



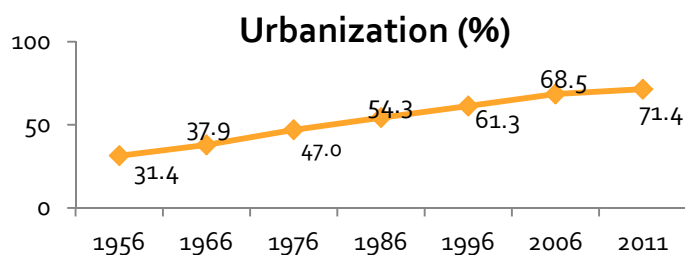
Situation Analysis of Urbanization & Internal Migration in the I.R. Iran

BACKGROUND

Urbanization and internal migration have been recognized as some of the most important determinants of population dynamics and growth in I.R. Iran. Over the last three decades, an average of one million people has annually moved within the borders of the country, with about 71% of the population now residing in urban areas. This number is expected to reach 80% by 2050. Iran does not currently have an integrated and harmonized urbanization and internal migration policy. Municipalities and provincial-level governmental offices have developed regional policies and plans over the past decades, and only ad hoc policies affecting these issues exist, such as a rural development plan, a plan to relocate the capital city, and agricultural development plans.

I.R. Iran is experiencing rapid socio-economic and demographic changes. In collaboration with the Demography Department of the University of Tehran and the Statistical Center of Iran, UNFPA Iran has

conducted an extensive mapping of urbanization and internal migration, as one of four key emerging population issues. The analysis will assist policy and decision-makers to effectively develop national policies and plans in order to cope with the implications of this issue in the country. It will be used in a series of advocacy and policy dialogue meetings with relevant stakeholders to further strengthen the capacity of the government.



KEY FINDINGS

HEALTH

- Prevalence of **communicable and non-communicable diseases** is different among cities and depends on several factors such as population structure and environmental characteristics.
- Ahvaz, with a population of more than 1.3 million, is one of the most polluted cities in the world.
- The situation of **noise pollution** in Tehran is critical and the capital has been recognized as the most noise-polluted city in the country.

ECONOMIC

- In 2012, the **inflation rate in rural areas** (28.6%) was less than in urban areas (33.8%).
- The **unemployment** rate in urban areas (13.8%) is higher than in rural areas (8.2%). The unemployment rate for youth (15-29 years old) in urban areas is also higher than in rural areas.
- **Average expenditure** of households in both urban and rural areas has increased by more than 20% in the past two years. Average annual expenditure is 16m IRR in urban areas and 10m IRR in rural areas.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC

- While **rural-to-urban migration** has shown a downward trend during the past four decades, **urban-to-urban migration** has become more dominant. Lately, Iran has seen a slight reversal in migration trends, with urban to rural migration increasing to 15% of all migrations, higher than rural to urban migrations (13%).
- The top reason for migrating is **employment and economic opportunity**, particularly amongst men (80%). Other main causes for migrating are education, military service, and access to better housing.
- Tehran, Esfahan and Khorasan Razavi provinces are home to the highest proportions of migrants in Iran. App. 380,000 people migrated to **Tehran** between 2006 and 2011. Khuzestan, Kermanshah and East Azerbaijan have the highest negative migration flows.
- The proportion of male migrants (66%) is higher than that of female migrants (44%).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Develop a national policy and strategy** on urbanization and regional migration in Iran, with emphasis on addressing the growing marginalized urban areas.
- Address the lack of **comparative data of the health situation of rural and urban areas** in Iran.
- **Review and revise Iran's rural development programme** to improve the management of rural-urban migration flows.
- Plans to relocate the capital are controversial and **careful analysis** should be conducted of other country experiences in this regard.
- Address the lack of data with regard to **environmental and socio-economic implications of migration and urbanization** in Iran which further in-depth analysis and surveys is crucial.
- Make use **international experience** to further strengthen Iran's response to urbanization and migration.

Dispersion of internal migration patterns in %

