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Rethinking informal economy in the Arab region: A human rights- based approach

Amman, Jordan – 16-18 April 2013

Workshop Report

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Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to the realization of this workshop. Particular thanks go to¹:

Abid Briki, Alia Al-Dali, Eman Hamoudi Abdel-Rahman, Frank Hagemann, Guy Tchami, Hadi Assaf, Hanan Rhimi, Kalil Cherry, Karima Boudrouaz, Mansour Omeira, Mary Kavar, Saleh El-Kafri, Soumia Khalfi, Randa Abed Rabbou, Rawand al-Madmouj, Simel Esim and Ursula Kulke for their precious technical contributions. A great level of appreciation is due to Farah Dakhallallah and Nisreen Abou-Ragheb for their support with all media and communications related matters.

Special thanks also goes to ILO and UNDP logistics support team, including Hadeel Saadeh, Penelope Shawkatly, and Wala'a Ababneh

This workshop would have not been possible without the wealth of knowledge shared by all participants to whom the organizers are very thankful.

This report is a collaborative effort of ILO and UNDP. It has been prepared by Emanuela Pozzan, Marwan Abi Samra, Mitra Motlagh, and Shaza Ghaleb Al-Jondi. Lots of appreciation is due to Mary Kavar and Ursula Kulke for their technical inputs and to Henrietta Wilkins for editorial support.

¹ All names mentioned in this section are listed in alphabetical order by first name.

Introduction

The pro-market reforms introduced in the Arab region since the 1980s have failed to generate decent jobs and quality social services. They were deficient in that they increased fiscal burdens through economic mismanagement and resulted in slow productivity growth, low competitiveness, and limited promotion of gender equality.

The turmoil created by the Arab uprisings since late 2010 will affect the region for years to come. The revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen have not only led to significant, ongoing political transitions but they have also brought about severe economic challenges with energy and food costs rising, particularly in non-oil-exporting countries, as well as the loss of income in key economic sectors such as tourism. As a result, governments have imposed austerity measures that have particularly affected spending on social services and protection and increased unemployment.

The rent-based economies and the marginalization of productive activities and sectors to the benefit of speculative activities, together with the increasing flexibility of labour markets at global and local levels have led to a rise in informal employment around the world, including in Arab states. While the rise in the informal economy may have afforded the governments some short-term relief by absorbing and sustaining many of the job seekers, employment under these conditions does not provide basic economic, social and legal security and protection. Existing policies and legal frameworks have failed to include the provisions required to protect workers' rights, set minimum wages and promote decent working conditions for all; hence adding to the sense of injustice. This condition is further aggravated among those people, such as workers employed in the informal economy, who have been outside the realm of labour and social security legislation, and who in turn have been denied their basic social, economic, and legal rights, many of who are women.

Given the shrinking public sector employment options in the economies of the region since the 1990s and the slow gains in viable private sector alternatives, most of the economies are now facing growing informality in employment where women and men entering the labour force throughout the region are flocking to the informal economy. A majority of the working population in Arab states are involved in unorganized and, unprotected forms of work and self-employment. This is for several reasons, including the fact that workers' unions are either not authorized or not able to function in an autonomous way, and are thus unable to advance labour and workers' rights. This is because the political context in many countries remains non-conducive of healthy social dialogue.

Informality of employment in the region also has a unique gender dimension. Women in informal employment in the region are more likely to be contributing family workers than own-account workers, in contrast with other regions.

Rationale

Against this backdrop the ILO Regional Office for Arab States and the UNDP Regional Centre in Cairo organized a regional workshop entitled "Rethinking Informal Economy in the Arab Region: a Human Rights-Based Approach", that took place in Amman, Jordan from 16 to 18 April 2013.²

The workshop was a result of extensive consultation between the two agencies and was informed by both their mandates and the key priorities of the regional United Nations Development Group

² For more details see Annex 1: Workshop Concept Note

strategy and action plan (August 2011). More specifically it built on the work of both agencies in the following areas:

- The UNDP Legal Empowerment of the Poor (LEP) initiative which was established in 2008 with the aim of promoting: access to justice and the rule of law, property rights, labour rights, and business rights with a focus on informality.
- The ILO regional initiative on gender equality and workers' rights in collaboration with Centre of Arab Woman for Training and Research (CAWTAR) (2007-2010). This initiative, funded by the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC), aimed to mainstream Arab states into the current global thinking on informal employment using a perspective of gender equality and workers' rights.

Moreover, the workshop is one in a series of regional, country and thematic consultations that the ILO is organizing to disseminate and foster dialogue around the recently published ILO-UNDP report "Rethinking Economic Growth: Towards Productive and Inclusive Arab Societies" (2013).

Objectives

- Lay the groundwork for the establishment of a regional community of practice on informality of employment in Arab states that is evidence and rights based;
- Identify priority areas of action for increased accountability, collective action, and the empowerment of civil society actors to promote innovative solutions to support the realization of rights for people engaged in the informal economy;
- Identify priority areas of action for advancing the knowledge base on informal employment in the region including statistics; and
- Explore potential areas for joint action and better coordination of initiatives for improving the situation of workers in the informal economy, including legal inclusion, social protection, representation and organising a collective voice.

Participants and Format

The workshop served as a good opportunity to bring together around 45 academics, workers, governments, employers and human rights activists as well as representatives from civil society and national statistical offices, and from international organizations from eight countries in the MENA region, namely Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), Tunisia and Yemen (see Annex 1 List of Participants).

The format of the workshop included sessions with panels elaborating on selected topics with presenters and moderators engaging in open dynamic discussion with all participants. On the last day, participants were divided into working groups to identify and discuss key areas of intervention and recommendations for the way forward. At the end, participants were asked to evaluate the workshop while highlighting strengths and weaknesses as well as lessons learnt.

Sessions Highlights

9.00 – 10.00	Opening - H.E. Ibrahim Saif, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan
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	- H.E. Jawad Annani, President of the Economic and Social Council, Jordan - Ms Alia Al-Dali, Manager of UNDP Regional Centre in Cairo (RCC) - Mr Frank Hagemann, Deputy Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS)
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All keynote speakers emphasised the importance and timeliness of addressing the informal economy in the Arab region in the overall context of moving towards a new development model that is inclusive, sustainable and firmly rooted in social justice. The speakers also noted that while the growth of the informal economy is very much pronounced in the Arab region, it is a worldwide phenomenon that is receiving increased attention at the global level. Moreover, the link between growth in the informal economy and increased poverty and inequality levels in many countries was also highlighted in the opening session.

While Arab countries are looking at sound socio-economic policies that take into consideration the evolving situation in the region, the ILO and UNDP took this opportunity to keep the issue of the informal economy high on the agenda. Addressing informality through a human rights and workers' rights based approach would allow better understanding of the phenomenon and more effective tools to address it. Of importance in this process is the role of employers' and workers' organizations that need to expand their membership to become more inclusive of workers in the informal economy, including migrant workers. This can be done by establishing alliances with civil society. Of importance in this analysis is the relationship between informality and poverty that deserves particular attention when developing poverty reduction strategies and addressing the social and economic rights of the poor. It is particularly relevant to the pursuit of MDG 1 (poverty), which encompasses both poverty reduction and decent work related targets.

The international community can play a catalytic role in building a platform and trust between governments, employers' and workers' organizations, and civil society organizations. It should support governments in integrating more analysis on social protection into gender-responsive surveys. They would enable them to identify national partners, including women's organizations, to work closely with them on gender equality and workers' rights. Finally, community level initiatives have to be a part of creating a conducive environment with citizenship rights, to organize the unorganized, and to support linking up with constituencies to make their voices heard, particularly the voices of women who are often absent from leadership positions at local and national levels in governments, and workers' and employers' organizations.

In the Jordanian context, H.E. Dr Ibrahim Saif, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, and Dr Jawad Annani, President of the Economic and Social Council, shed light on the recently published study of the informal economy in Jordan. According to the study, both speakers indicated that in recent years the phenomenon of the informal economy has become a major concern in Jordan whereby it employs as much as 44 per cent of the Jordanian labour force. While some still consider informal employment a better option than unemployment, Dr Saif argued that this type of employment increases the vulnerability of workers as it denies them some of the most fundamental labour rights, including access to social security.

In response, the government has prioritized this issue and is planning to implement initiatives that would lead to organizing this sector and preventing it from expanding further. Dr Saif specifically highlighted their planned initiatives to promote public-private partnerships, particularly in the area of vocational and technical education and training. This would result in improving the skills base among workers; hence improving their employability and increasing their chances of being employed by the private sector. Additional initiatives include supporting business start-ups, particularly for youth and women. Moreover, he indicated that one additional priority for the

government in addressing the expansion of the informal economy is to improve the legislative framework and issue a comprehensive social security law that would cover all workers.

10.30-11:30	Rethinking economic growth: Towards productive and inclusive Arab societies – presentation of the ILO-UNDP Report 2013, Mary Kavar, Senior Regional Employment Policies Specialist, ILO ROAS
11.30 – 13.30	Informality in the Arab region: Looking for common ground - Political economy of informality: the need for a new development paradigm, Marwan Abi –Samra, Governance Team Leader, UNDP RCC - “Rethinking informality in the Arab region after the uprisings” Presentation of recent ILO work, Mansour Omeira, ILO Consultant Open discussion

This session presented an overview of the socio-economic situation in the Arab region over the past 30 years leading up to the recent uprisings. The three speakers provided economic and social data and trends related to the performance of the region and highlighted key characteristics of the labour market, failures, and missed opportunities.

In his presentation on the informal economy and the need for a new development model, Marwan Abi Samra first highlighted the fact that the high level of unemployment, affecting particularly youth and women, only partially reflects the deep employment crisis in Arab countries. This is because this crisis is characterised by: (i) a decrease in unemployment in North Africa in the last decade resulting from a dramatic increase in illegal emigration from Morocco, and from large scale employment subsidy schemes in Algeria; (ii) the labour force participation rate in the region (the lowest in the world) stagnating and even decreasing in several countries; and (iii) most importantly, the incapacity of Arab economies to create decent jobs which has mainly been reflected in the systematic expansion of informal and vulnerable employment.

While the incapacity to create decent employment and the expansion of informality are sometimes attributed to the low quality of education and the mismatch between educational outcomes and market demand, Marwan Abi Samra argued against this hypothesis. He explained that the limited labour demand for educated workers and skills was fundamentally a demand-side problem that is closely associated with the rent-based structure of the economies which inhibits fixed capital investment and productivity growth. Compared to other regions that have experienced healthy economic structural transformations that created decent jobs, the oil and rent-based patterns of development at the expense of productive sectors have perpetuated a structural economic retardation in the Arab region (stagnating shares of agricultural and manufacturing sectors and a rapidly expanding service sector concentrated mainly in low value-added activities). This has rendered the region as the least industrialized among developing regions and has created a situation in which high productivity and decent jobs are scarce.

Marwan Abi Samra also highlighted that this development failure was largely due to a fundamental and deep governance failure, i.e. the acquisition and transformation of the state and its institutions into tools to serve the interests of political and economic elites who, in turn, control core assets and resources. In this context, he concluded that, in order to face the employment challenge, Arab countries must move away from the prevailing rent-based political economy model to a developmental state model premised on a new social contract of mutual accountability capable of promoting investments in productive sectors and of creating decent jobs.

Mary Kavar, ILO Senior Regional Employment Policies Specialist, unpacked the recent ILO-UNDP report when she looked into the relation between economic growth, and employment outcomes in the region. She emphasized that regional development models are characterized by the prevalence of rent-seeking activities which have failed to address employment challenges, particularly those related to young people and women, despite the high level of education attained. She explained that the economic reforms which have taken place in the region during the past decade or so were not inclusive and proved to be unsustainable. She stressed that economic growth needs to be balanced and to create jobs and social services of the quality and quantity required to provide women and men and their families with security and dignity. What happened nevertheless is that policies led to the concentration of job creation in low productivity sectors with low wages, the expansion of the informal economy, the deterioration of quality in public services and growth which was not equally distributed and benefited a few.

She stressed that compared to other regions, Arab states have the lowest level of expenditure on all aspects of social protection. The rate of unprotected employment for women is significantly higher than it is for men and has showed an increase in the past decade. She also pointed out that only a few countries have incorporated informal employment modules in their labour force and establishment surveys while others have conducted informal economy surveys though sporadically or only recently. Moreover, very few countries also have specific policies to address informal employment in the region.

All of the above is within a context where governmental policy making is opaque with very limited accountability and with a big deficit in social dialogue. She concluded by stating that in the Arab region economic reform should be linked with political reform and that more inclusive growth is characterized by diversification of production, regulation of migration, expansion of social protection and promotion of equitable redistribution of the benefits of economic growth.

Mansour Omeira, ILO consultant, guided the audience through the findings of his recent paper "Rethinking informality in light of the Arab uprisings", where he argued that the regional dominant policy mindset has pushed for economic growth as the central aim of economic policy, and has accordingly led to changes in policy and institutions in line with that stated aim, under the assumption that the benefits of economic growth would trickle down to the population and lead to the generation of decent employment opportunities. However, the economic growth performance of the region since the 1990s has failed to generate the expected outcomes. Not only did employment opportunities fail to grow sufficiently as the region witnessed 'jobless growth', income inequality increased and employment grew more informal. Moreover, while policies pushed for the shrinking of the public sector and a shift to more production in the private sector, employment opportunities for women diminished forcing them into precarious and unprotected forms of employment including self-employment.

Mansour Omeira criticized the popular micro-credit/entrepreneurship development approach for reducing poverty especially among women. He argued that gender equality should be addressed at the macroeconomic policy level, rather than at the microeconomic level. He argued that this piecemeal approach of fostering an 'entrepreneurship culture' did not take into account the complexity of various situations. As it concerns women targeted by these micro-solutions, they often used the funds for consumption purposes, and had to bear an increased debt burden, while new micro-businesses typically could not compete, and in fact often out-competed each other.³

3 For this process in the case of Lebanon, Abdo and Kerbage, 2012, "Women's entrepreneurship development initiatives in Lebanon: Micro-achievements and macro-gaps", *Gender & Development*.

Mansour Omeira also stressed that the link between informality and productivity has not been properly explored. It is often claimed that informality is mainly found in low productivity activities, and that increasing productivity and formality are closely intertwined. But this assertion can hardly be reconciled with another assertion, namely that the public sector is the most formal but also typically criticized for its low productivity. This suggests that while there may be a correlation between low productivity and informality, the relationship is not clear-cut, as raising productivity without adequate institutional frameworks does not need to translate into more formality.

Finally, Mansour Omeira touched upon issues related to data and the measurement of informality in the region. Still to date, there is confusion over the definition of “the informal economy”. The International Labour Conference in 2002 defined informal economy as “all economic activities by workers and economic units that are, in law or in practice, not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements”. In simple words, informal economy is not only about the economic unit but it is also about the characteristics of the job. This has important implications on the way the informal economy is measured and work is valued. For example, unpaid care workers are the largest single occupational group in the Arab region but they are hardly measured or taken into account.

14.30 – 16.30	Country case studies - oPt (ILO) - Saleh El Kafri, ILO Consultant - Yemen (ILO) – Mansour Omeira, ILO Consultant - Jordan - Orooba Sabbagh (UNDP) - Morocco - Hayat Benayad (Statistical Division- Haut Commissariat au Plan Morocco) - Egypt (AUC) – Alia El Mahdi Moderator: Emanuela Pozzan, Senior Regional Gender Specialist, ILO ROAS Open discussion
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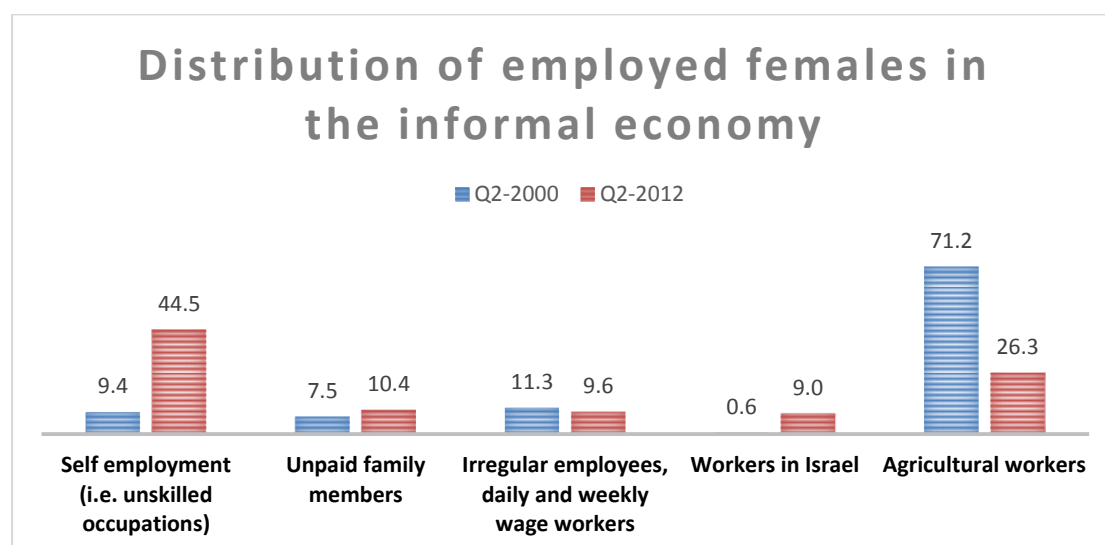
Occupied Palestinian territory: Case study

Saleh El-Kafri from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics shared some highlights on recent statistical work carried out in the oPt on measuring informality. He stressed the fact that the majority of Palestinian workers are engaged in informal employment – which further limits their access to social security and health insurance, occupational safety and health measures, and working conditions regulations. He indicated that the total amount of informal employment (male and female) declined while formal employment increased between 2006 and 2012. Nonetheless, there remains a persistently high level of unpaid care work in which more than half of the female population is engaged. In general, the female labour force participation rate (LFPR) increased from 14.6 per cent in 2006 to 16.6 per cent in 2011 and women remain mainly employed in the service and government sectors.

Saleh El-Kafri then moved into a deeper analysis of the dimension of informality among women. In 2012, 60 per cent of females aged 15 and above were “vulnerable and insecure workers/people”, 7.3 per cent were employed in the formal sector, around 5 per cent were employed in the informal economy, and 27.6 per cent were outside the labour force. Female employment in the formal economy increased significantly from 51 per cent in 2000 to 60 per cent in 2012. Informal employment among females declined from around 48 per cent to 40 per cent.

The presenter further explained the distribution of female employment within the informal economy, which changed significantly between 2000 and 2012. Most female employment in the

informal economy was concentrated in agriculture in 2000 (71 per cent). By 2012, the share of women in agriculture had dropped to 26 per cent and the share of self-employed women had increased from 9.4 per cent in 2000 to 44.5 per cent.



Yemen: A country case study

Mansour Omeira presented a short paper on the socio-economic insecurity in Yemen focusing on the informal economy. He elaborated policy priorities to advance national capacity for socio-economic development in line with the aspirations of women and men, particularly the youth who took collective action in support of freedom, dignity, and social justice during the uprisings.⁴ According to Omeira's findings, the informal economy in Yemen is largely synonymous with micro- and small enterprises in the private sector. In other words, levels of self-employment in Yemen are too high, making up more than 38 per cent of total employment for women and men. About 93 per cent of self-employment in Yemen is informal, mainly because labour and social legislation is based on the model of a male breadwinner in protected full-time employment, which is far from national reality. In fact, even in waged employment the majority of jobs are informal: 59 per cent for men and 49 per cent for women. A main reason is that more than a third of wage employment jobs are casual, seasonal, or temporary. Agricultural employment represents a larger share of women's employment (35 per cent) than men's (29 per cent), and is essentially informal.

However, a more comprehensive picture takes into account the work that an individual performs even when it is not counted as employment, particularly unpaid household service which includes unpaid care work and unpaid housework. The recognition that individuals reported to be homemakers are workers leads to a different statistical picture: women become the majority of working persons rather than being less than 10 per cent. This is because the majority of women are reported to be homemakers, whereas it is the category with the fewest men. The family responsibilities of homemakers impede upon their access to employment, typically leaving them without an independent income and with access to social protection mainly as dependants.

Omeira concluded that for Yemen to shift from non-employment and informality towards a path of full employment and decent work there needs to be a transformation of socio-economic thought, policies, and institutions, with a focus on three priority areas: expansion of social security,

⁴ Alwazir (2012) discusses prospects for the fulfilment of youth aspirations.

promotion of better social dialogue and employment policies, and participation of people in shaping the development of the country.⁵

Jordan: Country case studies

Orooba Sabbagh presented the two recently published studies on the informal economy in Jordan entitled: “The Informal Sector in the Jordanian Economy” and “The Panoramic Study of the Informal Sector in Jordan”. The former was a diagnostic study that measured the informal economy in the Jordanian economy based on the Jordanian Labour Market Panel Survey 2010 and showcased the main activities that have a large concentration of informality. The latter on the other hand served to provide more of a qualitative dimension to informality in Jordan.

The study specifically aimed to: i) Provide a qualitative dimension to informality in Jordan, (ii) Define the factors that drive and motivate the informal economy, (iii) Define who from the various segments of society are most affected by informality, (iv) Focus on the relation between informality and both youth and women, (v) Test the links and relations between informality and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) operation, (vi) Show which sectors are most effected by informality - how and why, (viii) Showcase the regions in Jordan that demonstrate high rates of informality.

According to the diagnostic study, in 2010 informal employment stood at around 44 per cent of the total employment in the Jordanian economy, and the percentage of informal employment in the private sector reached 55 per cent of the total employment in this sector. Furthermore, in 2010 the percentage of informal employment amongst working males stood at around 23 per cent compared to about 15 per cent for working females. This is in line with findings from other countries in the region that have shown that the formal public sector constitutes a larger share of women’s paid employment than men’s.

At the sectoral level, 30 per cent of informal employment was concentrated in "retail and motor bike and vehicle maintenance", 18.6 per cent in manufacturing, 11.7 per cent in "transportation and storage", and 11.1 per cent in construction.

The study also shows that the Jordanian informal economy was characterized by its inability, or unwillingness to register workers in any form of social security; hence denying them their basic labour rights.

To address these dimensions and respond to the challenges pertaining to the informal economy in Jordan, the study made a number of recommendations that will be summarized below:

Expanding social security coverage: It is crucial to find a legal mechanism that forces these establishments, regardless of whether or not they are SMEs or large corporations, to cover their employees with social security and give them their full rights and protection. This can be achieved by activating the new Social Security Law and introducing, as soon as possible, the SME Law that the government is currently drafting. It is also of vital importance for the Chambers of Industry and Commerce to encourage their members to be covered by social security and health insurance, and to extend more efforts to widen the registration of respective establishments in these chambers. Increasing inspection programs and specific establishment visits to make sure that employees are covered by basic employee rights is also needed. Inspection should target social security issues and labour law issues.

⁵ Forthcoming, *From Informality to Decent Work in Yemen*, Mansour Omeira for the ILO, 2013.

Formalizing informal economy: On the other hand, government institutions have a huge role and responsibility to “formalize” the informal economy. The aforementioned institutions should work on facilitating business start-ups and providing tax incentives to entrepreneurs. Additionally, they should support the expansion of the private sector, especially in small business, while making sure that social security and health insurance and other labour rights are applied to workers. By doing so, the government will indirectly encourage youth to work and eventually take away the idea that the private sector is not stable or sustainable. This by default will allow youth to work in the private sector and decrease the rate of unemployment; thus contributing to poverty alleviation.

Promoting public private partnerships: The government in cooperation with the private sector should enhance its public – private sector partnership in vocational and technical education and training. In other words, improving the skills base of job seekers and workers and providing them with market-oriented training will serve as an incentive for the private sector to employ them and expand their businesses. It would also prevent job seekers from working in the informal economy under precarious conditions.

Issue licenses to the increasing number of individuals who operate from their homes: This will not only allow more women to participate in the labour force but it will also encourage youth to start up simple ideas from their homes. To achieve that, legislation needs to be amended and awareness of the new regulations needs to be introduced to encourage home businesses to register.

Morocco: A country case study.

Hayat Benayad, from the Statistical Division of the High Commission for Planning in Morocco, presented research from Morocco on informal economy, which showed the importance of considering informal activities in the development and implementation of national economic policies and accountability.

To achieve that objective, different aspects of the informal economy have to be targeted including what is considered as illegal activities, the hidden economy and the unorganized sector. Research and statistics can reach that objective by using hybrid research approaches from institutions and statistical elements from the informal economy, and information from the recruitment processes. This was carried out in Morocco through national studies launched in 1988, 1999 and 2007 that deal with the inclusiveness of economic policies and the recruitment process.

The results of the 2007 study showed that the size of informal production units moved from 1,300 million in 1999 to 1,55 million in 2007, with 40,000 units created every year. The dominant activity is trade, which it is mostly located in urban areas. Most of the informal activities take place in the households. About 6 per cent pay tax and one in ten is run by a woman. Most of them do not hire more than one person.

Specific research on the informal economy will take place in 2013-2014. The objectives of this research will be to: monitor features and characteristics of non-production units; understand the relationship between the formal sector and other economic sectors; measure the extent of the contribution of the informal economy in job creation, production and income; provide the necessary data to formulate national statistics; understand the motives of the stability of the production units in the unorganized sector and trends calling for regulation. The research will be conducted over a full year using a sampling methodology. It will exclude the agricultural sector. The first step will be to identify a sample of non-organized units of production, which equals 60,000 households representing different social groups and entities in Morocco, and to design a preview research on employment and the recruitment process. The second phase will be to carry out questionnaires with

the identified units and collect data on employment, expenses, funding, and demography.

9.00 – 11.00	Legal action and protection of social and economic rights - Legal empowerment: Introduction to the UNDP's work – Mitra Motlagh, Human Rights & Justice Specialist, UNDP RCC - Legal action and strategic litigation, Khaled Ali, the Centre for Economic and Social Rights, Egypt & Alaa Shalabi, the Arab Organization for Human Rights Open discussion
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 – 13.00	Country experiences - Egypt – Maher Boushra, Better Life Association for Comprehensive Development - Morocco – Laalag Abdel Razek, Secretary General. Ministry of Labour, Morocco Moderator: Khaled Ali, Centre for Economic and Social Rights, Egypt Open discussion

While the first day of the workshop gave the opportunity to discuss informality from an economic perspective – looking at the “WHAT” through discussions on definition, statistics, indicators etc., the second day will take a closer look at the “HOW”. How can we ensure that people in informal economy can have more rights? This is where legal empowerment comes into play.

Mitra Motlagh, Human Rights and Justice Specialist at the UNDP Regional Centre in Cairo, provided an overview of the UNDP's perspective on the legal empowerment agenda and some of the initiatives that have been adopted or are on-going.

There is overall recognition that the vast majority of the world's economy lives in the informal economy. At all levels (individual, family, community and national) the lack of access to effective legal protection and formal policy and welfare systems, as well as a lack of recognition of economic assets/activities, worsens existing vulnerabilities and further constrains the economic /social development opportunities of the poor. The result is lower growth, less revenue and less room for investment in health, education and infrastructure.

The High-Level Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor was hosted and supported by the UNDP from 2006 to 2008. The Commission's Report identified some critical yet not adequately addressed causes for the persistence of poverty. These include: lack of access to justice or lack of effective legal protection for the vast majority of poor and disadvantaged people; legal and institutional obstacles that diminish opportunities for them to leverage owned assets, and claim their rights and entitlements; and policy and market failures – misalignment of social practices with legal provisions.⁶ The Commission offered recommendations to address the scale of poverty and provided an agenda for change to stimulate poverty reduction and make the law work for everyone through interventions in the areas of property rights, labour rights and business rights underpinned by access to justice. Legal empowerment is therefore grounded on a human rights based approach to democratic governance and poverty reduction.

⁶ For more information about the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor, see the final report “Making the Law work for Everyone” Volumes 1 and 2. Recognizing that Legal Empowerment of the Poor is essential for eradicating poverty, the UN General Assembly has supported and endorsed the Commission's report and its recommendations by calling upon UN organizations and member states to undertake appropriate follow up action.

In the Arab region, pushing for the implementation of legal empowerment is also done by ensuring that: 1) constitutions and laws are in line with international principles, 2) national rules and policies are in line with the Constitution and laws, and finally and most importantly 3) that these rules are implemented in daily life. This last point also requires adequate access to justice, which may be impeded by financial barriers, corruption, or the absence of accountability.

There are several examples of initiatives across the globe (Indonesia, Pakistan etc.) that have been documented.⁷ In the Arab states, several initiatives have been developed or are supported at the national or regional level (e.g. the regional project on social justice, the regional study on links between economic and social rights and legal empowerment of the poor, support to modernize the justice sector in Algeria, a diagnostic study on informality in Jordan).

Khaled Ali, an Egyptian lawyer who has been working in the field of human rights since 1996 and who co-founded the Egyptian Centre for economic and social rights in 2009 made a presentation expressing the role of strategic litigation in bringing marginalized people deprived of their rights into the space of social and economic rights.

People working in the informal economy are especially deprived of social and economic rights. In that context, strategic litigation is a way to ensure their inclusion and make them recover some of their rights. Strategic litigation brings before the court individual situations of people deprived of their rights and activates their constitutional rights, international standards and specific laws to bring back their rights.

Khaled Ali's work started with the Constitutional Unit at the Egyptian Centre for Economic and Social Rights, and was aimed at mobilizing constitutional provisions to target laws weakening human rights by focusing on the situation of people who had been deprived of their rights. The organization tackled several Egyptian laws, such as the one on trade unions, which they referred to the Supreme Constitutional Court. Moreover, strategic litigation was used for various issues: the social insurance funds in Egypt grabbed by the Ministry of Finance, the move towards privatization of health insurance, the agreements of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan, and the situation of the 30,000 informal workers in the country's public administration system.

Khaled Ali then emphasized the role of strategic litigation concerning a national minimum wage in Egypt. Through a judgment in March 2010, the courts had declared the state capable and required it to implement a national minimum wage. For this case, there was a call for respect of the constitutional and international standards that Egypt is committed to. In addition, strategic litigation was combined with the social mobilization of workers, the intervention of economists and experts to prove the need for a minimum wage, and the capacity of the state to implement it.

Finally, Khaled Ali expressed several recommendations concerning the informal economy. First, that collective action is necessary to activate people's rights. Furthermore, it is necessary to find rights based frameworks to include marginalized people also through litigation. It is crucial for societies to accept that informal workers are entitled to rights and legal recognition. Only in this way they can be included into society, such as the street vendors in Egypt. Then, it has to be taken into account that laws are an expression of the balance of power, and political stakes have to be a concern when dealing with the social and economic rights of informal workers.

⁷ UNDP, *Envisioning Empowerment* (2009), available at <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/Lep/envisioning-empowerment/>

Alaa Shalabi, from the Arab Organization for Human Rights, made a presentation about the rights of workers in the informal economy and the role of strategic litigation.

The rights of workers in the informal economy is tackled at an international level, notably with the ILO's recommendations in 2002, promoting the necessity of decent work for all, the expansion of social protection systems, and community dialogue. Shalabi recalled the international covenants for economic and social rights and stressed that strategic litigation is an important tool to help uphold these rights.

Strategic litigation consists of choosing an issue and establishing a lawsuit before the court for the benefit of a person or group, in order to benefit a wide range of society and attract the attention of the community and decision-makers. This is focused on policy change at the macro level on a wider scale. Several principles deal with this type of litigation such as participation, oral proceedings, freedom of defence, and confrontation between adversaries.

Alaa Shalabi then linked strategic litigation to advocacy, as an opportunity to use the judiciary to bring social and legal change. Preparation and management for strategic litigation have to be deeply prepared, considering the global effects granted to this tool. To achieve strategic litigation, strategic questions have to be raised: is there a legal issue related to the social or community problem? Will the court ruling help to solve the problem? Is the issue attractive for media coverage? Are there other ways to solve the problem? Can you find some institutional agencies available to use the case later? Then, one has to address the right court or jurisdictions and refer to the correct law or international law which can help deal with the case. Building a case of strategic litigation has to include all means of awareness, such as conferences, press releases, and meetings at each stage of the judicial process.

Egypt: A country case study

Maher Boushra, from the Better Life Association for Comprehensive Development in Egypt, shared his experience of promoting social and economic rights for local communities with the work his association is doing with quarry workers.

First, he recalled the poor working conditions of 45,000 workers in the quarrying sector, exposed to fatal accidents and deprived of social and health insurance. With the objective of improving the life conditions of the workers and their families, Maher Boushra described the strategy of the association in four pillars. First, they work on organizing quarry workers into official entities, such as independent trade unions and civil institutions to defend their interests. Second, they provide training for quarry workers to enable them to defend their rights, on topics such as collective action, planning, trade union freedoms, negotiation, human rights approach to development, and campaigns. Then, they consider legal support by providing legal counsel and training for lawyers. Finally, they draft and develop programmes to improve housing, sanitation and water facilities, and the economic situation of women.

Furthermore, the Association is working on repeating this successful model so as to reach other socially or economically marginalized communities, such as the fishermen and poor farmers from the informal economy. This grass-rooted and complementary strategy has thus been implemented in order to protect and promote the economic and social rights of local communities working in the informal economy, and can be adapted to other situations existing outside of the legal system.

Morocco: A country case study

Laalag Abdel Razek, the Regional Representative for the Moroccan Ministry of Labour, presented the ADMITRA Program and its implementation in Morocco. This program is funded by the French government and will be implemented in five African countries between April 2011 and December 2014, in order to bring technical support to modernize and strengthen the labour administrations and inspectorates. This program has four objectives: 1) strengthen the intervention and management capacities of the labour administrations and inspectorates in the informal economy; 2) implement effective regulations through national policies and management techniques; 3) strengthen and modernize the way inspectors work by providing updates and permanent training; 4) implement and monitor public policies regarding labour.

In Morocco, this program was launched in two cities adjacent to the capital Rabat, Sale and Temara, and targeted the main informal activities of the carpet and metal industries. The programme was also linked to the construction and public work sectors. Six inspectors (three per city) were in charge of 30 production units from the informal economy. The inspectors collected data through direct contact with the production units and by filling technical questionnaires. This programme resulted in concrete observations about the workplaces, most of them rented and with poor health, safety and space conditions. Workers are deprived of social security coverage, work insurance, official holiday and training in the work framework. Moreover, workshop owners lack access to loans, electrical equipment and sanitation. Finally, it also showed that these informal production units had failed to organize into associations and that professional chambers are absent or lack regulations.

14.00 – 15.30	Extending social protection to workers in the informal economy Presenter: - Ursula Kulke, Senior Regional Social Security Specialist (ILO) – Open discussion
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Ms Ursula Kulke, the ILO Senior Regional Social Security Specialist, started with an overview of social security, while emphasizing that it is an economic necessity and a human right. She then explained why workers in the informal economy are usually excluded from social security coverage. The two reasons she gave are: i) conventional social security systems rely on the employer-employee relationship as a basis for social security coverage; and ii) the low and irregular income of informal economy workers reduces their capacity to make social security contributions. In some cases, though, informal workers benefit from cash transfers that are sporadic/temporary in nature and linked to the notion of charity rather than rights.

Turning to the region, Ms Kulke explained that most Arab countries have very low rates of social security coverage that are in most cases below 50 per cent (in some countries it is as low as 30 per cent of the population). This, she explained, is closely linked to the high rates of informal economy in the region. According to the ILO-UNDP report “Rethinking economic growth: towards productive and inclusive Arab societies”, social protection is considered to be one of the two greatest deficits in the Arab region, alongside social dialogue. Spending on social protection has been significant in terms of fiscal outlays in many Arab states but has mainly benefited privileged groups, giving rise to a sense of exclusion and unfairness.

In her presentation, Ms Kulke highlighted that only a few Arab states have developed coherent and comprehensive national social security policies to guarantee universal coverage. Three key characteristics of the social security policies /schemes in the Arab region were outlined as follows:

- i) A lack of coordination between different social insurance and social assistance schemes;
- ii) A lack of coordination between different social assistance schemes as benefits are provided by different government entities, NGOs, etc., resulting in the duplication of support to some groups, while others are hardly covered; and
- iii) Many social assistance schemes grant benefits on a discretionary basis, as opposed to providing clear rights and entitlements.

She then presented the Social Protection Floor (SPF) concept which was adopted by the UN Chief Executive Board for Coordination (UNCEB) as one of the nine responses to the most recent financial and economic crises and which is led by the ILO in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund. It consists of a two-dimensional (vertical and horizontal) strategy⁸ which is a tool for better policy coherence across social security schemes, as well as an instrument for the extension of social protection to those excluded from basic transfers and services, including those in the informal economy.

The SPF-Initiative promotes access to essential services and social transfers for the poor and vulnerable, thus presenting a comprehensive approach to social protection that highlights both the supply and demand side of extending social protection and ensuring effective access. The Social Protection Floor includes:

1. A basic set of essential social rights and transfers, in cash and in kind, to provide a minimum income and livelihood security for all and to facilitate effective demand for and access to essential goods and services.
2. The supply of an essential level of goods and social services such as health, water and sanitation, education, food, housing, life and asset-saving information that are accessible for all.

By concluding with successful experiences from countries in other regions, notably Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, and India, she encouraged countries in this region to adopt their own national SPF so as to progressively extend social security coverage to all those in need including people in the informal economy.

15.45 – 16.45	An introduction to social solidarity economy as a way out of informality, Guy Tchami, ILO Cooperatives Branch, Geneva (via video conference) Country case study: Cooperatives in the oPt, Rawand Al-Madmouj, the ILO in the oPt and Randa Abed Rabbou, the Union of Women Cooperatives for Savings and Credit Moderator: Emanuela Pozzan, Senior Regional Gender Specialist, ILO ROAS Open discussion
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Guy Tchami, ILO Cooperatives Specialist, introduced the concept of a social and solidarity economy (SSE) as a way out of informality. He explained that “the social economy is a concept designating enterprises and organizations, in particular cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, associations, foundations and social enterprises, which have the specific feature of producing goods, services and

⁸ ILO Recommendation No. 202 of 2012. For more information please check:
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_183326.pdf

knowledge while pursuing both economic and social aims and fostering solidarity”.⁹ He clarified that social economy entities differ from other types of enterprises and social organizations in that:

- Their primary purpose is not to obtain a return on capital. They are by nature part of a stakeholder economy whose enterprises are created by and for those with common needs, and accountable to those they are meant to serve. SSE entities recognize the primacy of people and work over capital;
- They are democratically controlled;
- They are flexible and innovative;
- They are based on voluntary participation, membership and commitment;
- They emphasize self-help and self-reliance, as well as a local identity.

Tchami also explained that a SSE can act like a bridge as: it can play an important role in the transition from an informal to a formal economy, it generates economies of scale among informal economy workers and enterprises to enhance productivity and profitability, and it provides opportunities for skills development and training to enhance productivity and profitability. More importantly, it organizes informal economy workers and enterprises to increase their bargaining power, enhance workers’ voices and representation, provide schemes of social protection and it reaches out to vulnerable groups (e.g. women, people living with AIDS, home-based workers, migrant workers, and people with disabilities) who face barriers in accessing the labour market.

The presenter shared some experiences from Africa, and from Tanzania in particular, and received several questions from the audience, which highlighted curiosity on the topic and limited knowledge on SSE. Questions were raised on how cooperatives functions and how they reach out to workers in the informal economy.

A country case study: Cooperatives in the occupied Palestinian territory

Rawand Madmouj, the ILO national coordinator in the oPt, provided an overview of Palestinian cooperatives with a focus on the gender dimension and ILO intervention in the oPt to support cooperative development.

Cooperatives have great potential to create jobs and they play an important role in economic and social development; however the actual contribution of cooperatives in the oPt has remained limited due to many constraints, including: low membership coverage and effective economic participation, limited scope of economic activities (lack of economies of scale), insufficient financial resources, poor management performance and a lack of cooperative work awareness, limited collaborative projects which show the productive capacities of men/women, restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities on their operations, fragmentation and isolation areas for market, and poor coordination between institutions working in the field of cooperative development. The donor community has been supporting primary cooperatives but this is said to have made them donor-dependent.

Some underlying challenges to women’s participation in cooperatives in the oPt include: limited access to and control over land/financial resources needed for obtaining membership, low educational attainment, patriarchal norms, gender stereotypes, and a lack of cooperative management. To address these challenges, the ILO has been working to strengthen new women-only cooperatives, while strengthening the existing ones.

⁹ ‘The Social Economy: Africa’s response to the Global Crisis’ regional conference 2009

The ILO interventions in the oPt on cooperatives comprised of capacity building training for cooperative extension workers, and the capacity building programme for women's cooperatives. With regards to the latter where extensive work has been done, an agreement was signed in 2010 between the ILO and the Union of Cooperative Associations for Savings and Credit (UCASC). The programme was designed by the ILO and UCASC to help create institutional and capacity building activities for empowering women-only cooperatives in the West Bank. The programme provided support for around 43 women cooperatives through non-financial and financial support. Different capacity building activities have been executed for most targeted cooperatives and their members. Training, workshops and coaching services have been provided. In most cases, these activities have enhanced the skills of the cooperatives' administrative committee members and have resulted in more efficient performances plus better services granted to rural women and their cooperatives. The programme also provided around 23 women cooperatives with the necessary technical support to enable them to run and manage their cooperatives in a profitable way, and it also applied a good governance approach. Moreover, women cooperatives were provided with the necessary technical and administrative interventions according to their needs either by UCASC staff or external experts. Among key successful cooperative modules in the oPt the following are worth mentioning: olive oil cooperatives, housing cooperatives, saving and credit cooperatives, and consumer cooperatives.

9.00 – 11.30	Representative voice, collective action and self-organization: Experiences and perspectives - A presentation of the UNDP project on building constituency for social justice (Mr Marwan Abi Samra) - Experience from: Egypt (Ms Zeinab Kheir, the Egyptian Association for Economic and Social Rights) and Lebanon (Ms Farah Kobaissy, Lebanese Labour Watch) - Experiences from Lebanon, Morocco, Algeria and Yemen on the role of trade unions and civil society in reaching out to and organizing informal workers, particularly women Moderator: Ms Shaza Ghaleb Al Jondi, UN Reform Regional Programme Analyst, ILO ROAS Open discussion
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This session aimed to highlight interventions that have successfully addressed the informal economy, especially by reaching out to women in unprotected employment. All these interventions revolve around workers organizing collectively, including in trade unions, business groups, associations, and cooperatives. Emphasis is put on democratic organizing which allows for a stronger position in representing interests and influencing public policy, and on collective entrepreneurship, which improves financial returns to founders and members. Through the formation of secondary bodies, such as federations of workers' organizations and unions of cooperatives, knowledge transfers among members can be facilitated, and alliances among social and solidarity economy organizations can be enabled to help in the transition from informality to formality.

Marwan Abi Samra, UNDP Governance expert, made a presentation about the project the UNPD had started to implement on social justice. Within the framework of the transformation and transition that the region is witnessing, there is a need for an organized social base in order to move towards democracy and create foundations for social justice. This will enable us to work both on social justice, and within the framework of the informal economy.

Regarding the situation in the Arab countries in the last two decades, we can assume that the failure in development results from the political and economic networks controlling the economies of these

countries, and turning them into rent-based economies. This situation has prevented the Arab economies from establishing a productive base that can create job opportunities. In order to move into a productive economy, we need to have developed states that are able to build and assure the growth of the productive sectors that provide job opportunities.

Moreover, we need to make the states focus on social justice, with mutual accountability between the state and its citizens. However, this will not happen without looking at a basic issue, which is the state of civil society or the social solidarity which exists in our society. In the last decade, one main factor for the rent-based economy in the Arab world was the methodological approach on fragmenting the social organizations, communities, civil society organizations, trade unions, and community-based organizations. They became followers of the political regime and Arab societies lost this independent base, needed to represent and defend all citizens including the workers. Arab societies became voiceless and various segments lacked organization or a framework. There was no social contract, no organization, and no social activism. Therefore, it was not possible to implement a real development or policy, as well as accountability and transparency of the state, because civil society was not able to be a major player in this situation. In addition, a major part of civil society, i.e. the workers have been prevented from being unionized. The regimes did not allow them to self-organize and join organizations which would defend their interests.

To improve informal work or informal workers' conditions we have to empower the informal workers, unionize them. When we talk about building an accountable state of transparency or bringing social justice, community-based organizations are needed. Consequently, our project is to help the work of civil society organizations, especially emerging ones or community-based organizations; to empower them to activate their capabilities, network with each other, and create a framework which will enable them and us to activate this global project on social justice, especially for the informal economy. If we talk about a right-based approach, a main component for doing this is the ability of people in the informal economy to establish their associations, their societies, their organizations and frameworks that represent them.

Country cases shared from Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco and Yemen provided ideas on how trade unions can reach out to domestic workers, migrant workers, home-based workers, and workers in the processing zones who are mainly women. They also shared examples of how trade unions can mobilize, organize, educate and represent these women to improve their working conditions and enhance their status so that they change from being informal workers to workers with social security protection and better working conditions. Somaia Khalfi from the Moroccan Workers' Union shared the example of call centres where women have organized and advocated for maternity protection rights, better working hours and higher wages. Karima Boudrazi from the General Union of Algerian Workers presented the example of Algeria which has advocated for many years for better working conditions for informal workers starting with collecting data and putting in place a monitoring system of informal workers, and providing services such as information and registration to the social security registry. As for Lebanon, Hanan Rhimi from FENASOL and Khalil Cherry from the Association of Lebanese Industrialists are currently working on mobilizing women migrant domestic workers and provide them with notions of workers' rights. A similar initiative is taking place in Egypt by the Egyptian Association for Economic and Social Rights (EAESR)¹⁰ which is working with a large group of Egyptian domestic workers providing them with professional skills and rights knowledge, and making them understanding the importance of signing a legal employment contract and negotiating on their entitlements. Eman Hamodi Abd-Al- Rahman shared an interesting experience of creating associations of women in Yemen. She discussed the experience of the Al-Dhala Community Resources Management Project (ACRMP) which targets a large number of poor women in remote rural areas. She shared the strong cultural barriers that the project had to face and also the good

¹⁰ Presented by Zeinab Kheir

results that came from grouping women into associations which has led to significant social and economic empowerment in the community.

Conclusions

Following three days of presentations, discussions and deliberations in groups on socio-economic challenges in the region with a particular focus on the informal economy, participants reached a better understanding of the multi-faceted nature of the informal economy, the evolution of this phenomenon in the Arab region and its specific gender and rights dimensions.

The workshop served the purpose of creating a network of experts and practitioners on the informal economy, and it took stock of recent research conducted on the informal economy in the region and allowed for sharing of country experiences and case studies.

At the end of the workshop, participants identified four priority areas necessary for addressing the phenomenon of the informal economy in the Arab region:

- 1) Knowledge gap
- 2) Collective participation - organizing
- 3) Social security and social protection
- 4) Legislation and legal rights

Participants identified four priorities and brainstormed key issues and strategies to address them. Overall they supported the key messages of the ILO-UNDP report that was extensively presented and discussed the call for a new development model for the region based on social justice.

1) Knowledge gap

Issues: Participants acknowledged that the knowledge base on informal economy remains limited and that there has been no consensus on the terminology and measurement to adopt. This has undermined the ability to measure informality in its holistic approach valuing the work of many people, women in particular, who are invisible in the labour market as a whole. Participants also voiced the lack of access to information related to informality and its multiple levels of employment relations as a major obstacle to properly understanding the phenomenon.

Suggestions: Participants proposed a regional initiative to promote consensus amongst socio-economic experts and statisticians on the definition of the informal economy and its measurements according to international standards. Participants also agreed on the need to establish observatories that would improve monitoring of employment relationships and support an informed social dialogue and decision-making process.

2) Collective participation and organizing

Issues: Participants voiced a persistent lack of knowledge of workers' rights in the region in general and particularly in the informal economy. This is further exacerbated by a lack of trust between workers and employers and between citizens and governments. The general feeling among participants was that workers' organizations and civil society groups do not have enough knowledge and capacity to reach out to workers in the informal economy; this applies also to the large number of both women and men who are home-based or unpaid care workers, and it can extend to children engaged in informal work.

Suggestions: Through the showcasing of country examples, participants recognized the importance of civil society organizations, trade unions and professional associations to work together in sharing information and creating alliances that would enable them to better reach out to people in the informal economy. For this to happen, participants agreed on the importance of building the capacities of these organizations. There was a consensus among participants of the need to promote initiatives that aim to mobilize, organize and educate workers in the informal economy as a prerequisite for them to secure their rights. Examples from Morocco and Egypt demonstrated the importance of trade unions and NGOs in reaching out to informal workers, particularly women, and providing legal counselling, negotiation skills and dialogue with employers.

3) Social security and social protection

Issues: Participants recognized that the notion of social security and social protection has not yet fully been assimilated in the region and this has implications on the overall understanding of the phenomenon of the informal economy and ways to address it. It also indicates that social security coverage during the life cycle remains low in the region in general and is not understood as a universal right.

Suggestions: Participants agreed on the need to promote the expansion of social security to workers in the informal economy while recognizing economic constraints that countries in the region are facing. Joint effort by the government, employers and workers are necessary to reach consensus on social security coverage. Moreover, participants identified the review of legislation governing social protection as an important area of action to reinforce the role of labour inspectors in ensuring compliance with social security contributions and promoting better working conditions.

4) Legislation and legal rights

Issues: Participants recognized that current legislation in many countries in the region excludes significant categories of workers such as agriculture, domestic and construction workers. Despite the efforts of some countries to promote laws and decrees to cover these categories, they still remain largely outside of the purview of legal systems hence contributing to the expansion of the phenomenon of the informal economy.

Suggestions: Participants agreed on the need for more work to be carried out on reviewing the legislative framework to ensure coherence and alignment with human rights and international labour standards and to ensure the better inclusion of all categories of workers. One way of strengthening legal frameworks so that they better protect informal workers is through strategic litigation, which according to one of the participants can lead to a “qualitative shift in implementing a country’s commitments to international labour standards and bringing national laws in line with constitutions that usually support workers’ rights.”

Annex I: List of participants

Regional Workshop: “Rethinking informality in the Arab region: A human rights-based approach” 16-18 April 2013 - Amman, Jordan

NAME of Participant			Organization
Algeria			
Ms	Karima	Boudrouaz	General Union of Algerian Workers
Egypt			
Ms	Alia	El Mahdi	Cairo University
Mr	Alaa	Shalaby	Arab Organization for Human Rights
Ms	Hoda	Kamel	Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions (EFITU)
Ms	Ghada	Barsoum	American University in Cairo
Mr	Khaled	Ali	Egyptian Centre for Economic and Social Rights
Mr	Maher	Bushra	Better Life Association for Comprehensive Development
Mr	Mahmoud	Mortada	Centre for Studies and Alternative Development Programmes
Ms	Zeinab	Kheir	Egyptian Association for Economic and Social Rights
Jordan			
Mr	Ayman	Hatahet	Jordanian Chamber of Industry
Mr	Azzam	Al Somadi	The Jordanian Federation of Independent Trade Unions
Ms	Arouba	Al-Sabag	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC)
Mrs	Dana	Dudokh	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC)
Mr	Khaled	Al Habahbeh	General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions
Mr	Laith	Al-Qasem	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC)
Mr	Mukhalad	Al-Omari	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC)
Mr	Mohammad	Khraisha	Department of Statistics
Ms	Nisreen	Alami	Consultant
Mr	Samer	Kirresh	General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries
Ms	Zein	Soufan	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC)
Lebanon			
Ms	Farah	Kobaissy	Lebanese Labour Watch
Ms	Hanan	Rhimi	FENASOL
Mr	Khalil	Cherry	Association of Lebanese Industrials
Morocco			
Mr	Abdel Razak	Laalaj	Ministry of Labour
Ms	Hayat	Benayad	Haut Commissariat au Plan

Ms	Soumia	Khalfi	Union des travailleurs du Maroc (UMT)
The oPt			
Ms	Randa	Abed Rabbou	Union of Women Cooperative for Saving and Credit
Mr	Saleh	Kafri	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
Mr	Shaher	Saad	General Federation of Trade Unions
Mr	Yousef	Alayasa	Ministry of Labour/ Cooperatives Directorate
Tunisia			
Ms	Hayet	Trabelsi	General Secretary of the Services Federation
Mr	Sami	Zouri	CAWTAR
Yemen			
Ms	Eman	Hamodi Abd-Al-Rahman	Al-Dhala project
Mr	Mohammed	Al Kohali	Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour
Ms	Rheda	Qarhash	Trade Union
Ms	Sawsan	Al-Rifai	Youth Local Development Forum
UNDP			
Ms	Alia	Al-Dalli	UNDP Regional Cairo Centre
Ms	Costanza	Farina	UNDP Jordan
Mr	Fuad	Al-Kadasi	UNDP Yemen
Ms	Hadeel	Saadeh	UNDP Jordan
Ms	Majida	Al-Assaf	UNDP Jordan
Mr	Marwan	Abi Samra	UNDP Regional Cairo Centre
Ms	Mitra	Motlagh	UNDP Regional Cairo Centre
Mr	Mounir	Tabet	UNDP Regional Cairo Centre
Ms	Nahid	Hussein	Human Rights & Access to Justice Project Manager, UNDP Iraq
Mr	Reyad	Al Ahmad	UNDP Saudi Arabia
Ms	Zena	Ali Ahmad	UNDP Jordan
Ms	Walaa	Ababneh	UNDP Jordan
ILO			
Mr	Abid	Briki	ILO ROAS - CTA Worker's Programme
Ms	Farah	Dakhlallah	ILO ROAS - Senior Regional Communication Specialist
Mr	Frank	Hagemann	ILO ROAS- Deputy Regional Director
Ms	Emanuela	Pozzan	ILO ROAS - Senior Regional Gender Specialist
Mr	Hadi	Assaf	ILO - Consultant, Economist
Mr	Mansour	Omeira	ILO - Consultant, Labour Economist
Ms	Mary	Kawar	ILO ROAS - Senior Employment Policies Specialist
Ms	Rawand	Al-Madmouj	ILO - Jerusalem National Coordinator
Ms	Shaza	Ghaleb Al Jondi	ILO ROAS - UN Reform Regional Programme Analyst
Ms	Ursula	Kulke	ILO ROAS - Senior Regional Social Security Specialist

Annex II: Programme of the Workshop

	Day 1
9.00 – 10.00	Opening - H.E. Ibrahim Saif, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan - H.E. Jawad Annani, President of the Economic and Social Council, Jordan - Ms Alia Al-Dali, Manager of UNDP Regional Centre in Cairo (RCC) - Mr Frank Hagemann, Deputy Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS)
10.30-11:30	Rethinking economic growth: Towards productive and inclusive Arab societies – presentation of the ILO-UNDP Report 2013, Ms Mary Kwar, Senior Regional Employment Policies Specialist, ILO ROAS
11.30 – 13.30	Informality in the Arab region: Looking for common ground - Political economy of informality: the need for a new development paradigm, Mr Marwan Abi –Samra, Governance Team Leader, UNDP RCC - “Rethinking informality in the Arab region after the uprisings” Presentation of recent ILO work, Mr Mansour Omeira, ILO Consultant Open discussion
14.30 – 16.30	Country case studies - oPt (ILO) - Mr Saleh El Kafri, ILO Consultant - Yemen (ILO) – Mr Mansour Omeira, ILO Consultant - Jordan - Orooba Sabbagh (UNDP) - Morocco - Hayat Benayad (Statistical Division- Haut Commissariat au Plan Morocco) - Egypt (AUC) – Ms Alia El Mahdi Moderator: Ms Emanuela Pozzan, Senior Regional Gender Specialist, ILO ROAS Open discussion
	Day 2
9.00 – 11.00	Legal action and protection of social and economic rights - Legal empowerment: Introduction to the UNDP’s work – Ms Mitra Motlagh, Human Rights & Justice Specialist, UNDP RCC - Legal action and strategic litigation, Mr Khaled Ali, the Centre for Economic and Social Rights, Egypt & Mr Alaa Shalabi, the Arab Organization for Human Rights Open discussion
11.30 – 13.00	Country experiences - Egypt – Mr Maher Boushra, Better Life Association for Comprehensive Development - Morocco – Mr Laalag Abdel Razek, Secretary General. Ministry of Labour, Morocco Moderator: Mr Khaled Ali, Centre for Economic and Social Rights, Egypt Open Discussion
14.00 – 15.30	Extending social protection to workers in the informal economy Presenters: - Ms Ursula Kulke, Senior Regional Social Security Specialist (ILO) – Open discussion
15.45 – 16.45	An introduction to social solidarity economy as a way out of informality , Mr Guy Tchami, ILO Cooperatives Branch, Geneva (via video conference) Country case study: Cooperatives in the oPt, Ms Rawand Al-Madmouj, the ILO in

	the oPt and Ms Randa Abed Rabbou, the Union of Women Cooperatives for Savings and Credit Moderator: Ms Emanuela Pozzan, Senior Regional Gender Specialist, ILO ROAS Open discussion
	Day 3
9.00 – 11.30	Representative voice, collective action and self-organization: Experiences and perspectives - A presentation of the UNDP project on building constituency for social justice (Mr Marwan Abi Samra) - Experience from: Egypt (Ms Zeinab Kheir, the Egyptian Association for Economic and Social Rights) and Lebanon (Ms Farah Kobaissy, Lebanese Labour Watch) - Experiences from Lebanon, Morocco, Algeria and Yemen on the role of trade unions and civil society in reaching out to and organizing informal workers, particularly women Moderator: Ms Shaza Ghaleb Al Jondi, UN Reform Regional Programme Analyst, ILO ROAS Open discussion
12:00 – 13:30	Group work: way forward to apply a rights-based approach to informality in each country context Facilitator: Mr Mahmoud Mortada, Center for Studies and Alternative Development Programs
14:30 – 16:15	Presentation and Discussion in Plenary