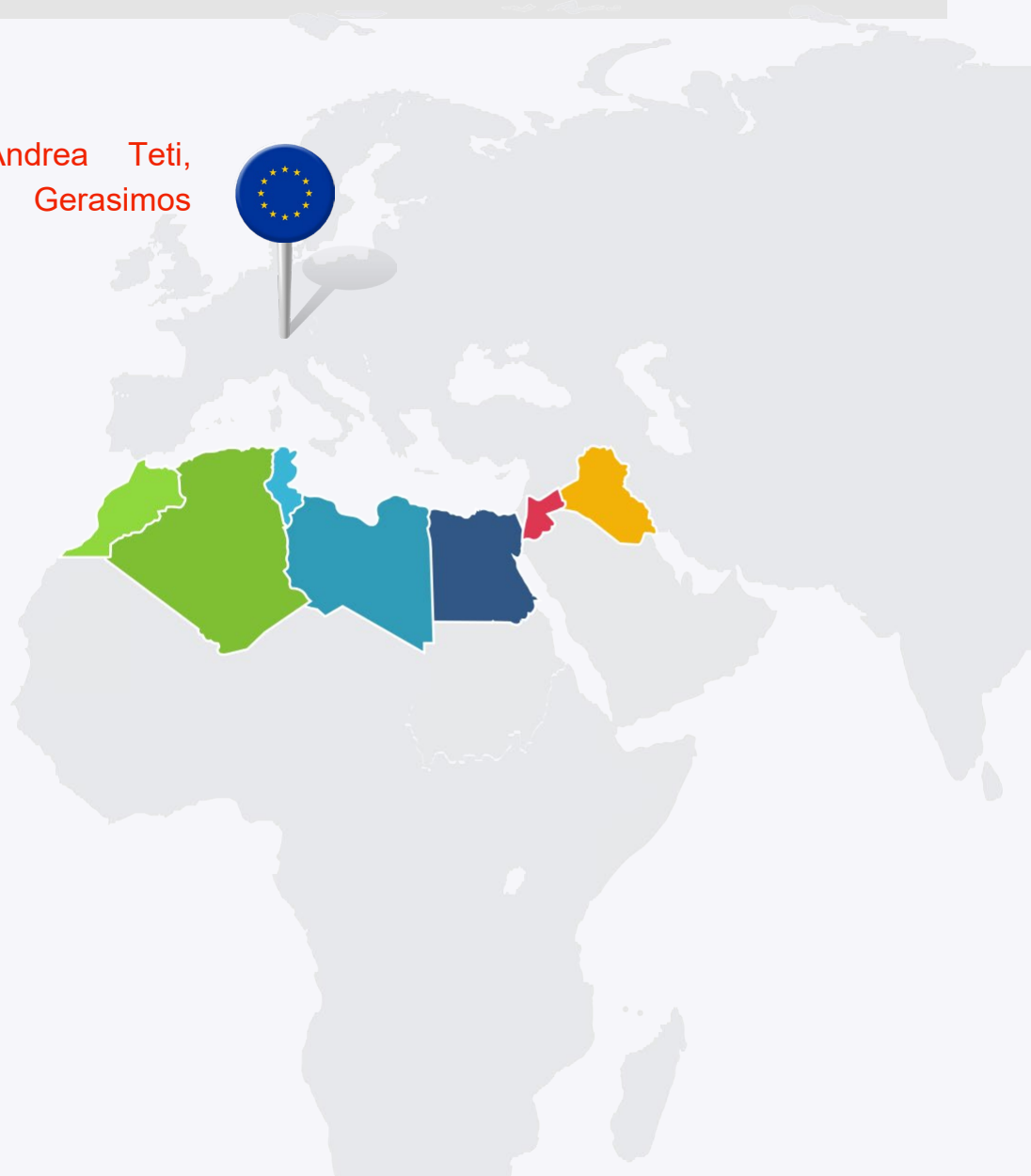
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### Arab Transformations: Have Expectations Been Met?

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## 1 Introduction

This paper examines whether the expectations of the post-2011 Arab uprisings have been met, by evaluating how citizens felt, three years later, who had supported the 2011 events actively or passively. The 2011 protests that shook the Arab world could be seen as a form of popular protest demanding democratic government - albeit on a massive, cross-national scale - but a political economy approach would suggest differently: the drivers of the uprisings were not discontent with authoritarianism but the outcome of a complex process of interaction between political, economic and social development (or lack thereof). In particular, a variety of factors can lead to this 'paradox of unhappy development' - from the incomplete liberalisation of state economies since the 1970s and the subsequent rise of crony capitalism to the poor or worsening living conditions and poor labour market conditions, combined with a lack of freedom despite economic growth and improvements in human development (Abbott and Teti 2016; Achar 2013; Arampatzi et al 2015; Cammett and Diwan 2014; World Bank 2015).

Importantly, the implicit social contract of redistribution in return for limited "voice" is no longer seen as adequate. The legitimacy of Arab governments has been questioned by their citizens, particularly the middle classes. Specifically, the Uprisings can be located in the crisis of neo-liberalism and the growth of the precariat (Standing 2011), a breakdown of the (implicit) social contract between the state and citizens and a perception of growing inequalities and a decline in satisfaction with life (Therborn 2013; Verme 2014; World Bank 2015). This was in the face of sluggish real economic growth at least partly due to the demographic transition, with a decline in decent jobs for the increasing number of educated young people coming onto the labour market (Hakimian 2013). Ordinary people had become dissatisfied with their standard of living, with high inflation and large increases in food prices. Protestors were demanding social justice in the face of a more aggressive implementation of a new modality of capital accumulation in a regime where there had been a persistence of authoritarianism that offered highly restricted economic and political opportunities (Arampatzi et al 2015; Sika 2012). The middle class in particular had become frustrated by a lack of reward for qualifications and experience and the persistence of a system in which connections and patronage determined progress.

Thus one could argue that the Uprisings should be located within a distinct socio-economic, cultural and political context, which will allow a more accurate analysis of the interaction between structure and agency. One way through which this can be done is to examine how citizens' opinions on the Arab Uprisings evolved as the years passed. Indeed, as one delves deeper into the motivation of different classes with regard to the levels of support of the 2011 events three years later, it could be argued that the popular slogan accompanying the Arab Uprisings, "change the regime," should be more broadly interpreted as "change the system."

A related survey, the 2011 Arab Barometer, asked participants to nominate two main demands of the Arab uprisings: 80 per cent of both Egyptians and Tunisians identified the improvement of the economic situation as their main demand, followed by the fight against corruption (72.7% and 62.8%, respectively). The demand for civil and political freedoms and the fight against authoritarianism were

identified by only 16.5 per cent of Egyptians and 43.6 per cent of Tunisians. With the benefit of hindsight, how can we evaluate whether protesting citizens' expectations have been met?

As a background note in order to contextualize the survey results, the situation in each country in 2014 was as follows:

- In Egypt, protesters had achieved the ousting of Hosni Mubarak in early 2011, and a March 2011 constitutional referendum led the way for Egypt's first parliamentary elections in November 2011. The subsequent election of the Muslim Brotherhood's Mohamed Morsi to the Presidency in June 2012 was followed by a wave of protests against the new government. The military removed Morsi in July 2013, regained formal power in Egypt, and paved the way for Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to become President in June 2014. The intense polarization around Egyptian politics, the continuing deterioration of the country's economic indicators, as well as a prevailing question regarding the effects of the 2011 Uprisings can be witnessed in the polling results below.
- In Morocco, the 20 February movement led a series of protests in early 2011, to which the Moroccan monarch replied swiftly: in March, Mohammed VI agreed to adopt deep, comprehensive reform of the country's politics in order to improve accountability and rule of law in the country. These reforms, formally announced in June, were agreed by referendum in July 2011. Although it has largely subsided, instances of protest continued (most notably in May 2012), accusing the monarch of not delivering results and also driven by continuing unemployment and a number of structural economic problems. Moroccans' responses below shed light to the extent to which their 2011 demands were met three years later.
- Tunisia, much like Egypt, has been characterized by intense polarization following the ousting of Ben Ali in 2011. The Islamist Ennahda Movement won the October 2011 Constituent Assembly elections but argued for maintaining the state's secular orientation. As the transition away from authoritarianism continues – amidst protests, backtracking, and a number of obstacles – Tunisia has also been hit by terrorist attacks on foreign tourists as well as a number of political assassinations. Given a struggling economic performance in the post-2011 era, Tunisians continue to debate the extent to which the 2011 protests against corruption and unemployment and for freedom of speech etc. were successful, as can be seen from this study's results.
- In Jordan, the Arab Uprisings elsewhere produced distinct diffusion effects that led citizens to protest on a large scale following 2011. However, in a similar way to the Moroccan monarchy's reactions to these events, King Abdullah II performed a quick shifting of his cabinet, replacing the prime minister, and promising a number of political reforms. The extent to which these actions placated Jordanians – who are also faced with a struggling national economy and instances of corruption and mismanagement, as well as an influx of Syrian refugees – is debatable. The study highlights the extent

to which Jordanians have rethought their support of the 2011 events, and their perceptions of the country's present and future.

- In Libya, the 2011 Arab Uprisings quickly escalated to a civil war that led to the overthrow and killing of Muammar Qaddafi, in the midst of an international operation by NATO. The post-Gaddafi era has seen the country divided between different military groups that hindered economic or political progress. This has been highlighted by the creation of two separate governments, one in Tobruk and one in Tripoli, as well as several instances of the rekindling of hostilities. Citizens' polling reflects to a large extent their positive reaction to the overthrow of Gaddafi, but also their apprehension and confusion about the future.
- In Iraq, the Arab Uprisings contributed to heightened conflicts within the state, already suffering from the post-2003 US-led occupation. Normality – in terms of economic development or socio-political stability – is yet to be evident in the country, which is struggling to reconcile the interests and demands of different groups within its borders. Increasing amounts of violence, as well as the inability of the central government to maintain control of security across the state (coupled with the spread of ISIS) is evident in citizens' responses to this poll.

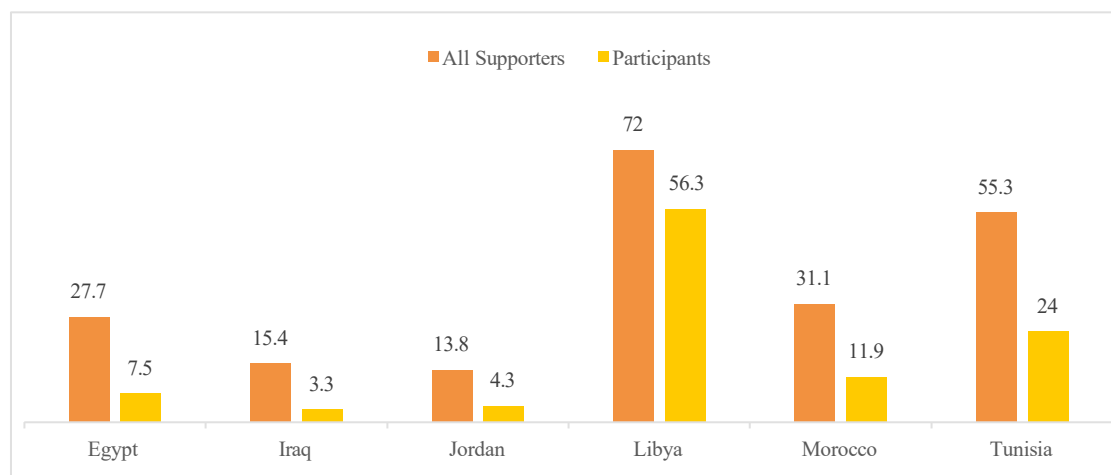
## 2 Findings

There has been considerable interest in establishing the amount of support for, and participation in, the Arab uprisings (Figure 1). While the numbers demonstrating on the streets during protests seemed relatively large it is not clear how much support there was for the Uprisings among the general population. In the ArabTrans Survey carried out in 2014 we asked respondents if they had supported the recent demonstrations in their country and if they had participated. (Other surveys have only asked about participation.) The question specifically asked about support for the '*Arab Revolution*' and followed a question asking respondents to say what was their preferred name for the '*recent social and political events that had happened in some Arab countries during the last five years*'. Given this, those that said they supported the demonstrations even if they did not participate are most likely to be those that supported demonstrating against the regime and, in the case of at least Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, demanding regime change rather than just reforms.

Looking at Figure 1 we can see that support for the Uprisings varied by country to a marked extent and that the proportion that participated was significantly lower in all the countries than the proportion that said they were supporters. The proportion of respondents that said they had supported the Uprisings was highest in Libya, where nearly three-quarters said they had done so, and lowest in Jordan, where only 14 per cent said they had done so. It is perhaps not surprising that there was such strong support in Libya because there was ongoing civil war at the time when the survey was carried out, but it is also probably an indicator of how much Gadhafi was hated. It is also somewhat surprising that 15 per cent of respondents in Iraq said that they supported the Arab revolution given that there had not been

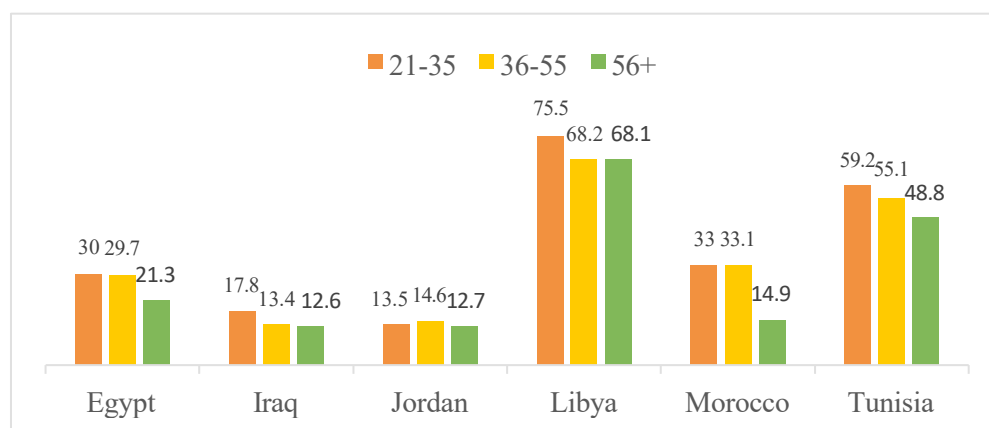
demonstrations in Iraq, but this is probably indicative of support for regime change in general.

**Figure 1: Support for and participation in the Arab Uprisings, %**



The Uprisings have generally been portrayed as a revolt of youth, although analysis of Arab Barometer II (carried out in 2011) found that the largest group of demonstrators in Egypt were those in young middle age, and while the demonstrators tended to be younger in Tunisia they were by no means restricted to youth (Bessinger et al). The ArabTrans data (Figure 2) suggest that there is variation by country in terms of the pattern of the ages of supporters but no evidence of the supporters being mainly young people. Older people, however, do seem less likely to have supported the Uprisings in all the countries with the notable exception of Libya (though the difference is only marginal in Iraq and Jordan). Overall, then, age was not a major factor dividing supporters and non-supporters especially youth and the middle aged.

**Figure 2: Supported the Arab Uprisings, % by Age and Country**

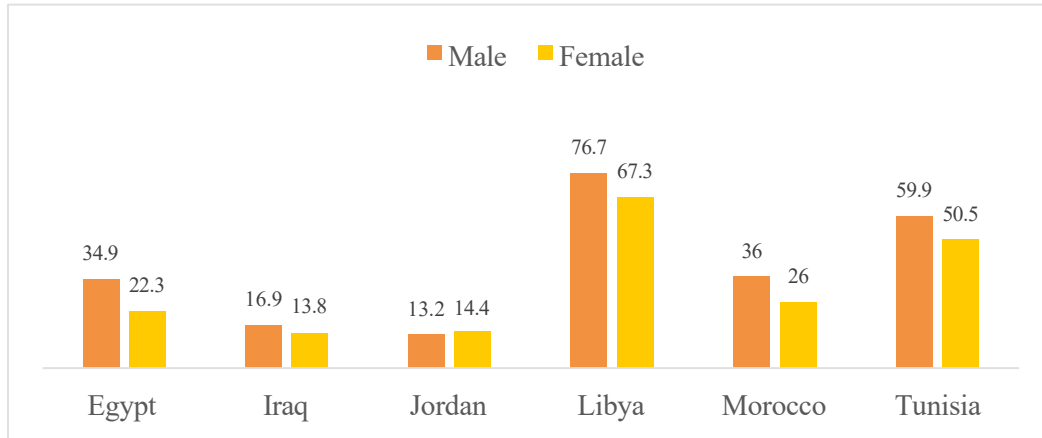


Although women participated, the Uprisings have generally been seen as having greater support from men. Given the restrictions placed on women's participation in the public sphere and the sexual harassment from male supporters and the security services that women who did participate had to endure, this is perhaps not surprising (Abbott 2016 in this volume). However, while there are significant and noticeable differences between men and women in their support for the uprisings, they are not large, and indeed in Jordan there is no noticeable difference (Figure 3).

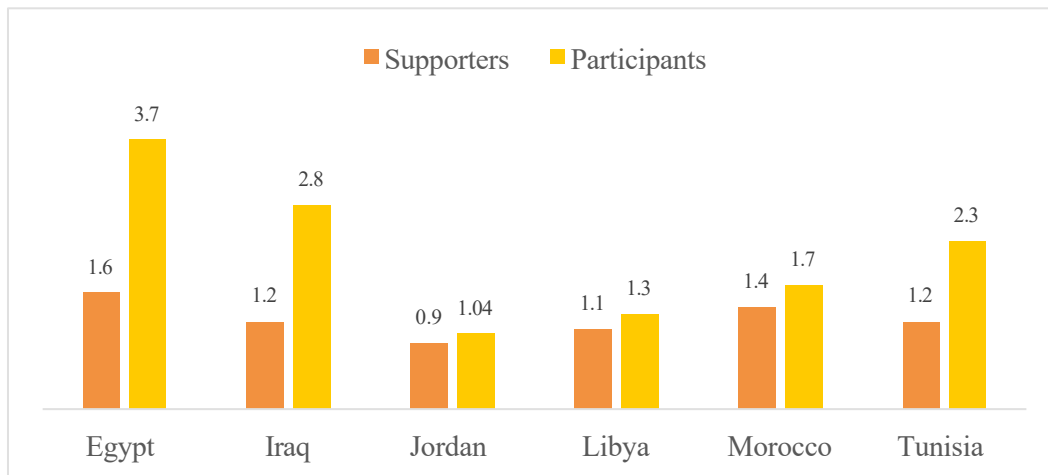


Looking at the ratio of make to females among supporters and participants in the 2011 events (Figure 4), we can see that there is not much difference among supports except in Egypt but generally quite a lot more men than women among the participants, especially in Egypt, though the difference is not nearly as pronounced in Libya and perhaps Morocco and is not significant in Jordan.

**Figure 3: Men and women that supported the Arab Uprisings, %**

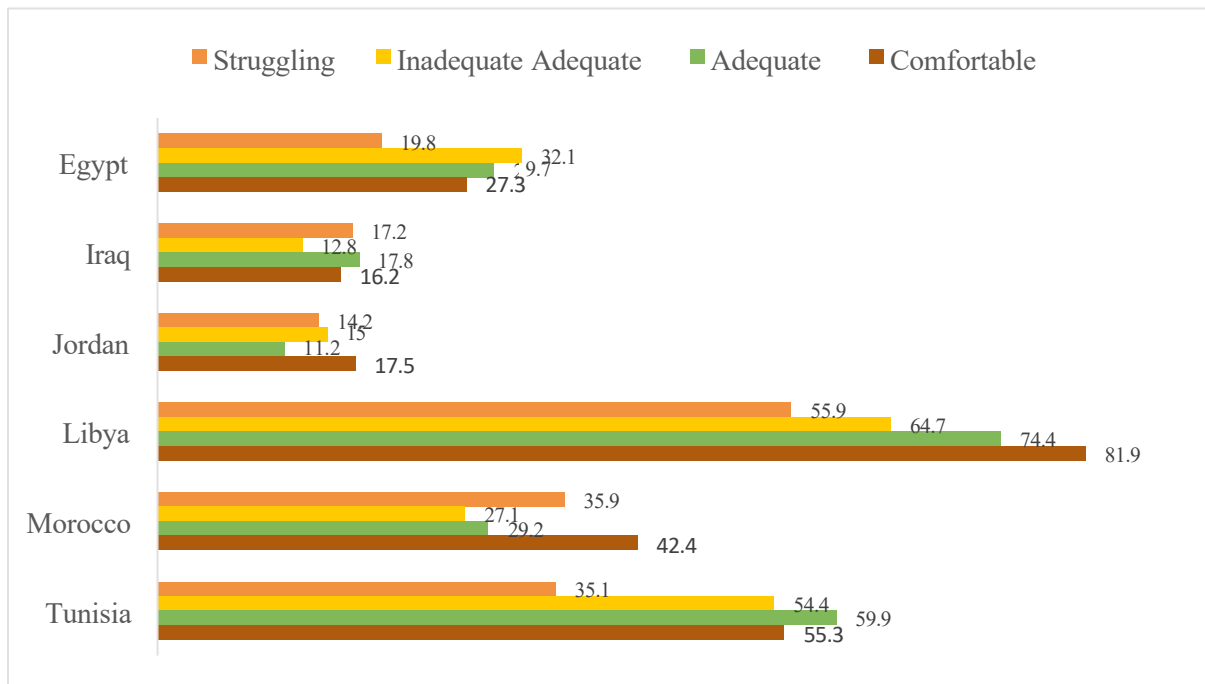


**Figure 4: Ratio of males to females: supporters and participants**



The differences by household income are not readily interpretable (Figure 5): there is perhaps an overall tendency for support to increase with income (though in no country does the proportion of supporters fall below 14 per cent in the poorest category), but no country except Libya exhibits the pattern with clarity. Education (Figure 6), however, does show a strong positive correlation with having supported the uprisings except in Jordan.

**Figure 5: Support for the Uprisings, by household income (% of those aged 21+ in 2014)**

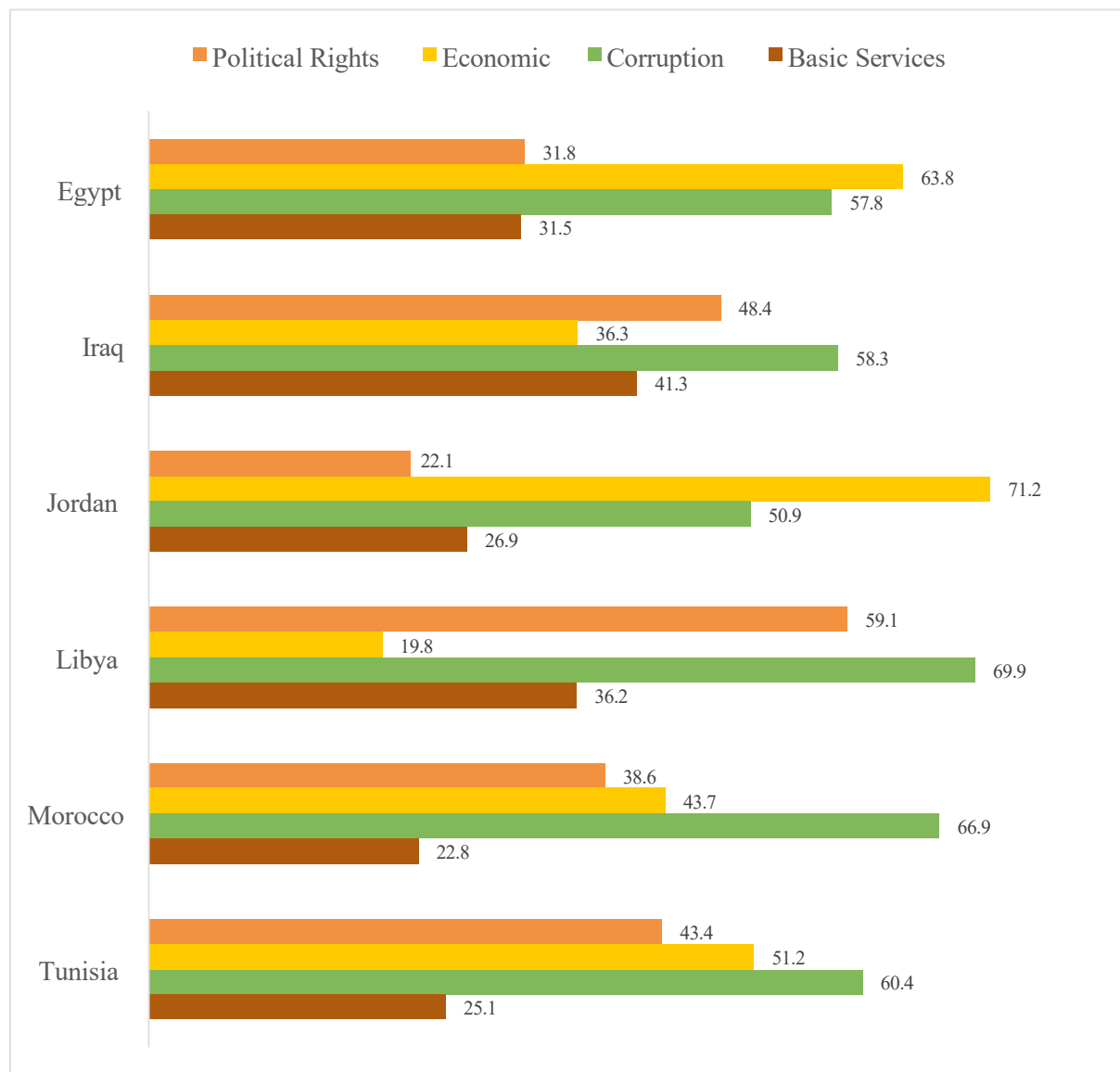


**Figure 6: Support for the Uprisings, by education (% of those aged 21+ in 2014)**



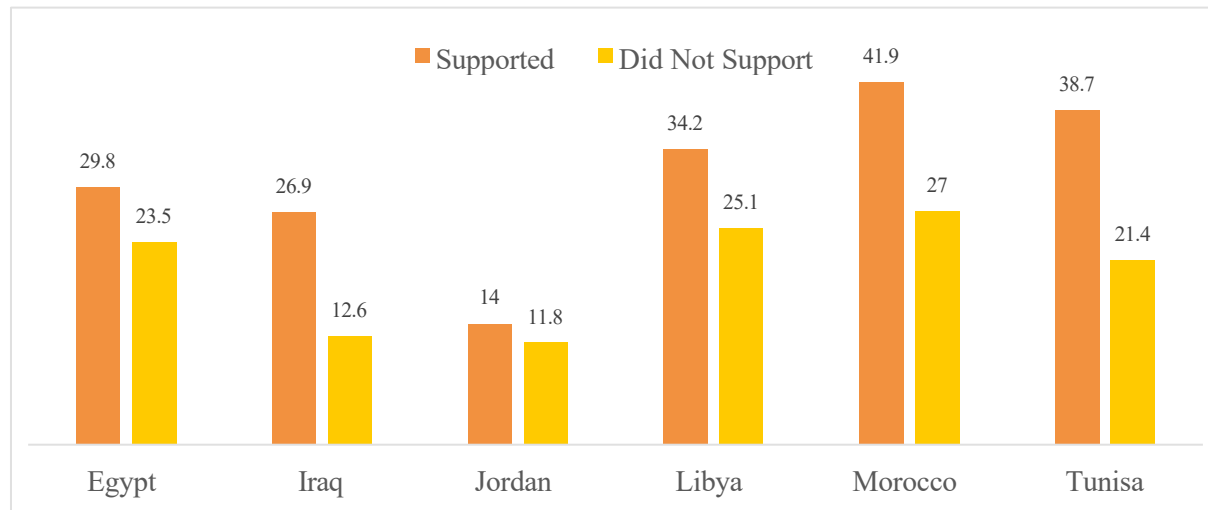
Trying to understand the motives behind popular support for the Uprisings (Figure 7), we notice that economic conditions drove protests forward for Egypt and Jordan, which is quite understandable, given that both countries experienced neoliberal reforms with deep repercussions for the social body. Libyans, Moroccans, Tunisians and Iraqis said that corruption and political rights were the most important drivers of protests.

**Figure 7: Main Reasons for supporting the Arab Uprisings (% of supporters nominating as one of two main reasons)**



Asking whether the Arab Uprisings produced positive results for the country produces mixed results. Of those who supported them (Figure 8), Moroccans and Tunisians are most positive about their results; Jordanians are very pessimistic, as polled both by supporters and non-supporters of the Uprisings. The difference between supporters and non-supporters is lowest in Egypt and Jordan; elsewhere it is much more substantial, and nowhere even among the supporters do as many as half the group feel that they achieved what the protests set out to achieve.

**Figure 8: The Arab Uprisings seen as positive for the country (% of supporters and of non-supporters)**

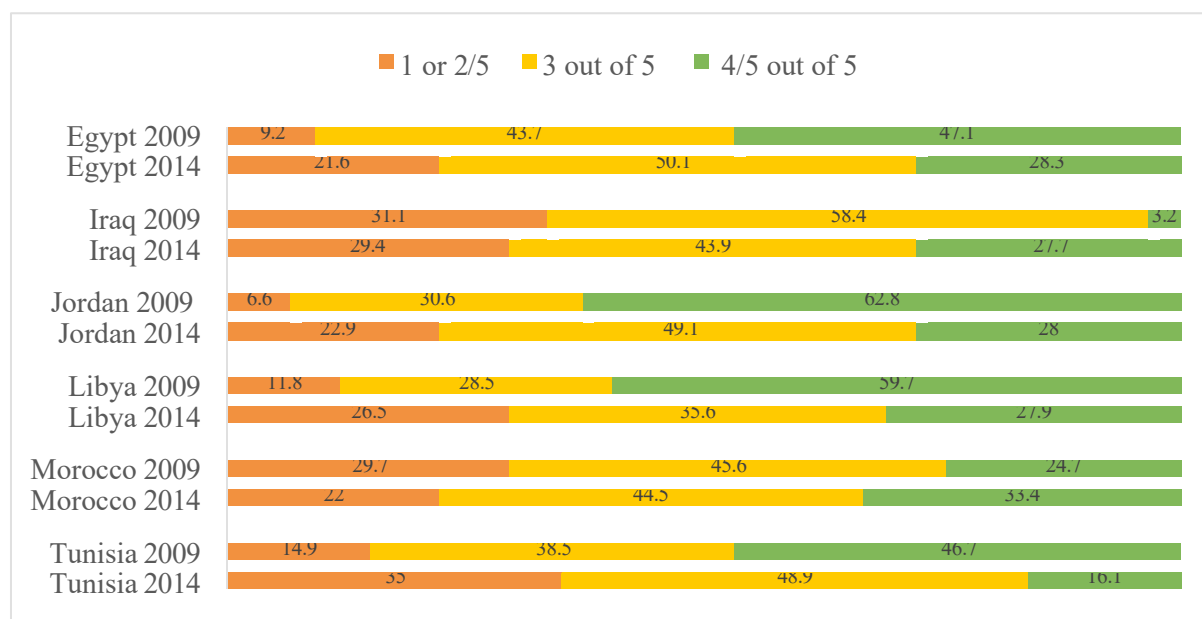


Comparing participants'/supporters' rating of the general situation in their country in 2014 with how they recall things as having being in 2009 reveals a pessimistic attitude across the spectrum (Figure 9): the percentage of those who are least content with the general conditions of their country (scoring at least 3 out of 5) in 2014 is larger than the proportion who remember being content in 2009 in all countries but Morocco but the percentage of those most content with their countries' condition (scores of 4 or 5) in 2014 versus 2009 shrunk dramatically in all countries except for Morocco and Iraq. There is no consistent pattern: in Iraq over half the respondents express dissatisfaction in both periods and the proportion who are satisfied is tiny; Egypt shows some increase in those who are dissatisfied, and the proportion who are most satisfied halves; Jordan, Libya and Tunisia show a substantial increase in dissatisfaction and a corresponding decrease in satisfaction. The only country to be more satisfied on the whole in 2014 than 2009 is Morocco, and even here a quarter are dissatisfied. Similarly (Figure 10), Iraq and Morocco are the only countries in which participants/supporters who were most happy with their own households' general situation in 2009 are even happier in 2014. Iraq also witnessed a decrease in the percentage of those who are least content with their households, from 31.1 per cent to 29.4 per cent, a trait that it also shares with Morocco.

**Figure 9: Rating the general situation in country in 2009 and 2014 - 1=lowest (% of those that supported the Uprisings)**

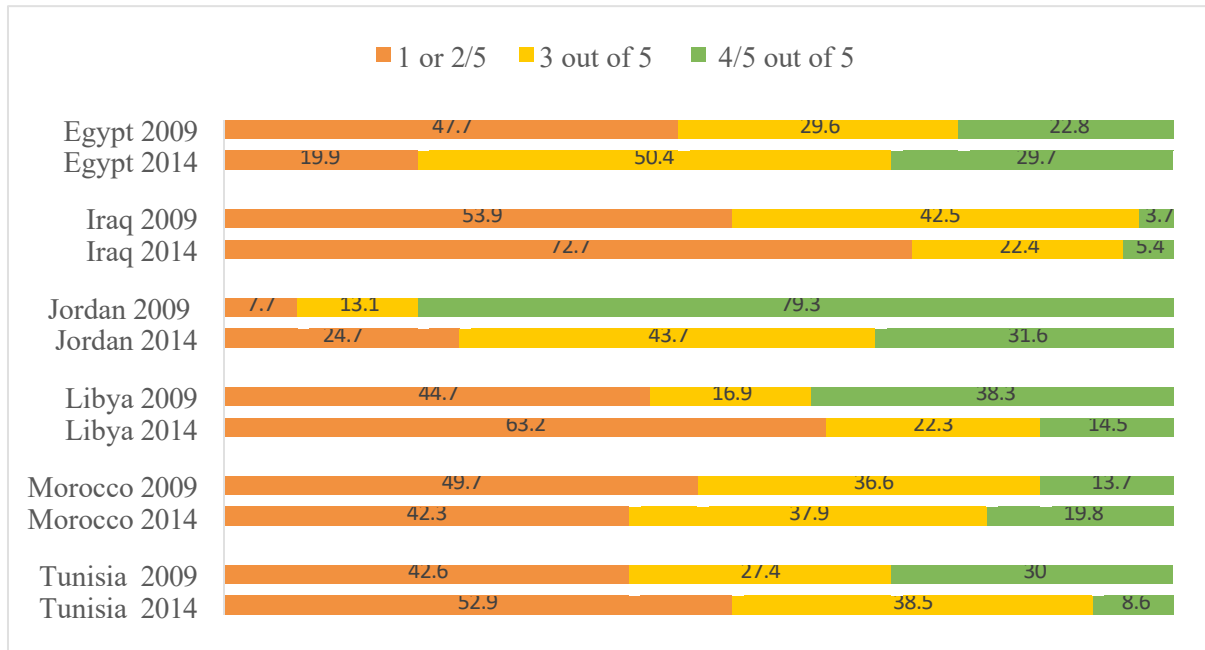


**Figure 10: Rating the general situation of household in 2009 and 2014 - 1=lowest (% of those that supported the Uprisings)**



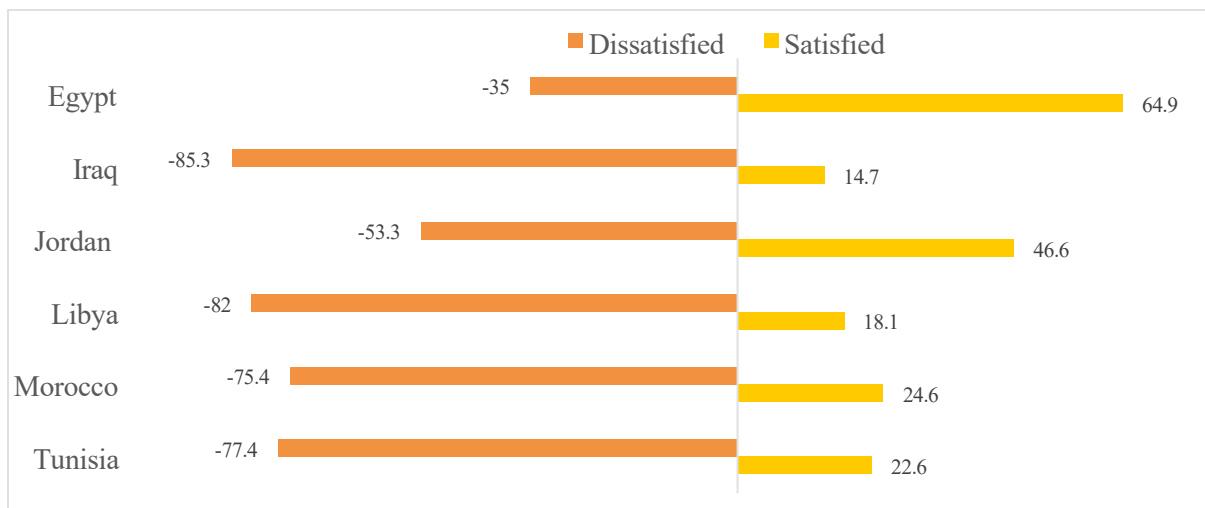
The rating by Uprising supporters of each country's domestic political system in 2009 and 2014 again highlights an increase in dissatisfaction of the least satisfied in all countries, save Morocco (Figure 11). Dramatically, while 79.3 per cent of Jordanians believed their country's political system was very good or excellent in 2009, only 31.6 per cent share that opinion in 2014. This includes those who have supported the Arab uprisings.

**Figure 11: Rating the political system in 2009 and 2014 - 1=lowest (% of those that supported the Uprisings)**



Polling supporters' satisfaction with their government's performance (Figure 12) shows a high degree of satisfaction in Egypt (64.9%), which arguably has to do with the timing of the poll. Almost half of all Jordanians are also satisfied, whereas most Iraqis (at 85.3%) are dissatisfied. The second highest level of dissatisfaction is in Libya, where 82 per cent appear dissatisfied.

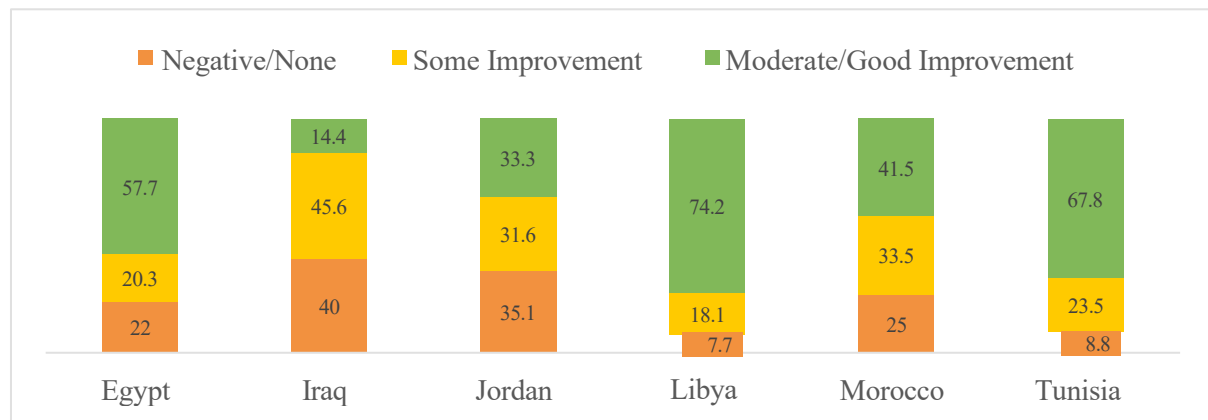
**Figure 12: Satisfaction with way the government is performing its duties in national office in 2014 (% of those that supported the Arab Uprisings)**



Interestingly, the majority of Egyptians, Libyans, and Tunisians who said that political rights was one of the two most important targets of their Uprising argued that there has been a moderate or even a strong improvement in political rights over the previous five years (Figure 13). This is most evident in Libya, where 74.2 per cent support such a statement. Iraqis are most dissatisfied with the progress on

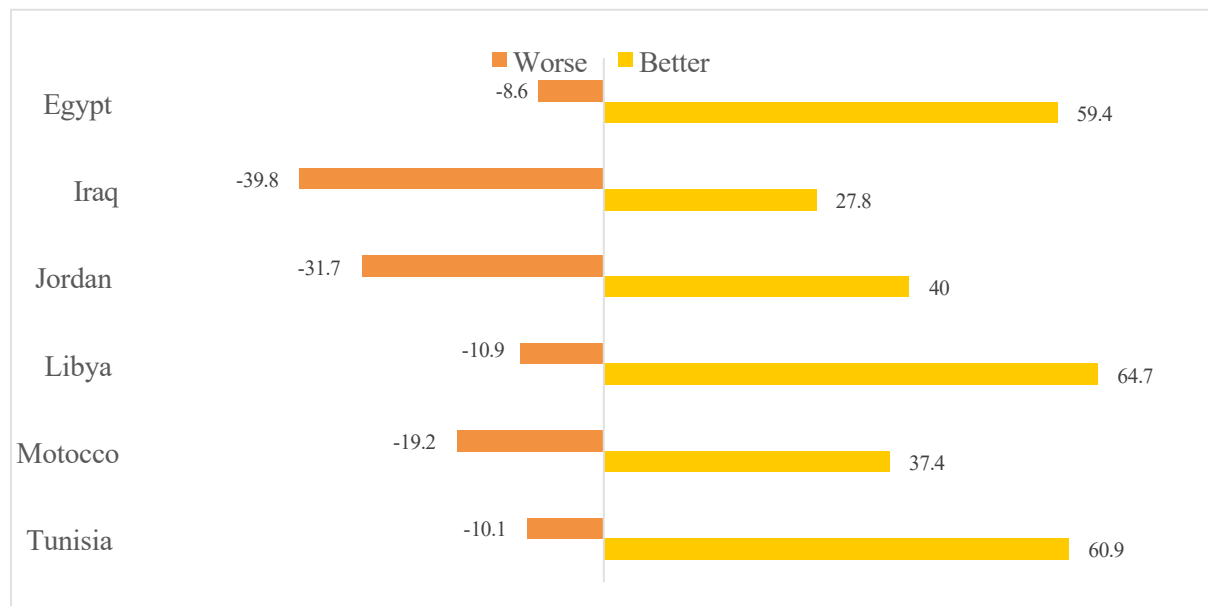
political rights (40% believe there has been negative progress), followed by Jordanians (35.1%) and Moroccans (25%).

**Figure 13: Change in political rights 2009-2014 (% of those who wanted more political freedom at the time of the Uprisings)**



When those who protested for political reasons asked about changes in voice and accountability (Figure 14), Egyptians, Libyans and Tunisians appear optimistic (59%, 65%, and 61% respectively). At the other end of the spectrum, almost 40 per cent of Iraqis are pessimistic about changes in voice and accountability, followed by Jordanians (31.7%).

**Figure 14: Changes in voice and accountability 2011-2014 (% of those who wanted more political freedom at the time of the Uprisings)**

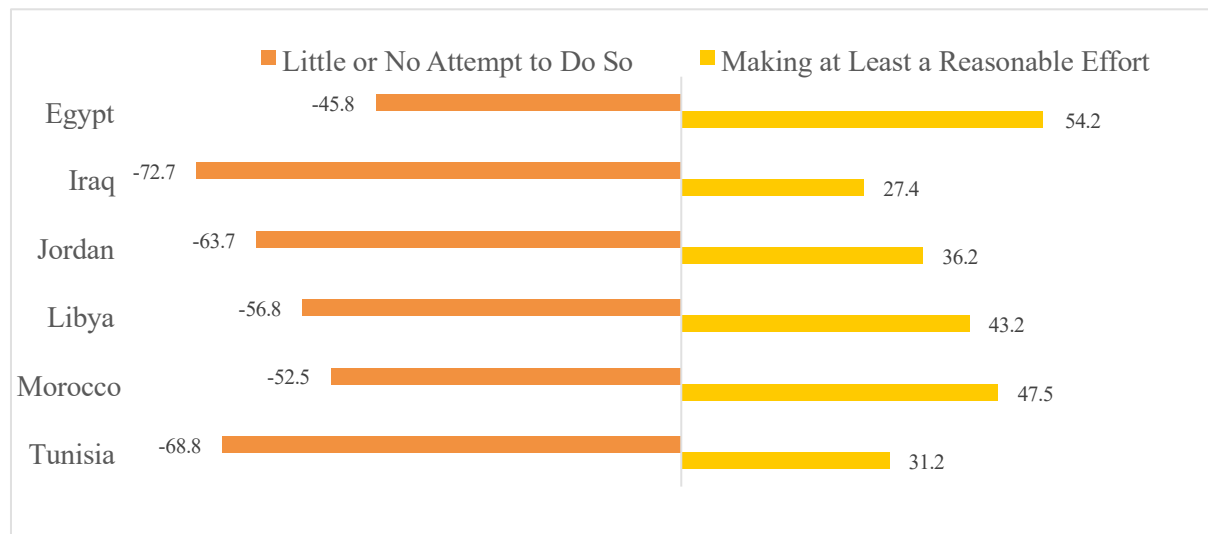


One of the key questions investigates whether citizens who supported the Arab Uprisings to protest government corruption believe that the government is working to crack down on it (Figure 15). Around half the Egyptians and Moroccans say this is the case. However, Iraqis, Jordanians, and Tunisians are less impressed – in fact,



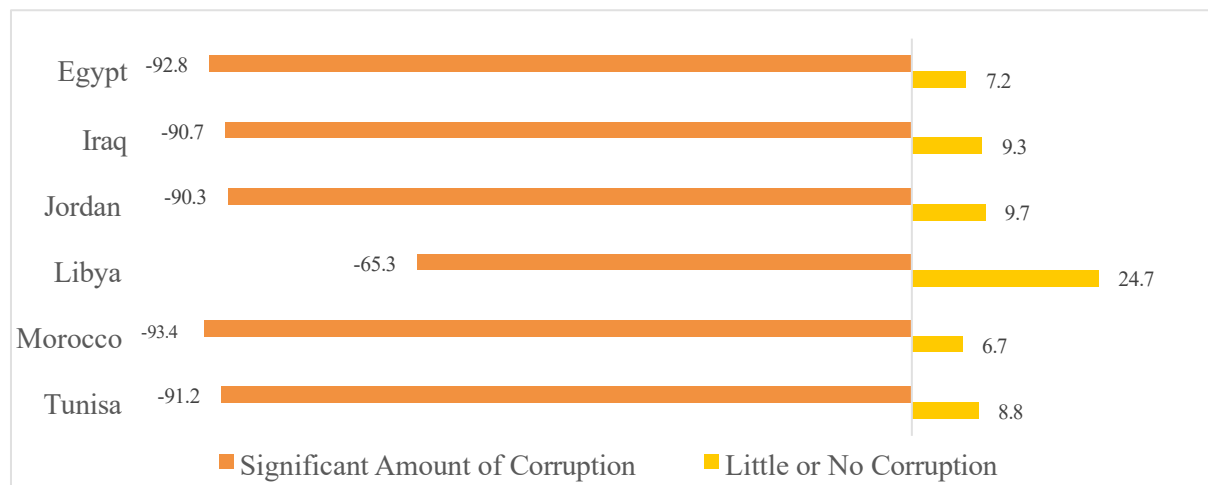
no country save for Egypt has a majority of respondents believing in their government's anti-corruption policies.

**Figure 15: Government working to crack down on corruption (% of those that supported the Arab Uprisings because of government corruption)**



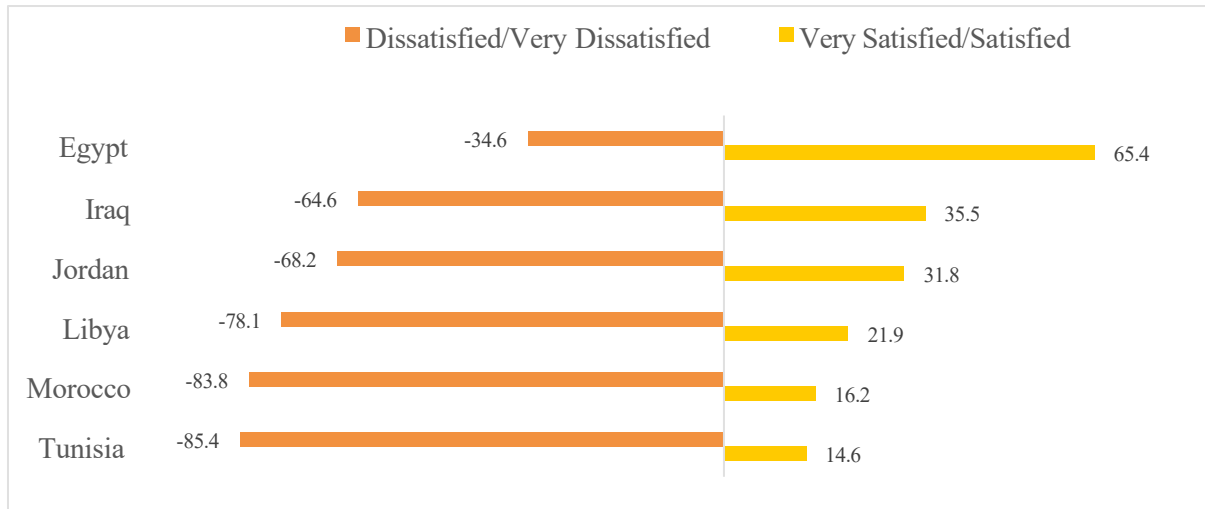
The extent of corruption is evident when people who supported the Arab Uprisings on grounds of government corruption) are asked whether it still exists in their country (Figure 16). In most countries 90 per cent of them say it does. Interestingly, about a quarter of Libyans (24.7%) believe that Libya has little or no corruption, a percentage that is three times the average.

**Figure 16: Corruption in 2014 (% of those that supported the Arab Uprisings because of government corruption)**



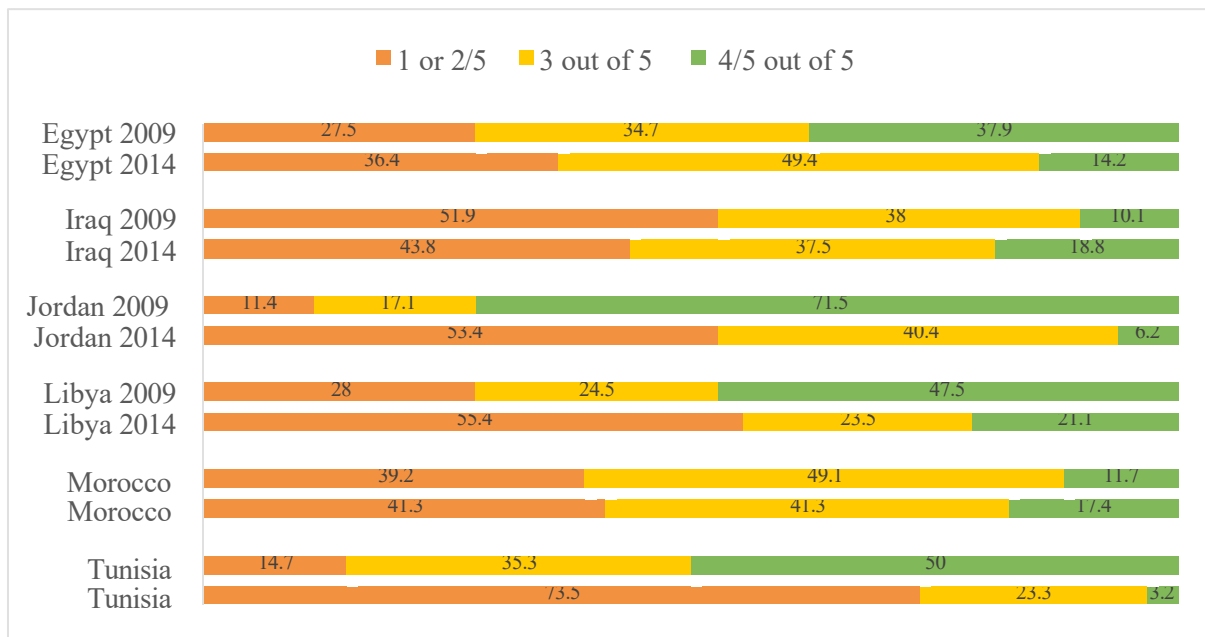
In terms of satisfaction with economic development (Figure 17), Egyptians appear satisfied or very satisfied about the way their country's economy is developing (at 65.4%), but this is not shared in other countries, all of which have a majority of respondents who are either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Tunisians are least satisfied, at 85.4 per cent.

**Figure 16: Satisfied with the way the economy is developing - 1=lowest (% of those that supported the Uprisings for economic reasons)**

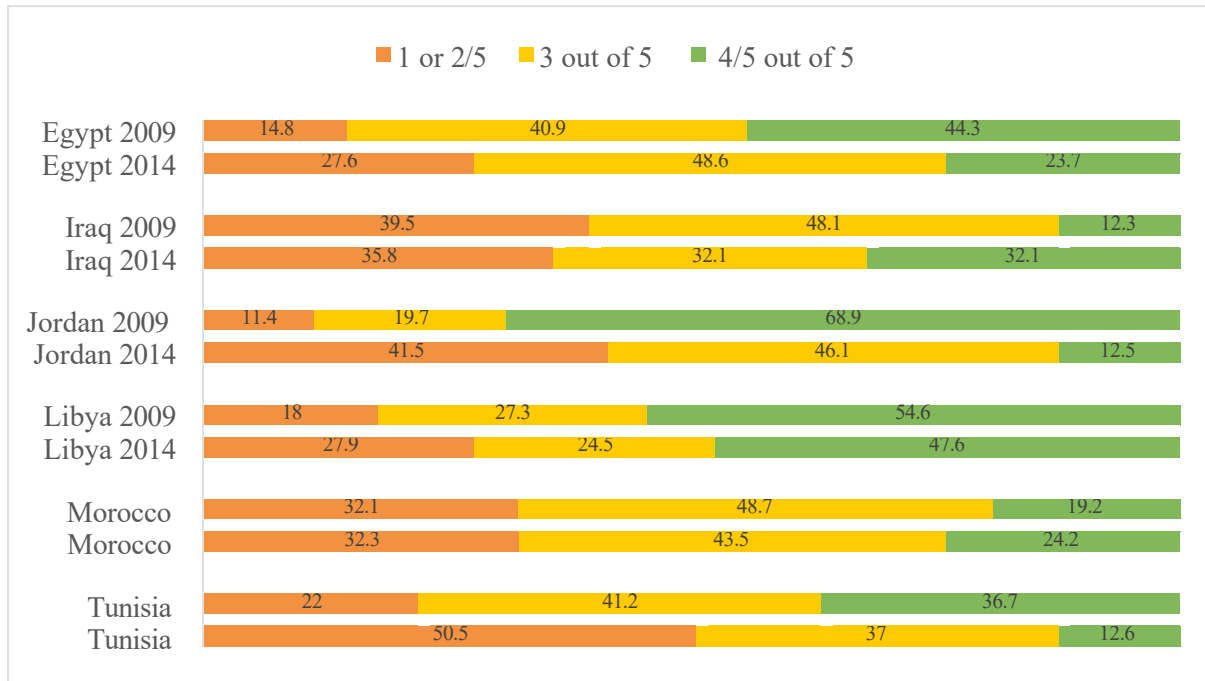


Asked to rank their country's economies in 2009 and 2014 (Figure 18), supporters who were not happy with it (rating it 1 or 2 out of 5) increased in 2014, except in Iraq. Those most satisfied with the 2009 state of their national economy decreased dramatically in 2014, with the exception of Iraq and Morocco. In terms of change in their own household's economic situation between 2009 and 2014 (Figure 19), Tunisians, Jordanians, Libyans, and Egyptians thought things were better while Iraqis thought they were worse.

**Figure 17: Rating the national economy in 2009 and 2014 - 1=lowest (% of those that supported the Uprisings for economic reasons)**

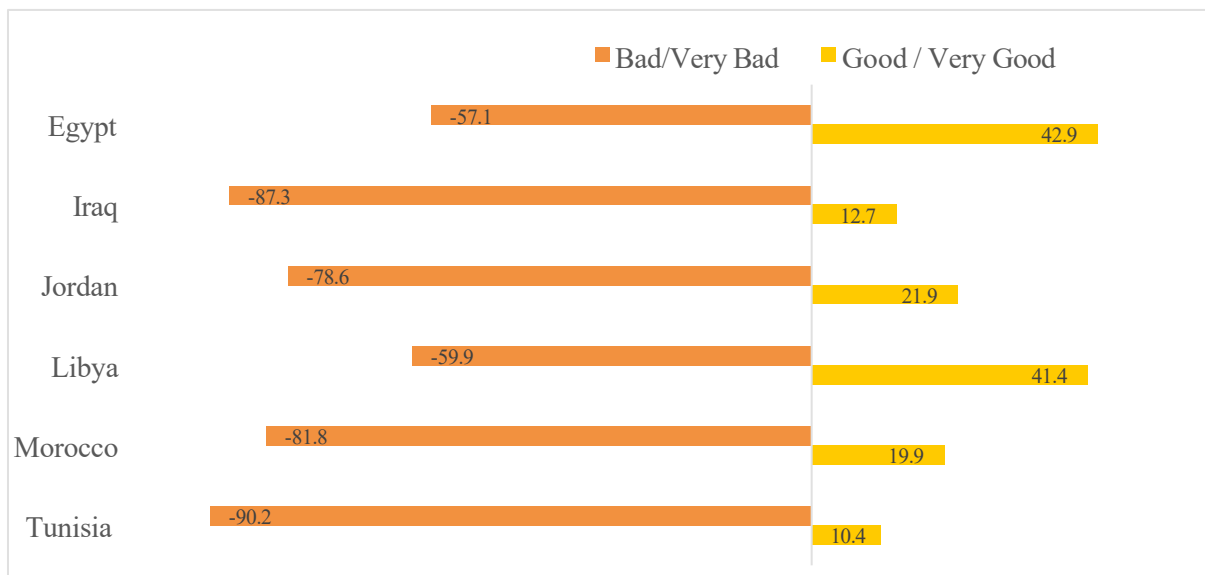


**Figure 18: Rating household economic situation in 2009 and 2014 - 1=lowest (% of those that supported the Uprisings for economic reasons)**



Asking participants to rate government performance in creating employment opportunities (Figure 19) reveals a divergence between Egypt and Libya (which are good, or very good, at creating employment opportunities according to only 43% and 41% of participants), and the other four countries, where citizens appear even less convinced – 90 per cent of Tunisians and 87 per cent of Iraqis answered that their governments are bad or very bad at creating employment opportunities.

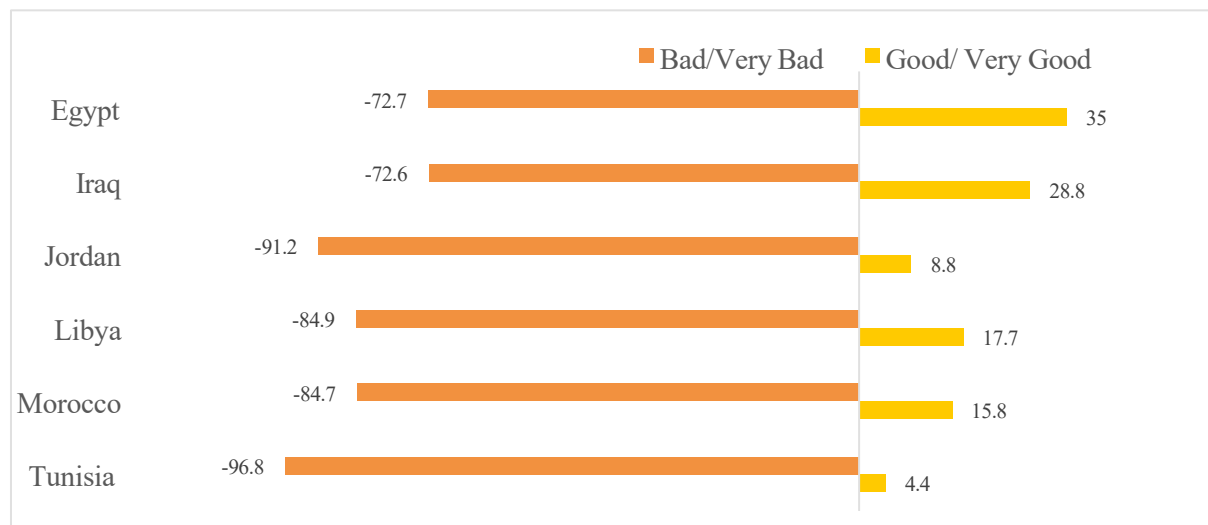
**Figure 19: Government performance in creating employment opportunities (%)**



Similarly (Figure 21, citizens' dissatisfaction with government performance in controlling inflation is least evident in Egypt (where 35% of participants rank it as

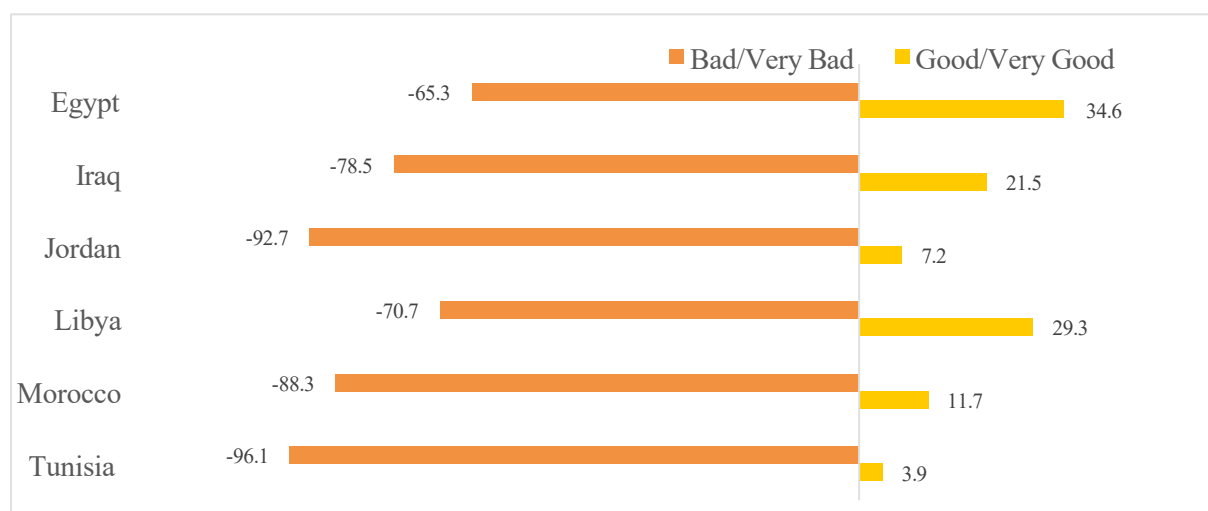
good or very good), but most evident in Tunisia and Jordan: an astounding 96.8 per cent of Tunisians are dissatisfied and 91.2 per cent of Jordanians.

**Figure 20: Government performance in controlling inflation**



In terms of reducing the rich-poor divides (Figure 22) there is no country that has a majority who are impressed by government performance. Egyptians are most convinced by their government's efforts at narrowing the gap between rich and poor in 2014, with only 65.3 per cent ranking it as bad or very bad, the lowest of all six countries. Tunisians and Jordanians, again, lead the low rankings, with over 96 per cent of Tunisians ranking their government as bad or very bad at this, followed by 92.7 per cent of Jordanians.

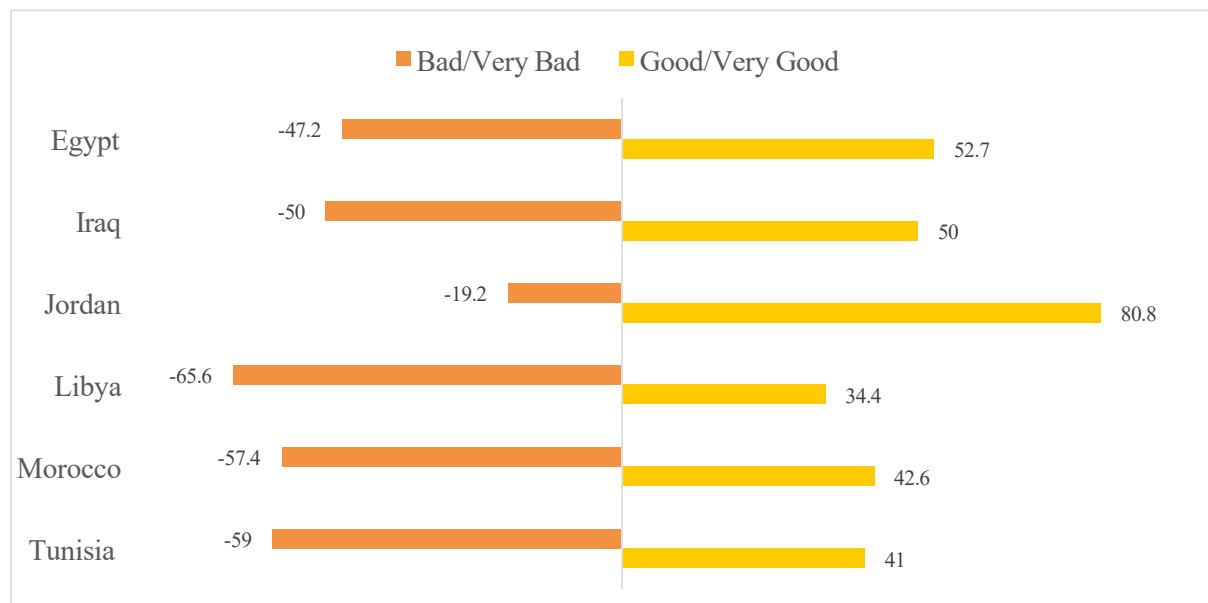
**Figure 21: Government performance in narrowing the gap between rich and poor**



Interestingly, 80 per cent of Jordanians rank their government as good or very good at providing utilities for its citizens (Figure 23). This is followed by Egyptians and Iraqis, at 52.7 per cent and 50 per cent, respectively. Libyans and Moroccans are

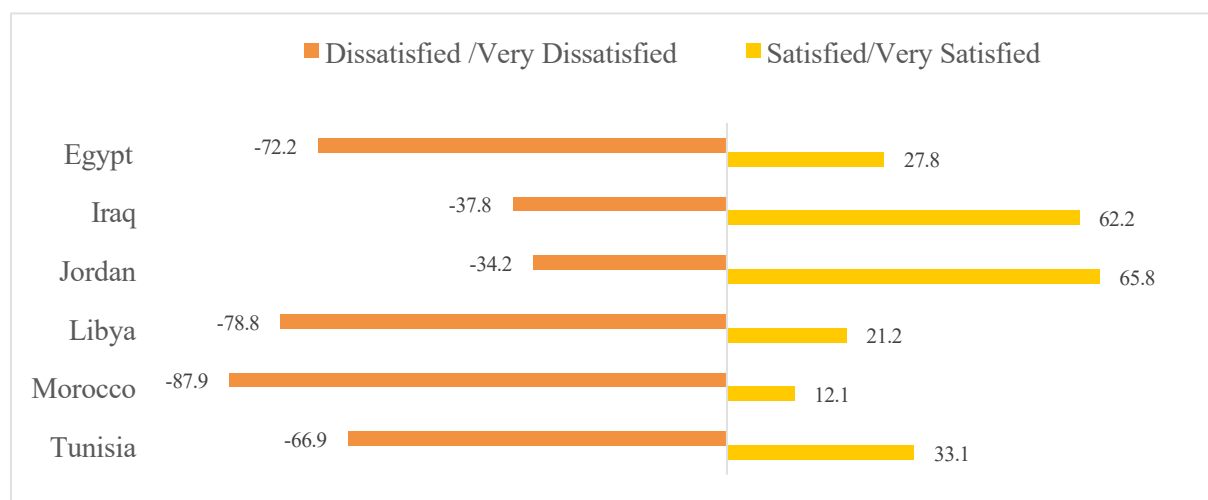
least satisfied in this field, with 65.6 per cent and 57.4 per cent respectively evaluating government performance as bad or very bad.

**Figure 22: Government performance in provision of utilities (%)**

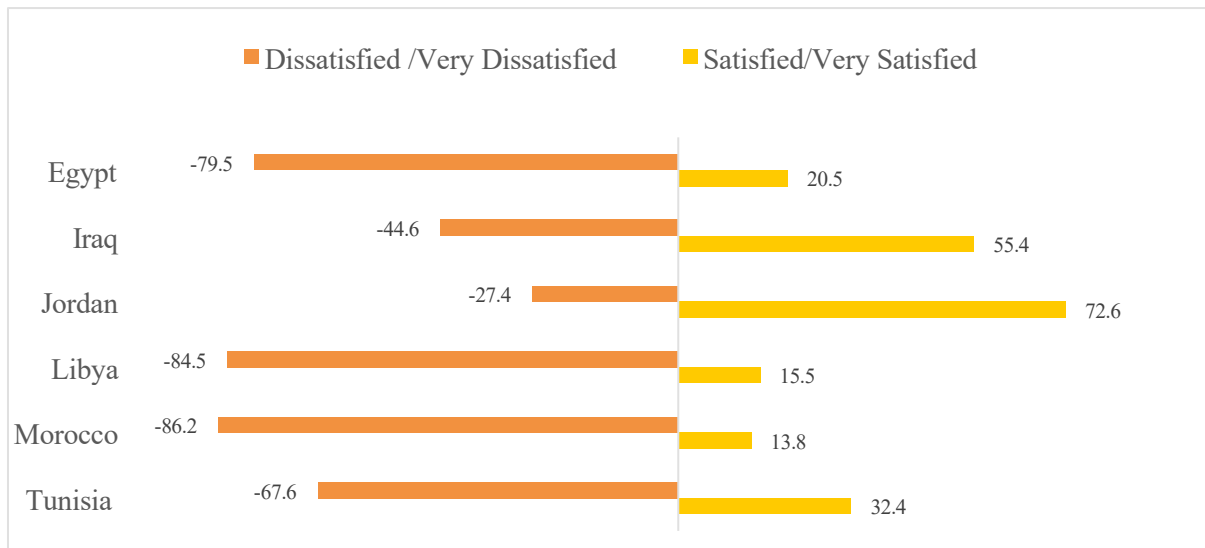


Jordan also comes first on satisfaction with education (Figure 24 - 65.8% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied), followed by Iraq and Egypt, at 62.2 per cent and 27.8 per cent. Moroccans and Libyans are, again, most likely to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied on this. Jordan, again, leads the 2014 responses on satisfaction with the healthcare system (Figure 25) with 72.6 per cent of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied, followed by Iraqis at 55.4 per cent. At the other end of the spectrum, 86.2 per cent of Moroccans and 84.5 per cent of Libyans are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the state of the national healthcare system.

**Figure 23: Satisfaction with the way the education is developing (%)**

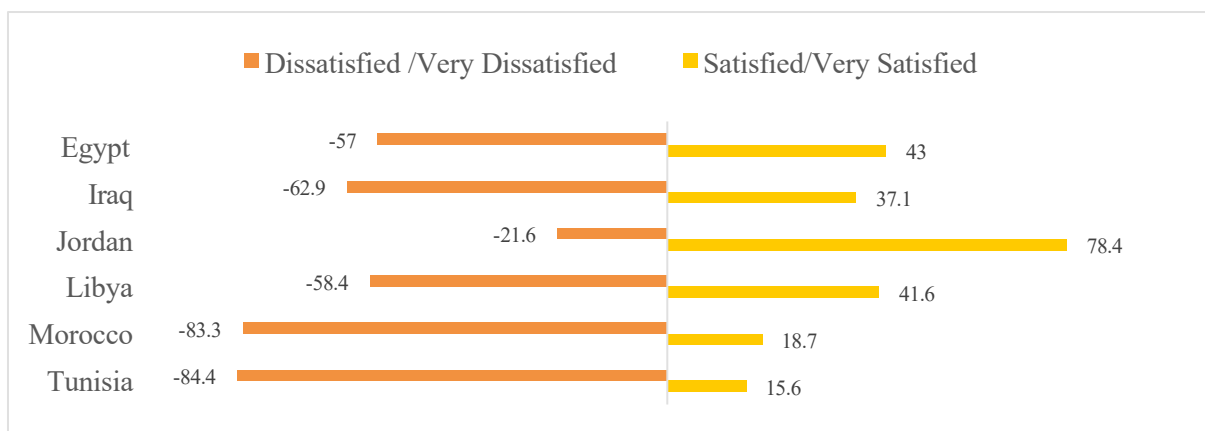


**Figure 24: Satisfaction with the healthcare system (%)**



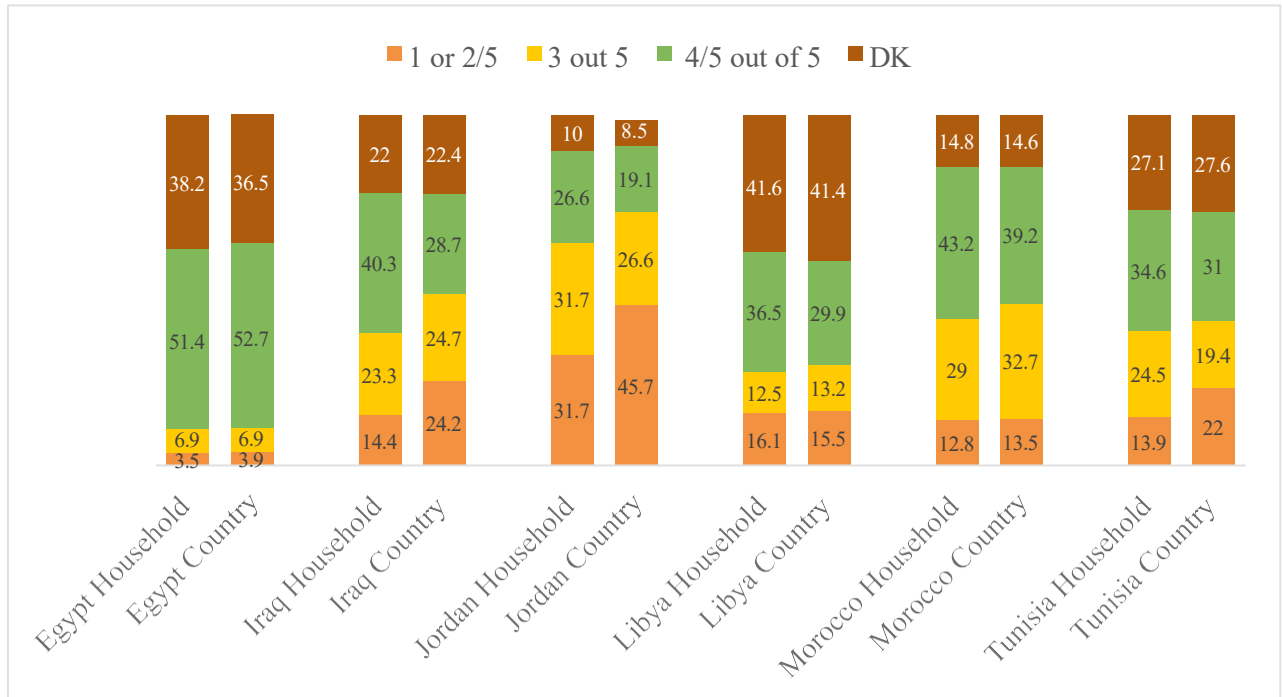
Similarly, Jordanians are the most satisfied with the social security system (Figure 26 - 78.4% are satisfied or very satisfied). Eighty-four per cent of Tunisians and 83 per cent of Moroccans, at the other end of the spectrum, are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the state of their social security system.

**Figure 25: Satisfaction with the social security system**



Most tellingly (Figure 26), Egyptians and Moroccans appear most optimistic about the future of their household and country in 2019: around 51 per cent of Egyptians are optimistic about the future state of their household and their country, compared to 43.2 per cent and 39.2 per cent of Moroccans, respectively. Jordanians are least optimistic (31.7% and 45.7%).

**Figure 26: General situation for household and country anticipated for 2019 (% of those that supported the Arab Uprisings)**



### 3 Conclusion

Perhaps unsurprisingly, data suggests evident that the level of support for the Arab Uprisings three years after 2011 varies by country. There is little evidence to support an argument for uniformity across answers in the six countries examined here, which adds weight to the case for more careful analysis of each country's economic and socio-political conditions. At the same time it is apparent that – beyond country variation – supporters of the Arab Uprisings tend to be male, not elderly, not the poorest, and not the least-educated. Despite national difference, the argument can also be made that corruption and economic issues are more important than political ones for the survey's respondents. However, the 'story line' is more complex than this simple statement would suggest:

- a) There are clear differences between countries. For example, the general economic situation is much less frequently seen as a problem in Iraq and Libya – two relatively affluent countries – than in the rest of developing MENA. However, the level of services that the government provides or facilitates – the 'social wage' – is also important, and respondents were quite capable of separating this from broader economic questions and problems.
- b) The method used to elicit most of the responses was to ask people to name the *two* most important issue or questions or reasons or problems. This is a good way of discovering the salient issues – those most likely to be identified as problems, and our measure of importance here has been whether people selected a given issue as the most or the second most important. That something is not mentioned, or is mentioned by fewer people, does not necessarily mean that it is *unimportant*, however. There can be more than one issue which are important, in which case the respondent has to choose which ones not to mention, or there can be very important issues which are not as *urgent* as the ones nominated

By 2014 a noticeable percentage of 'supporters' (those who took an active part in the protests plus those who supported the process more passively), but nothing like a majority, thought the Arab Uprisings had produced a positive outcome for their country, varying from 14 per cent in Jordan to 4 per cent in Morocco. Egypt and (narrowly) Morocco had majorities who thought the political system had improved over the past five years, but everywhere else a majority said it had declined or was at least no better. Sixty-five per cent of Egyptians were satisfied with the government's performance, but in Morocco and Tunisia only 20-25 per cent expressed satisfaction and in Iraq and Libya it was less than 20 per cent. Mostly, therefore, people are not saying that life in general has improved as a result of the Uprisings. On the contrary, the percentage saying the country's general situation is good fell in every country except Iraq, where virtually everyone said it was not good in the past as well as the present. In some countries the fall in the number saying the situation was good was precipitous: Jordan fell from 65 per cent saying the past was good to less than 20 per cent saying the same about the present; Tunisia fell from more than 50 per cent to less than five.

Four major groups of problems were put forward by substantial proportions of the protest movement's supporters as having been main reasons for their involvement –



corruption, economic issues, political issues and the provision of basic services - and perceived progress with these may be considered separately.

1. *Eradicating corruption in government*: this was the most frequently chosen reason in Libya and Iraq, where economic issues did not loom as large as in the other four countries, and the second most frequent everywhere else. It was nominated in all countries as a main reason for joining the uprising by between 50 and 70 per cent of those who participated or more passively supported the uprising. Although some progress was seen as having been made in tackling corruption, a large majority across the countries think that it is still a significant problem in 2014: over 90 per cent in five of the countries say it is still rife, and 65 per cent in Libya. A bare majority of Egyptians (54%) thought government is making serious attempts to curtail it, 48 per cent in Morocco and 43 per cent in Libya; in the other three countries between 64 and 73 per cent of supporters said that little or no effort was being made.
2. *Economic issues and job provision*: This was the most popular choice in four of the six countries, chosen by 60-70 per cent of supporters; in Iraq and Libya it was lower, at respectively 36 per cent and 20 per cent. In Egypt only 35 per cent expressed dissatisfaction with the way the economy was developing, but in Iraq and Jordan over 60 per cent did so, in Libya 78 per cent and in Morocco and Tunisia around 85 per cent. The national economy is generally seen as having declined in recent years (disastrously so in Tunisia) everywhere except in Iraq, which showed a slight improvement. In four of the six countries a majority said their own household economy had deteriorated, more so in Tunisia and Jordan; Iraq and Morocco were the exceptions. All six countries thought the government's performance at creating jobs was bad – Egypt and Libya the least so and Iraq and Tunisia the most.
3. *Provision of services* was generally picked as a main reason by between 20 and 40 per cent of supporters. Government performance here was seen as good by 50 per cent of Egyptians and over 80 per cent of Jordanians; the worst verdict was Libya's (34%). However, while the provision of education and healthcare was highly rated in Iraq and Jordan, in the other four countries over 70 per cent gave a low rating. Social security provision was praised by 78 per cent of Jordanians, nearly or over 40 per cent of people in Egypt, Iraq, Libya but only around 15 per cent of Moroccans and Tunisians.
4. *Political freedoms and/or an end to authoritarian rule* were picked out as a reason for demonstrating by between 22 per cent of supporters (in Jordan) and 59 per cent in Libya. In Egypt a bare majority said the political system had improved, and a reasonable number in Morocco but it was said to be worse in Jordan, Libya and Tunisia. The situation with regard to rights and the law as said to have improved in Libya, Tunisia and Egypt by a majority of their supporters, but this was said by fewer than a majority in Morocco, Jordan and Iraq. We also note that those that wanted more political freedom

appeared more positive about outcomes than those that supporting the Arab Uprisings because of economic issues.

This there have been some successes, in popular perception. Overall, however, people are tending to see things as having changed for the worse. In particular, economic problems persist – any growth is not giving rise to sufficient jobs to deal with the ‘birth bulge’ – and even in countries where there are fewer ‘straight’ economic problems such as Libya there is concern about under-provision of basic services and the ‘social wage’. Politics was not named as a main reason for protest in comparison with economic issues and corruption, but this does not mean that it is unimportant, as we said above; some improvement has been mentioned, but it is of note that Tunisia, the ‘political success’ among the uprisings, is not one of the countries where this is often said.

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