

INPUT TO TORS FOR A SOCIO-ECONOMIC STUDY FOR TAWDIF II, ALGERIA

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Query 51 Question: A review of Terms of Reference for a socio-economic study to support women's economic empowerment in TAWDIFF II: Skilling Youth for Work in Algeria.

The Key Questions are:

- 1. To what extent does the ToR match the objectives of the study that CSSF Algeria is requesting?
- 2. What edits/additions/recommendations can be made to ensure that a planned research study will provide solid evidence on the barriers that Algerian young women face in transitions from education to decent work in the labour market, and identifying strategies to overcome these barriers for ANEM to use in its counselling services so that they are better adapted to the profile of jobseekers?

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Acronyms

ANEM	Agence Nationale de l'Emploi
ANSEJ	Agence nationale de soutien à l'emploi des jeunes
AWEM	Antenne Wilaya de l'Emploi
CREAD	Centre de Recherche en Economie Appliquée pour le Développement-
GEM	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
DFID	Department for International Development
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
ONS	Office National des Statistiques

Summary

This Report responds to a WOW Query related to a proposal to DFID from the ILO to fund the Tawdif II project. Tawdif II will assist the Algerian state job placement agency, ANEM, to improve its placement rate of female university graduate job seekers relative to men. CSSF's view is that Tawdif I did not perform satisfactorily and the proposal needs improvement in this respect. To address this criticism, ILO carried out a gender study in early 2020 (Benmoussa 2020). But this, in turn, was deemed inadequate: it provided information on certain aspects of ANEM's support programmes but did not identify the reasons behind ANEM's poor record in assisting women graduates. ToR have now been drawn up for a second socio-economic study. The Key Questions of this Query are:

- 1. To what extent does the ToR match the objectives of the study that CSSF Algeria is requesting?
- 2. What edits/additions/recommendations can be made to ensure that a planned research study will provide solid evidence on the barriers that Algerian young women face in transitions from education to decent work in the labour market, and identifying strategies to overcome these barriers for ANEM to use in its counselling services so that they are better adapted to the profile of jobseekers?

The answers to these questions are:

Question 1. As they stand, the ToRs for the study will generate useful information. But the scope of the study needs to be made clearer. It is intended to be a socio-economic study with recommendations to enable ANEM to overcome gender-based barriers. Accordingly, the ToR need to be modified to broaden data collection and analysis, including investigation of measures used by businesses seeking to overcome gender biases in their recruitment practices, as follows:¹

- It needs to be expanded to demonstrate an understanding of the causes of gender discriminatory outcomes in the Algerian labour market so that ANEM can develop activities to address the problem (Comments C5, C8)
- It needs to extend the range of interviewees and the scope of its interviews to enable a more nuanced understanding of the factors behind gender discriminatory outcomes (Comments C9, C15, C18, C20)
- It needs to drop references to entrepreneurial support, which are currently unclear and unsatisfactory (or the proposal needs to be revised to address this issue properly). (C2)

Question 2. Edits/additions/recommendations to the ToRs are set out as marginal comments to that document. They are intended to ensure that the resulting study is informed by a better understanding of the underlying challenges to improving job placement of female graduates. Only by understanding and addressing the real challenges, will ANEM be able to make effective gender-sensitive interventions. As the Question suggests, this requires an examination of the barriers that Algerian young women face in their transition to employment. The Report argues that the barriers are of different kinds, related to mismatches in the qualifications of job seekers and the skills demanded by employers; as well as problems on the supply and demand side. Social norms and attitudes about women's place in the labour market are at the root of gender bias in employment in Algeria. They shape individuals' preferences and expectations on both supply and demand sides. The study should gather information to verify (or disprove) this diagnosis, and, if proved, it will encourage ANEM to address social norms among job seekers, their families and employers. Some ways of overcoming

¹ The main comments to the ToR related to each of these points are noted in brackets. The remaining comments to the ToR are self-explanatory edits and suggestions.

employers norms-based gender biases in female recruitment, in other settings are described. Staff at ILO Headquarters should certainly be aware of these issues and could also be requested to support the design and delivery of the socio-economic study.

The context: female labour force participation and unemployment in Algeria

he female labour force participation rate in Algeria is the lowest in the Arab region (14.6% in 2019) and one of the lowest in the world. It has changed little over the past decade (see Table 1). However, there have been important changes in the labour force status of young women (16-24 years). The proportion in employment has declined, the proportion in education and training has risen; most notably, the share in unemployment has risen dramatically (by 35%)² (see Table 2).

The rate of unemployment among young women is 49.9% compared to 22.3% for men.³ The level of youth unemployment in North Africa is one of the highest in the world and considered a major challenge for development in the region. The increased shares of women in education and training, and of unemployment, suggests that women are increasingly ambitious to find employment and earn income. Unemployment is a form of queueing for work and participants in vocational training and placement schemes receive a stipend as well as support to find employment. In 2013, 19.2% of females aged 16-24 yrs with tertiary education were unemployed, compared to 9.4% of males (Lassassi and Hammouda 2014).

The inability of the Algerian economy to generate jobs for one quarter of young men, and half of young women, testifies to underlying structural challenges as well as a systemic bias against women as workers. The disparity between, on the one hand, rapid increase in women's educational attainment, and, on the other, stagnation in women's engagement in the labour market and high rates of unemployment, is often referred to as the 'MENA paradox' (Kabeer 2020).

Tawdif II priorities and ToRs for a study of the barriers facing young women job seekers

While job placement agencies, such as ANEM, cannot solve the underlying structural problem of mass unemployment, they aim to help reduce mismatches between education and employment (Nilsson 2019). They can also seek to improve the probability of finding employment for particular sub-groups of the population which are otherwise disadvantaged in their job search.

² Publicly available, comparative labour force data for Algeria is sparse although informality is discussed by Benhabib and Adair (2017) among others. For instance, a global review of informal employment by the ILO (2018) includes no data for Algeria. Also note data inconsistencies in Table 1 between rows 11, 12 and others.

 $^{^3}$ According to the ToR for the study. ILO data gives 46.3% for women and 26.2% for men in 2019. See Table 1.

Tawdif II aims to support women graduates' transition to employment in Algeria by improving the services provided by the main job placement service, ANEM. In 2013, approximately half (55%) of all unemployed people in Algeria registered with job support agencies, including ANEM, to find work (ONS 2013). Women are much more dependent than men on ANEM for finding employment (Lassassi and Hammouda 2014). As the potential funder of the Tawdif II project, CSSF has urged the project proposer, ILO, to carry out a second gender study⁴, better conceived than a previous effort (Benmoussa 2020), to inform the project design and improve ANEM's offer to female graduates. The present report is intended to assist CSSF to optimise the design of the new study and enable CSSF to assess the product, and gender-sensitive revisions to Tawdif II.

This Query includes two key questions:

- 1. To what extent does the ToR match the objectives of the study that CSSF Algeria is requesting?
- 2. What edits/additions/recommendations can be made to ensure that the research study is designed to provide solid evidence on the barriers that Algerian young women face in transitions from education to decent work in the labour market and identifying strategies to overcome these barriers for ANEM to use in its counselling services so that they are better adapted to the profile of jobseekers?

Tawdif II will continue the Tawdif I focus on ANEM clients with tertiary education⁵. Six universities are also included in the project activities, spread across northern Algeria and with one in the south region.

Job quality is raised as an issue in this Query. Decent jobs are usually defined as 'formal' jobs that are based on a contract and confer social security (non-wage benefits) or both. It can be assumed that ANEM deals only with formal employers. Furthermore, over the period 1997-2007 almost all job placements by ANEM have been with the public sector: 95% of placements for men and 98% for women (Lassassi and Hammouda, 2014). Of those placements, however, the majority were in non-permanent positions: 68% for men and 72% for women (ibid). This is certainly an indication of job quality. The jobs presumably had a contractual basis and were relatively well paid but social security benefits may or may not have been attached. Those placements mirror the general situation. There was a large increase in the ratio of non-permanent to permanent jobs in the public administration over the period 1997-2007⁶; indeed that category of jobs expanded more than any other job category (Lassassi and Hammouda 2014). Even if more of ANEM's job placements since 2007 have been with the private sector, it seems unlikely that ANEM, as a state agency, would deal with informal (unregistered) employers. There should be a concern, however, that employers might place job seekers in 'undeclared' posts, whose job quality must be suspect. By 2007, undeclared workers outnumbered declared workers in the private sector by 3:1 (Lassassi and Hammouda, 2014).

Entrepreneurial support measures are invoked in the proposal in a minimal way. In the ToR, the state agency ANSEJ that provides entrepreneurial support, primarily with micro-credit, is mentioned only once. Entrepreneurial support interventions can, in principle, be very important in the context of high unemployment. They address deficiency of labour demand by encouraging job seekers to create their own employment and become self-employed and, in the best-case scenario, employers. Entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship are highly regarded in Algeria, which is also the only country in

⁴ "Réalisation d'une Etude Socio-Economique sur le Genre dans la recherche d'emploi et le recrutement".

⁵ This focus may not be consistent with wider gender equality and social inclusion objectives, but is a given in the present exercise.

⁶ There was a similar but smaller, related shift in the private sector, in terms of the relative shares of undeclared and declared employees (Lassassi and Hammoud 2014, Table 6).

the region where youth prefer self-employment to working in the public sector⁷. The level of female entrepreneurship is higher in North Africa than other Arab countries (OECD and IDRC, 2013; GEM, 2009 and 2011). But the number of start-ups and established small businesses in Algeria proportional to population is lower, and business failures (discontinuations) are more frequent (GEM 2009 and 2011). Studies of the determinants of enterprise formation and growth (or close) shows that employment experience is an important factor; thus the exceptionally low rate of female employment in the region is likely to also be a drag on entrepreneurial activity (GEM, 2009 and 2011; OECD and IDRC, 2013). Many entrepreneurial support programmes for women exist worldwide (Stevenson, 2010), and the ILO is a key service provider in this field. They focus on well understood gender-based barriers, and tailor business development support services to improve women's management skills and their access to information, business networks and finance. It is recommended that Tawdif II pay serious attention to gender barriers in this area. At the moment the TORs pay passing reference to ANSEF so the study should either drop all references in this area or treat the topic seriously.

3. Barriers faced by young women graduates and implication for Tawdif II interventions

The determinants of gender discrimination against young women job seekers in Algeria are not well understood. The literature suggests that several types of determinants are involved.

3.1. Mismatch

A mismatch between employers' needs and the skills of school leavers and university graduates is the usual rationale for the existence of job placement programmes such as ANEM. The reasons for mismatch may be higher expectations, reservation wages, or queuing on the part of new entrants to the labour market; women generally experience longer transitions in the labour market (Nilsson, 2019). Disparities are growing in Algeria between job seekers' expectations and job offers, and between skills on offer and demanded by employers (Lassassi and Hammouda, 2014). The quality of education in the MENA region is poor in international terms (World Bank 2008; Abdel Ahad and Tzannatos 2016). Tzannatos et al (2016) suggest that skills and experience may not be valued much in the Arab labour markets because they rely on credentialism in the public sector and employ basic production techniques in the private sector.

Overall, women are more qualified than men among Algerian youth. In 2017 women accounted for 64% of university graduates. There is some gender imbalance by subject qualification, but the effect is not severe. The lowest shares of women graduates were in technology, veterinary and applied sciences, but women accounted for one third or more of graduates in all cases (Benmoussa 2020). Whether or not the subject qualifications of female graduates are a worse match than men's to employers' requirements is not known.

⁷ Corruption is believed to be rife in the public sector, and access to it is believed to depend on connections rather than merit (CREAD 2020). It is also cited as the major problem for businesses, especially for small enterprises (Lassassi and Hammouda 2015).

3.2. Supply side issues and norms

These involve not only qualifications but preferences on the part of job seekers and the influence of social norms.

An evaluation of Tawdif 1 reported that ANEM staff state (without details) that women were 'picky' i.e. over-selective in their response to possible job offers; data on uptake of job offers by gender, however, showed that their rate of acceptance of job placements was in fact higher (Benmoussa, 2020). This may not be a contradiction if women's preferences are respected by ANEM before offers are presented to them. Women have a stronger preference than men for public sector employment and greater distaste for private sector jobs. This is partly for economic reasons (greater social security entitlements, job security and higher wages in the public sector) (Kabeer et al 2020)⁸ and partly for social reasons (respectability and personal security) (CREAD n.d.) and as an acceptable pathway into the public domain (Kabeer et al 2020). The strength of gender norms about the propriety of different labour market options may require them to bring 'reservation conditions', relating to hours of work, maternity leave provision, transportation to work and other factors, as well as 'reservation wages' to their job search, making them indeed seem 'picky'. Women's preference for public sector employment could become problematic if ANEM extends it engagement with private sector employers, without addressing social values.

Social attitudes in Arab countries tend to accept equal 'civic rights' for women, but not gender equality in relation to roles in the economy (Robbins and Thomas, 20189). However, the concept of 'civic rights' is limited: it does not extend to women's rights over mobility and decision-making within the household. Women's autonomy is curtailed in both respects and associated with gendered social values about socio-economic roles. Men are seen as responsible for the material support of the family and women's search for a job is seen to compete with and undermine men's ability to fulfil this role. The great majority (87%) of young men in Algeria (and 69% of young women) believe, by extension, that, "when there is not a lot of work, men should have more right to employment than women" (CREAD n.d,). Only 57% of Algerian men believe that married women can work outside the home (more women have this view) (CREAD n.d., reporting on a large, one-time youth survey¹⁰). Marriage is indeed associated with greatly reduced labour force participation for women (Lassassi and Hammouda 2014). Most women (68% of women aged 15-49 years) think that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstances (UNICEF 2011); this can be interpreted as a means of enforcing norms about women's autonomy and employment. A study in Egypt (Assaad et al, 2014) found that a lower educational level of young women's fathers is associated with stronger belief in the absolute primacy of women's domestic role.

It is known that 88% of women in Algeria aged 16-29 live with their parents (CREAD n.d.). Young women are thus highly likely to be tightly constrained by such attitudes. Information on the family circumstances of ANEM women clients is not available from the Tawdif project documents and needs to be collected for the new study. It also needs to research tools and techniques that have been developed to address discriminatory social norms. These include small group discussions with job

⁸ ONS crude wage data shows higher average wages in the public than the private sector in Algeria, but needs to be controlled for occupation and sector of activity as well as worker characteristics. In addition, there is a strong perception among youth that the public sector is corrupt and that access to jobs depends more on connections than merit (CREAD n.d.).

⁹ This is based on the findings of the Arab Barometer, a close equivalent of the World Values Survey for the Arab world.

¹⁰ This is the SAHWA youth survey, a project financed by the EU. See http://www.sahwa.eu/OUTPUTS/SAHWA-Policy-Reports-ISSN-2564-9159/SAHWA-Youth-Survey-2016-Questionnaire

applicants and their families and with employers to soften discriminatory attitudes; working with 'male champions' can be effective in this context.

3.3. The demand side

The Tawdif II project will need to have information on the characteristics of new jobs, in terms of the evolution of the economic structure in general, the nature of new industries and lines of business in the private sector, as well as the distribution of occupations on offer. The increase in the number of private sector jobs from 1997 to 2007 was almost identical to the increase in public sector jobs (Lassassi and Hammouda, 2014: Table 6). Nevertheless, as noted, job placements by ANEM for both men and women graduates have been almost completely with the public sector; more recent data is needed.

Benmoussa (2020) states that the law prohibiting shift work for women has had a strong negative effect on women's job opportunities. It may be that this demand restriction has reinforced ANEM's placement of women graduates almost exclusively in the public administration (although, as noted, the share is also extremely high for male graduates). If so, ANEM may consider making representations to policymakers to change the law in this respect¹¹, as many countries have done.

Detailed information is needed on modern, particularly IT-based activities including in business services and modern consumer products (video games etc.) and on green economy jobs, which need to be defined¹². Leading sectors of this kind, where gender norms are less entrenched, may be more open to taking on female graduates¹³. One comparative study, which covers Algeria, gives the gender breakdown of business owners in sub-sectors (40), using a novel dataset from the Future of Business Survey (Goldstein et al 2019). If the raw data were accessible, the situation in Algeria could be analysed. Women stand to gain by taking jobs in male-dominated sectors, where wages are higher by virtue of segregation in the labour market (ibid). Another study identifies professions at the 'frontiers of the new economy', using a very fine classification derived from data from the Linked-In website (WEF 2020); this shows that worldwide, the share of women in employment differs very little from their share in the talent pipeline.

Employers are no less subject to gendered social norms than other members of the population. A number of specific tools and techniques have been developed to address gender discrimination in hiring (Bohnet, 2016; Humbert et al, 2019). The objective is to persuade employers to open up to talent rather than connections, and to recognise and overcome unconscious biases. A study of gender bias in recruitment to accountancy firms in Algeria showed that employer bias against women applicants is not absolute and not applied in all situations, and by extension that the gender composition of sector workforces can change (Cédiey et al, 2007; Benhabib and Adair, 2017). Anonymising CVs and aptitude test results to disguise the gender of applicants can be effective. Private sector employers can be persuaded to offer probation or apprenticeships to women, which often result in subsequent full hires when women are proven to be effective on the job, against employers' expectations. ANEM can adopt such techniques and share them in its interactions with employers to improve job offers to women on the demand side.

¹¹ The World Bank Group's <u>Women, Business and the Law</u> reports itemise labour and other laws with gender discriminatory effects https://wbl.worldbank.org/

¹² UNEP has a clear definition.

¹³ An earlier (2016) confidential study led by PWC for FCO in Jordan, in which the author was involved, revealed a vibrant video games industry and a gender balanced graduate level workforce in call centres.

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ANNEX 1

Table 1 Algeria: Labour force by gender and age, 2009-201914

Algeria (except row 1: Arab world)	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1. Arab World female labour force participation rate											
15yrs+	20.7	20.8	20.9	21.1	21.4	21.4	21.3	21.4	20.8	20.7	20.8
Algeria:											
2. Female labor force participation rate 15yrs+	14.2	14.4	15.2	16.1	16.9	15.3	15.2	15.0	14.8	14.6	14.6
3. Male labor force participation rate 15yrs+	69.7	70	69.4	68.9	70.2	67.4	67.4	67.5	67.6	67.6	67.4
4. Female unemployment rate 15yrs+	18.1	19.1	17.1	17.0	16.3	15.6	16.7	18.6	21.1	21.1	21.1
5. Male unemployment rate 15yrs+	8.6	8.1	8.4	9.6	8.3	9.0	10.0	8.3	10.0	9.3	9.7
6. Male youth LF participation rate (15-24 yrs)	48.0	46.6	45.3	44.0	45.5	42.9	42.9	42.8	42.7	42.4	41.8
7. Male youth unemployment rate (15-24 yrs)	19.2	18.9	19.9	24.9	21.8	22.6	26.7	22.1	26.6	26.6	26.2
8. Female youth LF participation rate (15-24yrs)	8.5	9.2	9.7	10.3	10.3	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.7	8.4
9. Female youth unemployment rate (15-24 yrs)	34.8	37.4	35.1	39.1	39.9	39.1	44.9	43.3	45.3	45.2	46.3
10. Female youth NEET %	40						32.1		31.8		
11.Female employment: population ratio 15-24 yrs					6.0						
12. Male employment: population ratio 15-24 yrs					35.5						

Source: ILO modelled estimates at World Bank database at data.worldbank.org; rows 11 and 12, Lassassi and Hammouda 2014.

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¹⁴ Algeria rows 2-12. For regional comparison, row 1 gives the female labours force participation for the Arab world as a whole.

Table 2: Distribution of female population 16-24 years, by labour force status, 2009-2015.

	2009	2015	2019	Change in share 2009-2019 (%)
In the Labour Force, of which	8.5	8.8	8.8	+4%
employed	5.54	4.85		-13%
			4.81	
unemployed	2.96	3.95		+35%
			3.99	
In education or training	51.50	59.1	59.4	+15%
NEET *	40	32.1	31.8	-20%
TOTAL	100	100	100	

Source: calculated from Table 1

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^{*}NEET – not in employment, education or training