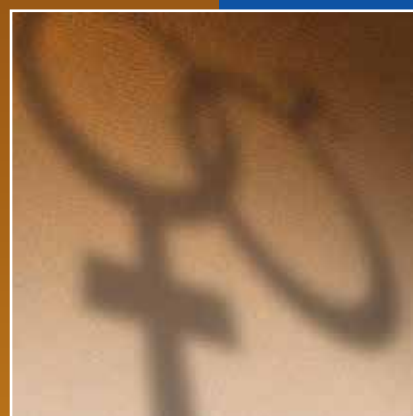




International
Labour
Office

Gender dimensions of national employment policies

Kristine Goulding



Gender,
Equality and
Diversity Branch
Conditions of
Work and Equality
Department

Employment
and Labour
Markets Branch
Employment
Policy
Department



Gender dimensions of national employment policies

A 24-country study

Kristine Goulding

Employment and Labour Markets Branch
Employment Policy Department

Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch
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Foreword

The ILO provides technical support for the formulation of national employment policies (NEPs) in developing countries through its Employment Policy Department. At the same time, a core mandate of the ILO is to promote gender equality in the labour market.

As part of its efforts to establish and maintain a sound knowledge base, the Employment Policy Department has, in recent years, been compiling a cross-country inventory on employment policies, where national employment policy documents, national development plans, relevant socioeconomic policy documents, as well as technical reports are collected. So far, there are some 53 countries for which various documents are stored, and of these, there are 24 countries for which there are documents on NEPs.

Given the dual ILO mandates of the ILO of providing technical support on NEPs and the mainstreaming of gender equality issues into policy formulation, and in light of the availability of the country-level data, a systematic review and documentation of the gender dimensions of national employment policies and strategies was built into the Programme and Budget of 2012-13. This Working Paper provides an overview of the experiences of 24 countries, including a methodology for analysis, a mapping of the gender responsiveness of the policies along multiple dimensions, and an examination of the recurrent themes and patterns that emerge from the review. Through this approach, the Working Paper situates the debates and considerations of gender equality within NEPs from a global perspective.

The Working Paper draws upon a broad range of publications from international, regional and national sources and offers a wider analysis of gender roles within the economy. It also takes account of the thoughtful comments of ILO specialists on employment and on gender equality based in the various field offices. The Working Paper is a joint undertaking of the Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch (GED) of the Working Conditions and Equality Department, and the Employment and Labour Markets Branch (EMPLAB) of the Employment Policy Department (EMPLOYMENT). The publication was written by Ms Kristine Goulding to whom we are grateful. Special acknowledgements are due to Ms Susan Maybud (GED) and Ms Naoko Otobe (EMPLOYMENT) who were responsible for the examination and finalization of the Working Paper. Their diligent and critical reviews enriched the paper through its various versions. We also thank Mr Sergio Iriarte Quezada (EMPLOYMENT) who provided technical assistance and Ms Brigitte Honma (GED) who edited the final draft.

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Contents

FOREWORD	III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	V
LIST OF ACRONYMS	XI
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. METHODOLOGY	2
BACKGROUND	2
DESIGNING EFFECTIVE GENDER RESPONSIVE NEPS	2
STUDY DESIGN	3
III. RESEARCH FINDINGS.....	5
ILO INVOLVEMENT AND THE DECENT WORK AGENDA	10
DEMAND-SIDE CONSIDERATIONS	12
<i>Foreign direct investment</i>	12
<i>Enabling environment for sectoral development</i>	14
<i>Agricultural policy</i>	15
SUPPLY-SIDE CONSIDERATIONS.....	15
<i>Skills and human resources development</i>	16
DISCRIMINATION IN RECRUITMENT, HIRING AND TREATMENT	18
LABOUR MARKET POLICIES.....	20
<i>Active labour market policies</i>	21
<i>Passive labour market policies</i>	24
<i>Employment services</i>	25
ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT	26
<i>Entrepreneurship and MSMEs</i>	29
UNPAID WORK AND SOCIAL PROTECTION	31
<i>Time use surveys</i>	32
<i>Support measures to reduce unpaid care work</i>	33
<i>Social protection</i>	35
NEP FORMULATION, IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND BUDGETING	38
<i>Policy formulation and implementation</i>	38
<i>Monitoring and evaluation</i>	40
<i>Budgeting</i>	41
IV. COUNTRY CASE STUDIES.....	43
SERBIA	45
ILO INVOLVEMENT AND THE DECENT WORK AGENDA	45
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT	46
NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY	47
DEMAND-SIDE CONSIDERATIONS	49
SUPPLY-SIDE CONSIDERATIONS.....	50
<i>Education and skills development</i>	50
<i>Technical and vocational training</i>	50
DISCRIMINATION IN RECRUITMENT, HIRING AND TREATMENT	51
LABOUR MARKET POLICIES.....	52
<i>Active labour market policies</i>	52
<i>Passive labour market policies</i>	53
<i>Employment services</i>	54
ACCESS TO RESOURCES, MSMEs AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (BDS).....	54
SOCIAL PROTECTION.....	55
<i>Pension</i>	56
<i>Social assistance and childcare benefits</i>	57

<i>Unpaid care work</i>	58
SOCIAL DIALOGUE.....	58
SNEP FORMULATION, IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND BUDGETING	59
CONCLUSIONS	59
THE COMOROS	61
ILO INVOLVEMENT AND A DECENT WORK AGENDA	62
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT	62
NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY	64
DEMAND-SIDE CONSIDERATIONS	65
<i>Employment sectors and sub-sectors</i>	66
<i>Employment targets</i>	67
SUPPLY-SIDE CONSIDERATIONS.....	67
<i>Education and skills development</i>	67
<i>Technical and vocational training</i>	68
DISCRIMINATION IN RECRUITMENT, HIRING AND TREATMENT	69
LABOUR MARKET POLICIES.....	70
<i>Active labour market policies</i>	70
<i>Passive labour policies</i>	71
<i>Employment services</i>	71
ACCESS TO RESOURCES, SMEs AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (BDS)	72
<i>Access to productive resources</i>	72
<i>Credit and microfinance</i>	72
<i>SMEs</i>	73
SOCIAL PROTECTION.....	73
SOCIAL DIALOGUE.....	74
CNEP FORMULATION, IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND BUDGETING	75
CONCLUSIONS	75
REPUBLIC OF KOREA	77
ILO INVOLVEMENT AND A DECENT WORK AGENDA	77
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT	78
NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY	79
DEMAND-SIDE CONSIDERATIONS	80
<i>Employment sectors and sub-sectors</i>	80
<i>Employment targets</i>	81
SUPPLY-SIDE CONSIDERATIONS.....	81
<i>Education and skills development</i>	82
<i>Technical and vocational training</i>	83
DISCRIMINATION IN RECRUITMENT, HIRING AND TREATMENT	84
LABOUR MARKET POLICIES.....	85
<i>Active labour market policies</i>	85
<i>Support services for female employment promotion</i>	86
<i>Passive labour market policies</i>	87
<i>Employment services</i>	89
ACCESS TO RESOURCES, SMEs AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (BDS)	91
<i>SMEs</i>	91
SOCIAL PROTECTION.....	92
<i>Work-family policies</i>	92
<i>Pension</i>	94
<i>Employee welfare system</i>	94
SOCIAL DIALOGUE.....	94
KNEP FORMULATION, IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND BUDGETING	95
CONCLUSIONS	96
JORDAN	98
ILO INVOLVEMENT AND A DECENT WORK AGENDA	98

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT	99
NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY	101
DEMAND-SIDE CONSIDERATIONS	101
<i>Employment sectors and sub-sectors</i>	102
<i>Employment targets</i>	103
SUPPLY-SIDE CONSIDERATIONS.....	104
<i>Education and school-to-work training</i>	104
<i>Technical and vocational training</i>	105
DISCRIMINATION IN RECRUITMENT, HIRING AND TREATMENT	106
LABOUR MARKET POLICIES.....	108
<i>Active labour market policies</i>	108
<i>Passive labour policies</i>	108
<i>Employment services</i>	109
ACCESS TO RESOURCES, MSMEs AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (BDS).....	110
<i>Access to productive resources</i>	110
<i>MSMEs</i>	110
<i>Microcredit and microfinance</i>	111
SOCIAL PROTECTION.....	112
<i>Maternity insurance</i>	113
<i>Childcare assistance</i>	113
<i>Health insurance</i>	114
<i>Social Protection Floor</i>	114
SOCIAL DIALOGUE.....	114
JNEP FORMULATION, IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND BUDGETING	115
CONCLUSIONS	116
V. CONCLUSIONS	117
VI. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS	119
APPENDICES	123
APPENDIX 1: GENDERED CONSIDERATIONS OF NEPS	123
APPENDIX 2: COUNTRY-LEVEL ANALYSIS OF GENDER DIMENSIONS OF NEPS	141
REFERENCES.....	165

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

<u>TABLE 1.</u> <u>SPECTRUM OF GENDER DIMENSIONS</u>	4
<u>TABLE 2.</u> <u>REVIEW OF GENDER CONSIDERATIONS, NEPS</u>	6
<u>TABLE 3.</u> <u>SERBIA PUBLIC SPENDING ON LABOUR MARKET POLICIES, 2004-2010</u>	52
<u>TABLE 4.</u> <u>STRUCTURE OF KOREAN EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (EI)</u>	88
 <u>FIGURE 1.</u> <u>GENDER SPECTRUM OF NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT POLICIES</u>	7
<u>FIGURE 2.</u> <u>LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE OF MEN AND WOMEN, AGE 15+, ILO ESTIMATES (2010)</u> ..	8
<u>FIGURE 3.</u> <u>PERSONS IN INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT BY SEX, SELECT SURVEYED COUNTRIES 2010</u>	10
<u>FIGURE 4.</u> <u>SERBIAN EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS</u>	46
<u>FIGURE 5.</u> <u>COMORIAN EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS</u>	63
<u>FIGURE 6.</u> <u>KOREAN EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS</u>	79
<u>FIGURE 7.</u> <u>STRUCTURE OF KOREAN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING</u>	84

FIGURE 8.	<u>KOREA'S NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE NETWORK</u>	90
FIGURE 9.	<u>SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM IN KOREA</u>	92
FIGURE 10.	<u>JORDANIAN EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS</u>	100

LIST OF BOXES

BOX 1.	<u>THE FEMINIZATION OF MANUFACTURING LABOUR - THE SOUTH KOREAN "MIRACLE"</u>	13
BOX 2:	<u>SENEGALESE WOMEN IN PERIURBAN AGRICULTURE</u>	17
BOX 3.	<u>QUOTAS IN THE SERBIAN SECURITY SECTOR - A GENDERED TRANSFORMATION?</u>	200
BOX 4.	<u>HONDURAS AND THE NATIONAL PROGRAMME OF EMPLOYMENT BY THE HOUR</u>	21
BOX 5.	<u>"JOB WORLD" AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA</u>	222
BOX 6.	<u>SERBIA AND THE EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT</u>	244
BOX 7.	<u>SENEGAL AND LE REPERTOIRE OPERATIONNEL DES METIERS ET EMPLOIS (ROME)</u>	26
BOX 8.	<u>MICROFINANCE INSTITUTIONS AND GENDER IN THE COMOROS</u>	28
BOX 9.	<u>"ONE VILLAGE ONE PRODUCT" FOR UGANDAN WOMEN</u>	300
BOX 10.	<u>DOMESTIC WORKERS' INSURANCE IN HONDURAS</u>	34
BOX 11.	<u>IMPLEMENTING GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL IN SERBIA</u>	42
BOX 12.	<u>THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA: OPPORTUNITIES BEING MISSED FOR GENDER RESPONSIVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC POLICIES?</u>	44
BOX 13.	<u>EUROPEAN NEP TRENDS</u>	45
BOX 14.	<u>AFRICAN NEP TRENDS</u>	61
BOX 15.	<u>ASIAN NEP TRENDS</u>	77
BOX 16.	<u>MIDDLE EASTERN NEP TRENDS</u>	98

List of acronyms

AFDB	African Development Bank
AFRISTAT	Observatoire économique et statistique d'Afrique Subsaharienne
AMIE	Appui à la création et au développement des micro et petites entreprises, Union des Comores
ANFTU	All Nepal Federation of Trade Unions
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
APROJEC	Appui à la pérennisation de la paix par la promotion de l'emploi des jeunes et des femmes aux Comores
BDS	Business development services
CEB	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DEF	Development and Employment Fund
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
DWI	Decent Work Indicators
EAC	East African Community
ECD	Early childhood development
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EI	Employment insurance
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
EPZ	Export processing zone
ETF	European Training Foundation
ETVET	Employment, technical and vocational education training
EU	European Union
FADC	Fonds d'Appui au Développement Communautaire
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDI	Foreign direct investment
GDP	Gross domestic product

GESS	Global Expansion of Social Security
GJP	Global Jobs Pact
GKBEP	Global Knowledge Base on Employment Policy
HCBC	Home/community-based care
HIMO	Haute intensité de Main d'œuvre
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization/Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
KEIS	Korea Employment Information Service
KWTU	Korean Women's Trade Union
MECK	Mutuelle d'Epargne et de Crédit ya Komor
MFI	Microfinance institutions
MoERD	Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Republic of Serbia
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSME	Micro, small and medium enterprises
NDP	National development plan
NEAP	National Employment Action Plan
NEP	National employment policy
NES	National Employment Service
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework

NREGA	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NSA	National system of accounts
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OVOP	One Village One Product
PNEEG	Politique Nationale de l'Équité et de l'Égalité de Genre, Union des Comores
PRGS	Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PSLEGE	Provincial Secretariat for Labour, Employment and Gender Equality
R&D	Research and Development
ROAME	Répertoire Opérationnel Africain des Métiers et Emplois
ROME	Répertoire Opérationnel des Métiers et Emplois
SARUMAYA	Comorian Craft Association
SEC	Social-Economic Council
SME	Small and medium enterprises
SPF	Social Protection Floor
SSC	Social Security Corporation
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
UPEC	Union for the Promotion of Comorian Enterprises
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States dollar
VET	Vocational education and training

VOUNA DJEMA	Association of Comorian Women in Business
WG	Working Group
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
YEF	Youth Employment Fund
YES	Youth employment services

I. Introduction

The 2009 Global Jobs Pact, in its section on shaping a fair and sustainable globalization, states that: “This current crisis should be viewed as an opportunity to shape new gender equality policy responses. Recovery packages during economic crises need to take into account the impact on women and men and integrate gender concerns in all measures. In discussions on recovery packages, both regarding their design and assessing their success, women must have an equal voice with men” (ILO 2009a, p. 7).

Further, the ILO Programme and Budget 2012-13 document, in its section on delivering results in gender equality, states: “...in 2012-13, efforts will focus on a comparative analysis of employment policies, in order to identify good practices and develop recommendations that support the implementation of Global Jobs Pact. It is expected that these recommendations will help countries to move more towards gender equality and improve quality of women’s employment” (ILO 2011a, p. 83). Given these two mandates, this report emerges to help respond to the crisis and to promote economic and social development.

The ILO Employment Policy Department has been providing technical support for the formulation of national employment policies (NEPs) in developing countries during the last six years. As part of its efforts to establish and maintain a good knowledge base, it has been compiling a Global Knowledge Database on Employment Policy (GKDBEP) where national employment policy documents, national development plans, relevant socioeconomic policy documents, as well as technical reports are collected and stored, with the aim of being made available electronically to all ILO colleagues who are working on employment policies in both the field and at HQ. So far, there are some 53 countries for which various documents are collected and stored, and of these, there are 24 countries for which there are documents on NEPs.

In light of the availability of these documents, the aim of this study is to provide a systematic review and documentation of the gender dimensions of the various national employment policies and strategies. This report will provide an overview of the 24 countries sampled, including a methodology for analysis, a mapping of the gender responsiveness of the policies along a “spectrum of gender dimensions”, and an examination of the recurrent themes and patterns that emerge from the review. The purpose of this report is to provide grounding within a global context of the emerging issues, debates and considerations of gender equality within NEPs. The report focuses on the Decent Work Agenda; demand side considerations (i.e. macro- and microeconomic environment, foreign direct investment, sectoral policies to encourage employment); supply side considerations (i.e. the development of marketable skills); control over and access to productive resources and SME development; labour market policies (active and passive labour market policies, employment services); equal opportunity and treatment in employment; social protection and labour rights; work-family balance considerations; issues surrounding unpaid work; and policy formulation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation and budgeting.

The report also includes a more in-depth analysis and review on 4 country studies (Union of the Comoros, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Republic of Korea and Republic of Serbia) to compare and document both gender responsive interventions and gender equality concerns of national employment policies and strategies. Based on lessons from these 4 cases, and in combination with global trends of how gender is included in NEPS, this report will highlight proactive strategies to include gender equality in the world of work.

II. Methodology

The ILO has established gender equality as one of the key cross-cutting priorities in its mission to promote productive employment and decent work for women and men. Through the endowment of a variety of tools and strategies, the ILO has worked to support outcomes which contribute to gender equality within the world of work. The methodology for this report has been based primarily upon interventions already undertaken by the ILO to place gender at the heart of economic and social policies, both through gender mainstreaming and targeted initiatives.

Background

Firstly, the ILO's Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in the Employment Sector 2010-15, which mirrors the aims of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010-2015 (ILO 2012a), is a cornerstone for this report; the Strategy is designed to ensure that gender concerns are fully integrated into all of the ILO's technical work related to the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of employment policies, programmes and other actions. It also provides a framework to ensure that gender analysis and planning are introduced into all of the ILO-supported activities for employment promotion. The objective of the Strategy is to outline how gender dimensions will be systematically addressed both substantively and in structures and procedures (ILO 2012b). The Strategy identifies key gender issues and response strategies in employment themes (*ibid.*, pp. 6-7), strategies for gender mainstreaming in the employment sector (*ibid.*, pp. 12-15) and useful gender-related tools for the promotion of equitable outcomes. Its technique on how to design and deliver gender responsive employment policies, strategies and programmes has been a key component in designing the research methodology of this report.

Secondly, the Guidelines on Gender in Employment Policies, Vision Paper and policy briefs (ILO 2009b) provide concrete and operational guidance on how to mainstream gender equality into specific employment policy areas. Focusing on economic policies, international trade policies, employment intensity of growth, labour migration and mobility, skills and employability, enterprise development, access to microfinance services, value chain analysis, local economic development, good working conditions, labour market institutions and policies and crisis response and reconstruction, these Guidelines help to integrate gender issues into employment policies and programmes. The formation of the matrix used for analyzing NEPs was informed heavily by the analysis from the Guidelines, in an attempt to be cross-cutting and comprehensive.

Finally, the Global Knowledge Database of Employment Policy (GKBEP), an electronic virtual library of employment policies, was the text-base for the evaluation matrix of this report. The GKBEP includes a component for country-level analyses which tracks general information (title and date, status, timeframe, ILO support), strategic goals, objectives and employment targets, the formulation process (including the extent to which tripartite partners were involved), the content of the NEP (based on key policy areas), the implementation process (including budget) and the monitoring and evaluation process. The evaluation matrix for this study utilizes similar categories and information collection methods to the GKBEP and is designed to supplement and elaborate upon the information already available.

Designing effective gender responsive NEPs

The overall logic of the ILO's intervention strategy to support member States in developing integrated and inclusive employment policies relies on knowledge building, partnership, tripartite social dialogue, policy coherence and coordination, and advocacy

and capacity building as the primary means of action. National employment policies should prioritize productive employment, decent work and income opportunities within their macro analysis, sectoral or economic stimulus strategies, and should be developed in consultation with social partners and endorsed by the government (cabinet, parliament or inter-ministerial committees) (ILO 2012c). Therefore, broadly speaking, an effective NEP requires coherence among economic and social policies, inclusive structures and accountability of the policy to its citizens, women and men alike. Without these milestones, a policy will not serve the needs of people who face decent work challenges, women or otherwise.

While the purpose of this study is not to be prescriptive of how to create a gender sensitive NEP, nor to make explicit recommendations on what aspects of social, political and economic policy must be present for an NEP to be considered gender transformative, it does aim to build on the ILO's strategy to support inclusive employment policies. As a result, this study aims to determine the degree to which gender is included as a cross-cutting issue in policies designed to promote productive employment, decent work and income opportunities. The means and degree to which countries have achieved this goal vary, and there is no "right" or "wrong" way to work towards gender responsive policies. However, the overall aim of countries should be a NEP that targets both women and men equally, and that recognizes the existence of gender-specific needs and constraints for both women and men. This policy should seek to transform the existing gender relations in a more equitable direction through the redistribution of resources and responsibilities, not just in the existing social framework but also by questioning the existing status quo.

Consequently, some of the guiding questions that should be asked of a gender responsive NEP include:

- Does the NEP include a mechanism to create and share an evidence base for informed policy formulation and programme implementation?
- Does the NEP support the development of enabling institutional mechanisms to promote gender equality?
- Does the NEP facilitate advocacy dialogue relating to gender issues among key stakeholders?
- Does the NEP act in coherence with other policies to guide social, political and economic growth?

Study design

Taking as a basis these tools and strategies, this review establishes criteria to measure the depth and breadth of different gender considerations which could impact the gendered dimensions of NEPs. The study is based on a matrix of a number of considerations (Appendix 1), and is designed as an additional tool to evaluate the extent to which gender responsiveness is evidenced in national employment policies and strategies. It provides a comprehensive (though not exhaustive) list of considerations which capture the gendered nature of the policy, including the associated social side of the labour market. The quantitative examination is combined with a qualitative assessment, taking into account considerations which may fall outside the realm of the quantitative analysis and any other relevant factors which may arise through a detailed reading of the policy.

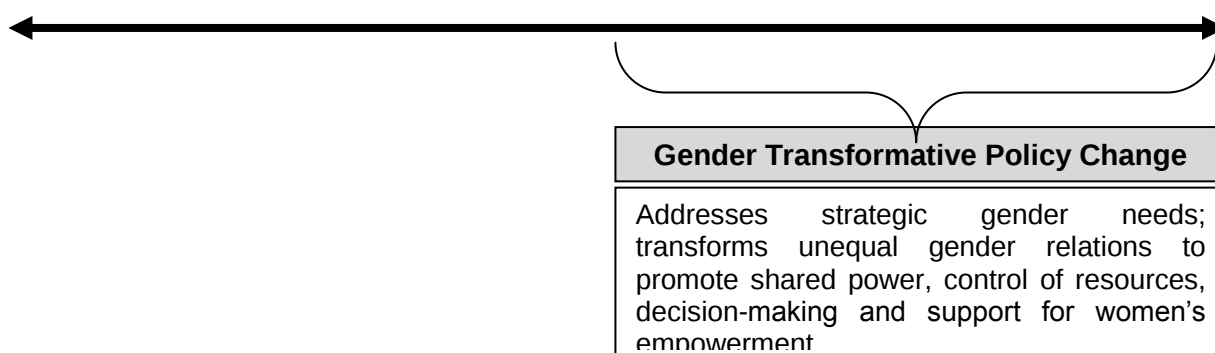
Each policy is then assessed based on the number of considerations incorporated, as well as an overall qualitative appraisal. Each evaluation included the number of

considerations, selected key points that guided the NEP, areas of strength, areas of weakness and an overall listing (Appendix 2). Based on the number of considerations in a given policy, each NEP is placed along a spectrum of gender dimensions (Table 1) in order to allow for comparative analysis, and an overall ranking of how each country performed (i.e. the number of considerations each country had) is provided in Figure 2. It is important to note that the spectrum indicates the degree of enabling environment for action and/or the political commitment made towards gender equality in the NEP. It is not a reflection of gender equality outcomes or an evaluation of a country's performance in the realm of gender equality. A country's NEP and associated policy documents may be far more gender responsive than outcomes on the ground, or, to the contrary, a policy document may not reflect many of the gender responsive nuances that are present within society. Gender transformative policy change can, and often is occurring in countries along the entire spectrum.

More broadly, the goal of the mixed-method evaluation and the spectrum of gender dimensions is to gain insight into both how countries compare to each other (on a regional and/or global level), to understand themes, trends and anomalies (both regionally and globally) that emerge from the analyses, and to gain a deeper understanding of the context-specific environments within individual States.

Table 1. Spectrum of gender dimensions¹

Gender Blind	Gender Neutral	Gender Sensitive	Gender Positive
Presumes men and women not as equals; uses gender norms, roles and stereotypes that reinforce gender inequalities	Presumes men and women not as equals but as the same; gender norms, roles and relations are not affected or iterated	Presumes men and women as equals; addresses gender norms, roles and access to resources to reach policy goals	Presumes men and women as equals; changing gender norms, roles and access to resources is a key component of policy outcomes
"None"	"Working towards"	"To some extent"	"Meets or exceeds"



¹ Adapted from ILO 2010a, p. 30 and the UN System-Wide Action Plan for the Implementation of the United Nations CEB Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women 2012).

The research findings (Section III) of the report are based primarily on each country's NEP, with supplemental information in boxes and footnotes drawn from multilateral and national-level reports, policy-relevant research and academic publications. It is important to note that in some cases, the policy documents available were quite limited in depth and breadth and sometimes were not representative of the larger environment of gender transformative policy change. Further, based on the scope of the research, it is impossible to analyse all interventions that are taking place within individual countries; therefore the analysis in this report is limited to the most recent NEPs made available to the ILO. At the same time, the four country case studies (Section IV) attempt to provide a deeper, more nuanced examination of not only the NEP, but also

Decent Work Country Programmes, Global Jobs Pact Country Scans, multilateral (UN, ILO, WTO, OECD) research and technical reports, National Development Plans, national level policies (social policy, youth employment, health, education, etc.) and academic articles and analysis. It must be noted, however, that many of the NEPs make no explicit reference to other complementary policies (specifically on gender, social protection and/or anti-discrimination), which could provide more nuance to the analysis. This persistent question of policy coherence raised challenges in the analysis in this report, as well as in the process of policy implementation at the national level.

III. Research findings

The 24 countries for which NEPs were available drew on a wide geographical distribution, starkly different historical contexts, different degrees of socio-economic development, diverse socio-cultural milieus and widely divergent political systems. Nevertheless, the commitment to equal opportunity, social inclusion and institutionalized gender equality seems to be enshrined – to varying degrees – in most, if not all, policies. In general, most countries fall into the top three categories of “gender neutral”, “gender sensitive” or “gender positive”, with a few “gender blind” outliers. This section will provide first an overview of how each country performed along the spectrum of gender dimensions, and then elaborate upon recurrent themes that arose both globally and on a regional basis.

Table 2 shows the breakdown of countries analysed, while Figure 3 demonstrates graphically how each country fell along the spectrum of gender dimensions. Here, the number of considerations (column 2) refers to the number of parameters which each NEP fulfils in a series of categories including: the degree to which the NEP was formed through the organization of common interest; the gender dimensions of the development of marketable skills; demand side considerations (including gender responsive changes in monetary, fiscal and investment policies, sectoral policies, employment targets, interventions to help the unemployed find work, etc.); gender responsive labour market policies; the degree of discrimination in recruitment, hiring and treatment; the presence of decent work deficits; work-family balance; gendered access to resources; gendered access to business and financial services; support for women and youth entrepreneurs; provisions for unpaid care work; the inclusion of gender in the policy formation process; policy coordination and implementation; policy monitoring and evaluation; and policy budgeting. These categories are designed to be inclusive of the various economic, social and political parameters through which gendered issues should be included in NEPs.

In total, there are 226 considerations upon which each NEP was evaluated using a yes/no binary (e.g. Does the NEP include provisions for skills development? Does the NEP promote social dialogue? Does the NEP disaggregate employment sector and sub-sector by sex?). If the answer to a question is yes, then it is counted in the total number of considerations. Countries that have 50-65 considerations are considered gender blind; those with 65-75 considerations are gender neutral; those with 76-115 are gender sensitive; those with 116 and above are gender positive. Given that all the considerations are considered equally, it happens that one country may perform significantly better in one category (i.e. strongly gender responsive social policies or maternity coverage) but worse in a second, while another country may perform better in the second category (i.e. sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis tools) but worse in the first, and the two have similar places along the spectrum. It is crucial to note, therefore, that the ranking is cumulative and is far more nuanced than a single number along a spectrum.

Moreover, “gender transformative policy changes”, i.e. policies that addresses strategic gender needs to transform unequal gender relations to promote shared power, control of resources, decision-making and support for women’s empowerment, are

Table 2. Review of gender considerations, NEPs

Country or Territory	Number of Considerations	Spectrum position
Nepal	54	Gender blind
Mozambique	56	Gender blind
Cameroon	70	Gender neutral
Occupied Palestinian territories	70	Gender neutral
China	71	Gender neutral
Liberia	75	Gender neutral
Macedonia, FYR	79	Gender sensitive
Iraq	80	Gender sensitive
Benin	82	Gender sensitive
Tanzania, United Republic of	82	Gender sensitive
Nigeria	91	Gender sensitive
Honduras	92	Gender sensitive
Seychelles	96	Gender sensitive
Uganda	102	Gender sensitive
Malawi	103	Gender sensitive
Senegal	107	Gender sensitive
Burkina Faso	111	Gender sensitive
Jordan	119	Gender positive
Bosnia and Herzegovina	127	Gender positive
Moldova	130	Gender positive
The Comoros	135	Gender positive
Madagascar	135	Gender positive
Serbia	138	Gender positive
Republic of Korea	140	Gender positive

manifested in a variety of ways and at many points along the spectrum of gender dimensions. The process of transforming societal relations is far from straight-forward, and a route that requires deeper insight into gender relations and how those relations transform the economic, social and political environment of a country. As such, gender transformative policy change is happening even in countries that rank fairly low along the spectrum. Capturing this kind of change in NEPs is imprecise and tricky, which is why an evaluation of policies is not sufficient; understanding the gendered impact of policy change on the ground should be the next step in evaluating gender equality outcomes and a country's performance in the realm of gender equality.

No clear regional or economic trends emerge to explain the results of the mapping. Madagascar is a low income country, but its NEP is highly gender responsive, while Nepal is also low income, but with a less gender responsive NEP; China is an upper middle income country, but its NEP is less gender responsive, while Serbia is also upper middle income, with a highly gender responsive NEP. The most gender responsive NEPs were found in Asia, while African, European and Middle Eastern countries run the gamut of high to low gender responsiveness. Further, there is no correlation between high rates of female employment and high gender performance in the country's NEP (Tables 2 and Figure 1). To the contrary, those with high rates of female employment (Tanzania, Mozambique, Nepal, Malawi and Madagascar) show mixed results of gender performance, while others with lower rates of female employment (Republic of Korea,

Figure 1. Gender spectrum of National Employment Policies

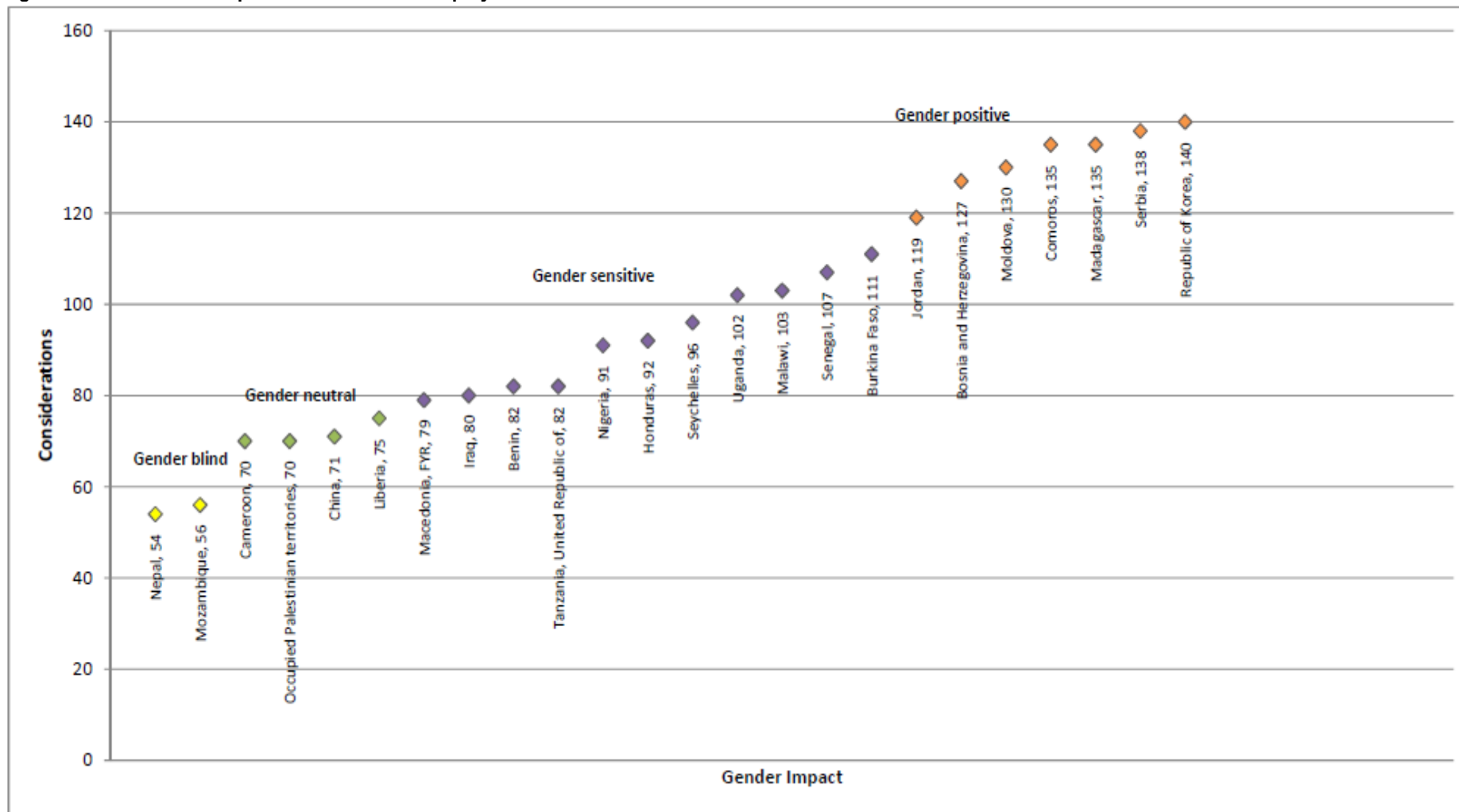
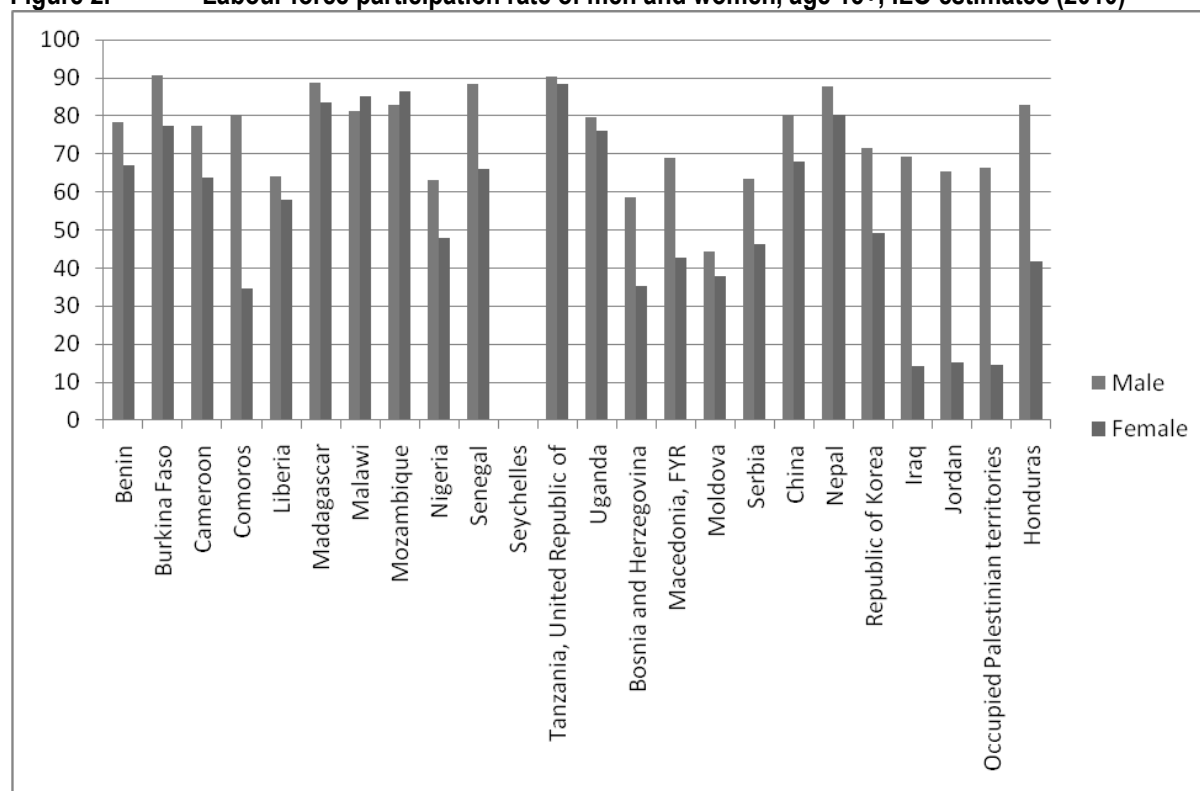


Figure 2. Labour force participation rate of men and women, age 15+, ILO estimates (2010)



Source: Calculated from ILO KILMnet 2012

Note: No data on labour force participation rates for men and women of any age or for any year is available for the Seychelles

the Comoros and Jordan) have more proactive policies in terms of social protection, employment promotion and affirmative action. Notably, in countries where there is high share of subsistence agriculture, the employment rates of women tend to be higher, although the quality of the work is often questionable. Further, cultural norms also affect how men and women participate in economic activities, rather than the level of economic development, per se; this is clearly the case in more strongly patriarchal societies or those with a history of low rates of female economic participation.

While this report does not aim to understand the nuances of which precise factors can or do contribute to a NEP having high or low gender responsiveness (especially given that this report focuses on policy formulation and not policy outcomes), it is suffice to conclude that economic growth is not entirely sufficient to ensure more gender equitable policies. Scholars, development agencies and practitioners (Duflo 2010; World Bank 2012; Razavi et al. 2012) concur: while gender equality in capabilities and access to opportunities can accelerate economic growth, economic growth alone is not enough to ensure significant progress in important dimensions of women's economic empowerment and employment.

Further, it becomes clear that women are far from a homogenous group and external factors, including the most recent global job crisis, rising food prices and changing market structures, affect them differently.¹ In some cases, women appear to be propelled into the labour market (especially low-paid casual employment) at times of economic distress to make up for falling earnings of other household members, especially male breadwinners (as argued in Heinz and Lund 2012). In other cases, economic crisis seems to have pushed women out of the labour force completely, especially when sectors in which they are disproportionately represented (garments and textiles, manufacturing,

¹ See Otake 2011.

public sector employment) are forced to downsize. Past research has shown that women are typically the first to be laid off both because they worked in more cyclically volatile firms, such as small export-oriented enterprises, and because of efforts to protect the jobs of “male breadwinners” (UN 1999). In the most recent global job crisis, though, different trends have emerged: in most developing countries, women in export-oriented labour-intensive manufacturing and tourism are among those most negatively impacted, while women who work in the service sector (including domestic services and health) have fared better in keeping their jobs. Men typically have worked across a broader range of sectors than women, but they tend to be more represented in sectors such as construction, mining and heavy manufacturing, which have been heavily affected by the economic crisis in many countries, especially at the onset. This has meant that unemployment has impacted men more so than women in these sectors (Otobe 2011). Cases like Serbia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia demonstrate this pattern: when industries that employ more men than women are hit by economic downswings, women actually suffer from lower rates of unemployment than their male counterparts. However, as the crisis has endured, the impact of job losses has spread to other sectors where women work, and the overall patterns of gender gaps in unemployment rates have not changed. However, the global female unemployment rate has remained higher than men’s (with regional variations) (ibid.).

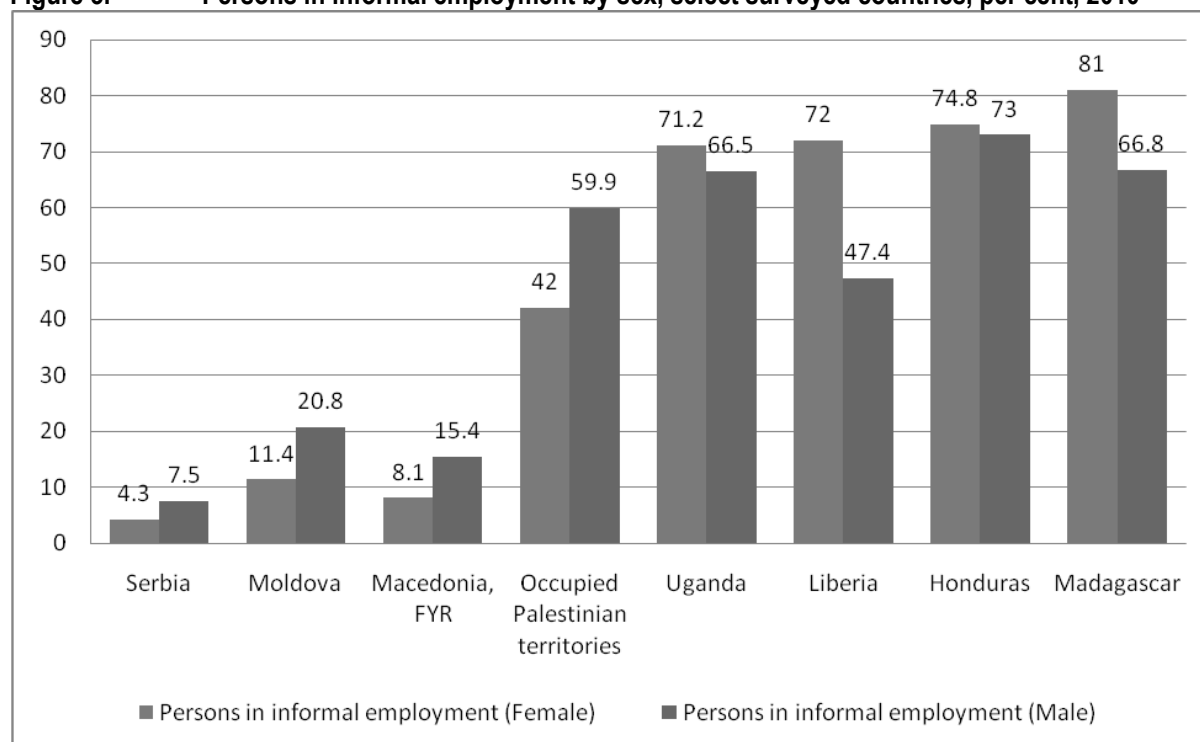
However, as Elson (2011) notes, unemployment statistics may not in themselves be a good guide to the relative impact on women’s and men’s employment. Women who lose their jobs may disappear altogether from labour force statistics, which often just include formal sector jobs. This can happen if workers do not have any rights to unemployment insurance (and thus do not register as unemployed), or because they are discouraged from looking for another formal sector job (because they do not expect to find one). This does not necessarily mean that women become idle; they may take up informal employment, which is not always captured in labour force statistics.

As such, decreasing employment opportunities and chronic unemployment can and have led to a shift of workers from the formal to the informal sector, with new workers and workers who have lost their jobs being absorbed into less formal, precarious or casual types of work. Women are especially likely to undertake such work in these circumstances, and research suggests that in most regions of the world informal employment constitutes a larger proportion of women’s total employment than it does of men’s total employment (Razavi et al. 2012, see Figure 3).

Furthermore, changes in agricultural policy (be it processes of modernization and increased efficiency of the agricultural sector to maximize exports and profits, a move to multi-national agro-business, or even reforms in land tenure and ownership rights) have often had dramatic effects on women, their livelihoods and the process of informalization. Causes, effects and impacts are most often context specific and therefore must be viewed in light of specific socio-economic contexts. Several cases in which large segments of the workforce are informal, or in which the informal sector is growing, will be discussed in detail later in this report, including an analysis of what is causing such patterns.

Despite the wide variety of forces that may explain the diversity of gender in the examined NEPs, some notable themes did emerge at the global and regional level that may shed light on future policy formation. The following section will explore in more depth some of the commonalities that have emerged from the comparative analysis.

Figure 3. Persons in informal employment by sex, select surveyed countries, per cent, 2010



Sources: ILO Laborsta 2012; ILO 2011b

Notes: Persons in informal employment (a job-based concept) represents the sum of informal jobs in formal enterprises, informal sector enterprises and households producing goods for own consumption or hiring paid domestic workers.

ILO involvement and the Decent Work Agenda

Of the 24 countries surveyed, 20 of them have formulated their NEP explicitly with ILO support, while the others (Serbia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Korea and Nepal) have received technical assistance, support in articulating national development frameworks including National Development Plans and Poverty Reduction Strategies² and/or adopted a Decent Work Country Programme within the last six years. Thus far, of the surveyed countries only Jordan has undertaken a National Jobs Pact country scan (ILO 2011c) that will provide input into national policy dialogue and implementation processes, in response to the global jobs crisis.

The degree to which ILO priorities have been embedded within policy formation is mixed: some policies refer explicitly to a corresponding national development framework to promote social and economic development, while others rely on past employment policies (often formulated with ILO support), regional/global collaborations and/or protocols (e.g. the Declaration of the African Summit³, the East African Common Market Protocol⁴, the EU Employment Framework, the Global Jobs Pact) or cooperation

² It should be noted that the Employment Policy Department's support is provided to the ILO constituents on employment policies to achieve either or both: formulation and adoption of a NEP; and/or integration of employment strategies/priorities into national development frameworks.

³ The Second Africa-India Forum Summit 2011: Addis Ababa Declaration lays down goals of cooperation on foreign direct investment, climate change, South-South cooperation, economic policy that will support stable, long-term capital flows to developing countries to stimulate investment, a post-2015 development agenda, Doha rounds, UN reforms, nuclear weapons, and drug and weapons trafficking.

⁴ The Protocol on the Establishment of the East African Community (EAC) Common Market entered into force on 1 July 2010, following ratification by all the five Partner States: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. It provides for "Four Freedoms", namely the free movement of goods;

with UN bodies (especially the UNDP and UN Women). Overall, however, there appears to be a strong trend towards understanding employment as more than only a means of generating revenue, but also as an avenue towards personal dignity, family stability, peace in the community, democracies that deliver for people, as well as economic growth that expands opportunities for productive jobs and enterprise development (ILO 2012e).

The integration of ILO priorities, especially the Decent Work agenda (characterized by four pillars: job creation, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection and promoting social dialogue)⁵ is evident in many of the NEPs analyzed. The analysis of the NEPs show that many demonstrate evidence of concern for all workers and especially for the improvement of the situation of the most vulnerable (e.g. policies focusing on the reduction of poverty, targets for job creation for vulnerable populations); concern for the living conditions of workers and their families (e.g. consideration for the creation of public infrastructure including transportation, communication, shelter, water/sanitation and energy); gender as a cross-cutting issue; and the importance of the economic and social context of decent work. There has also been a growing tendency of countries to provide data on labour supply through labour force surveys, although the degree to which this goal has been embedded in policy is dependent on individual countries. Decent Work Indicators (Footnote 7) have been utilized in several of the countries surveyed (Madagascar, Uganda and Malawi, among others), though not universally across all countries.

Although many countries strive to use indicators to monitor the progress of growth and gender responsiveness in their NEPs, few have standardized sex-disaggregated data collection (though some have prioritized it, including the Comoros, Jordan, Madagascar, Malawi, Serbia and Seychelles).⁶ Further, there has been little success quantifying low pay rates among women, lifting working poor women out of poverty, reducing excessive working hours for women, or reducing time-related underemployment rates among women, despite the integration of other decent work considerations. More consistent national reporting on the progress towards a Decent Work Agenda would be helpful to improve the gender responsiveness of NEPs in countries at all stages of development and in every region (ILO 2008b).

Moreover, all countries (with the exception of the occupied Palestinian territories which do not have status to ratify international conventions) have ratified ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) and Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100). Likewise, the promotion of labour codes in line with international labour standards (in particular those of freedom of association, wages, working time, labour contracts, occupational safety and health, industrial relations and maternity protection) has often been given priority in the formation of policies. While these standards have not been universally translated into national law and practice across all countries surveyed, there does appear to be a strong trend indicating that a policy framework of labour standards in line with ILO conventions and recommendations is becoming more increasingly recognized as being fundamental to

labour; services; and capital, which will significantly boost trade and investments and make the region more productive and prosperous.

⁵ The ILO Framework on the Measurement of Decent Work covers ten Decent Work Indicators (DWIs) corresponding to the four strategic pillars of the Decent Work Agenda (full and productive employment, rights at work, social protection and the promotion of social dialogue): (i) employment opportunities; (ii) adequate earnings and productive work; (iii) decent working time; (iv) combining work, family and personal life; (v) work that should be abolished; (vi) stability and security of work; (vii) equal opportunity and treatment in employment; (viii) safe work environment; (ix) social security; and (x) social dialogue, employers' and workers' representation (ILO 2012d).

⁶ Though not part of its NEP, for more information on sex-disaggregated data on the occupied Arab territories see the Report of the Director General 2012 (ILO 2012f).

job-rich growth. Tellingly, all 24 countries surveyed have NEPs that promote social dialogue.

Nevertheless, it must be highlighted that while integrating the Decent Work Agenda and/or adopting internationally-recognized labour standards does facilitate a more gender responsive, socially equitable environment, these measures alone may not be sufficient to guarantee that a state implement gender sensitive or inclusive employment policies. The Decent Work Agenda provides a framework for shaping policies and actions that respond to challenges and aspirations at the country-level, but this framework must also involve national ownership and national commitment to results. Countries with a Decent Work Country Programme seem to have made more significant progress towards the creation of gender responsive NEPs, although the link is sometimes tenuous or opaque. Overall, however, there is a close alignment of the Decent Work Agenda and gender responsive NEPs.

Demand-side considerations

Nearly universally, the first step to crafting a development-friendly NEP, and the base upon which all other considerations are built, seems to be getting the macro- and microeconomic climates “right” in order to foster investment and job creation. Interventions in macroeconomic policy such as tightening monetary policies, proactive changes to trade and regional integration (including reducing trade barriers and adjusting migration policies), changes in financial policies (adjustments in the tax code or lower rates of interest), or transformations of investment policies and investment climate (such as corporate tax credits, the creation of business zones or tech parks, or the reduction of tariffs on non-domestic goods) can either hurt or hinder the economic environment.

At the same time, changes in economic policy can also have strong impacts on women. For example, high taxes may act as a disincentive for informal economy operators to register their holdings, whereas tax incentives and amnesties may be ways of encouraging registration (ILO 2009b). In Burkina Faso, for example, lowering taxes and loosening fiscal restraints have been used as a way to encourage the integration of informal workers into more formalized systems of accounts. Honduras has also worked to simplify its macroeconomic, financial and investment policies to make investment and business creation simpler and less costly. Pushing to make the export sector more competitive, standardizing fees and fines, increasing tax collection to finance social programmes and trade tariffs have helped to build a stronger domestic market, which has also led to job creation (notably in Honduras). However, protectionist policies that artificially inflate domestic products and stifle imports can be harmful to all, and in particular women producers – given that taxpayers are the ones who ultimately finance subsidies and other types of protectionist mechanisms, and that consumers are ultimately faced with limited options in terms of quality and quantity and/or with higher prices than what would have been available should no barriers exist - and therefore counterproductive to gender equitable growth (ibid.).

Foreign direct investment

Seventeen of the 24 countries surveyed, especially in Africa and Europe, have prioritized foreign direct investment (FDI), export processing zones (EPZs), special economic zones, or export-oriented industry to generate jobs. As a result of trade liberalization, many countries have expanded their exports of labour-intensive manufacturing commodities and contributed to driving down the relative prices (“terms of trade”) of those goods on the global market. This can be especially damaging for women who tend to be concentrated in the types of industries that are most exposed to international competition (especially textiles and manufacturing) (Razavi et al. 2012).

Studies show that while there is likely to be some short-term improvement in women's incomes as FDI expands, the longer-term trajectory of women's wages is less promising; rather, labour-intensive, export-oriented FDI can be influential in determining a gender wage gap and can drive down working conditions (Oostendorp 2004; Braunstein 2006, see Box 1). Further, even as this sector expands, the quality of jobs is often poor, with less organizational potential and no upward mobility. However, it is important to note that the relationship between wages, working conditions and FDI is far from straightforward, and could actually stand to benefit workers – particularly women (World Bank 2012, Kucera 2008). In some cases, the income generated by long hours of work may be a necessary survival strategy for men and women. At the same time, though, several studies have found that while export-oriented FDI might result in higher wages for women, the reverse might be observed when FDI shifts towards higher productivity and more domestic-oriented production (Braunstein and Brenner 2007). Other studies have revealed that where female to male wage ratios have increased, the proportion of the wage gap that is unexplained by productivity differentials has increased (Liu 2004). Overall, however, it must be noted that problems persist guaranteeing equal pay to men and women doing equal work and work of equal value, especially in FDI industries. A persistent and systematic undervaluation of women's work, low wages and risky, long working hours in female-dominated industries remains (ILO 2008d).

Box 1. The feminization of manufacturing labour - the South Korean "miracle"

The Republic of Korea's successful economic growth model, which was based on strong central government trade, industrial and technology policies, has long been emulated by policy-makers from many developing countries. The Republic of Korea's economy started to gain momentum from the 1960s, with the help of targeted investments in strategic sectors to help industries acquire the technology they needed to upgrade. High rates of growth and structural transformation guaranteed near-full employment, increased wages and the birth of strong corporate welfare. Yet in order to facilitate this kind of upgrade, low wages for women - roughly half those of men - provided a stimulus to growth, since women's low wages kept the cost of exports down, financing the acquisition of technology (Seguino 2000a, 2000b). These low-cost exports were produced primarily by women, who faced job segregation in export industries. Young, unmarried women played a key role in the early, labour-intensive phase of industrialization between the early 1960s and 1973, with state policy deliberately mobilizing such labour. Increasing numbers of women workers also precipitated a shift from agriculture to manufacturing, with women's share of total employment increasing (Razavi et al. 2012, p. 7).

Yet from the 1980s onward, post-industrial strategies turned from the labour-intensive production to capital-intensive production in an attempt to upgrade the economy technologically. The opening up to foreign direct investment and domestic capital mobility from the 1980s has reversed into a "defeminization of labour" (Berik 2009), as the composition of the workforce in the electronics industry changed in favour of male workers, producing more sophisticated communications and computer products (UN 1999). Contrary to "typical" patterns of growth after the implementation of FDI, the Republic of Korea's experience has shown a negative correlation between job creation, FDI and gender equality.

In 10 cases (especially in Europe), countries that have prioritized FDI and labour-intensive export manufacturing have also made efforts to set labour standards and wages that can help to prevent the exploitation of workers. In Serbia, for example, a strong effort has been made to prioritize FDI and export-oriented production by raising the share of export goods and services in order to create jobs and stimulate growth. At the same time, the government has prioritized labour rights and equality in labour markets in order to abide by the EU ascension process. Minimum wage laws, employment and unemployment insurance, social security, pension and health care have all been

implemented by the government, despite attempts to reduce public expenditures from 20.5 per cent to 12.4 per cent by 2020 (Republic of Serbia 2011a).

Enabling environment for sectoral development

Domestically, the development of a financial sector and financial institutions (including microcredit, credit facilities, access to credit, payment facilities and/or credit for non-wage labour costs) can have a positive impact on employment creation.⁷ As research has shown, fiscal policies such as taxation and income transfers are important tools for reaching social goals, and they are a major means of redistributing wealth. This is particularly important in situations where women carry the burden of the care. At the same time, monetary policy changes that prioritize low inflation, low public debt, minimal public expenditure, reduced taxes and reduced budget deficits can actually reduce growth or employment targets, often disproportionately affecting women's employment (ILO 2009b). As such, it is important to realize that economic growth itself (prompted by an enabling environment for sectoral development) is not enough to reduce poverty; there must be a strong employment content to growth, and employment creation must be targeted to particular sections of the poor – including vulnerable women (ibid.).

Eleven out of the 24 countries surveyed included changes to monetary policy; 21 included changes to fiscal policy; 22 included changes to financial policy; 22 included changes to investment policies and investment climate; 19 included changes to trade and regional integration policies. Of those, only two had gender-specific considerations for monetary policies; three for fiscal policies; four for financial policies; three for investment policies and investment climate; and two for trade and regional integration policies. It is safe to conclude, therefore, that the macroeconomic policies found in NEPs were largely gender blind.

Moreover, all countries surveyed supported creating a general regulatory environment that would be conducive to job creation. However, only eight utilized methods that were specific to women. Measures such as subsidies for hire, adjusted rates of interest or tax reductions for the poor were particularly utilized in higher-income countries in Europe (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Moldova and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Asia (Republic of Korea and China) and the Middle East (Jordan), though lower income African countries (Madagascar, Mozambique, United Republic of Tanzania and Nigeria) also utilized some measures. Rarer, though, were targets for women in employment, job creation or labour force participation rate. However, it should be mentioned that the EU's Europe 2020 Strategy sets a goal of labour market participation of 75 per cent for women and men aged 20 to 64 by 2020 (i.e., without specific different targets for women), to which Serbia, Macedonia, Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina have pledged to strive.

Other employment sectors and sub-sectors that employ conspicuous numbers of women have been established as a priority in NEPs, especially within the fields of agriculture, industry and services. While only eight countries provided data on sex-disaggregation of employment sector and subsector, many did maintain that women were a large percentage of workers in those sectors. Manufacturing (handicraft and artisan) in Burkina Faso, for example, has been given particular attention in the NEP; the policy problematizes banks' reluctance to give credit to small-scale producers and offers entrepreneurial and industrial training to workers. Given that women make up the bulk of the workforce, this policy stands to strongly benefit them.

⁷ See ILO and UNIFEM's "Guidelines for Gender-Sensitive Employment Creation for District Councils" (ILO and UNIFEM 2008)

Agricultural policy

Agricultural policies, especially in Africa, paint an even more complicated picture. Agriculture accounts for a huge percentage (sometimes 80 per cent or more) of the workforce, many of whom are unskilled small-scale holders with low-productivity. In many cases, women are disproportionately represented within labour-intensive agro-industrial settings, and as own-account and contributing family workers. For example, in Uganda, women make up 85 per cent of the cut-flower industry (Maertend and Swinnen 2009) and 58 per cent of the overall agricultural labour force, an estimated 7.3 million workers, according to the 2007/2008 Gender Productivity Survey; in Senegal, women make up 90 per cent of the share of workers in French beans and 60 per cent in cherry tomatoes (*ibid.*), as well as 85 per cent of the overall agricultural labour force (Box 2 below). Despite (or perhaps, because of) their concentration and work in these sectors, their work may not be given appropriate monetary value, thus undervaluing their economic contribution, particularly in subsistence agriculture.

As the reviewed countries show, many states are attempting to modernize, diversify and to make efficient the agricultural sector in an attempt to maximize exports and profits through the use of skills development and upgrading, vocational training and mechanization and technology promotion – as was the case in Uganda and Senegal. Several countries (including Malawi and Tanzania) have aimed to reduce the proportion of agricultural workers in an attempt to diversify the economy. Yet this attempt to make agricultural work more productive, on larger-scale farms and for greater profit stands to harm small-scale holders, especially women, who, as a source of cheap labour that can be drawn upon seasonally, may have no other alternatives for employment. Changes in agricultural policy, either to the benefit or detriment of the small-scale sector, stand to have strongly gendered implications within the labour market. Nevertheless, some countries (notably Malawi) have pushed to legislate a minimum wage in the agrarian sector to ensure a living income, which could be seen as a unique way to both maintain jobs and combat poverty in a gender responsive way.

Supply-side considerations

Women are often at the centre of the mismatch between supply and demand in the labour market, particularly at the highly-skilled end. A lack of comprehensive education, adequate skills to participate in the labour market, technological innovation and skills for entrepreneurship can curb women's options for decent employment. Moreover, gaps between education curriculum and needs of the labour market can be disadvantageous to all students, especially in the cases when student chose to study fields that cannot provide for jobs in the long run. Vocational training, designed to fill this gap, is often inaccessible or inapplicable for women workers. Further, women quite often have less access to labour market information systems and employment services which could broaden their choices and visions (ILO 2009b).

For the most part, governments have prioritized the development of marketable skills through vocational and professional training, skills for technological change and entrepreneurship, and both public and private employment services across regions. Nevertheless, the extent to which women's needs are taken into account - in the content and the provision of skills development, training and employment services - is more complex.

Notably, many countries, especially in Africa, have a ministry of women or gender that provide particular guidance and financial support to topics related to women's education and training, labour market policies and other supply-side considerations, as

well as the creation of SMEs and access to credit – although most often there was little or no reference to such ministries within individuals NEPs.

Skills and human resources development

Skills development and appropriate education skills to participate in the labour market have been prioritized by nearly all the surveyed countries, although far fewer have established specific targets for women. While 19 of the surveyed countries have made provisions for skills for technological change, and all 24 have initiatives to build skills for entrepreneurship, only four and ten, respectively of those, have made explicit provisions for women's training. Eleven provide appropriate education skills and opportunities to participate in the labour market, and 14 provide skills development, skills upgrading and re-skilling specifically targeted to women.

By and large, policies seem based on the assumption that such skills-building and educational opportunities will impact men and women similarly, therefore making it superfluous to cater curriculums or skills types to women. As research has shown, however, when developing skills training for women, micro-level actions to promote equality are as important as macro-level commitments; training needs to be flexible and adapted to the time constraints of women. Further, encouraging non-traditional skills (often through vocational training) is helpful to encourage participation in different, under-explored sectors of the labour market (ILO 2009b). Ensuring that women are trained in market relevant skills is essential to combat labour market segmentation and occupational segregation.

Centres that provide entrepreneurial training and support to women have been widely successful in rural communities in Africa, especially Burkina Faso, Liberia and Madagascar, as women are able to benefit both from skills training and from community support in their activities. Uganda has proposed gender responsive career guidance and counselling at all levels of education and training, while Senegal boasts Centres d'Initiatives pour l'Emploi Local (Centres for Local Employment Initiatives), as well as the Fonds National de Promotion de l'Entreprenariat Féminin (National Fund for the Promotion of Female Entrepreneurship). Such initiatives, combined with heightened reporting within national employment services, could lead to greater efficiency, transparency and gender responsiveness in the development of marketable skills.

Countries that have been able to target their education and skills development (notably Bosnia and Herzegovina, Comoros, Serbia and the Republic of Korea) have seen notable results. The Republic of Korea, for example, introduced specialized job training for unemployed female household heads in an attempt to integrate a wider spectrum of women into the labour market, which has helped lead, in part, to higher rates of female employment (Republic of Korea 2008). Iraq has also initiated a series of entrepreneurial trainings exclusively for women, in the hopes of promoting skill-building in targeted areas of the economy.

However, while education, training and human resource development can be creative and responsive to specific segments of the labour market, they are often gender blind and therefore fail to address some of the real concerns that women face. In Uganda, for example, 34 per cent of women in the workforce are illiterate, and yet the government has made no provision for literacy programmes. In Mozambique, 57 per cent of the workforce is illiterate and 80 per cent have no training, yet literacy and primary education are not mentioned as a way to develop workers' skills. In Malawi and Nepal,

vocational training and education are primarily geared towards rural, agrarian sectors, with less focus on growing the technical sector. This is an interesting contradiction, especially in Nepal where the majority of managers felt that obtaining workers with sufficient skills was a significant problem that was constraining the expansion of their enterprise and limiting investment (Kyloh 2008). Nepal's NEP states that in the case that human resources that have high management capabilities and ultra-modern technological know-how are not available within the country, provisions will be introduced to allow industries established in special economic zones and export processing zones to hire employees or workers from abroad, if needed. However, there is little effort made to train those skilled workers domestically.

Box 2: Senegalese women in peri-urban agriculture

Maty Ba Diao's revealing analysis (2004) of women's work in the peri-urban zone of Niayes of northwest Senegal exposes interesting dichotomies in gendered ownership/producer relationships. The peri-urban zone of the Niayes has a long tradition of market gardening and fruit and flower production, in combination with small-scale animal husbandry, both for self-consumption and sale on urban markets. Unlike the other West African countries, in the Niayes zone, few women own farms. Women are involved in horticultural activities where they account for 20 per cent of small farm holders, but the area cultivated seldom exceeds one hectare. Most often, they work actively as part of the family or employed work force in urban and peri-urban market gardening, harvesting, sorting and packaging of food groundnuts, tomatoes, or green beans (export products) - all highly labour intensive activities. Women and young girls represent 68 per cent of the labour force involved in harvesting activities and 100 per cent of those in sorting and packaging operations.

While traditionally the male head of the family has cultivated the land and led the cattle while his wives sold the surplus production at the market, the distribution of labour in peri-urban zones seems to be changing. The emergence of new opportunities may provide women with new economic environments (if the family tradition does not confine the women), especially given that processing and marketing of agricultural products have become full-time activities. Many women have low but steady revenues on a daily basis to satisfy both their needs and the needs of their families, and women constitute an important economic force in the Niayes zone: 73 per cent of them have revenues drawn from the marketing of miscellaneous agricultural products and 12 per cent of them have revenues higher than 200,000 CFA (USD \$407)/month.

The income generated by the different farming and marketing activities gives women certain autonomy for action not only within the households, but also within the community. They organize tontines (traditional, informal savings organizations used primarily by women: see Balkenhof and Gueye 1994) and participate in the running of women's organizations, even if these are informal.

Despite these positive trends, however, in general women have little access to information, training and advice on agriculture. A limited number of women have received agricultural technical training in the zone, but most of them are illiterate, despite literacy campaigns. This limits the efficiency of any learning process of technical and financial management. Moreover, women lack time; strikingly, though, this is often put forward by their husbands to justify the non-attendance of their wives at training sessions on farming techniques. Further, women have little access and control, particularly over production factors such as land, water, credit, farming equipment, quality seed, fertilisers, and pesticides. The plots women farm are most often lent to them by their husbands, leased or borrowed. Most of this land has a limited surface area and is of poor quality. Moreover, the lack of access to fertilisers and funds is a hindrance for the development of important agricultural activities.

Despite increasing amounts of responsibilities and the opening up of opportunities, challenges remain that could (and should) be addressed through proactive economic policies. Technical innovation is crucial to allow women to save time, increase their production potential and improve the quality of their lives and those of their families. Women should have access to production means, services, and fertilisers in order to get out of poverty and participate in sustainable development. They must be trained, informed and advised at the same level as men. Senegal's NEP lacks many of these provisions, however, which should be addressed in the future.

Discrimination in recruitment, hiring and treatment

Making sure that women have equal access to employment opportunities throughout the employment process is essential. At the policy level, most the countries surveyed have been successful in adopting and promoting gender non-discrimination policies and laws as noted above: all (with the exception of the occupied Palestinian territories) have ratified ILO Convention No. 111 and Convention No. 100. The majority have enacted laws prohibiting gender discrimination (with the notable exceptions of Liberia, Iraq and the occupied Palestinian territories) - although not all have made the explicit link with non-discrimination legislation in their NEPs - and a smaller percentage have national policies specifically devoted to gender. All countries (again, with the exception of the occupied Palestinian territories who are not privy) have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), although some have registered reservations.

Nevertheless, there remain sizable gaps between the spirit of the law and practice. Many NEPs have explicitly outlawed gender-based discrimination without providing a definition of what “discrimination” entails. Others lack enforcement procedures, jurisprudence or means of conciliation and arbitration to settle work-related disputes. While these discrepancies can have implications on all facets of women’s lives, from inheritance to marriage, they also have direct effect on recruitment, hiring and firing practices. Only the NEP of the Republic of Korea stands apart in its fight for legislation for gender equality. An employer who commits a violation of the Equal Employment Act is liable to criminal penalties. Accordingly, various prevention, guidance and check-up activities are conducted by labour inspectors of regional labour offices with the aim of implementing the prohibition of gender discrimination. These proactive measures are certainly the most stalwart when it comes to the enforcement of legislated gender equality. However, based on evaluations by the ILO’s Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, serious concerns remain.⁸ In general,

⁸ The Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, in the “Application of International Labour Standards 2012 (I)” (ILO 2012g) has “called on the Government [of the Republic of Korea] to step up its efforts and to seek cooperation with the employers’ and workers’ organizations, to increase the low level of women’s participation in the labour market and reduce the gender pay gap....Data from the 2009 Survey on Labour Conditions and Employment Type confirm the occupational gender segregation of the labour market and the low representation of women among managers over all (8.2 per cent)” (p. 531). Further, “the Committee notes that from 1 July 2007 until 31 May 2010, a total of 2,280 cases [of complaints filed by trade unions on behalf of their members due to discrimination on the basis of sex and employment status] were filed with the Labour Relations Commission to seek redress, of which 2,216 cases were handled. A correction order was issued for 125 cases; 494 cases were settled through mediation or arbitration; 693 cases were rejected or dismissed; and 904 withdrawn” (ibid.), while “the Committee notes that the Conference Committee also expressed concern that the large majority of non-regular workers were women. In this regard, the KCTU states that measures to eliminate discrimination based on gender and employment status have been insufficient and that discrimination on the basis of employment status is particularly severe for women resulting from the fact that 70 per cent of women in the labour force are non-regular workers; the quality of women’s employment has also deteriorated as jobs were created by expanding part-time work after the current economic crisis” (ibid.). As a result, “the Committee asks the Government to continue to examine the nature and extent of discrimination against fixed-term and part-time workers, particularly women, on the basis of employment status. Considering the particular vulnerability of non-regular workers to discrimination, the Committee asks the Government to consider taking serious steps to allow trade union representation with respect to complaints on behalf of fixed-term, part-time and dispatched workers under the existing anti-discrimination legislation. The Committee also asks the Government to provide information on all the steps taken to ensure the effective enforcement of Act No. 8074 of 2006 generally, including information disaggregated by sex, on the number and nature of complaints filed with the Labour Relations Commissioner regarding discrimination based on employment status, and their outcomes” (p. 532).

including a means of conciliation, jurisprudence and adjudication to penalize violations of non-discrimination standards explicitly in an NEP can be a means to eliminate gender-based discrimination.

Upholding standards of equal opportunity and treatment, as well as preventing discrimination in employment has also been challenging in the surveyed countries. Few NEPs (Burkina Faso, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malawi and Uganda) addressed occupational segregation by sex, or the share of women in wage employment in non-agricultural work (notably, Uganda proposed to increase the rate from 12 per cent to 25 per cent); fewer mentioned a gender wage gap (Serbia and Uganda); and only Serbia proposed measures to deal with such gaps (specifically through the stimulation of social dialogue, equalizing access to training and education, standardization of wages and synchronizing work and family life by offering childcare facilities; these measure are in line with Guideline 6 of the European Employment Strategy). Combined with the general lack of gender-specific targets to create employment opportunities, the dearth of gender-specific active labour market policies and the need for gender responsive skills development, it seems evident that there remains a significant disparity between political intent and policy outcomes.

In response to gaps in female employment and promotion, some countries have undertaken systems of quotas or preferential hiring practices for women, although the results of these policies are still unclear. Serbia, for example, has instituted a quota of 25 per cent for the education, training and hiring of women in the security sector (Box 3 above). In Iraq, 50 per cent of all employees of the Ministry of Health and Education must be women, as well as 30 per cent of all other ministries. Nepal advocates for “positive discrimination” to employ women, though without specifying what that would entail. Malawi has advocated 30 per cent representation of women in all decision-making positions, although without specifying an implementation mechanism. Despite their low rate of representation of women among managers, the Republic of Korea offers a subsidy for the re-engagement of female employees after giving birth (the Subsidy for Recruitment of Mothers), as well as adopting affirmative action in the revision of the Equal Employment Act in 2006, including tentative measures and accompanied procedures an employer implements in order to eliminate all existing discrimination in employment (Republic of Korea 2008).

In all surveyed countries, gender discrimination persists to some degree in recruitment, hiring and treatment of women, despite active policies and legislation. China’s NEP, for example, states that “with the exception of certain types of work positions designated by the state as unsuitable to women, no employer shall refuse to recruit women”, a statement which could be seen to establish a form of “state-sponsored” gender discrimination. Further, sometimes counter-intuitive goals get in the way of realizing equality: in the Seychelles, for example, the NEP aims to reduce the instances of termination of employment on the grounds of discrimination and to reduce the number of terminations based on victimization by employers. Instead of achieving the goal of a friendlier, more gender responsive workplace, such policies instead encourage women not to report instances of victimization or unjust termination for fear of reprisal. In contrast, aiming to increase the number of reports of terminations of employment based on the ground of sex discrimination or victimization by employers, though seemingly antithesis to the goal of gender responsiveness, demonstrates that women are comfortable enough to complain. Rather than using punitive measures that discourage “bad behaviour” which could push complaints underground, states should work to build a work environment in which women feel comfortable to voice their complaints. In

Box 3. Quotas in the Serbian Security Sector - A Gendered Transformation?

The quota system set within the Serbia security sector is used for the enrolment of women in police or military schools or in training for police or military jobs. The system was introduced originally in early 2000, with the exception of the Police College, and then expanded in 2002 and 2006 to include the police, and in 2007 to include the military.

The percentage of women admitted to the Military Academy of Serbia is adjusted to the needs of the General Staff of Serbia, and ranges from 17.3 to 21.66 per cent, while the quota for the admission of women to the Criminal Police Academy and the Centre for Basic Police Training in Sremska Kamencia is fixed at 25 per cent. Women's share in police and military positions has grown continuously since the reforms in 2001, and now women's share in the total number of employees is 21 per cent (Bjeloš 2012).

The benefits of these quotas have been extolled by politicians and military practitioners alike: the measures have increased the number of women in particular sectors (education, training) and in particular posts in the police and military in which their representation is disproportionately low (such as in special units). The measures are of particular importance in situations in which women were not previously represented, which was often the case in the Military Academy. Further, the inclusion of more women has increased the versatility and range of skills and abilities available – essentially increasing the effectiveness of the military and police (especially in tasks like work with women victims of violence or collecting information from minors) (Milošević 2012).

However, a series of shortcomings – that are not particular exclusively to Serbian quotas in the security sector, but universal with all types of quotas – persist. Quotas are seen to “set an upper limit”, i.e. setting a maximum number of places that can be taken by women (no more than 25 per cent), as opposed to a minimum floor (25 per cent or more). The use of quota systems can also increase misconceptions among both women and men that women were chosen because of their gender and not their qualifications (and that by association, other “qualified” candidates were pushed aside). Similarly, many women have opposed the use of quotas because they do not want to feel that they were chosen merely because of their gender. Concerns also persist around the idea that women bring a “kinder” or “gentler” face to an organization, an argument that essentializes women under the belief that first, there can be some sort of “essence” of femininity, second, that all women possess it, and third that all women (regardless of class, ethnicity or race) are the same (Goulding 2009). Another issue has been the shelf life of such systems; when designed as a temporary measure they can be more palatable because they work in a time-bound framework. Quotas are inherently on a temporary basis and rigidify identities, and even when they are the best practical route for achieving substantive gains, should be used only with a strong dose of caution for the intersectionality inherent in all individuals.

general, prioritizing the equal opportunity and treatment of all employees, above and beyond rudimentary rhetoric or window-dressing policies, should become a global priority in NEPs.

Labour market policies

Labour market policies, both passive and active, are designed to influence the interaction between labour supply and demand, and may help to redress many of the disadvantages women face in the labour market. These policies include activation measures for the unemployed and other target groups, including job orientation measures, self-employment, public works and special job creation programmes, as well as financial assistance that aims to compensate individuals for loss of wage or salary (such as unemployment benefits or cash transfers). Employment services are the system used to facilitate the implementation of both passive and active labour market policies.

Active labour market policies

Active labour market policies (specific interventions to help the unemployed find work, such as job orientation measures, self-employment, public works, special youth employment measures, incentives/subsidies to hire and/or skills development/upgrading/re-skilling) have been used widely to combat unemployment on a global scale. While data is not universally available, in many countries surveyed, women have higher unemployment rates than men, as well as high rates of underemployment, working poor and those who no longer seeking a job (often disguised within labour statistics). Therefore, active labour markets policies can be an important means of breaking down occupational segregation and labour market segregation by opening up training opportunities to low-skilled women (ILO 2009b).

Box 4. Honduras and the National Programme of Employment by the hour

The Programa Nacional de Empleo por Hora (National Programme of Employment by the Hour), approved in November 2010 through Decree No. 230-2010, is a temporary special emergency programme aimed at promoting decent work, retaining existing jobs and avoiding rises in the unemployment and sub-employment indexes. It allows companies to hire workers on an hourly basis, either for ordinary hours, half days, night time, or mixed, with the aim of including more youth and unemployed persons into the labour market.

The Programme allows employees to be hired in two ways: for a limited time or for specific work. Employers may hire up to 40 per cent or more of their workers (the percentage depends on the decision of STSS [Secretaría de Estado en los Despachos de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Labour and Social Security]) on a temporary basis. Companies with 1 to 15 workers must hire 10 per cent of vulnerable people, whereas companies with more than 15 workers must hire at least 5 per cent of vulnerable people. The Programme establishes the following working hours:

1. Minimum hours per day: 2 hours (rural) and 3 hours (urban);
2. Part-time: 4 hours (day); 3.5 hours (mixed); 3 hours (night);
3. The maximum weekly is set at: 44 hours (daytime); 42 hours (combined); and 36 hours (night).

The programme allows for overtime remuneration and guarantees the minimum wage. It provides an unusual compensation which is equivalent to 20 per cent of the base salary (equivalent to 13th and 14th month; vacation; and is paid together with the salary), and does not apply to skilled workers whose wages exceed the sum of the minimum plus unusual compensation.

Workers are also guaranteed accident insurance and medical, disability, invalidity, old age and death coverage, and are registered with the IHSS (Instituto Hondureño de Seguridad; Honduran Institute of Social Security) (República de Honduras 2010).

In its first year, the programme is estimated to have generated 15,334 jobs and revenues of 469.6 million lempiras (USD \$27.3 million), benefiting some of the most at-risk populations (La Tribuna, 2012). However, despite its success in including larger numbers of workers in the labour market, questions remain about the sustainability of such a programme, and the long-term benefits to young workers. The government is in the process of analyzing the preliminary results of the programme, with possible changes to be made in the future.

While the programme is not necessarily gendered in nature, the outcome will doubtless show a strong gender dimension, given that women in Honduras already are more than twice as likely to work part-time than men and account for 52 per cent of precarious workers (ILO KILMNet 2012). While this programme will help to provide a temporary relief for the unemployed and the young, there must be serious consideration of the long-term effects on patterns of women's employment.

In many poorer countries, public works programmes seem to be accepted as a win-win solution: labour-intensive projects employ large numbers of low-skilled or semi-skilled labour, and also benefit the infrastructure of the country, often making transportation and communication easier for private-sector industries and investors. This trend is especially noticeable in post-conflict countries (Liberia and Iraq), primarily rural milieus (Burkina Faso, Mozambique and Uganda), or those aiming to modernize the housing sector, roads or electricity grid to meet demand (Honduras [Box 4] and Nigeria). As these states also suffer from fairly high rates of unemployment, public works programmes can help to solve multiple challenges. However, it is important to note that, unlike national rural employment guarantee programmes such as India's Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA, a scheme which provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage – with at least one-third beneficiaries women and crèches available at worksites),⁹ there appears to be little gender consideration to most public works projects. On the contrary, the types of skills that are called for (heavy construction, masonry, etc.) seem to fit more closely with skills more commonly associated with men. Gender targets that integrate gender concerns into employment intensive public works schemes would be beneficial to make this kind of policy more

Box 5. "Job World" and the Republic of Korea

The Republic of Korea's "Job World" is a 35,000 square meter, 5 floor exhibition hall, including an exploration centre, and experience centre, an information centre and support facilities. The state-of-the art career "theme park" is designed to give visitors a perspective of the overall job world available and to help them to design their career paths. A high-tech experience, the hall includes a 4-D movie theatre, a flight simulator and animatronics. In the first seven months of its opening, the park has attracted 600,000 visitors.

The job experience hall for youths allows its visitors to directly experience typical jobs in each sector, helping them to choose a career path that fits their aptitudes and abilities. The children's job experience hall allows younger children to experience jobs using facilities specifically designed for them, thereby providing opportunities for them to understand the job world from an early age. The career designing hall provides job aptitude tests, career designing and counselling, career information, and meetings with workers in the field, thereby helping its visitors to make their future career paths more specific (Government of Korea 2012).

The aim of "Job World" is to help youths to design their career paths and get information in a stimulating and exciting way. It is also a means for the government of the Republic of Korea to promote job training and career preparedness for its youngest and most vulnerable populations. Further, it is seen as a way to introduce men and women both to "atypical" job options in order to diversify their future prospects.

⁹ However, research has shown that the NREGA scheme has radically increased the working time of women, by 20 – 25 per cent for women who were working in the labour market earlier, and by 160 per cent by women who were engaged only with domestic work (house wives) earlier. This has also reduced their leisure time radically (Hirway and Batabyal, forthcoming). Further, the scheme guarantees 100 days of work *per rural household*, which dilutes adult entitlements regardless of gender; but given the rural power inequalities, it risks putting women at the end of the queue, although reservation of one-third of all work for women may help reverse such gender bias. Still, single women (widows, divorced, never married or separated) seem to face difficulties in accessing NREGA worksites (Kelkar 2009; Dasgupta and Sudarshan 2011).

gender sensitive.¹⁰ Moreover, it is important to highlight the centrality of participatory planning and the identification of assets to create through infrastructure projects, especially those including women. Even if women are not involved as labourers, having their views reflected in the planning for the kinds of work or assets will help to build infrastructure that can make their existing, often unpaid work more productive and time saving.

That being said, public infrastructures do have a knock-on effect of reducing women's time poverty, a trend that is quite visible in Africa, South Asia and rural areas of Central and Eastern Europe. Strategic investments in basic infrastructure, especially in time-saving infrastructure, can accelerate progress towards equality in access to resources and economic opportunity. Research has shown that the gains from infrastructure investment may benefit people generally, but they will have a differential impact on men and on women (World Bank, 2004). Affordable transport and communication (prioritized in Benin, Cameroon, the Comoros, Iraq, Jordan, Liberia, Macedonia, Madagascar, Moldova, Mozambique, Nepal, Seychelles, Tanzania, and Uganda) increases mobility and makes transportation of goods to markets easier; adequate water supply and sanitation (prioritized highly in Cameroon, Madagascar, Malawi and Nigeria) decrease the time spent fetching water or managing waste disposal; electrification projects (such as those sponsored by the Rural Electrification Agency in Nigeria, or the Legal Framework for Energy Sector in Honduras) increase opportunities for work at home and can link communities to one another; and secure shelter (a priority for Nigeria by 2012, and legislated by the Housing Sector Framework Law in Honduras) both empowers women and allows for a healthier, safer generation of children. Further, it is noted that employment-intensive public investment for infrastructure development is one of the key measures for promoting employment – not only for men, but also for women.

Special youth employment measures¹¹ have also been prioritized in all surveyed countries, as youth unemployment or underemployment have been identified almost universally as a hindrance to equitable and sustainable economic growth. Creative and wide-reaching interventions such as Youth Employment Funds (Serbia and The Comoros), loans specifically targeted to young people to start businesses (Liberia and Benin) and more ambitious projects like the Republic of Korea's Job World for youth (Box 5). Korea's Job Development Account System for skills development will also be expanded to include more youth, potentially increasing the breadth and depth of jobs available for the young. Globally, transformations in systems of vocational training and education have also been undertaken to provide the proper skills for workers hoping to enter the job market.

In some cases, specific funds and programmes for young women have been pursued in an attempt to integrate young women (often the least-represented social group) into markets. Burkina Faso, for example, has established Le Centre de Production et de Formation pour les Jeunes Filles (The Centre for Production and Training for Young Girls) to reduce unemployment of young women through two-year training programmes in agro-pastoral activities and textile trades and through the provision of equipment and start-up funds upon the completion of training. While the programme is still relatively small (only 2,000 girls of working age have completed training in ten years), such

¹⁰ South Africa's Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) is an interesting example: it is a public employment programme that employs women, not only in infrastructure work, but also in social services. A component of its projects form the Early Childhood Development (ECD) programme and the Home/Community-Based Care (HCBC) programme (Razavi et al. 2012, p. 44).

¹¹ See ILC Report 101st Session, June 2012 (ILO 2012g).

methods could stand as an example for other countries wishing to make specific provisions for young women.

Passive labour market policies

The promotion of passive labour market policies (unemployment insurance, income support and changes in labour legislation) by select countries has helped to alleviate the financial needs of the unemployed and maintain consumption, although they are not designed to improve workers' employability. A number of countries (Serbia [Box 6 below], Republic of Korea, Honduras and Macedonia) have established comprehensive, state-funded unemployment insurance to provide a safety net for workers; many others (most notably Madagascar and China) have strongly prioritized the creation of such a system. A seemingly insurmountable obstacle, however, is how to fund the scheme, leading many poorer countries to prioritize other interventions. The Republic of Korea provides the most comprehensive coverage: its Employment Insurance (EI) scheme is more than simply unemployment insurance, but also a comprehensive labour market

Box 6. Serbia and the Employment and Unemployment Insurance Act

The unemployment benefit system in Serbia is provided through unemployment insurance, and is primarily financed through compulsory payroll taxes paid by employees and employers to the extra-budgetary unemployment insurance fund operated by the National Employment Service. Consequently, eligibility is limited to those without a job who have previously paid unemployment insurance contributions.

The unemployment benefit replacement rate is 50 per cent of the average wage of the unemployed person, but it cannot be higher than 160 per cent or lower than 80 per cent of the minimum wage, determined pursuant to labour regulation for the month in which the unemployment benefit is being paid (Government of Serbia 2011).

The unemployment benefit system in Serbia has only an unemployment insurance component; there is no second-tier protection in the form of unemployment assistance, for example. On the other hand, able-bodied social assistance beneficiaries should prove that they are actively looking for a job in order to qualify for the social assistance. However, the weakest link in the current arrangements is the low actual job search activity of unemployment benefit recipients, especially those who have benefitted from extremely generous rights stemming from the pre-2003 law on employment and unemployment insurance. Further, the system is prohibitively expensive: only one-tenth of the registered unemployed receive unemployment benefits, but those benefits consumed over 87 per cent of the total expenditure allocated for the national employment agency that year (Kuddo 2010).

Serbia has undertaken some creative solutions to its chronic problems, though the implications are fairly mixed. Job seekers in Serbia who have been receiving unemployment benefits for at least three months and who have open-ended work contracts are entitled to one-time incentives for employment in the amount of 30 per cent of the total amount of monetary compensation which would have been paid for the time remaining until the expiration of the right to financial compensation. Further, a cash compensation (unemployment benefit) for the entire period of eligibility may be paid as a one-time (lump sum) amount to launch self-employment at the request of the unemployed (ibid.). Questions about the coverage of the programmes, as well as its efficiency, have been questioned, as well as the costs to both employers and employees. Limited incentives to register unemployment, combined with the burden placed upon employment services by those not actively seeking work, place an undue strain on the unemployment insurance system.

A distinctive problem with this system, however, is the gendered nature of unemployment. Women are far more likely than men to be unemployed in the long term (unemployment benefits are temporary), often have not worked in a regular job often enough to meet the requirements necessary to claim benefits, and make lower wages in the jobs they perform (Republic of Serbia 2011). As such the degree to which women are able to claim benefits is far reduced.

policy and social security scheme that includes employment security and vocational skills development intended to promote restructuring, prevent unemployment and promote employment (Republic of Korea 2008). While it is perhaps overly-ambitious to advocate for the universalization of such benefits in poorer countries, passive labour market policies doubtless can help to ease the burden of unemployment for men and women alike. Work conducted by the ILO on social protection floors demonstrates the usefulness of passive labour market policies from a gender perspective.¹²

Interestingly, Macedonia had adopted a policy wherein the government compensates workers for shortened working hours due to caring for a child with physical or mental disabilities. Encouragingly, this provision is available for both women and men, avoiding the common hidden “gender trap” of assuming that the mother is the primary caregiver which can lead to more discrimination in the labour market. Such measures could provide an interesting case study for other countries looking to create an enabling environment for workers with family responsibilities.

Employment services

Other tools for matching supply and demand in labour markets are public, private and collaborative employment services. Beyond the straight-forward benefit of helping job seekers find work, such services can also help in eliminating discriminatory practices, ensuring social justice, fairness and diversity in the labour market.¹³ Moreover, gender sensitive career guidance and training can help to address occupational segregation and encourage working-age girls and women to participate in non-traditional occupations and skills (ILO 2009b). All of the countries surveyed have reformed or developed employment services (though the greatest change has been in public services), in an attempt to understand better the dynamics between the jobs available and the jobs being sought after. However, in only the rare case of the Republic of Korea and Jordan were employment services customized to meet women’s needs. In Jordan, online and mobile-phone based job search programmes facilitate the access of women who otherwise may not be able or willing to visit an employment service centre.

The Republic of Korea has been exceptional in advocating the expansion of employment services to vulnerable workers, especially women, whereas in most other countries surveyed, employment services are considered to be gender blind. Korea’s Return to Work Centers (specifically for women re-entering the labour market after giving birth, but also available to all workers) provide information about available jobs, vocational training and childcare services.

Additionally, many countries (especially in Africa) have identified the need for a national occupational classification list to provide standardized language to describe occupations within labour markets and to manage the collection and reporting of occupational statistics. Such systems would help a country to understand better the dynamics of its labour market and help provide career guidance, skills development, occupational forecasting, labour supply and demand analysis, employment equity and other employment-generating services. If used correctly, a national occupational classification list could provide a standardized framework for organizing the world of work in a manageable, understandable and coherent system. Some countries like Senegal have already taken steps to implement such a system, and such examples could act as a model for other countries in the region, or regional cooperatives (like the African

¹² See the ILO/WHO report of the advisory group chaired by Michelle Bachelet, “Social Protection Floor for a Fair and Inclusive Globalization” (ILO 2011c).

¹³ This is recognized in the Private Employment Agencies Convention, C181, Article 5, 1997.

Box 7. Senegal and Le Répertoire Opérationnel des Métiers et Emplois (ROME)

Le Répertoire Opérationnel des Métiers et Emplois (Operational Repository of Occupations and Jobs) is an important tool in the management of skills within the Senegalese labour market. The ROME was established by the Government of Senegal in 2005 with the support of development partners including France, the EU, the World Bank and the involvement of social actors, employers' organizations and trade unions. The ROME acts as a "dictionary" of trades and occupations that provides an inventory, identification and description of all trades, as well as the skills necessary to fulfil each occupation. It covers 22 occupations and 66 areas of activity, although it focuses primarily on work in food service, hospitality and tourism and the construction of public works. The project has aimed to enhance the effectiveness and transparency of the labour market, especially job training and labour mobility, while increasing investment and enhancing national human capital. However, the ROME has run into financial difficulties throughout its existence; originally slated to cost 914 million franc (USD \$1.86 million), only 150 million franc (USD \$306,000) has been made available, forcing many programmes to be shelved or never actualized.

Nevertheless, since 2012 Senegal, Benin, Cameroon, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and Togo have joined forces with the EU, Pôle Emploi France, AFRISTAT and representatives of GIP International and the MIEUX Programme to adopt the ROAME (Répertoire Opérationnel Africain des Métiers et des Emplois), the African Operational Repository of Occupations and Jobs. This regional occupational repository defines the roles, activities and tasks, as well as pre-requisites, qualifications and skills associated with each occupation. By providing a common classification of actors in the labour market, the ROAME will eventually optimize mediation and reconciliation between supply and demand for employers, job seekers and potential migrants. The long-term aim is to facilitate the development of training programmes and career counselling by facilitating the production of statistics and indicators (African Union Commission and the European Commission 2012).

This and other national occupational classification lists also allow for governments to collect accurate data on occupational data on women and men in order to better understand occupational segregation both locally, nationally and regionally. The institutionalization of such systems would allow for clearer, more accurate data to be collected and used to improve the education, training and resource provision to particular sectors of the economy.

Operational Repository of Occupations and Jobs [Box 7]), looking to implement a successful framework.

Overall, expanding the scope and quality of employment services in general should be made a priority in all surveyed countries, especially given the gender bias in employment services and the persistent flow of boys/girls into male/female-dominated occupations. Such a move could be especially useful for facilitating women's entry into the labour market.

Access to resources and entrepreneurship development

The growth potential of enterprises is linked to access to resources such as land, credit, capital, technology, networks, information and markets. Women's limited access to each of these factors places severe limitations on the viability of their income-generating activities. This in turn accounts for the concentration of women in the smallest and most precarious enterprises. Facilitating women's access to resources expands the potential of building larger, more productive and sustainable ventures, and increasing women's equal access to markets. Similarly, expanding women's access to entrepreneurship, through access to financial and business development and through support programmes for women entrepreneurs, can help to expand the breadth and depth of opportunities available.

Nine of the surveyed countries made an attempt to combat gender gaps in control over or access to productive resources, most often through the provision of credit specific to women. Only three included reforms to access to land markets, while Madagascar was the only surveyed country to provide reforms to increase equal access to land. However, it should be noted that some countries have separate policies to deal with land reforms that were not specifically mentioned in the NEP, often with gender included as a consideration. Liberia has established a Land Reform Commission, as well as a National Rural Women's Programme in order to address a proposal to increase women's access to markets. Similarly, Madagascar aims to elaborate on its Programme National de Développement Rural (National Rural Development Programme) in order to provide greater access of "vulnerable groups" to credit and productive resources. Further, the NEP aims to promote female entrepreneurship and cooperatives by facilitating access to credit for women to help to develop micro and small businesses. Nevertheless, unequal inheritance practices and titling of land remain unaddressed in the surveyed NEPs, despite the fact that many surveyed countries were primarily agricultural producers and undergoing massive changes in the agricultural sector.¹⁴

Access to finance is critical for women and men to smooth consumption and provide a resource for income generation. Accordingly, nine countries have made efforts to expand women's access to credit and capital through credit schemes, microcredit, microfinance and other initiatives. Microcredit and microfinance have been given strong priority in 18 countries, especially in Africa, as important tools in a poverty reduction strategy. Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Comoros, Jordan, Madagascar, Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania, Liberia and Uganda have all implemented fairly wide-reaching systems of microfinance, especially in rural areas, as a means of promoting growth and combating poverty. Several NEPs also explicitly mentioned microcredit and microfinance as a gender-specific intervention to facilitate access to financial markets and as a means of "women's empowerment."

Madagascar, Serbia, Liberia and Jordan mention increasing access to credit as a goal to develop the rural sectors, while the NEP of Comoros explicitly aims to increase credit available to businesses and private initiatives, especially those of women (Box 8) through the provision of microfinance. The Republic of Korea has gone a step further, offering low-interest loans, rental subsidies (on buildings worth less than 100 million won) and collateral for women-driven start-ups. As mentioned earlier, microcredit and microfinance have also been promoted widely as a key part of poverty reduction strategies, especially targeted at women. Burkina Faso heralds the Organisation Professionnelle des Institutions de Micro Finance de Burkina Faso (Burkina Faso Professional Organization of Micro-credit Institutions), which is comprehensive but still has shortcomings (the scheme does not cover equipment or long periods of investment). Other initiatives, like mobile banking in Uganda, are high-tech solutions to the lack of capital. Despite the extensive networks of microfinance that have developed in a variety of countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Comoros, Jordan, Madagascar, Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania, Liberia and Uganda), gendered concerns remain: microfinance can, in some cases, contribute to saturation in certain market niches by

¹⁴ However, there is more information regarding women's unequal access to resources available outside of individual NEPs. On Bosnia and Herzegovina, see Somun-Krupalijia (2011); on Uganda, see Stevenson and St-Onge (2005) and Ellis et al. (2006); on Nepal, see Kyloh (2008).

Box 8. Microfinance institutions and gender in the Comoros

The Comoros' financial sector has been underdeveloped and highly concentrated with only one (foreign-owned) commercial bank (Banque pour l'Industrie et le Commerce-Comores [BIC]) until 2009. As a result, a large segment of the population has been excluded from the financial market. In an attempt to broaden financial intermediation, the government, with the financial support of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the French Development Agency (AFD) set up two microfinance networks in 1997 – the Meck (Mutuelle d'Epargne et de Crédit ya Komor) and the Sanduk. The Banque de Développement des Comores opened a microfinance window in 2005 and emerged as a competitor for Meck and Sanduk (IMF 2010).

These microfinance institutions (MFIs), or institutions financières décentralisées, have expanded rapidly. After some initial difficulties due to the country's political instability, they grew in size and diversified their activities. During 2002-2004, both deposits and lending expanded at an average annual rate of 26 per cent and 38 per cent respectively, while BIC's deposits declined by around 6 per cent and its lending stagnated. In addition, lending became more diversified, and small business loans have become a prominent part of the MFIs activity. As a result, the share of MFIs in domestic financial sector deposits grew from 13 per cent in 2002 to 20 per cent in 2004, and in domestic credit from 16.5 per cent to 27.4 per cent over the same period. Membership has increased from 30,632 in 2002 to 47,451 in 2004, in both rural and urban areas of all three islands. Loans have covered a range of activities from smoothing consumption to agriculture, including vanilla growing, fishing and commerce (IMF 2005).

Women constitute more than 50 per cent of the clientele of the Comoros' MFIs, a number which will likely increase in upcoming years as more poor women arrange small loans to support their trading activities. Consequently, the government is looking to increase the availability of credit to women in order to help develop micro and small businesses, targeting a rate of increase in credit to the private sector of 25 per cent each year until 2014. In the guide of performance indicators for MFIs, the government has established specific targets for both loans and savings for women (IMF 2010).

The Comoros is also testing two initiatives of socially and ecologically responsible investment through the AMIE Project (UNDP Micro and small-scale enterprise support project). The project involves the introduction of a joint guarantee system through women's organizations in connection with specialized loans for disadvantaged women, and Meck Moroni, by granting joint agricultural loans in partnership with SNAC (National Union of Comorian Farmers). The concept of ethical finance and the relevant implementation tools, including socially and ecologically responsible investment and credit instruments, constitute a new area for local players (ibid.).

Finally, two projects, financed by the UNDP, are underway in the microfinance sector, with a total amount of 2.9 billion KMF (USD \$7.6 million) available to strengthen and provide support for young entrepreneurs. The FCP (economic revitalization component focusing on young people) aims to develop and support initiatives to promote jobs for young people, especially on the island of Mwali, in connection with the modernization of the agricultural system. Moreover, the project will encourage women to become more involved in economic and social affairs, and support for the agriculture and fishing sectors (ibid.).

enabling more women to enter already crowded markets for traditional female producers in services, thereby reproducing gender segregation of labour markets.¹⁵

¹⁵ See ILO 2008a.

Moreover, access to business associations and networks that specifically benefit women producers and workers can help to expand trade opportunities and build community support for women-headed businesses. These associations can provide mentoring support and essential market information, including information on supplies, design, marketing and new opportunities. However, women face limited access to business advisory services and support networks such as employers' and business associations. Often they might not be able to afford the membership costs or the costs of the services provided. In other cases, their enterprises are not eligible for registration since they fall under the informal economy (ILO 2008b). While 17 of the 24 countries surveyed have prioritized institution building, particularly trade unions and employer organizations, none have made a concerted effort to mobilize networks of women entrepreneurs or women-only branches of existing business associations, trade unions or employers' organizations. It is unclear the degree to which the knock-on effect of "gender-neutral" institution building will impact women; however, it is important to remember that trade unions, employer organizations and business organizations are hardly gender blind.

Beyond "traditional" structures like workers' and employers' organizations, some countries have taken the step to encourage the mobilization and representation of vulnerable groups (most often informal workers or young workers). Madagascar, for example, has encouraged the formation of cooperatives of agricultural and informal workers in rural areas in order to promote practices of sustainable growth. Liberia, Senegal, Malawi, Honduras and Comoros specifically target groups of informal workers; Burkina Faso focuses on mobilizing young workers and women; Uganda has crafted a policy to encourage the formation of small enterprise associations and youth, as well as a One Village, One Product production network (Box 9 below) that aims to benefit female producers. Macedonia has looked to establish links to EU trading partners in order to exchange technology, knowledge and best practices for research and development in order to build partnerships. Similarly, Nigeria has promoted domestic market partnerships to incentivize exporters to build networks and share expertise. Granted, many of these moves do not explicitly target women workers and therefore cannot be assumed to be specifically beneficial. However, given the disproportionate share of female workers in the informal economy, in agriculture and in manufacturing, it seems that women stand to benefit from the reforms. Nevertheless, there remains a great scope for change to encourage greater access for women to business institutions that could benefit their growth and development.

Facilitating women's access to productive resources needs to be taken more seriously in NEPs, as well as in associated national development frameworks, including National Development Plans and Poverty Reduction Strategies.

Entrepreneurship and MSMEs

Poverty alleviation and pro-poor growth strategies often recognize the importance of promoting enterprise development for both women and men. With the right support, entrepreneurship can offer them the opportunity for individual, social and economic empowerment and increase earning power to support themselves and their families. Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), despite the high failure rates and challenges in providing quality jobs (in micro and small enterprises), can still offer employment opportunities when formal markets fall short. Women in particular have been increasingly active in small-scale enterprises in both the formal and informal economies. However, entrepreneurship is still an under-used alternative and larger concerns of equality, financing and efficacy persist.

Box 9. "One Village One Product" for Ugandan women

A One Village One Product programme (OVOP) was introduced in Uganda in 2008 as an integrated community development approach to increase incomes and wealth for Ugandans through adding value to local resources, human capital development and subsequent marketing of high value added products and services. The business model is fairly simple: every village is endowed with unique resources, which if converted into unique products through value-addition, and marketed nationally and international, could substantially improve the livelihoods of the rural poor (Republic of Uganda 2012). The local people are the basis of success within the programme, and the kind of human resource development – including business management, community leadership, product development and marketing – helps to build skills within the community (see UNIDO 2008).

In practice, this approach requires people to take up a product or an industry unique to their region and cultivate it into a nationally, or even globally, accepted one. It emphasizes the need of the people to recognize the locally available resources in their community and develop them into globally marketable products by adding values to them – specifically by specializing in a variety of product, a specially designed service, a specific production process, or another “traditional” way of producing/processing.

The initiative is meant to support value addition of locally available raw materials, facilitate transfer of skills and technology, promote the use of locally produced products, promote and improve market access for locally produced products, enhance income generation opportunities and wealth creation for local communities and, perhaps most importantly, create employment in the rural areas (Republic of Uganda 2012). Currently the body has a membership of over 2,000 members spread in 27 districts of Uganda.

The OVOP approach attracts a strongly female base of participants – up to 90 per cent in some countries surveyed (Kurokawa, K.; Tembo F.; te Velde, DW. 2010) – due in part to the nature of the work and because of the structures of women's associations that allow for cooperation. In many cases, the OVOP approach has been seen as a means to “empower” women within the local community by giving them greater control over resources and income, as well as enhancing capabilities and teaching skills about organization and leadership. In reality, results have been mixed, especially in terms of the role that women assume within organizations. Most often, the productive groups are led by men, and men are responsible for the financial side of the business, leaving the production work to women. While an evaluation of the nascent programme in Uganda has yet to be conducted, it seems likely that similar patterns will persist. Therefore, while the OVOP has the potential to benefit female producers and help to establish links among collectives, it cannot be viewed as a catch-all for business development.

Despite many surveyed countries' prioritization of creating a regulatory environment conducive to job creation, only four have promoted specific measures to generate new enterprise growth specifically for women. Countries including Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cameroon, China, Iraq, Jordan, Macedonia, Moldova, Republic of Korea, Serbia and Uganda have provided subsidies for new enterprises (and notably, the Republic of Korea, Iraq, Jordan and Serbia provide subsidies specifically for women-headed enterprises), while Macedonia has reduced the tax burden for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to encourage growth. These kinds of measures, while not necessarily explicitly gendered in nature, do promote an environment more conducive to enterprise growth and job creation. In combination with preferential grants given to women (such as those in Burkina Faso, Nigeria and the Republic of Korea), these policies can help women to develop enterprises.

The provision of microloans, microcredit and microfinance, and the support of MSMEs and SMEs are some of the most common means to create jobs, and have been given priority in more than 75 per cent of countries surveyed. Enterprise growth through investments from the government and the private market have helped this sector to grow; Comoros, for example, aims to facilitate access to credit for micro and small business cooperative networks in order to allow them to benefit from market services, training and funding opportunities. In Honduras, the Ley del Sistema de Fondos de Garantía Recíproca para la Promoción de las MIPYME (Law Regulating the Mutual Fund for the Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) helps to provide a regulatory environment and funding conducive to the growth of MSMEs. Iraq has targeted the creation of enterprises in traditional sectors, especially in geographic areas with high unemployment, while the Republic of Korea looks to increase its base of MSMEs through college-level job skills training. While these programmes hold the potential for wide-scale enterprise growth, most are based on the assumption that men and women come to the market with equal resources, skills, networks and labour, which is often not the case. Seemingly, therefore, a wider gender analysis of MSMEs creation¹⁶ must be undertaken.

Other countries have undertaken different interventions to support entrepreneurs. Honduras has attempted to maintain minimal tariffs on capital goods to support investment in SMEs; Jordan provides monetary support to start-ups in high skill, high tradability sectors; and Uganda provides tax reductions for small business during their first year of activity. In the field of female entrepreneurship, two Liberian programmes stand out: first, the Ministry of Gender and Development has partnered with Nike Corporation, the World Bank and the Danish Government to form the “Economic Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Young Women” (EPAG), programme, to train young women in practical, demand-driven skills, identified through private sector consultations. The project has provided microcredit for young women entrepreneurs to strengthen their participation in the economy. Second, the 10,000 Women certificate programme, a partnership between Goldman Sachs-GIBS and the World Bank, provides 150 hours of business and management training to women potential entrepreneurs who then start their own businesses. As of early 2012, 118 young women had been trained in various disciplines, including business planning, human resource marketing and customer services – and the programme aims to reach several hundred more in 2013 (Goldman Sachs 2012). Other such private-public partnership programmes throughout the world have great potential to form women’s entrepreneurship developments. However, they should not be seen as a panacea, or without limitations of their own.

Despite these positive trends and examples of creative and innovative programmes, providing business training or access to credit are not enough in themselves. A range of supportive measures need to be integrated at all policy levels. A strong employment-oriented macroeconomic framework is an essential starting point, but employment on its own may not be enough, given the large numbers of women who are working poor (ILO 2009b).

Unpaid work and social protection

Because of the persistent, slow-changing traditional gender division of labour in the household, working women in particular struggle to balance family responsibilities (reproductive work) with employment and income generation (productive work). Inadequate maternity leave and childcare provisions act as disincentives for women’s labour force participation, whereas family-friendly policies (e.g. flexible working hours, parental leave, professional care facilities for children, elders, sick and disabled and

¹⁶ See, for example, ILO 2011d; Stevenson and St-Onge 2011; Mayoux 2001

social protections and/or safety nets provided by the state) can help to establish a balance between work and family, leading to greater productivity, worker loyalty and less absenteeism (ILO 2009b; Cruz 2012).

Unpaid work is one of the most important issues in understanding women's disadvantaged position in the labour market. This is because women's and men's ability to participate in paid work depends on their roles and responsibilities in the household and the community, as well as how women and men undertake unpaid work. Unpaid care work includes housework (meal preparation, cleaning) and care of persons carried out in homes and communities without remuneration. Such work contributes to well-being and feeds into economic growth through the reproduction of a labour force that is fit, productive and capable of learning and creativity. Women perform the bulk of unpaid care work across all economies and cultures. Furthermore, it is estimated that if such work were assigned a monetary value it would constitute between 10 per cent and 39 per cent of GDP (UNRISD 2010). Despite its economic value, and UN efforts to add it to countries' national system of accounts (NSA), unpaid care work is not included in labour force surveys, nor brought into the calculation of GDP. It is therefore invisible in representations of the economy that inform policy making.

Some economic policies minimize the social responsibility of the states, putting extra pressures on households and further reducing women's ability to participate in the paid economy. In others, increased spending in areas like infrastructure, transport, food provisioning, childcare, health, education and other social services can significantly empower women by providing free time and space to earn an income, thereby reducing their vulnerability to poverty. Women's economic empowerment also has a multiplier effect in terms of improving the well-being of children, thus breaking the poverty cycle from one generation to the next (ILO 2009b).

Time use surveys

Estimating the value of unpaid work within the workings of the larger economy can be challenging and burdensome without the proper tools of analysis. Scholars and policymakers alike have for a long time been advocating the use of time use or household surveys to capture how, on average, people spend their time and what sort of labour disaggregation goes on in the home. Time use statistics offer a unique tool to explore the allocation of time for household work and the estimation of the value of household production. Many countries¹⁷ have undertaken such surveys in order to better understand the dynamics of the larger work environment: Cameroon, for example, conducted household surveys in 1993/4, 1996, 2001 and 2007 to capture the types of jobs being undertaken by its citizens; Uganda captured patterns of change between the National Household Survey 2005/6 and 2009/10, including incomes and patterns of work; using this methodology, Senegal was able to capture better the gendered breakdown of time use in its informal sector in its "Enquête Démographique et de Santé à Indicateurs Multiples 2010-2011", which sampled 7,902 households, 15,688 women age 15 to 49, and 4,929 men age 15 to 59 (ANSD 2012).

These surveys also can help to give greater economic or political value to the unpaid work that is undertaken primarily by women during their "free" time. In China, for example, the value assigned to unpaid work varies from 35 to 32 per cent of China's official GDP, from 52 to 66 per cent of final consumption, and from 63 to 80 per cent of the gross products of the tertiary industry. This analysis reveals a tension between paid and unpaid work in China's new market economy; while both paid and unpaid work are

¹⁷ For a full list of countries who have undertaken surveys on the allocation of time and time use, please see <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/tuse/>

essential to national well-being, the overriding concern of the Chinese government has been to improve the productivity of paid work and maximize GDP growth, assuming that the provision of domestic and care services will adjust itself accordingly. Consequently, market reforms have severely eroded the support for and protection of both the government and employers for women's reproductive roles, exacerbating the work-family imbalances that Chinese women face and potentially limiting economic growth (Dong and An 2012).

Understanding and appreciating the value of unpaid work, and allowing for measures to reduce the burden of that work, is essential to creating gender responsive economic modelling and analysis. All surveyed countries fell short in this category, and utilizing tools like time use surveys could help to improve this. Overall, future employment policies should provide a greater emphasis on equality between women and men in order to facilitate both the productive and reproductive economy.

Support measures to reduce unpaid care work

Some countries have undertaken specific measures to reduce the burden of unpaid care work on its (primarily female) workforce. In terms of work-family balance policies, six countries have made provisions for professional care facilities for children, elders, sick or disabled; six countries have adjusted flex-time/part-time work measures; and five countries have provided for parental leave – mostly in Europe and Asia. Other types of social protection measures (social security, maternity coverage, cash transfers, health services, etc.) are also promoted as means to provide some sort of protection for women trying to balance productive and reproductive work. Interestingly, there seems to be a correlation between countries which provide social protections to reduce the burden of unpaid work and those which aim to increase the birth rate.

In some countries, especially in Europe, professional care facilities have been made available to allow women the flexibility to return to work. Macedonia has a National Strategy for Elderly Care to help develop social services to raise the quality of life for the elderly; however, country-wide there are only 10 privately owned establishments providing care to approximately 250 users. Moldova provides “assistance services”, but does not give details of the scope. The Republic of Korea is the only country which provides comprehensive care facilities, offering companies subsidies to establish and operate in-company care facilities and subsidizing labour costs. In addition, government-run public day-care centres have been established in industrial complexes or other areas where small businesses and low-income workers are heavily represented, with a view to relieving low-income people of the financial burden of childcare.

Other creative solutions to deal with childcare have been established in several countries. Serbia, for example, has introduced a policy of “flexicurity”, providing flexible and secure contracts (though not specifically for women) that allows for part-time work and work carried out outside the employers' premise. The aim of this policy, as well as associated maternity protection rights is to increase the birth rate in Serbia, which has fallen dramatically in the past two decades (Republic of Serbia 2011a). Moldova has proposed creating community and regional networks for women returning to work after maternity leave in order to provide them training and solidarity networks. The government also offers family benefits to facilitate children's school attendance and encourages the sharing of family responsibilities between women and men. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Honduras also offer comprehensive maternity protections, while Serbia, Jordan, Moldova, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina offer benefits to facilitate children's school attendance. The provision of domestic workers' insurance (Box 10) has also been undertaken, especially in Latin America. The Republic of Korea has a policy that provides both subsidies for employers who re-employ female employees

after giving birth as well as subsidies for childcare leave, subsidies to temporarily replace the female employee during her leave, subsidies to allow for reduced working hours for women and men with childcare responsibilities, 90 days parental leave for both women and men and subsidies for continuous employment after child birth (i.e. hiring women during pregnancy, maintaining her post during childbirth and re-engagement after birth). Employer non-compliance with these measures can result in fines (see Footnote 10).

It is important to note, though that part-time work in countries with a low wage structure is often not preferred, as the double burden of lower pay and child care cost does not make it an attractive option. The promotion of part-time work that coincides with child care should be conducted in such a way that it is voluntary and offers benefits that are proportional to full-time workers.

Box 10. Domestic Workers' Insurance in Honduras

Honduras was one of 60 countries that was part of a comprehensive ILO cross-national comparative analysis of labour legislation (ILO 2003) carried out as background for the Convention Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers (Convention 189 and Recommendation 201, adopted in June 2011). The state has taken steps to fulfil its international commitments under Convention 111 (Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, 1958), following a direct request (CEACR) in 2003 to extend rights at work to a number of special regimes (domestic service, export processing zones, etc.) (ILO 2010b).

As a result, the government of Honduras has provided a special provision for domestic workers with the Scheme for the Progressive Affiliation of Women Domestic Workers, a provision of the Equal Opportunities for Women Act. The scheme guarantees the entitlement of all women to social security and its benefits, thereby ensuring the access to social security of those who work in the formal and informal economies and who perform paid and unpaid domestic work for others (ILO 2010d).

Domestic workers account for 8.8 per cent of female workers in Honduras (nearly 90,000 workers), compared to 0.4 per cent for male workers (ILO 2011f), numbers which have been increasing over the last five years. Under Honduran labour law, domestic workers have their food and lodging included in salary, can work up to 14 hours per work day with one day off per week, are guaranteed paid vacation according to the general labour code, are offered one month severance pay per full-time year up to four months, and can be fired immediately for lack of morality and respect (Codigo de Trabajo de la Republica de Honduras, 47–50, quoted in Blofield 2009). While there has been provision made to give domestic workers the opportunity of either attending school for at least an elementary training, or for professional training (Ramirez-Machado 2003), there are no provisions made for the establishment of a minimum wage.

However, as of 2008, only 2 per cent of women domestic workers were registered as beneficiaries and there were still no legal instruments for the establishment of a minimum wage or working conditions (ILO 2010b). Despite positive efforts to uphold the requests of the Governing Body, the push for domestic workers' insurance in Honduras still falls far short of sufficient coverage or scope.

However, the degree to which these services have become embedded within society is another concern.¹⁸ Even in progressive instances, the language of most policies gives

¹⁸ The Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, in the "Application of International Labour Standards 2012 (I)" (ILO 2012g) "...notes with *interest* the legislative measures to give effect to the provisions of the Convention, in particular, the adoption of the Act on the Promotion of the Economic Activities of Career-break Women, et. No. 9101 of 2008, and

nearly-exclusive responsibility of childcare to women, without regard for paternity leave or flexible time for male caregivers. Countries like Iraq and Jordan fall into this pattern, thereby reinforcing “traditional” gender norms.

Further, in countries in Central and Eastern Europe where parental leave, both paid and unpaid, is primarily taken by women for up to three years (at which point they may return to their posts), there is a “cost” to female workers in the eyes of the employer; that is to say, she is less likely to move upward in the organization if she takes paid parental leave, and especially if she takes additional unpaid time off. This issue has been publically debated in these countries, with some arguing to do away with the possibility of taking up to three years of unpaid leave (after the two years of paid maternity, as is in the case in Moldova). This view still faces opposition from those who do not want to see the “mothers’ privilege” curtailed.¹⁹

Social protection

Nearly two thirds of the countries surveyed have made explicit provisions for at least basic social security²⁰ to provide services to their populations (Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Comoros, Honduras, Iraq, Jordan, Liberia, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Moldova, Senegal, Serbia, Tanzania, and Uganda,). Some systems are more institutionalized than others; Honduras, for example, provides universal social security to all people, including the highly vulnerable such as domestic workers (Box 10), dependent migrant workers and security guards. The Honduran government plans to expand the programme to cover the dependents of informal workers, as well as those sending remittances from abroad and their families. For others, it is a relatively new phenomenon; Iraq, for example, has established an Emergency Social Protection Project, funded by foreign donors, in the aftermath of the 2003 conflict. Most systems are more fragmented and provide less coverage: Tanzania so far limits coverage to formal wage workers and urban dwellers, though there is an intention to expand it. Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite providing free health insurance to the unemployed, has looked to decrease coverage because it is seen to incentivize workers to stay in informal, unregistered enterprises rather than entering the formal sphere of regularized work where they must pay for services.

the Act on the Promotion of Creation of Family-friendly Social Environment No. 8695 of 2007, as last amended in 2010....The Committee further notes the amendments to the Act on Equal Employment and Support for Work-Family Reconciliation No. 3989 of 1987, including section 6-2, which provides that the Minister of Labour shall establish a basic plan on the realization of equal employment and reconciliation of work and family life....The Committee asks the Government to provide information on the practical application of the Career-break Women Act and the Family-friendly Social Environment Act, as well as the Second Basic Plan for Healthy Family (2011-15) and the Second Basic Plan on Low Birth Rate and Aging Society (2011-15), in the context of workers with family responsibilities. It also asks the Government to provide information on the process of enacting the Smart Work Promotion Act” (p. 532). Further, “the Committee asks the Government to continue to provide information on the leave entitlements [for a maximum of one year for both men and women] in practice, including statistical information, disaggregated by sex, on the number of beneficiaries of such entitlements. Noting the very low number of male beneficiaries of childcare leave, and recalling the importance of equitable sharing of family responsibilities between men and women, the Committee asks the Government to indicate the underlying causes of the low number of men taking childcare leave, and to take measures to promote the exercise of childcare leave particularly by men, as well as to indicate the results achieved by such measures” (p. 533).

¹⁹ Personal correspondence, Reiko Tsushima, ILO-Decent Work Technical Team for Central and Eastern Europe, Budapest.

²⁰ Measures include old age pension, child support, means-tested income transfers and/or universal social pensions, health insurance, disability compensation/insurance (including compensation in the case of occupational accident/injury), maternity protection, unemployment insurance, etc.

Five of the countries surveyed have set up basic health care services, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Comoros, Macedonia, the Republic of Korea, and Madagascar. The Republic of Korea is a particularly excellent performer in the provision of health care, offering health promotion explicitly for women, as well as providing nurses to conduct on-site visits for workers employed in industries where they may be exposed to toxic chemical substances. The government also offers wage replacement benefits of up to 70 per cent of wages during periods of injury, disability benefit, survivors benefit, nursing benefit, funeral expenses and injury/disease compensation annuities, in the case that an injury or disease is not cured after two years.

Other types of protections that are less gendered in nature have also been provided: countries which suffer high rates of HIV infection have prioritized policies that aim to combat, prevent or education about the disease in the workplace. Malawi, Uganda, Nepal, Comoros, Burkina Faso, Macedonia, Tanzania, Cameroon, Benin, Liberia, Madagascar and Mozambique all have such stated policies. Further, the majority of surveyed countries have also undertaken ambitious health and safety at work programmes (often in the context of the Decent Work Agenda) to protect workers from industrial accidents and diseases. Cameroon, Comoros, Republic of Korea, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Moldova, Mozambique, Nepal, Serbia, Seychelles, Tanzania, and Uganda, all have included occupational safety within their NEPs.

The national provision of pensions is one of the more contentious areas of social protection, and one that has been addressed in more than a third of the countries reviewed. Uganda, Serbia, Moldova and Madagascar have provided explicit state provision for pensions, but there are issues about who benefits, to what extent and how the systems are funded. Madagascar's pension programme is funded through the State Central Bank, for example, but lacks a sustainable model. Moldova has prioritized pension equalization between women and men, but given the rapidly aging population, expresses concerns about how many elderly people can be supported by the current system. Uganda has both the National Social Security Fund and the Public Service Pension Scheme, but less than 5 per cent of workers are covered, and funds do not exist to expand coverage. Some countries have gone so far as to extend the mandatory retirement age in order to reduce the burden on the pension system. Moldova, for example, has predicted "limitations in anticipated pensions and prolongation of the active labour life, including by creating flexibility incentives for employers", which will force elderly populations to work longer and without access to their pension. The Republic of Korea too has looked to extend the mandatory retirement age by promoting flexible working hours among employees; the end result, however, is that the rapidly aging population only gains access to their pensions later in life. Further, given that women are far more likely to be employed in short-term, informal and/or insecure contracts, they are less likely to benefit from a formal pension scheme. Moreover, assuming full-time, formal, life-long employment as the norm implicitly discriminates against women. A more comprehensive, simplistic system would doubtless be of benefit to workers, especially to women who often live well beyond the retirement age, more than their male counterparts.

The degree to which systems are funded, who is covered within the system and to what extent, is difficult to tell from the policies – therefore making it difficult to determine whether said measures are gender inclusive. Several states (Madagascar and Moldova, for example) have explicitly acknowledged that programmes lack comprehensive funding and therefore are far from sufficient to cover the needs of the people. Malawi's NEP states explicitly that due to budgetary constraints, universalized social protections remain unfeasible. Notably, cash transfers are a far more common tool

in Africa (especially Nigeria and Tanzania) than pension²¹ or health insurance, perhaps due to their targeted nature and lower overall costs.

Despite limitations in budgets, nearly half of the surveyed countries aspire to expand some forms of social protection (most often social security, means-tested income transfers and health insurance) to informal workers. This pattern is especially true in African countries (Comoros, Burkina Faso, Tanzania, Cameroon, Benin, Liberia and Mozambique; also Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jordan and Nepal) where informal workers make up the vast majority of the workforce. Macedonia is a particularly positive example of universalization: all at-risk citizens, regardless of their employment status, have the right to a package of social protections, as well as subsidies from the government (specifically for electricity).

The provision of social protections by the government raises a number of interesting questions regarding the link between economic and social policies. Senegal, for example, has a quite progressive NEP with clear aims and expected outcomes. However, the policy states explicitly that the social component, gender component and youth component are contained in separate, comprehensive policies. In this way, Senegal's social, gender and youth policies are treated as almost residual, something that is done when the business of running the economy has been accomplished: almost as an afterthought. Research has shown that the disconnect between the social and economic is misguided; to the contrary, patterns of employment shape social policies and social policies can support better employment outcomes (Heinz and Lund 2012). Further, by delinking economic and social policies, policymakers and planners often are not seeing poor, vulnerable or marginalized women and men as the agents of social change and economic development; rather, they are often seen only as in need of social assistance. This creates an artificial hierarchy which often marginalizes women, assuming a "trickle down" benefit when a policy is targeted to the perceived stronger economic sectors (ILO 2009b). Especially where there is an objective of promoting gender responsive outcomes, maintaining a link between the social and the economic is essential if policymakers do not wish to make a "trade off" between equity and efficiency.

The example of Nepal illustrates this point: social benefits are tied to employment, rather than provided universally by the state. Given that women are employed in far fewer numbers than men in formal employment, they are left without access to social benefits, leaving them dependent on a male breadwinner in order to survive. Universalizing social protection (e.g. the Universal Social Protection Floor introduced by the ILO²²) to provide basic income security and universal access to essential and affordable social services regardless of status in employment would be a way to combat such gender discrimination. In short, the quality of human resources depends on the nature of social policies and the welfare regime – including the central role of caring labour, both paid and unpaid (Heinz and Lund 2012).

²¹ The Ugandan Public Service Pension Scheme is characterized as a targeted cash transfer, targeting former civil servants including teachers, soldiers, widows of former soldiers and former public servants as well as orphans of former civil servants. The pension is given in two forms: one lump sum on retirement (calculated based on the years of service and dependent on the salary at the time of retirement), and thereafter as a monthly payment (Ntale 2007).

²² See the ILO/WHO report of the advisory group chaired by Michelle Bachelet, "Social Protection Floor for a Fair and Inclusive Globalization" (ILO 2011d).

NEP formulation, implementation, monitoring and budgeting

The national employment policies being analyzed throughout this report are the result of many years of collaboration among forces within the state and outside, and are implemented with the help of a variety of actors and partners. The inclusion of gender in an NEP starts from the formulation process, continues through the coordination and implementation stages, and is assessed during the monitoring and evaluation process. Fundamentally, gender perspectives in this process are important because they help to recognize that a working population is not a homogenous group, but rather consists of people with a broad range of needs and interests. Given that employment policies aim to create opportunities for all groups within the working population, it is imperative that employment policy-making includes a gender lens. This will help to develop strategies for employment that identify a broad range of needs – not just those of the most visible and privileged communities or demographic groups in society.

Within policy formation, tripartite social dialogue and bipartite collective bargaining are essential policy tools to advance gender equality in the world of work.²³ However, meaningful discussions and initiatives on gender equality issues are still rare in national dialogues, as well as in collective agreements that are negotiated at sectoral and enterprise levels.

From the NEPs examined, determining the degree to which gender is included in consultations and policy formation is challenging and imprecise, especially given that most policy formation takes place over a long period of time, in a variety of locales and may not necessarily be reflected as part of the process in final texts. While some policies (notably Jordan) provide a breakdown (by gender, occupation and department) of the specific members of their technical teams, most do not. Therefore, it is impossible without in-depth interviews in each country to determine the extent of women's representation and inclusion of gender issues in various workshops, consultations, etc.

More generally, though, the idea of having a “women's representative” could have shortcomings, as there is no guarantee that a women working within the Ministry of Gender is more “gender responsive” in her approach to economic policy than her male colleagues from, say, the Ministry of Labour. Is it wise to simply assume that her presence at a meeting will make the outcomes more gender responsive? Likewise, members of civil society, employers' organizations or workers' organizations are not necessarily more gender responsive than those working within the government. It is crucial to note, however, that tripartite social dialogue and collective bargaining have made significant contributions to improving the conditions of women workers and supporting gender equality, and have great potential as vehicles in the future (Briskin and Muller 2011).

Policy formulation and implementation

Research has shown that the inclusion of a variety of actors in the policy formulation process is recognized as an effective means of considering more voices and viewpoints, thus enriching the context in which policy options are debated²⁴. Countries that include trade unions, employers' organizations, civil society groups, sectoral ministries, UN agencies and others in policy discussions often stand a better chance of addressing a wide range of interests, and having a broader base of information, than private, elite or top-down methods. A participatory process is also key to transforming culturally-determined and/or selective gender relations, and can afford men as well as

²³ See Briskin and Muller 2011.

²⁴ See ILO 2012h

women an opportunity through which they can address issues relevant to their own development and well-being. The same holds true for the participation of different workers', employers' and civil society organizations. Giving space for discussion can lead to richer, more nuanced results for all parties. Bosnia and Herzegovina²⁵ is an excellent example of inclusive dialogue: the NEP formulation process included not only the Ministry of Civil Affairs as the lead actor, but also the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Department of Education, the Department of Economic Development, employers' organizations, trade unions, sectoral ministries, the ILO (providing technical advice) and representatives from USAID's "Enabling Labour Mobility" project (as observers). Actors were able to participate through working groups and capacity building activities, which allowed many voices to be heard as influencing policy.

This inclusive process also allows for a vested interest in, or ownership of, the success of a policy, rather than the feeling that change is government-oriented, high-handed, or out of touch with local realities. Nepal is an interesting example of this delicate relationship. The NEP examined in this report was dictated by His Majesty's Government (at the time of policy formation in 2008, the king was Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah, in power since 2001), following nearly a decade of civil conflict. A Comprehensive Peace Agreement, signed in 2006, dealt not only with disarmament and the procedures for national elections, but also the reforms required for the economic and social transformation of society in Nepal. The Peace Agreement explicitly refers to the ILO and the need to improve the industrial relations environment. The Interim Constitution of January 2007 committed the new Nepal to respecting international labour standards concerning collective bargaining and worker rights. The NEP, however, still reflects the historical tension between workers' organizations and the government (including widespread strikes, complaints and clashes between workers and the government), in forbidding strikes and picketing. The NEP also adopts a strongly "top-down" tone, seemingly establishing the government as the lone provider of employment opportunities, training and resources. The failed attempts to unilaterally reform labour legislation in part led to the re-emergence, in 2006, of the Maoist-backed All Nepal Federation of Trade Unions (ANFTU), and the level of strikes, protests and other forms of industrial action soared. It might, therefore, be no exaggeration to suggest that since 2006, Nepal has moved from an armed conflict to a political conflict with a significant industrial relations component (Kylloh 2008). Unfortunately, this tension in social dialogue (to put it lightly) has led to the creation of gender blind policy that reinforces gender inequalities²⁶ and aggravates relations between the workers and the government.

Similarly, an inclusive approach to policy coordination and implementation appears to lead to greater buy-in from stakeholders and therefore greater policy legitimacy. In both Serbia and Moldova, the government has established a national action plan, renewed each year, which is implemented by a number of political, economic and social partners (including workers'/employers' organizations, sectoral ministries, civil society and education and training institutes). This decentralization of authority also leads to a wider sharing of responsibilities, building a shared commitment to the success of the NEP. Seychelles is another interesting example, where a reliance on "social partners" results in greater dialogue in policy formation, and also a sharing of responsibility for coordinating and implementing the NEP. Whether or not this phenomenon has an impact on the gender responsiveness of policies, or the degree to which gendered policies are implemented, remains to be seen. However, one clear conclusion is that the promotion of

²⁵ See Somun-Krupalija 2011

²⁶ Not only have gender inequalities arisen, but indigenous peoples rights have suffered. ILO: Working Paper 1/2012 "Indigenous women workers with case studies from Bangladesh, Nepal and the Americas" (Geneva, 2012).

gender equality and social dialogue are inextricably linked and mutually beneficial, both in policy formation and policy implementation.

Monitoring and evaluation

Gender responsive monitoring and evaluation reveals the extent to which a policy has addressed the different needs of men and women, and the extent to which the policy has made an impact on their lives and overall social and economic well-being. It also improves policy performance during implementation, allows for corrections and makes it possible to derive lessons for future policy formulation and implementation.

Overall, one of the persistent obstacles that has prevented policy makers from designing effective, gender sensitive strategies is the dearth of sex disaggregated data and the development of indicators. Indeed gender sensitive measurements are critical for building the case for taking gender (in)equality seriously, and for enabling better planning and actions (ILO 2009b). Gender statistics help to raise public awareness of the plight and prevailing inequalities between women and men, provides policy makers with sufficient baseline information to institute favourable changes to existing policies, and provides an unbiased source of information to monitor the real effects of government's policies and programmes on the lives of women and men.

This was certainly the case in all the countries surveyed; some countries are better performers at utilizing indicators to monitor changes in the labour force, yet very few have been able to effectively disaggregate all (or even most) indicators by sex. While there are a number of countries that provide some data about occupational segregation, gender wage gaps, employment by sector and sub-sector, unemployment, education, proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment and the informal sector, gaps still remain that should be filled. While some countries (Comoros, Jordan, Madagascar, Malawi, the occupied Palestinian territories²⁷ and Serbia, Seychelles) have made concerted efforts to increase the depth and breadth of sex-disaggregated monitoring indicators, the vast majority of countries surveyed need to improve upon the type of data being collected. In this respect, the provision of national labour market information systems that prioritizes sex-disaggregated data would be universally beneficial.

Aside from the clear need for sex-disaggregated data available on a comprehensive basis, many countries have identified the need for standardized methods of data collection and analysis. The need for national labour market information systems was identified across regions, with many countries striving to establish structures that would allow the government to track supply and demand of labour, as well as deficits within particular sectors and sub-sectors. A national labour market information system can provide the state with information on job losses and job creation, aggregate shifts in the allocation of labour between sectors and occupations, vacancies and job seekers, the quality of (new) jobs, the social costs of the transition process - including changes in income levels - and other information indicating how businesses and people are faring. Labour, but particularly income and employment indicators, are critical in analysing economic and social progress at the macro and micro level, thereby necessitating a country to have timely information on labour and income aspects of the development process.

Of the 24 surveyed countries, 20 provided a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the NEP; 18 of those had some sort of monitoring indicators, but less than half

²⁷ See the Report of the Director General, "The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories" (ILO 2012f).

of those are sex-disaggregated. Therefore, despite the fact that many countries are ambitious to track change and progress (and utilize a wide variety of actors to accomplish this goal), they remain unable to collect comprehensive data that will show the gendered nature of employment patterns.

Budgeting

Budgeting is often the last, most difficult step to any national employment policy, and one that is particularly difficult to track. Budgeting is not always part of ILO support to the NEP process, and consequently in many cases, governments did not elaborate their budgets in the texts. It is impossible to tell if the lack of a budget plan means that costs have not been considered, or if the NEP is funded through national accounts or some other mechanism. And yet it is clear that the most ambitious programmes and laudable policy goals can be rendered moot if a budget plan has not been cost and totally funded.

In nearly three quarters of the surveyed countries, the NEP does not mention a funding mechanism nor detail how particular activities will be bankrolled. In other countries, an over-reliance on donor funds or other external resources (especially in post-conflict states like Iraq and Liberia) severely limits the scope of the policy. Some countries, including Benin, Mozambique and the occupied Palestinian territories, remain heavily dependent on aid, which can squeeze these countries when donor assistance is not entirely fulfilled.²⁸ Similarly, strong trade ties with struggling or volatile trade partners (i.e. Serbia, Macedonia, Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina's links with the EU) can prove problematic to the continued funding of programmes and projects.

Some countries have been creative and forward-thinking in their approach to funding for employment programmes. The budget of Madagascar's NEP combines a national budget with private-public partnerships and donor funding (in addition to a strong system of monitoring and evaluation to demonstrate policy impact over time). Comoros has proposed a tax on alcohol and tobacco and reformulated its taxation policy in order to raise the necessary funds for its employment programme. Serbia is notable, as its budget is funded by the National Employment Service, the Development Fund and Investment and Export Promotion Agency, and it aims to increase the funding of active programmes from 0.1 per cent of GDP currently to 0.5 per cent of GDP in 2020. The government has also proposed innovative forms of gender responsive budgeting (see Box 11), through restructuring public expenditures to promote women's access to programmes and equal access to resources.

At the very least, countries must make provision for budgets to support the programmes they propose or else risk rendering any collaborative, forward-thinking process of policy formation futile. Ideally, countries should strive to implement gender responsive budgeting²⁹ (government planning, programming and budgeting that contributes to the advancement of gender equality and the fulfilment of women's rights) with the aim to raise awareness within the government of the gender impact of the budget

²⁸ In 2011, only two-thirds of the budgeted amount of donor assistance was received in the occupied Palestinian territories. The recurrent deficit requirement in 2011 was USD \$1 billion, while only USD \$0.8 billion was received in direct budget support; in addition, only USD \$0.2 billion of the budgeted USD \$0.5 billion was provided in development aid (IMF, 2012, cited in ILO 2012f).

²⁹ See entry on "Gender analysis and planning" in ILO 2007a: "Gender planning may be broadly defined as planning that integrates gender equality and women's empowerment considerations at all stages into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a programme or project, including setting of goals and objectives, the definition of strategies and indicators, the selection of methodologies and tools for integrating a gender perspective, gender-related activities and the allocation of resources to carry them out." See also ILO Discussion Paper "Overview of Gender-responsive Budgeting Initiatives" (ILO 2006a).

Box 11. Implementing gender responsive budgeting at the regional level in Serbia

The Provincial Secretariat for Labour, Employment and Gender Equality (PSLEGE), a governmental body in Serbia's Autonomous Province (AP) of Vojvodina established in 2002, is responsible for monitoring and improving conditions in the fields of labour, employment and gender equality.

PSLEGE has worked in the field of employment policy to propose and implement active measures within the territory, including gathering employment-related data and analysis, monitoring the processes related to labour and employment in the territory of the province, outlining recommendations and proposing measures, and implementing and improving employment and self-employment programmes.

Further, PSLEGE has worked in the area of gender equality to promote the concept of gender equality through cooperation with all relevant institutions and governmental and non-governmental organizations in achieving equal opportunities. The Secretariat has also supported the establishment of gender equality mechanisms on the local level, helping to develop a strong institutional framework for gender equality in the province.

In 2005, the provincial parliament passed a Decision on Gender Equality which gave the provincial government a mandate to pursue equal opportunity policies and positive measures in the field of employment. In 2008, building on this framework and with political support from the government, PSLEGE started working on gender responsive budgeting in order to advance gender mainstreaming in Vojvodina. A UNIFEM-supported pilot initiative was implemented from April 2008 to June 2009, with the aim of integrating a gender perspective into Vojvodina's budgeting processes and raising awareness among decision-makers about gender responsive programme design and budgeting.

Seven employment-related programmes, funded by the provincial budget and privatization funds, and focusing on the encouragement of employment and self-employment, were selected for analysis. The results of the research generated interesting data both on how to improve the specific programmes that were examined, and more generally on the need for gender mainstreaming in the work of the provincial administration as a whole. Two sets of recommendations were consequently produced. The first one focused on integrating gender in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of individual programs so that delivery to beneficiaries could be more effective and responsive to their needs. The second set of recommendations was more general and addressed the need for consistent and systematic gender mainstreaming of all programs and policies implemented by provincial bodies and institutions.

The findings and recommendations of the PSLEGE analysis were collated in an official report that was submitted to the Executive Council of Vojvodina for consideration and were subsequently adopted as Council Conclusions in August 2009. The report recommended that:

1. Provincial bodies shall undertake activities to integrate gender equality into all their strategies, programmes, projects and other activities they are implementing.
2. Provincial bodies shall keep sex-disaggregated data on their program beneficiaries.
3. The Provincial Secretariat for Labour, Employment and Gender Equality shall, in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia which guarantees gender equality and the development of equal opportunity policy, as well as with the Decision on Gender Equality and the National Strategy for the Improvement of the Status of Women and Advancement of Gender Equality, develop a strategy on gender mainstreaming of all activities of provincial bodies, in order for this approach to become a regular practice of provincial bodies, and shall ensure all necessary expert assistance and support to other provincial bodies (UNIFEM 2010).

and the policies funded, to make governments accountable for their commitments to gender equality, and to bring about changes to budgets and the policies they fund to improve the socio-economic status of women (Elson 2006). This is a challenging next

step for many countries, but one that must be undertaken. The exploration of gender responsive budgets in terms of their contribution to the Decent Work Agenda and its approach to gender equality is an area of further research which should be pursued.

IV. Country case studies

The previous section has provided a systematic review and documentation of the overall gender dimensions of national employment policies and strategies. The goal was to provide insight into themes and trends - at the global level - that emerged from the analysis in order to gain a “big picture” view of the gender dimensions of national employment policies. The following section aims to take a more nuanced approach to understanding context-specific environments within four individual states (Serbia, Comoros, the Republic of Korea and Jordan) in order to better understand how the gender components of their respective NEPs came about.

The four countries surveyed were selected based on their performance rating along the spectrum of gender dimensions (Figure 1 above, in Section II). Each of the selected countries was the highest ranked in their respective geographic region. Each offers interesting gender dimensions and gender equality concerns to analyse. However, none of the cases should be viewed as a “best case scenario”, as all have problems and limitations of their own. The countries were selected because they stood out as useful in determining both “good practices” and identifying “sticky” areas that need further research or more attention during the policy-building process.

These countries also have the advantage of involvement in previous ILO interventions (Decent Work Country Programmes, Global Job Pacts Country Scan, representation within the ILO Governing Body, etc.), meaning that the respective country study is informed by a wider, more in-depth range of information which in turn provides an overall, inclusive picture of how the NEP is situated. As such, the analysis for each country is based not only on its NEP, but also on Decent Work Country Programmes, Global Jobs Pact Country Scans, multilateral (UN, ILO, WTO, OECD) technical reports, National Development Plans, national-level policies (social policy, youth employment, health, education, etc.) and academic articles and analysis.

Each country case study will be preceded by a box that provides a number of more generalized regional trends that emerged from the larger data analysis, and that also applies to the case countries. These trends may be useful to draw regional- and national-level comparisons. In addition, Box 12 provides an interesting series of examples where gender responsive policy making has been “rolled back” in response to the rise of conservative political and religious forces, most notably in the Middle East and North Africa. These “missed opportunities” are certainly not unique to the Middle East – as similar cases in post-Soviet states demonstrated - and can stand as useful examples, or perhaps as warnings, of how political upheaval and social turmoil can negatively impact previously gender responsive government policies.³⁰

³⁰ UNDP & ILO: “Rethinking Economic Growth: Towards Productive and Inclusive Arab Societies”, (Beirut, 2012), pp. 56-62, 93).

Box 12. The Middle East and North Africa: Opportunities being missed for gender responsive socio-economic policies?

A number of countries, especially in the Middle East and North Africa, should be highlighted as “missed opportunities” - cases where women’s economic participation and employment trends had been quite positive until an external event (most often, civic unrest or conflict) disrupted daily life and overturned gender responsive labour reforms. Recent trends have shown that countries that have “rolled back” on women’s rights in the aftermath of a revolution have disadvantaged their female populations and undone decades of positive reforms. The cases of Tunisia, Syria and Egypt are the most poignant examples.

Between 1991 and 2009, employment in Arab countries grew at an impressive average annual rate of 3.3 per cent, with women benefiting even more than their male counterparts (with an average annual growth of 4.4 per cent compared to 3 per cent for men). This has somewhat reduced the gender gap in the Arab employment to population ratio, although the gap still remains the widest among developing regions. Tunisia saw nearly 360,000 women enter the labour force from 1995 until 2009, while in Egypt more than 2.2 million women entered during the same time frame. While both countries still had very low rates of female labour force participation rate (25.1 per cent in Tunisia and 23.3 per cent in Egypt in 2009), the diversification of labour markets and the provision of skills training to women had been made a priority by both countries. Tunisia in particular had made an effort to court FDI, especially from Europe to diversify into more high-tech industries and call centres, both of which employed growing numbers of women. Moreover, the countries had introduced a number of reforms to social services and labour policies to ease the burden on workers: Syria had drafted an unemployment insurance scheme; Tunisia more than doubled its membership in its social security system between 1987 and 2001 and expanded pension coverage and cash transfers to the poorest sectors of society; Egypt expanded its Social Fund to cover female-headed households, as well as undertaking extensive labour surveys to better understand the relationship between poverty, employment and gender (UNDP 2011). While unemployment, especially among women and youth, remained at crisis levels, it seemed there had been real efforts by governments to be more inclusive in their labour and social policies.

The Arab Spring protests that brought about the fall of the autocratic governments of Tunisia and Egypt heralded in a new era of participatory democracy and reform. However, after an initial period of optimism and enthusiasm, a harsher reality sunk in. The emergence of strong Islamist political parties and a resurgence of conservative religious beliefs which are being increasingly enforced on society have combined to push gender equality to a back burner - and a backlash against women erupted in the streets and in policy-making circles. In Egypt, women’s representation in parliament fell from 13 per cent in 2010 to two per cent in 2011 despite the fact that the number of women who nominated themselves for office had doubled (Tadros 2012). In Tunisia, only 7 secular women (out of a body of 217) were elected, compared to 42 from the ruling Islamist al-Nadha party (Pickard 2011). Both countries have seen a marginalization of gendered social protections as political parties fight out more “pressing” issues like drafting new constitutions. While there have not yet been any changes in labour market participation rates or unemployment statistics that can be attributed to the regime changes, the atmosphere for employment certainly has changed.

While it is still quite early in the process of democratization and reforms in Tunisia and Egypt to see where women will fit in new employment and labour policies, it is worthwhile to give a word of warning to avoid missing opportunities in the future. Post-conflict states like Liberia, Comoros and the Balkan states have shown that gender responsive employment policies are a real possibility after periods of turmoil, as long as gender is carefully mainstreamed from an early stage and politicians and workers alike take a real interest in gender equitable outcomes. Tunisia and Egypt will need to look to the lessons from these and other successes in order to build their national employment policies to be responsive to the needs of both male and female workers.

Box 13. European NEP trends

The EU ascension process has had a strong impact on the NEPs in Eastern Europe; strict regulations of the European Union Framework for Employment 2011-2020 have helped to promote strong statistical evidence bases (especially in the realm of sex-disaggregated data), monitoring and evaluation processes, proactive labour reforms, heightened attention to labour rights and feasible financial goals. Further, due to regional patterns of integration, the countries of Eastern Europe have focused on making their corporate sectors more competitive in order to attract foreign investment and build a more favourable business climate. This holds the potential for high rates of growth, but also could lead to detrimental hiring/training practices that exclude women and jobs that could not be characterized as “decent work”.

However, integration with European markets has been both helpful and harmful to central and eastern European countries; growth has increased, more jobs have been created, industries have diversified and labour standards have improved, but labour markets have become more vulnerable to external factors (especially during periods of crisis), and have less flexibility in policy formulation. Further, austerity measures have been especially detrimental to public expenditure projections. For example, the IMF suspended a USD \$1.3 billion loan to Serbia in late 2012 because of persistent budget gaps and a public debt of 54 per cent of GDP (Bloomberg 2012). At the same time, the public expenditure budget of Serbia has been cut from 20.5 to 12.4 per cent by 2020 based on strict austerity measures implemented by the IMF (Republic of Serbia 2011).

Serbia

In January 2001, the Serbian government launched a major economic reform programme, the Labour Law of the Republic of Serbia, to accelerate the transition to a market economy. This programme contributed to reversing the trend of decreasing industrial activity and plummeting gross domestic product that characterized the previous decade. The implementation of the main pillars of this reform has been instrumental in achieving macroeconomic stability, liberalizing domestic prices and exchange rates, restructuring the banking system, privatizing state- and socially-owned enterprises and improving the overall business regulatory framework (ILO 2008c).

ILO involvement and the Decent Work Agenda

Since the beginning of its economic reform in 2001, Serbia has undertaken considerable work with the ILO. Early activities focused on the strengthening of the capacity of social partners, increasing the effectiveness of labour inspection, reporting procedures on international labour standards and employment. A Decent Work Country Programme was adopted in 2007, being the first joint programming exercise between the ILO and Serbia. Since 2007, the ILO has been providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs – now the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development (MoERD) – for the development of a comprehensive youth employment policy and national action plan to be embedded into the National Development Plans and the Employment Strategy. This assistance comprises strengthening of the capacity of labour market institutions to detect labour market problems of young people and devise appropriate responses to improve youth employment prospects. The ILO has also provided on-going assistance to the MoERD in crafting an active policy on employment (ILO 2008c), which is analysed below.

ILO has also supported a number of technical projects in Serbia, including the Project Youth Employment Partnership, support for integrated employment and social services, wages and income inequality and social dialogue.

Socio-economic context

Employment remains a pressing challenge in Serbia. Economic growth, macroeconomic stability and a notable increase in the private sector share of GDP have not been enough to compensate for the losses of employment resulting from economic restructuring and massive lay-offs during transition. Increasing numbers of redundant workers, coupled with a large stock of unemployed persons and high incidence of labour market entrants has resulted in the growth of informal employment, unemployment and inactivity.

Despite strong economic growth in the early 2000s, the economic crisis hit Serbia hard after 2008, and until 2011, labour market indicators deteriorated steadily. Both activity and employment rates declined to their lowest levels in a decade. After 2008, levels of employment fell by 8.6 per cent until 2011, due largely to the global economic downturn. Despite the overall economic growth of 2011 (Serbia's GDP increased by 1.6 per cent in real terms), the recovery was not conducive to employment creation and, according to the labour force survey, the number of employed people decreased by 6 per cent. Employment declined even in sectors which had positive growth rates, implying gains in labour productivity and probably increasing informalities (European Commission 2012).

Women's employment rates suffered slightly less than men's, with proportionately fewer job losses than their male counterparts – due largely to job losses in industrial sectors, which employs larger numbers of men, but not in service sectors where women were more strongly represented. While unemployment increased from both men and women since 2008, the pattern was sharper for men, with nearly equal rates for men and women by 2011 (Figure 4). Research showed that most of the unemployment was structural, as around three quarters of all unemployed were without a job for more than a year (European Commission 2012). Women's inactivity rate was also appreciably higher than that of their male counterparts (49.3 and 31.9 per cent, respectively) (Republic of Serbia 2012). Further, several studies conducted by the World Bank and the ILO on the informal economy in the region indicate that most employment in agriculture in the region is informal employment. This suggests that employment losses in the aftermath of the crisis have been absorbed by the informal economy, and that the post-crisis labour market situation might have been worse than the unemployment figures suggest (ILO 2012, p. 54).

Figure 4. Serbian employment patterns



Source: European Commission 2012

More than half of the employed are working in the service sector (42.9 per cent male, 61.4 per cent female) approximately 25 per cent in industry (32.3 per cent male, 15.7 per cent female), and 24 per cent in agriculture (24.9 per cent male, 22.9 per cent female). Further, a significant share of total employment is in the informal economy. According to the Labour Force Survey 2011, the share of informal employment among workers in the working age population (15-64) is 18.8 per cent (18.4 per cent male, 19.4 per cent female), a decrease over the last three years. The informal economy absorbs primarily unskilled, poorly educated (less than secondary education), rural and predominately very young (15-24) or very old (or 65+) labour. Most workers engaged in the informal sector are active in subsistence farming and self-employment in trade and other services (Republic of Serbia 2012.). Further, rates of vulnerable employment are on the rise again after a dip from 2004-2006, with a 28.2 per cent of share of vulnerable employment (729,289 people) in 2009. Youth unemployment stands at 50.9 per cent in 2011, an increase of more than 7 per cent since 2007 (European Commission 2012). Youth are also significantly more likely to work in the informal economy than adults. While less than one in five employed persons work informally, this ratio increases to almost one in three for the age group 15-24. Young men are more prone to work in the informal economy than young women, while this gender difference disappears for the overall workforce (Arandarenko 2010 p. 7).

National Employment Policy

The Serbian National Employment Strategy for the Period 2011-2020 (Republic of Serbia 2011a, hereafter “SNEP”) aims to support the future development of Serbia, with employment creation and reduction of relative poverty at its core. In pursuing its objectives, the SNEP focuses also on supporting pro-investment approaches and export-oriented industries, as set forth in the “Post-crisis economic development and growth model”³¹. The basic assumption of the post-crisis model is that Serbia will acquire the status of EU candidate country and member state, and gain access to financial instruments available under the European integration process.

Serbia is also working within the European Union Framework for Employment 2011-2020, a strategy that is based on smart growth by improving the knowledge economy and fostering innovation, sustainable growth by promoting more efficient use of natural resources and energy, and inclusive growth, by ensuring territorial and social cohesion. In ten years’ time, the Framework aims to achieve the following targets:

- Raise the employment-to-population ratio of individuals aged 20-64 to at least 75 per cent;
- Increase the share of GDP invested in research and development from 1.9 per cent to 3 per cent;
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent compared to the 1990 levels (or even by 30 per cent if the conditions are right), increase the share of renewable energy sources by 20 per cent and increase energy efficiency by 20 per cent;
- Decrease the early school dropout rate from the current 15 per cent to under 10 per cent, while simultaneously increasing the share of university graduates from 31 per cent to 40 per cent;
- Reduce the number of people living below the poverty line by 25 per cent, bailing at least 20 million people out of poverty.

³¹ Jointly published with USAID and the Foundation for the Advancement of Economics (Republic of Serbia 2010).

Serbia will pursue these goals as part of its bid for EU membership. Further, at the national level, Serbia will be required to:

- Implement a national path towards “flexicurity” as agreed with the European Council to reduce labour market segmentation and facilitate the achievement of work-life balance;
- Regularly monitor and adjust the tax system to ensure that work pays, with a special focus on low-educated workers and the promotion of self-employment;
- Promote new forms of work-life balance, and active aging policy and gender equality;
- Enhance social dialogue;
- Encourage the implementation of the European qualifications framework and the establishment of national frameworks;
- Enable the acquisition of competencies necessary for further learning and participation in the labour market, through general education, formal or informal learning, and retraining;
- Develop partnerships between the key stakeholders in the field of education, training and work, especially through inclusion of social partners.

On the basis of these aims, a series of labour market indicators (many of them sex-disaggregated³²) were established to track the patterns of change within the labour market. These indicators include: increasing the activity rate of the working age population; increasing the employment rate; decreasing the unemployment rate; changing the sectoral breakdown of employment to decrease agricultural employment and increase industry and service sector employment; changing employment type to decrease vulnerable employment (own account workers and contributing family workers); decreasing the share of the informal economy; reducing regional performance gaps; increasing funding for active labour market policies (0.4 per cent of GDP invested in active labour market policies by 2013); referring a larger share of the unemployed to active labour market measures; reducing long-term unemployment; employing more persons with disabilities; employing more of the Roma population; increasing the employment of the rural population; enhancing the employment of women; enhancing the employment of youth; enhancing the employment of older workers; enhancing the employment of refugees and internally displaced persons; and increasing the employment of social assistance beneficiaries.

The SNEP works in tandem with the National Sustainable Development Strategy of 2008,³³ the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS),³⁴ the National Strategy for Economic Development (2006-2012)³⁵, and the Strategy for Regional Development (2007-2012).³⁶ Additionally, the National Strategy for the Advancement of Women and the Promotion of Gender Equality and the Action Plan for its implementation were adopted in February 2009 and August 2010 respectively, the latter of which specifically addresses women’s employment. However, no mention of these two strategies is made in the SNEP, leading

³² See “Men and Women in the Republic of Serbia” (Republic of Serbia 2011c) for a complete sex-disaggregated data set.

³³ The National Sustainable Development Strategy outlines the following key national priorities: i) membership with the European Union, ii) development of competitive market economy and balanced economic growth, iii) development of human resources, increased employment and social inclusion, iv) development of infrastructure and balanced regional development and v) protection and improvement of environment and the rational use of natural resources.

³⁴ The PRS is centred on economic growth and job creation objectives.

³⁵ The National Strategy for Economic Development is geared to increase the competitiveness of the Serbian economy and to align economic development with social equity objectives.

³⁶ The Strategy for Regional Development seeks to redress regional development disparities and develop human capital through knowledge and skills.

to a persistent question (though not one specific to Serbia) of policy coherence at the national level.

Demand-side considerations

The macroeconomic trends in Serbia in the last two years have been marked by a growth of gross domestic product (GDP) and the recovery of economic and trade activities. The recovery of economic activity in the country was driven by the growth of the global economy, the successful revision of the stand-by arrangement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the strengthening of the banking sector and the implementation of monetary and economic policy measures. High GDP growth in 2009 and 2010 was registered in transport, storage and communications, financial intermediation and manufacturing, while the sharpest GDP drop was registered in construction and agricultural sectors (Republic of Serbia 2011). These patterns were consistent with the implementation of policies to reform the industrial and service sector (two areas which employ many women). Further, public spending decreased in real terms, due to the freeze of public sector salaries and pensions and to the lower level of public investments. As will be discussed later, this freeze may be strongly detrimental to safety nets and services provided to both men and women.

One of the overall goals of macro- and microeconomic policy changes has been to encourage investment growth to replace consumption growth. The SNEP sets clear targets of what sort of economic changes will be made, including increasing the share of fixed investments, reducing public expenditures as a share of GDP (in part through a freeze of public sector salaries and pensions and lower levels of public investment), increasing the share of export (goods and services) and reducing the current transactions deficit. Further, the SNEP provides particular support to FDI and export-oriented programmes to create new jobs. While none of these changes could be considered overtly gender responsive, the overall aim to engender more growth and sectoral diversification could lead to the creation of employment opportunities (Republic of Serbia 2011a).

Serbia has compiled a comprehensive set of indicators to track progress and provide transparency in labour market growth. Sex-disaggregated data is available for a number of key labour market indicators,³⁷ and the data is further broken down by region. The SNEP, however, does not target exclusively women, although there are often implicit and explicit equality targets. Women constitute the most heterogeneous vulnerable group; general targeting, therefore, is not the best policy option due to its imprecision. Rather, using other indicators (status as refugee or Roma, for example) to give greater nuance to data collection (Republic of Serbia 2011a).

Nevertheless, the SNEP does lay out a number of activities that focus on setting the foundations for equal opportunities in the economy, including promoting women's employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship, reducing the economic inequality that results from multiple grounds of discrimination, strengthening the capacity of stakeholders in the economy and society to remedy gender-based discrimination, and better use of women's resources. The ILO Decent Work Programme in Serbia (ILO 2008c) concludes that policies aimed at improving the employment prospects should have a wider scope (especially those targeted at youth), while programmes need to be targeted to those who are more disadvantaged in the labour market, especially youth with low educational and training levels and young people living in rural areas.

³⁷ Including employment by status in employment, employment-to-population ratio, informal employment, job creation, proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment, unemployment by level of education, occupational distribution, and structure of unemployment (see Republic of Serbia 2012).

However, the provision of adequate earning, productive work and decent working hours for both men and women have yet to be entirely realized. While net wages have increased for many (from an average of 100 euro in 2001 to an average of 350 euro in 2007), as well as citizens' savings (from 328 million euro in 2001 to 4.8 billion in 2007 [European Commission 2008]), changes have not been universal. Often, employers avoid paying for overtime and prevent employees from taking off time during the legally prescribed minimum of 20 days. Despite strong efforts to improve upon a labour environment conducive to job creation and the realization of full, productive employment, sizable gaps persist.

Supply-side considerations

The population of Serbia in 2010 was estimated at 7,276,604, more than 3 per cent less than recorded in 2002. The year 2011 registered a negative population growth rate of 0.464 per cent, a result of declining birth rates and continuing migration driven by economic transition and lack of employment opportunities. The next decade will see a relatively dramatic decline in the working age population of nearly 8 per cent, due to the difference between those leaving and those entering the labour market, under the presumption that the young labour force will not be leaving the country (which can hardly be assured, given current patterns). This demographic shift will have an essentially negative impact on the labour market and potential for economic growth, especially when combined with middling performance in education indicators (Republic of Serbia 2011a).

Education and skills development

Dropout at all levels of education is still high, and the majority of education indicators are the worst in Europe. About 10 per cent of the population has not completed primary school, while 15 per cent has not completed secondary school; only 13 per cent of the population completes post-secondary school. Only 19 per cent of the economically active population has a university diploma, compared with the EU average of 30 per cent (Republic of Serbia 2011a). Nevertheless, the ratio of girls to boys in secondary and tertiary education is more than 100 per cent, demonstrating that women are often more educated than their male counterparts (World DataBank 2012). As in-country experts have noted, though, the quality of education is far more challenging to appreciate than enrolment rates. Consequently, the troubling demographic shift, combined with education that does not fully reflect labour market needs, has led to a targeted NEP to help the population develop skills corresponding to labour demands.

The SNEP places human capital development at the core of its employment and development policies. Raising the quality of the labour force through education, training and the inclusion of socially excluded individuals and groups will contribute to economic and social development of the country. The education policy has focused on systemic reforms to build on the review of laws and teaching curricula, strengthening education and training institutions, training teachers and managers, and complemented by an awareness-raising campaign on the content of the reform (Republic of Serbia 2011). The educational policy has been refocused on real labour market needs and the prevention of early school leaving, a strategy which will hopefully allow the education of both boys and girls to propel them into the labour market.

Technical and vocational training

Cooperation and exchange among universities, research institutions and enterprises has also been encouraged, as well as vocational education and training (VET) in order to align the labour supply and demand and match educational and training outcomes to

labour market needs. A number of key interventions have been undertaken to improve the quality of workers' skills, vocational training, and employment services – although none of the interventions have an explicitly gendered component.

Serbia's Strategy for the Development of Vocational Education and Training (VET) outlines many of the interventions undertaken to develop the skills for employability and productivity of its workers. Its main objective is to provide youth and adults with the opportunities to gain knowledge, skills and competencies needed for work and employment, and to ensure the conditions for further education and learning. The Strategy advocates the development of social partnership, the creation of a National Qualifications Framework and a quality assurance system, the development of career guidance and counselling, and the promotion of entrepreneurship in vocational training and education.

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF), a partnership among educational providers, enterprises and the government, lays out occupational standards, qualifications standards and standards of VET to strengthen the capacity of VET schools and adult training providers, ensuring better governance of the sector. The NQF establishes transparent criteria, benchmarks and indicators of the quality of services provided, and allows for internal and external monitoring mechanisms to be applied uniformly to all VET providers. The aim of Serbia's NQF is to enhance the comparability and compatibility of its worker qualifications with the European Qualifications Framework, as well as to modernize the provision of VET and the development of the adult education system. Closely linked to the NQF is Serbia's new National Classification of Occupations System. This new system is being developed in line with international occupation and education standards (ISCO and ISCED) in order to regularize occupational and professional titles (Republic of Serbia 2011a).

Importantly, there remains a pressing need for social partnership in the field of education and training so that the NQF can be effective. Partnership among the government, employers and employees is the basis for human resources development and planning, along with adult education and training. Encouraging dialogue and partnership will help facilitate the creation of a dynamic and sustainable system of institutions and programmes for adult education that reflects the needs of the economy, the labour market and on the priorities of society and the individual, as well as improving the efficacy of the burgeoning NQF.

Discrimination in recruitment, hiring and treatment

Serbia joined the ILO in 2000, ratifying the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), Discrimination [Employment and Occupation] Convention, 1958 (No. 111) and CEDAW. While Serbia has addressed gender as a cross-cutting issue in its policies, concerns remain regarding the extent to which non-discrimination legislation is enforced.³⁸

While not mentioned explicitly in the SNEP, at the national level, the government has also prepared a number of bills on non-discrimination. Following the adoption of the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination (2009), the National Assembly elected the Commissioner for Equality in May 2010. This institution is responsible for assistance to

³⁸ At the 101st Session of the ILC (ILO 2012g), the CEACR “asked the Government of Serbia “to provide information on the measures taken to implement the anti-discrimination legislation. Furthermore, recalling the importance of concrete and practical measures to promote awareness and understanding of the non-discrimination legislation among workers and employers, their organizations, labour inspectors and judges as well as the public at large, the Committee once again requests the Government to provide information on the promotional and training activities undertaken on the anti-discrimination legislation and on the number, nature and outcome of employment discrimination cases addressed by the labour inspectorate and the Commissioner for Equality and the judiciary, including on remedies provided and sanctions imposed” (p. 567).

the victims of discrimination by reviewing complaints pertaining to violations of the Law, providing opinions and recommendations in specific cases, filing charges on behalf of the person discriminated against, submitting misdemeanour notices on account of discrimination, and warning the public of the most frequent, typical and severe cases of discrimination.

However, instances of discrimination based on gender, age and ethnicity persist despite legislation. When it comes to the treatment of women in the workplace, data indicate enduring though covert discrimination that can often place women in an unequal position in comparison to men. This mostly refers to the violation of basic labour rights, especially in small and medium enterprises (non-payment of health, pension and disability insurance, violation of the right to annual vacation and sick leave, non-payment of contributions during pregnancy), as well as to difficulties in career advancement to managerial positions, lack of respect, disdain and open harassment, including sexual harassment (Ristanović 2011). Given that such discrimination is often extremely difficult to prove, such violations rarely come up in reports by labour inspectors. Also, given that court proceedings related to discrimination are often long and uncertain in terms of outcome, few victims opt for this form of protection. This gap between the SNEP and the reality of persistent discrimination in the workplace must be explicitly addressed in the future.

It should be noted, though, in terms of positive discrimination measures, Serbia is unique in using a system of quotas for hiring women in the security sector (Box 3, above) – a proactive measure to counteract historical patterns of sectoral underrepresentation.

Labour market policies

A priority area of the SNEP is increasing the employability of vulnerable groups and strengthening the institutional framework in order to decrease differences in the labour market indicators between Serbia and EU. The new strategy particularly emphasizes the implementation of active labour market policies, as opposed to passive policies, through higher expenditures for active labour market measures, better targeting of potential beneficiaries and the fostering of programmes of additional education and training. Parallel to the strengthening of active labour market policies, emphasis will be given to education in order to improve the labour force supply. This is particularly important because of the forecasted decrease in the labour force until the end of 2020. Table 3 provides a breakdown of public spending on active and passive measures as a percentage of GDP.

Table 3. Serbia public spending on labour market policies, 2004-2010, % of GDP

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009 ¹	2010 ²
Active measures	0.03	0.09	0.08	0.10	0.11	0.11	0.122
Unemployment benefits, gross	0.83	0.75	0.81	0.78	0.72	0.77	0.892
Passive measures, gross	0.91	0.85	0.90	0.95	0.99	0.98	1.162
Labour market policies, total	0.94	0.95	0.98	1.06	1.10	1.10	1.272

¹ Shares of active policies in GDP are calculated according to GDP forecasts for 2009 and 2010 from the Serbian Ministry of Finance

² Own calculations based on the NES plan of expenditures on labour market measures for 2010

Active labour market policies

Active labour market policies, especially those that prioritize job creation for the young, have, to some extent, helped the unemployed to find work.³⁹ Job orientation

³⁹ For a matrix tracking changes over time, see Ministry of Serbia 2012, pp. 12 - 17

measures (especially through VET and skills development) have been designed to enhance human capital and employment and respond to labour market needs. Developing institutional capacity and expanding policies to a wider base of beneficiaries (especially in vulnerable groups including rural populations, refugees and the Roma people) allows many of the active labour market policies to target those most in need. For example, in 2009, a Youth Employment Fund (YEF) was established within the National Employment Service, with resources stemming from various sources. Its objective is to support disadvantaged youth, e.g. low-skilled individuals, young persons with disabilities, Roma youth, returnees, refugee and displaced young people, to acquire the skills needed for employment. The measures offered within the YEF framework often entail a combination of training and subsidized employment as these yield the best results (Republic of Serbia 2011a). The SNEP also sets out the goal of increasing the budgetary allocation for active employment measures to 0.4 per cent of GDP by 2013, and 0.5 per cent by 2020. The policy simultaneously prioritizes quality monitoring and rigorous evaluation of existing programmes, as well as more efficient targeting of hard-to-place individuals and vulnerable groups.

Notably, the ILO has partnered with the Government of Serbia in a Project Youth Employment Partnership (2007-2010) that aims to strengthen the capacity of labour market institutions to implement youth employment policies, with demonstration programmes directed at the creation of more and better jobs for youth. The Project has made a contribution to the development objective of supporting the promotion of more and better jobs for young people through the development of human resources, the formulation of an evidence-based youth employment policy; and capacity building of labour market institutions to deliver targeted employment services and programmes to address the needs of young people at risk of social exclusion. The final evaluation report (ILO 2011j) shows that the Project has had a lasting, positive and systematic impact on policy making and operational activities in both the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development and the National Employment Service. It has also forged valuable links among these two institutions, the social partners and other donor organisations, demonstrating that such a programme could be a good practice model of technical cooperation and project implementation.

Further, the Serbian government has implemented a national path towards “flexicurity”, as agreed with the European Council, to reduce labour market segmentation and facilitate the achievement of work-life balance. Such a policy allows all members of the workforce security with respect to achieving the right to employment, while at the same time giving enterprises flexibility in hiring employees and reducing their numbers for structural or other reasons. This policy is seen to benefit older workers and those with care responsibilities (most often women), by allowing flexible contracts and working hours, as well as job mobility and workforce training (Republic of Serbia 2011a).

Passive labour market policies

As a passive labour market policy, the Serbian NES administers unemployment insurance according to the 2003 Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance (see Box 6, p. 28). It is financed by a 1.5 per cent contribution, shared equally by employers and employees, and provides income replacement of 50 – 60 per cent. During 2006, around 75,000 beneficiaries received on average just over 10,000 dinars per month (USD \$121, or 47 per cent of the average net wage) after the deduction of social insurance contributions (OECD 2008). Given the high percentage of unemployed women, a sizable number of women should benefit from the scheme. However, given that women generally earn lower salaries and have less regularized contracts, their unemployment insurance is also lower – making it more difficult to claim a living income.

Employment services

Strengthening Serbia's National Employment Service (NES) to promote cooperation among labour market institutions (both private and public) and the working population has been made a priority. The NES is responsible for providing the working population with information on employment possibilities and necessary requirements, affording employment mediation, vocational guidance and counselling, organizing education and training, and implementing active employment programmes. Moreover, the NES is responsible for setting up Centres for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities, with links to other centres at the local and regional level. There are currently more than 126 local employment councils that are co-funded by the budget of the government of Serbia (though not all are functional), and there has been an attempt to redesign many of these programmes to align with the needs of the local labour market. In addition, there are some 60 private employment agencies in Serbia that provide client services and broker employment. The SNEP has identified the need to intensify the activities of employment service centres, both public and private, in order to provide sufficient services to job-seekers and those with employment concerns, as well as further improving the skills of staff providing counselling services (Republic of Serbia 2011a).

However, large regional disparities in unemployment/employment rates, low labour force mobility, redundancies in state and socially-owned enterprises, and the lack of a system for monitoring and forecasting labour market trends makes the realization of this goal challenging. Despite the government's commitment to the growth of programmes administered by the NES, their annual participation intake corresponded to barely 5 per cent of the total of registered unemployed persons (OECD 2008).

Access to resources, MSMEs and business development services (BDS)

The Serbian SNEP prioritizes the creation of credit programmes aimed at promoting women's entrepreneurship and all forms of self-employment. Further, specific measures to promote employment, entrepreneurship and self-employment among women belonging to marginalized groups have been adopted and administered by the NES, including specific programmes for the economic empowerment of rural and Roma women and women's business literacy.

The creation of MSMEs and entrepreneurship incentives has been flagged as important factors in the development of the country and sustainable growth, especially given that private companies have a smaller share in economic production, but a large share in foreign trade. From 2004 to 2007, MSMEs accounted for 99 per cent of the number of economic entities, 60 per cent of employment and 44 per cent of total export. In 2007, MSMEs recruited 36,000 new employees, providing 67.7 per cent of the total turnover of economy (Prokopenko 2008). Since 2001, the Business Advisory Services and the Enterprise Growth Programme have supported 53 projects with SMEs with more than 50 per cent female employees, while 21 consulting companies owned and managed by women have taken part in the Enterprise Growth Programme. The Business Advisory Services cooperates with the Association of Business Women to enhance capacities and raise its visibility among Serbian women entrepreneurs. Further, the Business Advisory Services launched the Women in Business programme in 2011 to provide business training, mentoring, technical training and grants for start-ups (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development 2012).

Further, the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development (MoERD), with the support of UN Women, commissioned two major studies in 2011 to better understand entrepreneurial activities of women in Serbia.⁴⁰ These studies, the “Baseline Study on Women's Entrepreneurship in Serbia” and the “Gender Impact Analysis of Selected Support Measures for Entrepreneurship in Serbia” seek to determine the extent to which women entrepreneurs have had access to selected state support programmes. The studies found that women generally opt for micro-entrepreneurship (99 per cent of women entrepreneurs employ fewer than 10 people), mostly in the service sector and the local market (76 per cent do business solely on the local market) and that many suffer from high percentage of business closure (overall, women's entrepreneurship accounts for only 26 per cent of active businesses and shops). The second report provided an overview of best international practices in the provision of financial and non-financial support to women in entrepreneurship, and gave specific recommendations for how to create support measures that would improve women's access to government programmes. The study found that only one existing programme in Serbia specifically targeted women as its prime beneficiaries, and that, although women disproportionately rely on governmental supported programmes to enter into self-employment, they are not as keen, or as informed, to rely on government support for already established enterprises. Women may be more reluctant than men to participate in ventures which require investment of own resources, possibly because of higher barriers to accessing private sources of capital which are a prerequisite for participation in these programmes (e.g. bank loans to provide their own co-financing share) (Avlijaš et al. 2012).

The recent work on the development of the institutional framework for entrepreneurship, MSMEs and provision of credit in Serbia has been favourable, with the establishment and improvement of various institutions. However, due to insufficient gender mainstreaming in regulations and policies of business development, many of the specific problems and needs of women in business are not addressed or supported. Despite strides made in the SNEP, sizable gaps remain.

Social protection

The social protection system in Serbia has a broad structure related to the coverage of the needs of the vulnerable population groups, including social insurance (contributory-based benefits such as pensions, unemployment's benefits; social assistance and child protection benefits; and range of social services.

Expenditure on social assistance and transfers to households as a share of GDP in 2009 was 18.7 per cent, with 29 per cent of spending directed to pensions. In the Revised Memorandum on the Budget, the Government plans a reduction of social assistance and transfers to households from 17.6 per cent of GDP (in 2011) to 16.8 per cent (in 2012), to 10.0 per cent (in 2020). Further, the Law on the Budget for 2011 expects a drop in the level of pension spending as percentage of GDP from 12.7 per cent in 2010 to 11.8 per cent by 2015 and 10.7 per cent in 2020 (World Bank 2009, cited in Vuković and Perišić 2012). The aim of these measures is to create a financially sustainable system by increasing revenues from contributions and reducing budget subsidies.

Serbia's policies on social protection are presented within the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2003), the National Strategy on Ageing (2006-2015), the National Strategy of Sustainable Development (2008-2017) and various studies commissioned by the Government (including the “Post-Crisis Model of Economic Growth and

⁴⁰ See “Key Findings and Recommendations of the Study on Women's Entrepreneurship in Serbia and Gender Analysis of Government Support Measures for Entrepreneurship” (Avlijaš et al. 2012)

Development of Serbia 2011-2020”, and the “First National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction 2008-2010”).

The SNEP recognizes that wide social security coverage (unemployment benefits, pensions and health care, social assistance benefits to households) should ease the reconciliation of work with private and family commitments (such as childcare, care for the elderly or sick family members). As such, the provision of social protection has been given weight in the current policy. Nevertheless, by aiming to cut expenditures on social spending, the Serbian Government risks undermining the policies they have created, and falling short on funding to provide services to their citizens.

Pension

The latest changes in the public pension system were introduced at the end of 2010. Their essence concerns the extension of contributory periods for a full pension, an increase in the minimum retirement age, as well as a change in eligibility criteria for privileged categories and in pensions’ indexation. Pension coverage is around 70 per cent, though more than 60 per cent of pensioners receive pensions below average. Controversies remain about introducing a mandatory funded system (Vuković and Perišić 2012).

The national pension scheme has already achieved a matured population structure, with only 1.25 contributors supporting one pensioner. The relatively large number of pensioners is due to the pensioners who have short contribution periods but managed to be eligible for pensions, as well as certain categories of workers who have higher pension rates at earlier retirement age. Moreover, an increasing number of workers retire early on the grounds of disability (ILO 2008c).

The pension scheme in Serbia is heavily subsidized by the general budget, with contributions from workers and employers covering only two-thirds of the total expenditure. In the context of a rapidly ageing population, the present pension scheme involves a potential problem with its long-term sustainability. Further, problems with social security legislation and a lack of coordination between government agencies to collect social security contributions further complicate matters (ILO 2008c). In order to support the process to develop policy and strategy for pension reform, the ILO has provided technical assistance to the Serbian government, workers’ and employers’ organizations, including a pension modelling training in June 2009, a tripartite workshop on pension systems in Serbia conducted in July 2009 by the International Training Centre of the ILO, and a Conference on Pension Reform in Serbia in September 2009.⁴¹

One area in which Serbian pension policy is moving towards tangible gender equality is in the gradual equalization of retirement age for women and men. The normal retirement age has been increased in 2011 to 65 years for men and 60 years for women (with at least 15 years contribution period). Further, the Law of 2003 provides 15 per cent increase of contribution periods in the calculation of old-age pensions for female workers. In addition, the state subsidises two years of additional pensionable period for every woman who has three or more children (Hirose 2009).

⁴¹ For more details, see Hirose 2009, Lakičević-Stojačić 2009, Vukojčić 2009 and Altiparmakov 2009.

Social assistance and childcare benefits

The Act of 21 March 2011 on Social Care⁴² and Law on the Social Care of Children (2010)⁴³ are the primary basis for the provision of social assistance established by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. There are 137 Centres of Social Work that are responsible for the delivery of social assistance, while local government is responsible for the delivery of day care services, administration of child protection benefits and supplementary social assistance related to the needs of their residents, which include single payments and additional funding of the priority needs.

The most important means of financial non-contributory assistance are basic financial support to lower income household, child allowances and caretaker's allowances. The first two are means tested benefits, while the support for the third one is based on the beneficiary's health/invalidity status. The child allowance has two roles: to improve family income status and to incentivize an increase of birth rate. While coverage rates for beneficiaries differ, child allowances can account for up to 14 per cent of household incomes, while basic financial support to lower income households can be up to 1 per cent. The decentralized approach to the delivery of such services has helped to improve efficiency and active participation of beneficiaries, although challenges remain. Any further reform process will require the establishment of a relevant data base and the simplification of administrative processes (European Commission 2008).

Further, incentivizing part-time work and forms of work carried out outside the employer's premises has been prioritized in the NEP to allow individuals caring for dependents (both children and the elderly) to continue to work - although a persistent concern remains that the existing wage structure is not sufficient to allow part-time workers to earn a decent living. Since women in Serbia are generally better educated than men and work performance is not significantly related to hours worked in the office, these kinds of flexible contracts are designed to enhance women's participation in the labour market (Republic of Serbia 2011a). Further, the mandatory minimum length of paid maternity leave is 135 days, paid by the government (although paternity leave is not offered) (IFC/World Bank 2012). However, concerns persist that the existing wage structure in Serbia is not sufficient to allow part-time workers (here, mothers), to earn a decent living, and that there are not sufficient "top-ups" available from the state to make sharing childcare responsibilities with employment a feasible option. As a result, many women are stuck in low paid, part-time and often precarious jobs due to the SNEP's prioritization of flexible part-time work.

To combat this implicit discrimination against women, experts have advocated for Serbia to actively invest in child care centres (which is currently outside the scope of the NEP) and encourage men to take up parental leave, rather than providing more incentive for women to stay at home with young children. Currently, though, no such provision exists.⁴⁴

⁴² Determines operations in the domain of social care, including aims and principles, procedures for obtaining rights and using services, rights and obligations of users, operation of institutions of social care, supervision and inspection, position of social workers, and financing.

⁴³ Defines the rights in the area of social care of children, procedure for exercising rights, pre-school education, institutions for children, provision of resources, supervision over legality of work and professional work, children's week, and penalty provisions.

⁴⁴ Personal correspondence, Reiko Tsushima, ILO-Decent Work Technical Team for Central and Eastern Europe, Budapest.

Unpaid care work

Serbia undertook a time-use survey in 2010/2011 in order to obtain a detailed portrait of how individuals spend their time, illustrating which activities people are engaged in and for how long.⁴⁵ The survey results revealed that women spend more than twice as much time on housework than men, that women undertake fewer hours of paid work per day and that men have on average more free time than women. True to global patterns, the time use data show that women absorb much of the unpaid work that allows for successful production and reproduction within the home.

These patterns have interesting implications when combined with patterns of economic change. A number of measures have been undertaken by the Serbian government to mitigate the impact of the global financial and economic crisis. In order to satisfy the austerity measures established by the IMF and the World Bank, the Government has cut the public expenditure budget from 20.5 to 12.4 per cent of GDP by 2020, with the result of serious cuts in allocations to social services including to social security benefits, healthcare and education (Government of Serbia 2011a). The budget savings have led to the freezing of (and eventual decline in spending on) pensions, a review of subventions, the closure of a number of healthcare institutions and a reduction in the number of healthcare workers and teachers. This shifting of the burden of public services ultimately increases women's unpaid work within the family, because women are taking up the work previously provided by public institutions (Beneria 2009).

Social dialogue

SNEP states that partnership and social dialogue are key prerequisites for the successful designing and implementation of the employment policy and the attainment of the aims of the Employment Strategy. Communication and understanding among the various stakeholders in addressing decision-making hurdles is of the essence. The prioritization of social dialogue is stated clearly, as is institution building at every level.

However, the status and recognition of employers' and workers' organizations has been hindered by a volatile political and economic environment, affecting disadvantageously their roles in tripartite decision-making about the key measures of structural reforms. The Government has recently renewed its dialogue with the social partners through a reinforcement of the Social-Economic Council (SEC), establishing a social partner expert group that is to advise the Government on how to enhance Serbia's regional competitiveness from the point of view of employers and workers. Despite this recent refocus on revitalising the SEC, both the trade unions and the Serbian Employers' Association have underlined the need for direct support and capacity building of the SEC to enable the latter to play its role of an effective forum for tripartite deliberations on the country's most pressing challenges such as youth employment promotion, poverty alleviation and addressing the problem of undeclared work. Further, the social partners called for continued support on collective bargaining in Serbia, as it has been scarce in the recent years and the only one general collective agreement has been signed (ILO 2008c).

In its attempt to promote industrial peace and decrease the number of collective and individual labour disputes at the work place, the government established an Agency for the Peaceful Settlement of Labour Disputes in 2005. A team of conciliators and mediators was recruited in 2005 and started providing conciliation and mediation services to employers and workers and their organizations. However, they are working

⁴⁵ See Republic of Serbia 2011a.

without sufficient training in modern techniques and procedures of conciliation and mediation and need an upgrading of their skills in this field as well as on industrial relations in general.

SNEP formulation, implementation, monitoring and budgeting

Serbia's National Employment Strategy for the Period 2011-2020 is strongly influenced by support from international bodies, including the ILO, UN, IMF, World Bank, and EU, and also with consultation from a variety of actors at the national and regional level. The prioritization of social dialogue by the government is evident, although as can be seen from the previous section, the process could be improved. Limitations aside, the process of SNEP formulation, implementation and monitoring has been fairly gender responsive, with an overall goal to increase equality for all citizens.

The formulation of SNEP, led by the MoERD, aims to develop a post-crisis model that will allow Serbia to acquire the status of EU candidate country and member state, and gain access to financial instruments available under the European integration process. As such, preventing discrimination in employment, reducing unemployment, promoting social dialogue and increasing equality – through the clear establishment of monitoring indicators – will help to counteract unfavourable demographic trends and middling economic performance. To reach the forecasted economic goals, the Serbian government has laid out the 2012 National Employment Action Plan (NEAP) that breaks down its projected interventions, including an overview of planned projects to be implemented in 2012 and a log frame of priorities, measures and activities for the implementation of the NEAP. Combined with the sex-disaggregated data collection methods that were outlined previously, a strong monitoring and evaluation mechanism has been established. The MoERD, the NES, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Gender Equality Directorate, employers' and workers' organizations and the ILO all play an active role in implementing and monitoring the success of the interventions.

The budget for the planned interventions is also laid out in the NEAP log frame, with costs derived from the Budget of the Republic of Serbia (active employment programmes are currently funded from 0.1 per cent of the GDP, which will increase to 0.4 per cent of GDP by 2013, and 0.5 per cent of GDP by 2020), the ILO, project funding and from donors.

Finally, the SNEP is notable in offering a new way of allocating public funds and public spending: gender responsive budgeting (see Box 11, p. 42). The SNEP recognizes that funding has a different impact on women and men, therefore making it necessary to restructure the distribution of public expenditures so as to promote women's economic opportunities and their equal access to resources. Such a proactive measure reflects the government's social and economic priorities, and demonstrates a level of political will to address social exclusion and inequality between women and men.⁴⁶

Conclusions

The SNEP, in combination with the National Employment Action Plan, the National Sustainable Development Strategy, the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the National Strategy for Economic Development, the Strategy for Regional Development, and the ILO Decent Work Programme, have laid a strong basis for transformative and gender responsive employment, development and social policies. A coherent review of these policies, the

⁴⁶ See ILO 2006a

degree to which they are implemented, and the level to which norms become embedded in society will have to be undertaken in upcoming years. The strong dedication to continued gathering of sex-disaggregated data, gender responsive social policies, inclusive and equitable active employment policies, and a valuation of unpaid work must continue.

However, cuts in public expenditure, recognized as necessary for austerity measures set out by the IMF, the World Bank and the EU, must be approached with caution, or else the government risks hurting its most vulnerable groups who depend on social spending to make ends meet. Vulnerable work, unemployment, and underemployment must continue to be combated, informal employment curtailed, and the continued promotion of the Decent Work Agenda needs to be prioritized.

Overall, Serbia is a good example of a gender positive model in Europe given its strong gender disaggregated data collection strategies, gender responsive labour market policies, legislative commitment to non-discrimination, gender responsive social protection measures, and especially its commitment to social dialogue and gender inclusive policy making. While limitations certainly persist, there are a number of good lessons that can be learned from Serbia's transformation.

Box 14. African NEP trends

The remnants of structural adjustment, including devalued currency, over-liberalized business environments, cuts in social spending, poor respect for labour standards or flexible application of labour standards, under-liberalization of industries have continued to stunt levels of growth and entrench patterns of poverty and inequality. However, states are gradually finding solutions to the structural challenges through Decent Work strategies and Poverty Reduction Strategies (or National Development Plans) and a number of national-level policies. Regional integration (especially the Programme for the Promotion of Social Dialogue in Africa; Declaration of the African Summit; East African Common Market Protocol, to name but a few) have helped to fill gaps caused by lack of financial or human resources. Nevertheless, budgets of most of the African countries surveyed are still heavily dependent on donors.

Overall, consistently high fertility rates have meant that large numbers of young people are entering the workforce; this demographic factor adds a sense of urgency to the promotion of policies to encourage youth employment. Further, HIV/AIDS has often necessitated the economic participation of younger, orphaned workers who have no other means of survival after the death of their parent or primary care-giver. Further, the pandemic has led to the emergence of increasing numbers of older women acting as care-givers (Lund and Budlender 2009), either as professional home-based care givers or as members of a family. Policies have begun to reflect this trend by prioritizing young employment measures and active measures to combat AIDS in the workplace, although there does not appear to be any change in policies for elderly working populations.

Agriculture, despite being the primary means of income generation for the majority of surveyed countries, is being down-graded in relevance in this context. States are pushing to make agricultural work more productive, via larger-scale farms and for greater profit. While this may increase outputs and revenues, the risk to small-scale holders (especially women already making less than a living wage) is undeniable, but largely unaddressed in the surveyed countries (FAO 2011; Borras and Franco 2011; Borras et al. 2011). At the same time, occupational/sectoral segregation is still quite strongly experienced by women. Employment patterns show an over-abundance of women in “traditional” occupations such as labour intensive manufacturing (handicrafts), agriculture, own-account and contributing family workers. Interestingly, national-level household surveys that help to understand the gendered division of reproductive labour are becoming more widely used. This trend may help governments to put to good use the time-use and labour disaggregation analyses.

Immigration and emigration (including remittances) are contentious within states. On the one hand, governments are looking to limit the number of migrants entering the labour force in order to preserve jobs for their own nationals. On the other hand, states look for ways to make emigration easier for their own citizens in the hope of increasing revenues from remittances. Skilled foreign workers are always in demand, and policies look to facilitate their participation and knowledge transfer in the labour market, but at the same time not excluding their own citizens. While patterns of immigration, gendered or otherwise, are beyond the scope of this report, the issue nevertheless remains essential to understanding women’s labour market participation.

The Comoros

Since independence in 1975, the Comoros has been characterized by chronic political and institutional instability, leading, in part, to weak economic performance and volatility detrimental to growth and development. These crises contributed to the

country's international isolation, the migration of its young people and the reversion to the informal sector and subsistence activities. Political transformation after 2001, the end of the Anjouan separatist crisis in 2007 and a new constitution adopted by referendum in May 2009 have helped to put the Comoros on a path towards stability. But economic and social hurdles remain. The economy faced a sharp recession in 2001, with a weak recovery from 2002-2003, but the global jobs crisis hit the economy hard in 2007-2009. Growth rates dropped to less than 0.2 per cent and poverty rates spiked, compounding underlying problems of unemployment. Nevertheless, economic recovery has been strong from 2010-2012, especially in combination with political reconsolidation and the opening up of international markets.

Despite positive trends over the last few years, the Comoros remains one of the poorest countries in the world, suffering chronic and severe poverty, high rates of unemployment, high birth rates and as-of-yet fragile political institutions. Ultimately, the country still requires further reforms in economic, social and especially gender policies to make better use of national resources, particularly in terms of job creation.

ILO involvement and a Decent Work Agenda

The Comoros has been a member of the ILO since 1978, with increasing levels of cooperation during the last five years. ILO has provided technical assistance to the government in order to implement the recommendations of the Ouagadougou Summit on Employment and Poverty, helping to develop a policy framework and national employment plan that deals with social protection, as well as extensive work on child labour. A Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) 2010-2013 (Union of the Comoros 2010a) was adopted in September 2010, aimed at promoting employment through professional training and optimized business competitiveness; developing and implementing a social protection policy; and applying good governance through a structured social dialogue and reinforced compliance with international labour standards.

Due to financial constraints, the DWCP has stipulated that the ILO will initially provide the budget to monitor and evaluate the new programme, both at the mid-term and the end. The ILO will also be responsible for overseeing and supervising the DWCP, in collaboration with the Technical Working Group and the Ministry of Employment, as well as mobilizing resources from international donors. The DWCP will also synergize with technical cooperation projects already in place to ensure a better convergence of activities, greater impact and more sustainability of achievements (Union of the Comoros 2010a, pp. 13-14).

The DWCP has been designed to work in tandem with the national employment policy that is analysed below, as well as other international initiatives. Notably, gender has been identified as a cross-cutting issue that will be mainstreamed in all the priority areas of the DWCP and associated programmes.

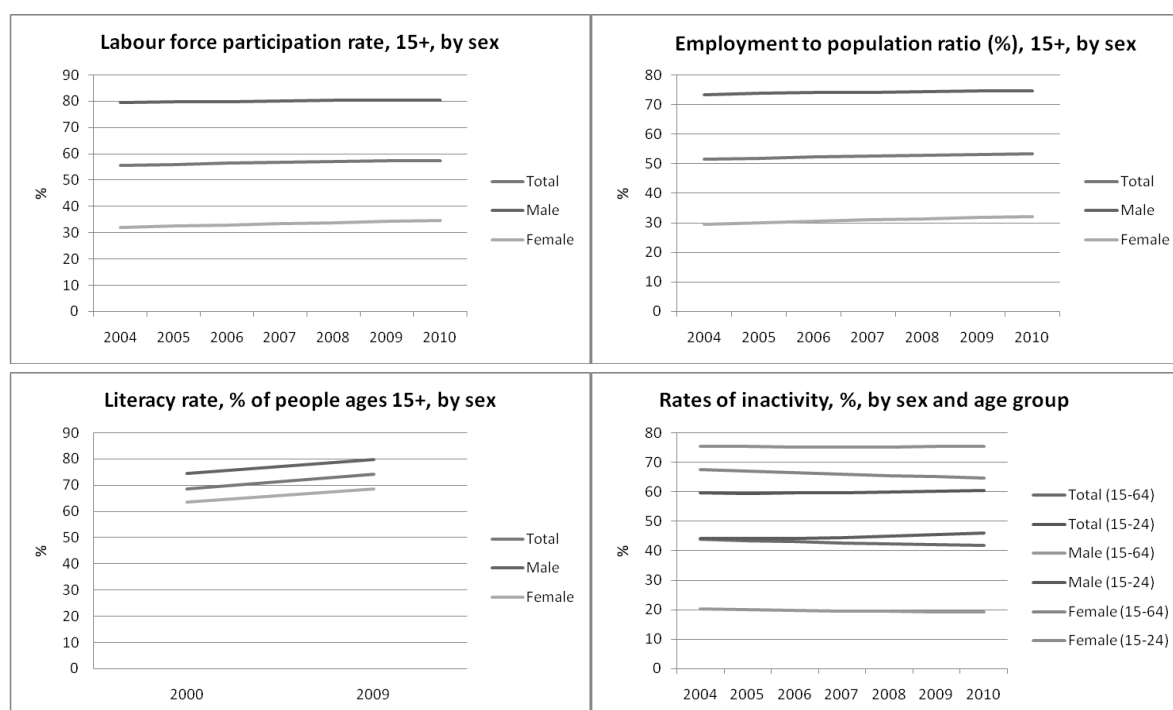
Socio-economic context

The Comoros is a low-income, low human development country of approximately 754,000 people, with more than 55 per cent of the population under the age of 20 (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 1). After decades of shaky performance, economic growth rates have improved in the last several years, reaching 2.6 per cent in 2012, driven primarily by agricultural exports and supported by remittances from emigrants. Estimates show that growth should continue into 2013, underpinned by the start of several major infrastructure projects in transport, tourism and energy (Union of the Comoros 2010a).

However, despite positive rates of economic growth, the government estimates that 37 per cent of households and 44.8 per cent of people live below the poverty line. As such, the government has laid out, with the assistance of the IMF, a Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (PRGS) for 2010-2014 (Union of the Comoros 2009a) with the aim of stabilizing the economy, strengthening tourism, agriculture and fishing, improving governance and social cohesion, improving human development outcomes, and promoting environmental stability and civilian security.

Unemployment remains a persistent problem, both in general and for specific groups. Government statistics show that the rate of unemployment for youth (15-24) is at least four times higher than that of adults aged 30-49, at 44.6 per cent (42.4 per cent male vs. 46.1 per cent female). At the national level, the unemployment rate for women (19.2 per cent) is twice as high as men (9.2 per cent) (Union of the Comoros 2007, pp. 14-15). Further, employment to population ratios are still low (53.4 per cent of the total population), although rates have increased slightly over the last five years for both women and men. However, men remain more than twice as likely to be employed as women (74.6 per cent male v. 32.2 per cent female), a trend which has remained essentially unchanged. Labour force participation rates for women are still quite low (34.7 per cent female vs. 80.4 per cent male), although there have been moderate increases over the last decade. Two thirds of working age females (15-64) are inactive, compared to one fifth of their male counterparts of the same age. Of young women (15-25), more than 75 per cent were inactive, compared to 45.9 per cent of young men (ILO KILMNet 2012). Female illiteracy remains a pressing concern, with 30.3 per cent unable to read or write, compared to 19.8 per cent of men (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2012) (see Figure 5). In general, it seems that age and gender are two of the strongest factors that negatively affect rates of unemployment and inactivity.

Figure 5. Comorian employment patterns



Source: ILO KILMNet 2012

Note: Data unavailable for rates of inactivity by sex and age group for the category 15+

The Comorian economy is based strongly on agriculture, livestock farming, fisheries and tourism, with a small sector in government services and a smaller percentage in construction, transport and manufacturing. The agricultural sector employs the largest number of women (66.9 per cent), with notably fewer women in civil service (30 per cent). There are more self-employed women (56.1 per cent) than men (47.5 per cent) and more women in the informal economy (54 per cent female vs. 46 per cent male) – a significant change over the last two decades. The informal sector has grown significantly in previous years, now accounting for an estimated 16.3 per cent of all employment (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 23).

Although birth rates have fallen over the last two decades, the population is still growing at a rate of more than 2 per cent per year, and more than half the population is under the age of 20 (Union of the Comoros 2009a, p. 2). As such, establishing and supporting policies to deal with the education and employment of a young and dynamic population has proven vital to the government and its partners in recent years.

National Employment Policy

The Comoros established the Cadre de Politique Nationale de l'Emploi Aux Comores (Union of the Comoros 2007, hereafter CNEP) in 2007, to help stabilize the economy and lay the groundwork for equitable growth. The CNEP has three primary aims:

1. Skills development and employability, by facilitating access of vulnerable groups to the labour market through technical and vocational training, integrating technical and vocational training into businesses, and improving the system of technical and vocational training;
2. The promotion of private enterprise productivity and efficiency, by supporting sectors that create jobs, enhancing the development of employment services, supporting entrepreneurship (especially of women and cooperatives), increasing financial flows to promote private initiatives, reworking policies towards the informal sector, and promoting effective public administration; and
3. The legal, social and institutional promotion of employment through improvements in mechanisms and institutions of the labour market, by fostering an environment conducive to investment and employment, strengthening labour legislation, and improving the governance of employment.

There is considerable overlap between the goals laid out in the CNEP and those of the Stratégie de Croissance et de Réduction de la Pauvreté 2010-2014 (Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy, hereafter PRGS; Union of the Comoros 2009a) and the Plan d'Action pour la Mise en Œuvre de la Stratégie de Croissance et de Réduction de la Pauvreté 2010-2014 (Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction; Union of the Comoros 2009b). The PRGS Action Plan lays out a comprehensive log frame of specific objectives, performance indicators, benchmarks and targets, data which will be used in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the NEP. This data comes primarily from annual reports from the Banque Centrale des Comores, the Department of Statistics and household surveys. The NEP itself lacks benchmarks or baseline data.

Based on the data from the PRGS Action Plan, a National Employment Action Plan (NEAP) has been proposed, which will span 15 years in three phases of 5 years each. The strategic goals sought by the NEP will contribute to subsequent priority areas in the

NEAP and allow the Government and its social partners to reduce poverty in the country by increasing opportunities for men's and women's access to decent employment and stable and sustainable incomes. However, qualitative and quantitative indicators have not yet been set, nor the NEAP put in place. There is some employment data, much of it sex-disaggregated, including employment by sector and sub-sector, salary gaps and unemployment, as well as social indicators such as education and incidence of poverty. However, there has been no comprehensive national-level data collection; instead, the Government is reliant on a melange of data collected over several years.

In drafting the CNEP, the government of Comoros and its Working Group⁴⁷ worked with the ILO and the UNDP to develop a document that reflected a multitude of priorities and that spoke to the themes of global partnership laid out in the Millennium Development Goals and the resolutions of the African Union's 2004 Employment and Poverty Summit. As of publication, the NEP was still subject to validation at the national level (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 6).

As well as working closely with the goals of the SGPR, the CNEP is also supplemented by the Plan Cadre des Nations Unies pour l'Aide au Développement 2008-2012 (United Nations Framework Plan for Development Assistance) put forth by the UNDAF. There has also been substantial technical and programmatic work on child labour undertaken in August 2009, and the formulation of a National Action plan that provides an appropriate response to the impacts of the crisis on vulnerable families and working children (part of a larger plan to combat child labour)⁴⁸.

Notably, the head of the *Ministre de l'Emploi, du Travail, de la Formation Professionnelle et de l'Entrepreneuriat Féminin* (Minister of Employment, Labour, Vocational Training and Women's Entrepreneurship), Ms Siti Kassim, has set a strong mandate for female entrepreneurship and advocated a strong gender dimension in the CNEP and other policy documents.

Demand-side considerations

Due to its geographic location, small population and limited natural resources, the Comoros is limited to a dualistic economy that rests primarily on agriculture (mainly subsistence and low productivity) and a relatively well-developed service sector (especially tourism). The striking deficit in commercial enterprises weakens national

⁴⁷ The Working Group (WG) was composed of: the Ministry in charge of Labour and Employment (lead actor), the Department of Employment, the Directorate General of Labour, the National Directorate of Technical Education and Vocational Training, the Department of Public Service, the Department of Commerce, the Planning Commission of the Isle of Ngazidja, the employment Agency of Ngazidja, the National Social Welfare Fund, the Pension Fund, of the University of Comoros, the Confederation of Workers of the Comoros, the Organization of Employers of the Comoros, the Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture and the Project of Educational Sector Support of the Comoros (Union of the Comoros 2010a, p. 6).

⁴⁸ The National Action Plan for the Fight against Child Labour was adopted in November 2010 by the Government of the Comoros. The employers' organizations drafted and adopted a Charter of Corporate Social Responsibility on child labour forbidding members to hire children below the minimum age to work. The National Steering Committee for the Fight against Child Labour was established by Ministerial Order No. 11-04/MITEF on 25 January 2011 and is operational. The establishment of these committees is the first step under their time bound programme. The revised Labour Code integrates provisions prohibiting the worst forms of child labour. The Five-Year Framework Plan, 2011-2015 and the 2012 annual programme of the Government integrate the issue of child labour and propose actions against child labour. The Decent Work Country Programme adopted in December 2010 by constituents includes a component on child labour. See "The Effective Abolition of Child Labour" (ILO 2010c, p. 3).

competitiveness and reduces the potential for diversification of the economy (Union of the Comoros 2009a). However, the Government is taking steps to facilitate a stable macro- and microeconomic climate that is conducive to economic growth and poverty reduction, as well as developing the tourism sector with a heavy reliance on foreign direct investment (FDI). Trade liberalization and improved financial intermediation to stimulate private sector development and support growth are helping to create a more dynamic environment that is conducive to investment. Further, specific interventions by the government to help the unemployed (especially women and vulnerable populations) to find work have been given precedence in the CNEP.

While there have been considerable efforts to make proactive changes to monetary, fiscal, investment and trade policies in both the NEP and the PRGS, very few, if any, of the projected changes will have specific gendered implications. The aim to practice budgetary discipline and fiscal restraint, reduce external debt, control inflation and mobilize more tax revenue will undoubtedly enhance sectoral growth and overall economic security. However, there have been no specific interventions that will benefit women's access to labour markets and employment.

Employment sectors and sub-sectors

One of the primary aims of the CNEP is to promote industries and sectors that promote jobs and boost economic activity – which, in the case of Comoros, means sizable investment in agriculture, stockbreeding, fisheries, handicrafts, construction and infrastructure, and especially tourism. Two areas in which a sizable proportion of women are employed – agriculture and tourism – have been targeted, owing to their importance in GDP and their preponderant role in the economy as a key source of wealth, revenue and job creation (Union of the Comoros 2009a, p. 119). The agricultural sector, for example, contributes to 98 per cent of revenues from exports and accounts for some 57.4 per cent of jobs nationwide – and nearly 67 per cent of women's jobs country-wide, compared to 51 per cent of men. And, while women make up only 18 per cent of workers in the so-called “modern sector”, which includes tourism, services and public administration, the sector nevertheless accounts for more than a quarter of national employment (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 18) and a proportionally large number of jobs for women. Investments in these sectors hold the potential to open more opportunities for women's employment.

The Comoros is also actively seeking to develop its substantial tourism potential by attracting FDI, increasing from an average of 0.4 per cent of GDP per annum for the period 2000-2007, to approximately 2 per cent of GDP in the medium term (Union of the Comoros 2009a, p. 117). Expansion of the tourism sector can be expected to provide substantial impetus for growth, and most likely will create more jobs for women and men alike. However, it must be noted that in its mission to attract FDI, the government has not made overt efforts to set labour standards or wages, nor to understand the gender patterns of labour that such investment may create, leading to questions of the quality of work that stands to be created.

The business sector remains weak, accounting for only 7 per cent of employment nationwide. The proportion of women employed in the business sector remains relatively low (18 per cent), with most represented in private social services. Industry and manufacturing accounts for only 4 per cent of employment; however there is no data available on the proportion of women in the sector (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 10). There has been limited effort by the Government to change these trends, given the fact that the sectors do not create many jobs. The number of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) is also very limited due to the weakness of the manufacturing sector and a lack

of industry transformation, although small-scale tourism businesses have been given some consideration.

Employment targets

Despite extensive sex-disaggregated data presented in the CNEP that gives context to the employment situation in Comoros, there have been no employment targets set for women, nor for any other specific group. The country does not yet have a labour market information system, and there is no formal public or private organization to collect data on labour market trends. The little data that exist come from different surveys undertaken sporadically: the Enquête Budget Consommation (Consumption Budget Survey) in 1995; the Recensements Généraux sur la Population et l'Habitat (General Census of Population and Housing) in 1980, 1991 and 2003; Enquête à Indicateurs Multiples (Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey) in 2000, a 2003 survey of business, and a household survey in 2004 (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 27). All surveys have had methodology concerns regarding breadth and depth, and no data have been systematically collected in nearly a decade.

Supply-side considerations

Chronic conflict, instability and poverty have led to poor quality and gaps in the education and training systems in the Comoros. Low levels of education (only 74.8 per cent of students complete primary school [World Bank DataBank 2012]) and a general lack of skills have limited workers' opportunities in the labour market, especially for women and young people. Interventions to provide for skills development, technical and vocational training and reforms in employment services have been prioritized to counteract gaps in workers' employability.

Education and skills development

Analysis of school system throughout the Comoros shows that the net school enrolment rate is low on all islands, and particularly in rural areas, and that overall fewer girls are enrolled in school than boys. The completion rate of primary school for boys is 20 percentage points higher than for girls (65.5 per cent female vs. 83.1 per cent male) (ibid.). It has been argued that the family context has an adverse influence on girls' education: high incidence of traditional structures, low levels of the mother's education, intensive use of child labour and male-bias when children are selected to be educated (European Commission 2002). Fewer girls than boys are literate, and overall youth illiteracy remains at nearly 15 per cent (ILO KILMNet 2012). Interestingly, however, the gap between girls and boys narrows at the secondary school and higher education level, unlike in technical and vocational education where girl enrolment remains very low (AFDB 2009, p. 6).⁴⁹

While there have been no specific programmes mentioned in the NEP to improve the education system in general, the government has prioritized vocational training to supplement the skills that students are not receiving in primary school. Specific skills

⁴⁹ Concerned by the persistent disparity between boys and girls in education, the Government of the Comoros adopted a national plan of action for 2005–2007 to promote education for girls, with a view to reaching a net enrolment rate of 83.7 per cent for girls and boys alike. The Comorian Movement for Girls' Education, created at the time the plan was launched, pursued this initiative. At that time, the movement successfully sought formal abolition of school fees by the President and the regional island presidents, particularly for girls, so paving the way to free education, one of the MDGs (UN CEDAW 2011, p. 17).

development, upgrading and re-skilling, especially for women, has been given priority. The CNEP prioritizes creating greater synergies between systems of learning and labour market skills to promote better employability, especially in poor and rural milieus.

Technical and vocational training

The Government has established that technical and vocational training are major tools to support human capital development in order to reduce poverty and unemployment. It is estimated that more than 5,000 young people each year drop out of school before completing their primary education, arriving in the labour market with the most basic of skills (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 24). Therefore technical education is being promoted as an extension of basic education so that children learn practical skills from a young age. Vocational and technical education has been introduced in lower secondary school, including the development of a voluntary occupational training programme for young drop-outs, and those who never attended school to integrate them more successfully into the country's socio-professional fabric (Union of the Comoros 2009a, p. 146). The CNEP explores the option of creating specialized institutions (in tourism, hospitality, etc.) and craft societies that would meet current demand and allow for skills development at all age levels.

The CNEP also advocates a collaborative management system, in agreement between vocational teaching institutions and businesses, which will help integrate business skills into the design of curricula for technical and vocational education to make the system more practical for students and companies alike. This system would also allow for apprenticeship placements for students, as well as greater flexibility for businesses who can hire young people who have been specifically trained for positions (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 32).

Overall, the Government is striving to develop a national strategy for vocational and technical training that will better define the purpose and status of such training, including regulations on the type, quality and methods of trainings, processes of certification and evaluation, and a methodology for dialogue and partnership among vocational training institutes, the Government and businesses. Interestingly, the CNEP also proposes implementing a national programme that would identify strong candidates to "train trainers" in different disciplines in order to improve pedagogical skills and to exchange knowledge (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 24).

Notably, the CNEP prioritizes facilitating the access of vulnerable groups (including women) to the labour market through proactive technical and vocational trainings designed for their needs. Creating a dynamic environment conducive to learning and strengthening the organizational capacity of women, as well as programmes to promote functional literacy in rural areas and for informal workers has also been given precedence (Union of the Comoros 2007, pp. 31-32). However, the extent to which this objective has been codified in practice remains to be seen. Women and girls have historically been far less likely to undertake vocational training, due partly to subject matter and partly to other "gendered" constraints such as domestic responsibilities or the perceived "masculine" nature of certain types of work (AFDB 2009). The NEP does little to combat this trend. Even within the objective of the Action Plan for Implementation of the 2010-2014 Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy - to develop education, technical instruction and occupational training to reflect the requirements of the job market - data is not sex-disaggregated, nor is low female participation taken into account.

Discrimination in recruitment, hiring and treatment

The Comoros joined the ILO in 1978, ratifying Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951(No. 100) in the same year, Discrimination [Employment and Occupation] Convention, 1958 (No. 111) in 2004 and CEDAW in 1994. There is a Politique Nationale de l'Équité et de l'Égalité de Genre (National Policy on Gender Equality and Equity, PNEEG) in place since 2009, and the Labour Code provides for equality under the law.⁵⁰ However, the PNEEG has no enforcement mechanism and is not harmonized within the national legislation (UN CEDAW 2012).⁵¹

Moreover, the extent to which non-discrimination has been embedded in society is still weak, with persistent reports of sizable wage gaps in the public, private and informal sectors, discrimination in recruitment and hiring, and strong occupational segregation by sex. While the CNEP utilizes statistics on gender-based discrimination – for example, the annual earnings of women are, on average, 64 per cent of their male counterparts; 56 per cent of all women make less than minimum wage, vs. only 32 per cent for men; and women earn 91 per cent of their male counterparts in the informal economy (Union of the Comoros 2007) – there is no discussion of policies to combat these trends. There is no information available on women's equal access to resources and employment through the IFC/World Bank's Women, Business and the Law Database.⁵² There is no institutional mechanism to ensure women's participation in the design, implementation, monitoring or assessment of social and economic policies, or the making of budget allocations, at either the national or the decentralized level. Women participate far less than men in political activities, and are very much in the minority in positions of responsibility and decision-making (UN CEDAW 2011, p. 6).

Notably, however, there have been a number of moves to provide for more equal treatment. There is discussion within the CNEP of commissioning a study to determine the feasibility of equalizing minimum wages with the cost of living. Such a measure would provide a starting point for the equalization of men's and women's wages, if not a full solution. There has also been hope that the Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (PRGS), which incorporates a gender perspective, will help to influence future policies. It has been noted that at the community level, there has been progress towards greater visibility for women in the management of community life. Women are becoming increasingly involved in implementing community and local development projects, a trend often supported and encouraged by development partners, including the United Nations (UN CEDAW 2011, pp. 6-7).

⁵⁰ Concerning the right to equal pay, article 97 of the Labour Code provides that: "where working conditions, professional qualifications and productivity are equivalent, pay should be equal for all workers, regardless of their origin, sex, age or status". That law does not discriminate with regard to salary. Men and women receive equal pay for equal skills. This provision was reaffirmed in the collective agreements provided for in articles 71 et seq. of the Labour Code, which require inclusion of the principle of "equal pay for equal work", respected and protected by the State, women and young persons (UN CEDAW 2011, p. 22).

⁵¹ The Committee notes that the Constitution of the State party incorporates in its preamble the prohibition of discrimination. However, it is concerned that the legislation of the State party does not prohibit discrimination in accordance with article 1 of the Convention and that there is no Law on gender equality. It is further concerned at the persistence of discriminatory provisions in the legislation, in particular the Family Code, which impede women's achievement of formal and substantive equality with men (UN CEDAW 2011).

⁵² The Women, Business and the Law Database highlights differentiations on the basis of gender in 142 economies around the world, covering six areas: accessing institutions, using property, getting a job, providing incentives to work, building credit and going to court. Data has not been collected for the Comoros.

Labour market policies

The labour market policies of Comoros focus primarily on skills building, employment promotion measures and public works development, with less emphasis on passive measures such as cash transfers. The employment services sector is still nascent, though growing rapidly.

Active labour market policies

The government has focused most of its efforts on the promotion of active labour market policies, including a strong vocational and technical education programme, training programmes for rural and informal workers, public works programmes, special youth employment measures, and employment information services to orient job seekers. One of the primary aims of the CNEP is to promote mechanisms and frameworks for the creation and development of enterprises, including structures to support the development of businesses, facilitating investments, and assisting with projects (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 36).

As previously discussed, the CNEP strives to refocus the development of key productive sectors (agriculture, livestock, fishing, building and infrastructure and tourism) by orienting the working population through skills enhancement and training. Vocational and technical education and training, especially for young and vulnerable groups, has been prescribed to help match labour supplies to labour demands. The modernization of the agricultural sector, for example, will require the creation of small enterprises processing agricultural products based on labour-intensive methods, as well as the rehabilitation of rural and urban infrastructures. Integrating employment into the eligibility criteria for public investment programmes has been identified as a key prerequisite to grow the rural economy, and as such the government has aimed to provide training and education to facilitate the first goal, and has invested in infrastructure programmes to accomplish the second.

The CNEP focuses strongly on promoting an approach of Haute Intensité de Main d'œuvre (high intensity manual labour, or HIMO), high labour-absorbing public works investment that will help to modernize transportation, agriculture and housing in rural areas. This method, which has also been adopted in Madagascar, Djibouti, Mauritius and Seychelles, targets women - especially single mothers - during recruitment so that women make up a sizable proportion of participants. A joint project with the ILO, UNDP, UNIDO and FAO on supporting sustainable peace by promoting youth and women's employment in the Comoros (APROJEC) has prioritized the inclusion of unemployed women in its HIMO projects, tracking the number of jobs reserved for women throughout the project cycle (Union of the Comoros 2010b, p. 14). A similar programme prioritizing the HIMO technique in Madagascar that was evaluated by the World Bank showed 50 – 90 per cent female participation in projects sponsored by the World Bank's Fonds d'Investissement pour le Développement (Investment Fund for Development), and 30 per cent average participation in similar ILO/NORAD projects⁵³ (World Bank 2008a).

Self-employment and entrepreneurship have also been promoted as ways to reenergize the economy and help the employed to find work, especially among young people. The CNEP will has prioritized promoting mechanisms to create, support and coach businesses, including providing guidance for projects, establishing a system of

⁵³ The ILO project, undertaken with financing from the Kingdom of Norway, was a technical cooperation project, begun in 2009, to help with the construction of primary schools. See <http://www.ilo.org/public/french/region/afpro/antananarivo/activities/cooperation.htm>

entrepreneurial sponsorship to link existing companies with new enterprises, facilitating access to credit, and providing financial services. The Government has also established specific goals to encourage female entrepreneurship and cooperatives, including facilitating access to credit for women to help develop micro and small businesses, promoting technical and professional training for (particularly young) women, and developing cooperative networks to benefit from structured markets, support services, mentoring and funding. It has been noted that in the private sector, there is an emerging class of women entrepreneurs who are very active in the import trade with countries in the region, although no statistical data is available at present (UN CEDAW 2011, p. 6). Tools to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship are also to be expanded to young people striving to start their own businesses (Union of the Comoros 2007, pp. 31-32, 37).

Nearly all the active labour market policies thus mentioned have been designed to target youth populations, especially collaborative programmes with international partners such as APROJEC and the proposed labour market information system (which will play a dual role of helping strengthening public, private and collaborative employment services as well as harmonizing labour supply and demand). Cooperation and partnership among state services, workers' and employers' organizations, chambers of commerce, enterprises and training institutes also will help to promote social dialogue and increase the efficiency of proposed interventions. The Government has also incentivized hiring young people, offering subsidies to businesses that provide training to young employees (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 33) – although there is no gendered component to this initiative.

Passive labour policies

There have been no specific interventions to provide for passive labour market policies such as unemployment cash benefits. This is of concern given the number of unemployed persons (both men and women) in the Comoros, especially since no data has been collected on long-term unemployment levels. There is no mention of a cash transfer programme in either the CNEP or associated development documents.

Employment services

The NEP's strategic objective of supporting young people in their integration into the labour market utilizes a strong system of public, private and collaborative employment services. The NEP prioritizes the establishment of a coordinated and sustainable institution to provide information and advice on access to employment, technical and professional training, and professional partnerships between employers and training institutes. This mechanism, to be developed in partnership with state services, chambers of commerce, employers' and workers' organizations and training institutions, aims to harmonize labour supply and demand by providing advice and guidance to job seekers.

Since the 1990s, the Comoros has experienced a proliferation of business organizations which cover a large part of industries and occupations. Some, including the Comorian Craft Association (SARUMAYA), the Association of Comorian Women in Business (VOUNA DJEMA), and the Union for the Promotion of Comorian Enterprises (UPEC) have a large number of women represented within their numbers, and these organizations often serve a similar purpose to national-level employment services (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 28). Alerting members of professional opportunities, opening networks of professional contacts and linking workers to information on technical and professional training, as well as tripartite negotiations, make these business associations a crucial component of the labour market landscape.

Access to resources, SMEs and business development services (BDS)

Discrimination on the grounds of sex in the allocation of resources is illegal under Comorian law, and the CNEP and PRGS both actively seek to enhance women's access to resources and services through proactive measures.

Access to productive resources

Interestingly, land inheritance customs in the Comoros are matrilineal and favourable to girls, who have the right to inherit family property and assets. However, the absence of a land registry and inadequate land registration, as well as the matrilineal system which prevents division of the land holding, women, even traditional landowners, are prevented from using it to secure bank loans (UN CEDAW 2011, p. 28). This custom contributes to the predominance of women in subsistence farming and market gardening. Control over and access to resources, aside from credit, was not discussed in the CNEP.

Credit and microfinance

Though not stipulated in the CNEP, under law, access to credit is not subject to discrimination based on either social or regional origin or sex. However, women entrepreneurs have very limited access to traditional bank credit because they do not meet the loan conditions. In order to overcome this problem, microfinance institutions have developed financial products specifically for women and grant credit on more flexible terms, making for a female clientele of over 50 per cent (UN CEDAW 2011, p. 29). Thus, microfinance institutions in Comoros are among the specific supporters of gender equality (see Box 8, p. 28). However, although rural credit unions have expanded, the rate of penetration remains low – only 0.5 per cent – and women remain at a relative disadvantage to men. Less than 17 per cent of loan recipients are women because they have difficulty finding the required financial guarantee (UN CEDAW 2011, p. 31).

The government has also instituted specific savings measures for the rural population, thereby helping to establish decentralized financial institutions. In order to encourage savings and small-scale lending to the rural population, a number of projects have been set up to help finance activities in rural areas. This policy has yielded satisfactory results; it has given a considerable number of women, mainly from rural areas, access to credit.

While women and men alike have access to credit, the government has undertaken a specific programme to facilitate women, especially young entrepreneurs. The Government/UNDP project to give vulnerable groups access to credit and enable them to establish microenterprises, known as Appui à la création et au développement des micro et petites entreprises (AMIE) (Support for the creation and development of micro and small-scale enterprises), has a small loans programme for women. More significantly, in the context of poverty reduction, AMIE cooperates with women's associations, to which it provides credits ranging from 250,000 to 1 million Comorian francs (CF). The system of loans and support for the creation of microenterprises has been taken over by the Fonds d'Appui au Développement Communautaire (FADC) (Community Development Support Fund) through income generating activities, MECK agencies and other microfinance institutions and initiatives. These initiatives have helped improve the landscape of small-scale businesses in the Comoros.

In addition, there has been evidence in rural areas of a strong tontine system established by women to provide mutual support with income generating activities.⁵⁴

SMEs

Women's entrepreneurship is still at the organizational stage, but women often encounter problems accessing to credit and markets, as well as challenges associated with women entrepreneurs' poor management skills (often due to lack of business skills training). The number of SMEs is very limited due to the weakness of the manufacturing sector and a lack of industry transformation, problems that are compounded by associated gender constraints. Nevertheless, the Government established in 2007 the Office of Female Entrepreneurship in the Ministry of the Economy and Budget. Despite limited resources, this Office managed to compile a list of women entrepreneurs and associations of women entrepreneurs in the Comoros, carry out awareness-raising activities to inculcate the entrepreneurial and networking spirit in women, network and facilitate their contacts with microfinance institutions (UN CEDAW 2011, p. 8). With the support of organizations like AMIE, and with the assistance of loans from credit associations such as Mutuelles d'Epargne et Crédit ya Komor (Comoros Mutual Savings and Credit, MECK), Comorian microenterprises have flourished in recent years, especially in private sector importing.

The government has also established specific goals to encourage women to develop micro and small businesses, promoting technical and professional training for (particularly young) women, and developing cooperative networks to benefit from structured markets, support services, mentoring and funding (Union of the Comoros 2007, pp. 36-37).

Social protection

Even though the Labour Code guarantees the right to social security, retirement and paid leave, government-funded social protection programmes are limited due to major budgetary constraints. While there are state subsidies for a range of consumer staples, including rice and oil, other kinds of safety nets are still limited. The current collective provident schemes, which enable the most vulnerable individuals or households to cope with social risks, however, remain rudimentary. A report by the ILO⁵⁵ indicates that in 2003 there were less than 5,000 beneficiaries, representing less than 1 per cent of the country's total population. The scope of social security is limited, systems providing health insurance and indemnification in case of illness are underdeveloped, and persistent organizational problems make the provision of services arduous (African Economic Outlook 2012). Despite challenges, there are plans to establish a cooperative health insurance scheme to improve public access to higher quality health services, especially for mothers and children. (UN CEDAW 2011, p. 26).

The pension scheme in the Comoros is equally fragmented: the nascent Caisse de Retraite des Comores (Pension Fund of the Comoros, CRC) is available only to public employees, though there is no data on how widely pensions are collected. Recent reforms, however, have aimed to expand coverage to workers in the private sphere, as well as broader-based voluntary membership (Union of the Comoros 2010a, p. 3). Nevertheless, a sizable gap in social protection coverage persists, especially in informal economy and particularly among women.

⁵⁴ See Balkenhol and Gueye 1992 for a comprehensive analysis of the tontine system.

⁵⁵ Audibert J.: Note au Gouvernement sur la situation de la protection sociale (Memorandum to the Government on the status of the Social Security System), ILO 2001.

There has also been some support from the World Bank's Fonds d'Appui au Développement Communautaire (Support Fund for Community Development, FADC) through cash-for-work scheme and small infrastructure rehabilitation following devastating floods in early 2012 (Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery 2012). However, these are short term initiatives that do not speak to the more systematic problem of lacklustre social protection provision.

The government has prioritized reforming its social protection policy, both through the CNEP and the PRGS, in order to improve services for employees in both the private and public sector, and to expand the system to self-employed and informal workers. The Government also aims to strengthen preventative measures against AIDS in the workplace (a pandemic that affects large numbers of women), as well as establishing a legal framework for the fight against child labour (see Footnote 47, p. 69). The Conseil Supérieur du Travail et de l'Emploi (Supreme Council of Labour and Employment, CSTE) was established in July 2011 and seen as a way to coordinate different solutions for issues related to work and employment.

The Comorian Labour Code provides for paid maternity without loss of formal employment, as well as making dismissal due to pregnancy illegal. Women may also suspend a work contract for up to 14 weeks due to pregnancy and still be paid by her employer. However, the Comoros has no specific social services to enable parents to combine family responsibilities with work responsibilities (UN CEDAW 2011, p. 23). The NEP makes no mention of maternity protections, availability of care services, or the promotion of flexible working hours for women or men.

Social dialogue

Since the 1990s, Comoros has experienced a strong growth in professional organizations which now cover a large part of the existing sectors and occupations. Many organizations have emerged in the sectors of agriculture, fisheries, trades and crafts, including l'Union des Chambres de Commerce, d'Industrie et d'Agriculture (Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture), which supports private sector development, especially larger exporters and importers. Currently, there are 13 unions grouped in the Confédération des Travailleurs des Comores (Confederation of Workers of the Comoros), which represent public sector employees and the self-employed, as well as the Organisation Patronale des Comores (Organization of Comorian Employers).

A number of civil society and workers' organizations, operating at the community or national level, promote gender equality, and particularly women's rights,⁵⁶ as well as providing support for women's economic and political empowerment. As previously discussed, AMIE provides loans for women, as well as professional training and support that link individual women to community networks and job opportunities. However, at the national level, women's participation in civic and political life remains minimal, with an enormous gap between women and men. There is no data on the number of women active in workers' or employers' organizations, nor their role in collective bargaining, but given patterns of political representation (in the legislative elections held in December

⁵⁶ The main ones include : Le Réseau National des Femmes et Développement (National network for women and development) ; The Forum for African Women Educationalists, Comoros section – (FAWECOM); Le Réseau National des Avocats du Genre (National network of gender advocates); L'Appui à la Micro-Entreprise (Support for microenterprise) ; L'Association Comorienne pour le Bien-Être de la Famille (Comorian family welfare association) ; La Fondation Comorienne des Droits de l'Homme (Comorian Human Rights Foundation)

2009, only 3 per cent of those elected to parliament were female [UN CEDAW 2011, p. 16]), it is doubtful that women have a strong voice in tripartite discussions.

Overall, social dialogue is poorly developed in Comoros, despite the existence of the Conseil Supérieur du Travail et de l'Emploi (Supreme Council of Labour and Employment) at the Union level and tripartite councils of the islands. Structural challenges and lack of budget for the tripartite bodies make them ineffective, and meetings are often irregular. Consequently, the CNEP has striven to improve the governance of employment through more coordinated efforts to make employment a cross-cutting issue. Making the Council operational and promoting social dialogue at the national level through the collective bargaining and tripartite discussions are steps to improve the legal, social, cultural and institutional atmosphere social dialogue.

CNEP formulation, implementation, monitoring and budgeting

The Comorian National Employment Strategy was constructed with the assistance of a national-level Working Group made up of representatives from the government, employer's and workers' organizations, chambers of commerce, sectoral ministries, the pension and social welfare funds and the University of Comoros, as well as ILO assistance and guidance from other UN agencies. As previously discussed, the CNEP was designed to work in tandem with the PRGS and its associated Action Plan, as well as the UN Development Assistance Framework. The CNEP proposes an Employment Action Plan (NEAP) to monitor and evaluate the goals of the CNEP over time, and to allow the aims to be made operational. Responsibility for the NEAP will be inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral, involving the Government, its social partners, civil society and international support (Union of the Comoros 2007, p. 43). The CNEP also calls for the creation of a Commission Nationale de l'Emploi (National Employment Commission) to harmonize the guidance, coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the CNEP.

Perhaps most creatively, the CNEP lays out a strategy to mobilize domestic resources to fund the proposed programmes and projects through a combination of tax on tobacco and alcohol and fines for narcotics possession (which will fund the Fund for the Promotion of Youth), an apprenticeship tax that affects all companies and institutions, an income tax on workers, and taxes on public and private markets (Union of the Comoros 2010a, p. 44). The government relies only secondarily on donor partners (notably France and the UN) who will benefit from improvements in the Comorian economy. However, there is no breakdown of costs associated with the proposed interventions, nor a timeframe in which said interventions will be undertaken.

Conclusions

The Comoros is an interesting example of a resource poor, geographically disadvantaged, low-population country that has made excellent progress despite a daunting set of challenges. The improvements achieved in terms of social and economic indicators in the past years have been notable, and with the establishment of a comprehensive NEP, PRGS and Framework for Development, improvements are slated to continue.

The lack of infrastructure, data and entrenched cultural discriminations remain as primary impediments to the realization of the gender responsive economic and social aims of the CNEP; however, given the apparent desire by the government, its social partners and the population, there is much potential for future gender inclusive growth.

Good practices around women's access to credit, support to women entrepreneurs and small business owners, the development of marketable skills, gender responsive safety nets, and a growing integration of Decent Work Indicators, strengthened by the country's first female minister of employment, labour vocational training and women's entrepreneurship, bode well for the future of gender in Comorian employment policies.

Box 15. Asian NEP trends

A slowing rate of population growth has precipitated the need for measures to encourage childbirth, and as a result, care facilities and government-funded subsidies for child care have been made available more widely. However, the lingering question of how to care for a rapidly aging population remains broadly unaddressed (Cruz 2012; Peng 2009). Because of questions regarding the provision of care, as well as a regional move to entrench labour standards including maternity protections, flex-time measures (both for men and women) seems to be more widely accepted as an alternative, perhaps because of the historical precedent of exceedingly long working hours. This is a trend shown in Europe as well.

Overall, states play a far larger role in providing for promoting employment, benefits and policy formation than in other regions. Often, this means that the NEP and other associated documents are more comprehensive and cover a wider range of concerns (from maternity protection coverage to specific measures to ensure that at least one family member in an urban family is employed). However, this strong state role sometimes can be detrimental to the relationship between workers, employers and the state. Collective bargaining, especially in China and Nepal, has sometimes been strained (Lee 2009, Kyloh 2008).

Republic of Korea

After emerging from the ruins of the Korean War, the Republic of Korea (hereafter Korea) has made remarkable economic progress in a short period of time. Transformative labour policies have contributed to economic development by supplying the necessary workforce during the period of rapid industrialization, while at the same time expanding workers' labour rights and a strong state-funded social safety net. Currently, the Government's employment and labour policy aims to promote decent work by ensuring that working conditions are up to standards, while at the same time generating more and better jobs through cooperative labour-management relations.

However, the Korean labour market has undergone significant changes in recent years, including jobless growth, a rapidly aging population and the after-effects of economic crises. Facilitating competitiveness, productivity and job creation, expanding and strengthening social protections and coping with labour migration have all become key in Korea's progressing and evolving labour and employment policy. Challenges remain, however, especially in terms of engendering sustainable, gender responsive changes in practice as well as in policy.

ILO involvement and a Decent Work Agenda

Korea joined the International Labour Organization in 1991, becoming an active member country and an innovating partner. Since 1996, the country has been represented in the Governing Body as both a Titular and Deputy Member. The government is a generous contributor to the ILO's technical cooperation work at both headquarters and within the Asia-Pacific region.

In 2003, the Ministry of Employment and Labour signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the ILO to formalize their partnership for development. A year later, the Government of Korea provided funding to institutionalize the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme, which provides technical assistance to realize the objectives set out in the Asian Decent Work Decade that were introduced during the 14th ILO Asian Regional Meeting in the Republic of Korea in 2006. The partnership's approaches and plan of work were reaffirmed in December 2011 at the ILO's 15th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting in Kyoto, Japan. The meeting recognized the importance of the

ILO/Korea Partnership Programme in supporting the objectives of the Asian Decent Work Decade (2006-2015) (ILO Asia and Pacific 2012).

In June 2012, the ILO and the government signed an agreement as part of the “Korea/ILO Partnership Programme Towards the Realization of the Asian Decent Work Decade” that would provide USD 1.14 million, as well as technical expertise, to support the development of decent work in more than 15 Asian countries, focusing on competitiveness, productivity and jobs, labour market governance and social protection, labour migration and research on decent work and occupational safety and health (ILO Press Office 2012).

Socio-economic context

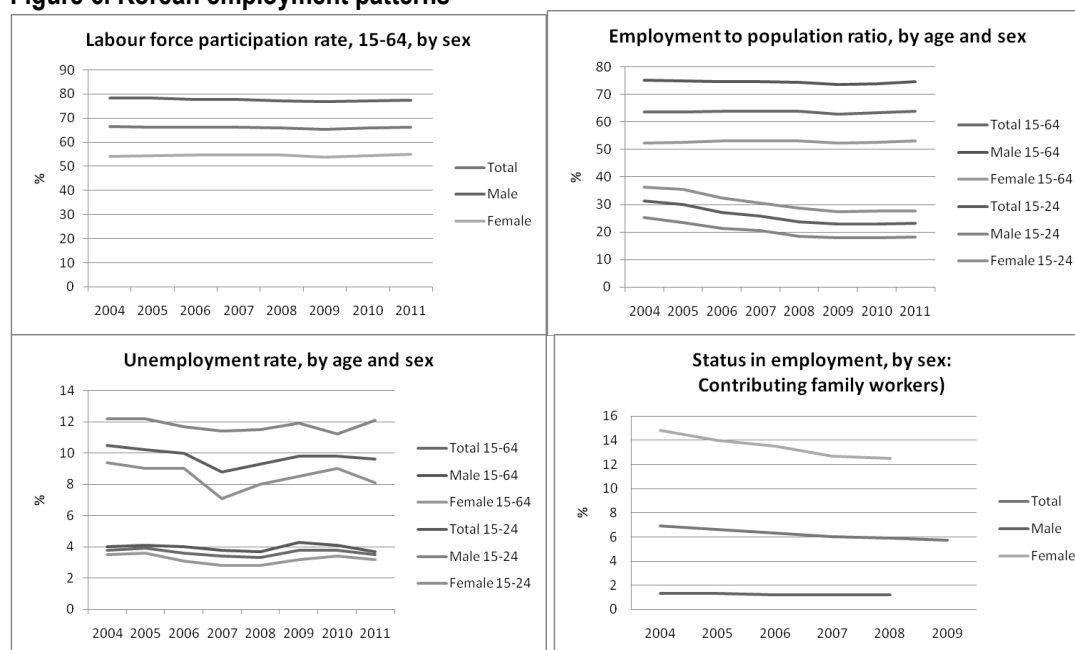
Korea is the highest income, most developed country of those surveyed in this study: being an OECD member state, Korea is a high income and high human development state. Following the financial crisis of late 1997, the Government undertook significant reforms in the labour system to expand workers’ rights and improve workers’ quality of life. Since 2004, the Government has aimed to create jobs, advance labour relations, alleviate labour market polarization, advance public employment services, and build labour-management partnerships.

Despite strong rates of growth, Korea experienced several years of “jobless growth”, losing some 300,000 jobs despite an economic growth rate of 3.1 per cent in 2003 alone. In response, the government prompted tripartite parties to sign the Social Pact for Job Creation, with the target of creating 2 million jobs by 2008. This Pact striven to address key societal issues, with a prioritization of generating social service jobs, addressing youth unemployment and providing jobs and vocational training for vulnerable groups (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 29).

The labour force participation rate in Korea in 2011 was 66.2 per cent (77.4 per cent male vs. 54.9 female), a rate that has remained largely unchanged for nearly 20 years. The unemployment rate is also quite low at 3.5 per cent (3.7 per cent for men vs. 3.2 for women); youth unemployment (ages 15-24) is higher, at 9.6 per cent (12.1 per cent male vs. 8.1 per cent female). Compared to the OECD average of women’s labour force participation rate and unemployment (61.8 per cent and 8.1 per cent, respectively), it is evident that fewer women are active in the labour market, but also fewer women report themselves as being unemployed. Female youth unemployment rates are also much lower in Korea, 8.1 per cent, than the OECD average of 15.7 per cent, and these rates have been decreasing. (OECD StatsExtracts 2012). Interestingly, the employment to population ratio for all youth has been decreasing steadily over the last decade, revealing, in part the extent to which youth are choosing to continue education rather than work.

Another feature of the Korean labour market is the high levels of education achieved by men and women alike. Approximately 98 per cent of students finish secondary school; Korea has the highest proportion of 25-34 year olds who have attained at least an upper secondary education among all other OECD countries. In addition, 65 per cent of 25-34 year olds have completed tertiary education – again, the highest proportion among OECD countries. However, fewer women than men have a tertiary education, although this trend is set to change in the next few years. Tellingly, though, Korean women with tertiary education have some of the lowest employment rates among OECD countries – 60 per cent – and the gap in the rate of employment between tertiary-educated Korean men and women is the widest among OECD countries (29 percentage points in favour of men). Seemingly, there is a sizable mismatch between labour demand

Figure 6. Korean employment patterns



Source: OECD StatsExtracts 2012; ILO KILMNet 2012

and supply in the labour market, bring about not only high rates of youth unemployment but also labour shortages in SMEs at the same time (OECD 2012).

Further, Korea's rapidly aging population places a tremendous burden on contributing family workers and unpaid care providers (most often female) who traditionally provide care for the elderly and young. Women make up more than twice the number of contributing family workers compared to men (see Figure 6), a trend which often negatively affects their participation in the labour market. Overall, Korea's female labour market participation is characterised by the "M curve" as participation decreases upon marriage, and further still upon childbirth, and increases when children grow up (OECD 2012). Care for the family is still primarily the responsibility of women, although a number of proactive Government interventions have been introduced in the NEP to combat this trend.

Women also make a sizable proportion of vulnerable workers; in 2008, for example, nearly 27 per cent of women's employment was categorized as "vulnerable", compared to 23 per cent for men. Women also account for nearly 60 per cent of part time, irregular workers (ILO KILMNet 2012), due in large part to childcare responsibilities in the home. There is a worry that labour market polarization, such as the gap in working conditions between regular and non-regular workers, may work as an obstacle to economic growth (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 28).

National Employment Policy

Korea has promulgated a number of labour and employment policies since the late 1990s in response to labour needs. Past efforts have focused on expanding workers' rights, increasing labour market flexibility, improving labour relations, creating jobs, alleviating labour market polarization, advancing public employment services, protecting vulnerable groups of workers and, most recently, pursuing growth and employment simultaneously by supporting economic revival and job creation (Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 8-9).

The current Employment and Labour Policy in Korea (hereafter KNEP, Republic of Korea 2008) is a conglomeration of a number of different past initiatives, and aims to elevate Korea to the level of a “leading advanced nation” (ibid. p. 12) by implementing labour policies with the main objectives of cooperative labour relations, dynamic labour markets and customer-oriented labour policy. In order to create decent jobs for all, the aim is to increase both the flexibility and security of the labour market and to facilitate job creation. In addition, to ensure a fulfilling work life for all workers, the Government will implement demand-oriented labour administration. To this end, the KNEP provides 11 tasks and 23 sub-tasks to implement national labour policy measures (ibid).

The Action Plans (Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 13-23) lay out specific interventions in a number of fields: building a framework for labour/management cooperation; creating a system for the effective management of labour/management conflicts; establishing a rule of law in labour relations; creating a system of demand-oriented job skills development; enabling a smooth supply of workforce to SMEs; customizing programmes to facilitate job creation; building an employment security net system for disadvantaged people; protecting statutory working conditions and workers’ health; providing advanced employment services; and regulatory reform.

Gender has been mainstreamed into the strategic plan, and there are also a number of specific considerations to enhance female participation in the labour market and to provide better balance to work-family life. Korea’s National Statistics Office collects a wide depth and breadth of sex-disaggregated data that has been used to supplement the KNEP, and this is used to track progress and provide transparency in labour market change.

Demand-side considerations

Many of the macro- and microeconomic policy interventions proposed within the KNEP are designed to promote employment, employee welfare and protect workers’ rights, especially for foreign workers. However, the primary thrust of the KNEP does not deal explicitly with fiscal, investment or trade policies. Nonetheless, there has been a move to provide tax reform to promote employee welfare, measures to protect human rights and working conditions for foreign workers, secured financial resources for workers’ learning and reforms to the income tax system. However, many of the policy reforms to get the economic environment “right” are not explicitly gender responsive in nature, although they do stand to benefit all workers regardless of sex.

Employment sectors and sub-sectors

The Bank of Korea and the Department of Statistics track carefully the GDP by economic activity each year, as well as wage levels and working hours within each industry and the sex disaggregation of each sector and sub-sector (Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 147-148; ILO KILMnet 2012). The Korean economy is based primarily on industry and services, with a nominal agricultural sector; women (more than 80 per cent of female workers) are grouped mainly in the services sector.

Social services, however, remain an area within which a very small share of jobs fall (13.6 per cent, vs. an OECD average of 21.7 per cent), failing to meet potential demands. As such, a strategy to create more social service jobs (jobs that are socially useful but are not provided enough in the labour market because of their low

profitability) has been prioritized by the Government (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 30).⁵⁷ These jobs are meant to benefit the elderly and other vulnerable populations who have difficulty in finding work. Interestingly, these types of jobs often include care-related professions (homecare, private nurses, nannies, etc.), work which is often undertaken, unpaid, by women in addition to their other professional responsibilities. This sort of sectoral policy has the potential to reduce some of the care burdens that are placed on women, freeing up time and other reproductive resources. However, questions of the quality of this work must still be addressed, especially given that the wages and working conditions of care workers have been historically low.

Employment targets

Despite the overarching goal of increasing the rate of labour market participation and reducing unemployment for vulnerable groups (the elderly, youth and disadvantaged women), the KNEP does not utilize specific employment targets. Rather, programmes with particular directed impacts have been funded and supported, with the aim to equalize employment outcomes on a national scale.

These targeted programmes also are designed to reduce pay gaps, both among groups of workers and between large and small companies. This, in turn will help women and men alike to move out of poverty.

Supply-side considerations

Despite the substantial depth and breadth of the education system in Korea (or perhaps because of it), there are still sizable mismatches between labour supply and demand. Adults' participation in training and education and the Government's spending on vocational training in the labour market is still very low. This trend suggests that, compared with other OECD countries, Korea is investing too little in human resources development in the labour market – which is directly related to higher corporate competitiveness and productivity – while investing too much in education at school (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 28).

Moreover, even though the number of decent jobs in large and medium companies, financial institutions and public organizations (which often pay better and are seen as more prestigious) are decreasing, new workers are choosing to remain unemployed rather than to take jobs in SMEs. Larger companies also tend to hire experienced workers who can be used immediately after employment rather than new graduates who may require training. Consequently, a lack of workers who meet industrial demands is intensifying the qualitative mismatch between labour demand and supply, as well as a mismatch between university study and jobs. Competition for decent jobs, such as public sector, large companies or public organizations is still fierce, while SMEs have difficulties in

⁵⁷ The project to create social service jobs, which started as a pilot program in 2003, has been implemented as an important job creation measure, with a total of 11 government agencies participating and injecting a budget of 1.2945 trillion won (benefiting 201,000 people) in 2007. The Ministry of Labour created 14,000 social service jobs with an injection of 121.5 billion won in 2007. In order to firmly establish the project, the Ministry has carried out support programmes, such as providing business consulting, distributing labour management guidebooks, building a network among organizations involved in the project, and holding workshops to provide related education. The project to create social service jobs is being developed into a self-reliant project by strengthening the connection between companies and NGOs. Since July 2007 when the Act on the Promotion of Social Enterprises took effect, the government has implemented various support systems, such as a certification system, corporate tax credits, preferential purchase, etc., to help organizations participating in this project grow into social enterprises providing decent jobs (Republic of Korea 2008 pp. 30-31).

finding workers (Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 50-51). This trend is especially true for women, who study subjects such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics at lower rates than their male counterparts (approximately one fifth of computing and engineering graduates are women [OECD 2012]), often leading to a mismatch between the skills they have and the skills the job market requires.⁵⁸

The Government has undertaken a series of formidable reforms to provide better skills for workers, especially young and female workers, through job training (especially for vulnerable populations), technical and vocational training, and a major overhaul of public employment services, in order to better match workers' employability to labour market demand.

Education and skills development

In a move to improve the employability of the workforce, the Government has embarked on a series of job trainings for targeted populations, specifically groups of women, the elderly and disadvantaged youth. For example, the Government provides job training for unemployed female household heads that have had little access to regular training because of family responsibilities, including the payment of training expenses and a training allowance. In addition, a programme of short-term adjustment training for housewives will provide one to four week training for housewives in selected occupations with employment demand (e.g. simple service and niche industry), and subsequent job placement jointly with a training institute and the Human Resources Development Service of Korea (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 57). The programme also offers subsidies and business counselling for business start-ups run by unemployed female household heads.

Similarly, the "New Start Programme for the Aged", established in 2007, provides vocation training and on-the-job skill building in SMEs and employment capability enhancement for unemployed elderly persons over 50 years of age.⁵⁹ In addition, short-term skills training on necessary work capabilities, basic knowledge and safety management have been provided to 3,072 mid-aged and elderly persons in 47 occupations that have been designated as preferential employment occupations for the aged (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 64). A similar "Agreement on Promoting Employment of the Disabled in Large Enterprises", established in 2005, has created customized trainings for the disabled in large enterprises (ibid., p. 69).

Subsidised training and skills development for youths who do not advance to higher education, single mothers, or disadvantaged farmers or fishermen are available in order to encourage the creation of start-ups (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 77). Overall, an employee who receives training or education to develop his/her skills will be reimbursed for part of the expenses; an unemployed person who takes a training course for re-employment to increase his/her employability is qualified for a subsidy for training expenses and a training allowance (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 35). Moreover, long-term employees working for SMEs receive a subsidy if they decide to enrol in a college/university, whereas the SME is subsidised if it sets up a body for organized study bridging work and learning (ibid. p. 76).

⁵⁸ See "Korea Human Development Report on Gender" (Republic of Korea 2005), p. 54 for a list of employment rate of college and university graduates by sex and field of major study (1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005).

⁵⁹ Since it was launched, the programme has offered training in 93 SMEs and employment capability enhancement to 328 unemployed elderly persons (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 64).

In addition, the Government has laid out the basis for career guidance at every level of education from elementary school to university using school curriculum and experience-based learning. Apart from publicizing employment rates for each college and department and helping colleges to expand their employment support services, efforts have been made to cultivate a workforce that meet industrial demand by setting up industry-academia cooperation teams, fostering colleges focused on industry-academia cooperation, providing support for vocational high schools to expand employment services, and fostering specialized vocational schools (Republic of Korea 2008, p 51).

Technical and vocational training

The Vocational Training Act of 1967 set the framework for Korea's vocational training policy and further entrenched with the Basic Vocational Training Act of 1976, which obligates employers to provide vocational training for their employees. By training youths who do not go to higher education to become technicians in key industrial fields, the training system greatly contributed to Korea's economic development. Other changes to the policy over the past two decades have resulted in a shift towards a life-long vocational competency development; currently, the "Initiative of Innovations for Vocational Competency Development" of April 2005 and the "Initiative of Innovations for Life-long Vocational Competency Development" of May 2006 regulate technical and vocational training (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 71). Currently, postsecondary vocational education and training accounts for 30.8 per cent of tertiary enrolment (Kis and Park 2012), though there is no data available on the gendered breakdown of students.⁶⁰

The government provides extensive subsidies for target groups seeking technical and vocational training; elderly people, disadvantaged youth (those with low education or low income) and, as previously discussed, unemployed female household heads and housewives. In addition to vocational training, subsidized aptitude tests, motivation and job placement are also provided. Further, since 2008, the Government has been carrying out a programme of "college-provided job skills training" in which colleges and large companies sign an agreement to support free-of-charge job skills development. Additionally, employers who provide vocational skills development training for his/her employees will have the training costs subsidized (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 19) (see Figure 7)⁶¹.

The Women Resource Development Centre is a primary provider of technical and vocational training for women; it also provides overall employment services, including employment consultation, job placement and skills trainings. There are 90 centres currently, with plans to expand to more than 100 in 2012.⁶² Also, since 2003, there have been Female Student Career Development Centres established in universities to provide vocational training, counselling and employment services to young female job seekers.⁶³

⁶⁰ See Kim and Choi, 2002, "An approach for vocational education and training for women in the knowledge-based society"

⁶¹ See also Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 73-74 for a breakdown of skills development training institutions and the content/target groups of the skills training.

⁶² See the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, http://english.moge.go.kr/sub02/sub02_22_01.jsp

⁶³ See the Ministry of Gender Equality and the Family "4th Global Forum on Gender Statistics: Enhancing Women's Empowerment through Education" (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/Jordan_Mar2012/Presentations/Panel%204/Panel%204_2_Republic%20of%20Korea_4th%20global%20forum_Revised.pdf)

Figure 7. Structure of Korean technical and vocational training



Source: Republic of Korea 2008, p. 72

However, despite a wide breadth of coverage, links between technical and vocational training and businesses are generally weak, including at the national policy-making level – making it harder to develop policies that help the system to meet demands.⁶⁴ There is no data available on the extent to which women are undertaking training, nor if courses are targeted to the needs of female jobseekers. An evaluation of the gendered nature of technical and vocational education would greatly benefit the efficacy of programmes.

Discrimination in recruitment, hiring and treatment

Korea joined the ILO in 1991, ratifying Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) in 1997, Discrimination [Employment and Occupation] Convention, 1958 (No. 111) in 1998 and CEDAW in 1983, although with reservations on Article 9. However, based on evaluations by the ILO's Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, serious concerns remain about women's low levels of participation in the labour market, occupational gender segregation, persistent wage gaps, undue dismissal of sexual harassment and discrimination cases, poor quality and short-term jobs, and discrimination against temporary or irregular workers.⁶⁵

At the national level, the Equal Employment Act was introduced in 2006, prohibiting discrimination based on gender in recruitment, hiring, wage, education, deployment, promotion, retirement age limit and dismissal. An employer who commits an act in violation shall be punished by criminal penalties. Accordingly, various prevention, guidance and check-ups are conducted by labour inspectors. In 1995, the principle of equal pay for equal work was written into law so that there should be no wage discrimination between women and men who perform work of equal value (Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 59-60). In addition, affirmative action was introduced in 2005 and expanded to private companies in 2008 with the aim of increasing the share of

⁶⁴ See "OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training: A Skills Beyond School Review of Korea" (Kis and Park 2012).

⁶⁵ See Footnote above.

female employees (ibid. p. 56). There has also been a law passed to protect non-regular workers from undue discrimination and to allow non-regular workers to seek remediation for discrimination through the Labour Relations Commission (ibid. pp.89-90).

Despite these policies, in practice there remains a sizable wage gap between women and men⁶⁶ - 39.8 per cent overall, a rate that has remained nearly unchanged for 10 years – and inequalities increase the higher up the pay scale women climb. As a result, female top-earners are paid 21 per cent less than their male counterparts, and there is less than one woman for every ten men in the boardroom (OECD 2012). Women also make up the vast share of irregular workers; female irregular workers make up 58.4 per cent of the total female workforce, and on average make 56.7 per cent less than male regular employees (OECD Stats Extracts 2012).

Societal perceptions also lead to self-imposed forms of discrimination against female workers, as women still bear the primary burden of unpaid domestic work in the home. Accordingly, women often work part-time as it facilitates combining work and family responsibilities, but this frequently comes at a cost to their long-term career and earning prospects. Care responsibilities at home are the most frequently cited explanation for the gender wage gap and the lack of upward mobility for women in the labour market (OECD 2012, p. 13). Korean policy is moving to further strengthen work/life balance policies such as parental leave and childcare supports, but as long as workplace cultures involve long working hours, socialising after work, and a seniority-based payment system which punishes women for leaving their job on childbirth, social policy reform will have limited effect.

Labour market policies

In response to massive unemployment in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the government established a series of government-wide comprehensive measures against unemployment, including strengthening active measures to create jobs and get the unemployed back to work, fortifying the national unemployment insurance scheme, and strengthening public and private employment services. These measures have been designed to combat unemployment and to cushion employees against future economic shocks.

Active labour market policies

As has been made clear, one of the primary thrusts of the NEP is to promote specific interventions to help the unemployed find work. Job orientation measures (vocational and technical education, training and skills building), support for self-employment and entrepreneurial/start-ups, public works programmes, special youth employment measures and subsidies for companies to encourage the hiring of young or vulnerable workers have all been supported and funded by the government in order to create jobs. There have also been particular considerations within all of these policies to target women in order to facilitate their heightened participation in the labour market.

While the NEP does not promote a strong culture on entrepreneurship or self-employment, there is nevertheless a push to encourage business start-ups for youth, unemployed female household heads and the long-term unemployed. The government

⁶⁶ In the decade from 1998 – 2007, women's proportion of men's wages increased 3.5 percentage points, from 63.1 to 66.6 per cent. This contrasts with the previous decade from 1998 – 1997, in which women's proportion of men's wages increased 10.7 percentage points from 51.4 per cent. In practice, this means that the wage gap is 39.8 per cent, the highest among the OECD nations. See ILO 2011i p. 11.

guarantees credit in order to provide sufficient collateral for business loans, business counselling and, as discussed before, appropriate vocational and technical training to build business skills (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 34; 52; 57). There are also a number of “start-up incubator centres” in which start-up businesses can co-locate, rent space and share business facilities and equipment, subsidized by the government (Hong Kong Legislative Council Secretariat 2003). There is not a great deal of analysis of how this support will be provided, however, nor the degree to which self-employment will be supported in the long term. Research has shown, though, that the current level of Government support for women entrepreneurs is relatively low and that the type of support that women are receiving is not necessarily the type that entrepreneurs themselves appreciate or benefit from (Lee et al. 2012).

The government has also made an effort to promote public works programmes to provide short-term jobs for low-income workers throughout recent decades.⁶⁷ Public works projects can be classified in four broad categories: infrastructure projects (e.g. construction of public facilities); public service projects (e.g. teaching children from low-income families in after-school classes); maintenance project (e.g. garbage collection and law maintenance in national parks); and information technology projects (Hong Kong Legislative Council Secretariat 2003). One such project utilized computerization services to update public databases; given the high education levels of women, this programme was seen as quite beneficial to women (UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific 2003, p. 52-53). However, the degree to which this and other public works projects explicitly benefit women is unclear within the NEP; a gendered analysis of outcomes would be beneficial.

Support for youth employment, as has already been mentioned, is also remarkably comprehensive and wide-spread. Aside from vocational and technical education, targeted education in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions, career services in universities, on-the-job training and comprehensive employment services, the government has also made provisions for Job Cafés (one-stop service centres for young job seekers), comprehensive employment services specifically for youths called YES (which already benefits more than 3,166 young people) and Job World (see Box 6, p. 21 of this report) (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 51-53). Notably, the Government has also introduced a programme called Training 100,000 Global Leaders, which will provide 30,000 overseas internships, 50,000 overseas jobs and 20,000 volunteer service positions for youth. This agreement is cosponsored by the business community, academia and the government, and came into effect in 2008 (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 19). These programmes, like many others proposed by the Government, have no explicit gender focus, but should provide equal access and equal opportunity to both young women and men.

Support services for female employment promotion

The government has undertaken a number of policies specifically to encourage women’s active and continued participation in the labour market, in an attempt to counteract the trend of women filling low-paid, short-term or precarious jobs.

⁶⁷ During the early 1970s, before an economic boom later in the decade, the government offered temporary employment at an unskilled labour wage, implementing road and other infrastructure projects. As the boom extended into the 1980s and market labour costs soared, more productive workers found higher-paying jobs. The falling number of unemployed workers led the government to replace the public works scheme with a cash transfer programme, which provided social protection more effectively to people who were unable to supply labour to the market (Samson et al. 2006, p. 108).

The government offers a wage subsidy to employers who secure and promote the employment of vulnerable groups of workers such as women (particularly heads of household), the aged or the long-term unemployed (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 35). There is an additional subsidy for the re-employment of female employees after giving birth; a subsidy for employers who offer childcare leave to employees (as well as an additional subsidy to hire a substitute employee); a subsidy for continuous employment after childbirth to provide support for employers who hire a non-regular female worker during her pregnancy and child birth without interruption; and a flexible working hour system for mother with young children (as well as for youth and those employed in hazardous occupations) (Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 56-59). These subsidies create short term incentives for employers to hire “atypical” workers who can then benefit from on-the-job training and skills development in the long term. In addition, the provision of on-site care facilities will be discussed in a later section.

Passive labour market policies

The Korean Government has undertaken an extensive series of programmes to provide income replacement and protection for the unemployed, including a comprehensive Employment Insurance (EI) system that includes unemployment benefits. These programmes are designed to prevent joblessness, promote employment, improve workers’ vocational skills and, in the event of unemployment, pay a sufficient level of benefits necessary to live. EI is not simply unemployment insurance, but also a comprehensive labour market policy and social security scheme, as it includes employment security and vocational skills development programmes intended to promote restructuring, prevent unemployment and promote employment (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 31). The EI system was responsible for overcoming massive unemployment and paving the way for the current vocational training system in the aftermath of the 1997-98 economic crisis. It acts as the primary source of funding for many of the aforementioned vocational and technical education programmes and incentives. EI programmes are categorized into employment security (employment stabilization scheme), vocational skills development, unemployment benefits and childcare leave benefits (Table 4). The components of EI that promote the employment of women with children in the marketplace (childcare leave benefits) will be discussed in a subsequent section.

The unemployment benefits offer by EI include job-seeking benefits (including injury/disease benefits and extended benefits [training, individual or special]) and employment promotion allowances (including early re-employment allowances, vocational skills development allowance, wide-area job seeking allowance, and moving allowances). Unemployment benefits are paid to workers who have been insured for at least 180 days for the 18 months before unemployment, and payments are 50 per cent of the previous average wage. The lower limit is set at 90 per cent of the minimum wage and the upper limit at 40,000 won (USD \$37) per day, which is designed to reduce the gap between benefit recipients and ensure fairness in benefit payment (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 35). Since 1998, unemployment insurance has been applied to all businesses with one or more employees (with the exclusion of businesses in the fields of agriculture, forestry, fishery or hunting, for which four workers or less are employed by a person who is not a corporation; small-scale construction work; private household services; those who work for less than 60 hours a month; public servants and those covered by the Private School Teachers’ Pension Act; special postal workers; those aged 65+) (Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 36-37)⁶⁸.

⁶⁸ For more information on the extension of EI, premium rates and duration, see Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 32-37.

Table 4. Structure of Korean Employment Insurance (EI)

Employment security – Skills development programmes	Support for employment creation	Subsidy for working hour reduction in SMEs Subsidy for transforming shift work systems Subsidy for improvement of employment environments by SMEs Subsidy for hiring of professional workers by SMEs Subsidy for entry into new business by SMEs
	Support for employment adjustment	Subsidy for employment retention Subsidy for out-placement service Subsidy for re-employment
	Support for employment promotion and security	Subsidy for hiring the aged in a large number, extension of retirement age or continuous employment after retirement Subsidy for promoting new hiring Subsidy for hiring middle and old aged workers completing training Allowance to compensate for wage cut under wage peak system Subsidy for retaining workers after their pregnancy and childbirth Subsidy for childcare leave and subsidy for employing replacement workforce
	Other supports for employment security	Retirement payments for construction workers and subsidy for employment insurance management Support for employment management diagnosis Support for business start-up by the long-term unemployed, etc. Subsidy for improving employment environments for the aged, etc. Subsidy for establishing and operating in-company childcare facilities
	Support for skills development programs by employers	Subsidy for skills development training (preferentially training for non-regular workers) Subsidy for training workers on paid leave Loan for vocational skills development training facilities and equipment
	Support for employees skills development	Subsidy for taking training courses and support for taking training courses through employee skills development card Loan and support for workers' school expenses Loan for vocational skills development training expenses Subsidy for test fees, etc. Subsidy for training for the unemployed (unemployed who intend to transfer to another job in priority occupations)
Unemployment benefits	Job-seeking benefits	Job-seeking benefits Injury-disease benefits Extended benefits (training individual or special)
	Employment promotion allowances	Early-re-employment allowances Vocational skills development allowances Wide area job seeking allowances Moving allowances

Childcare leave benefits, etc.	Childcare leave benefits Maternity/miscarriage or stillbirth/leave benefits	
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Source: Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 33-34

However, benefits are designed with very particular conditions for entitlement, including involuntary termination, active job search and minimum contribution period; however, many women are unable to meet these requirements because: a. women are often urged to apply for voluntary retirement; and b. women cease to search for jobs because of perceived low prospects of finding them (UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific 2003, p. 117). Further, despite the gradual extension of EI since 1995, by the end of 2008 only 44.7 per cent of all businesses were covered (Kim 2010, p. 9), and only 51.9 per cent of non-regular workers were covered by the scheme (Forbes 2011, p. 22). Given that women are more prevalent as irregular workers, that they already make a smaller wage than their male counterparts (two thirds of women workers are on precarious contracts, with their salaries reaching about 40 per cent of the regular male worker's pay [ILO 2011h, p. 16]), and that they are more likely to take up precarious employment when they are not covered by unemployment insurance, the provision of unemployment benefits seem not profit women equally.⁶⁹

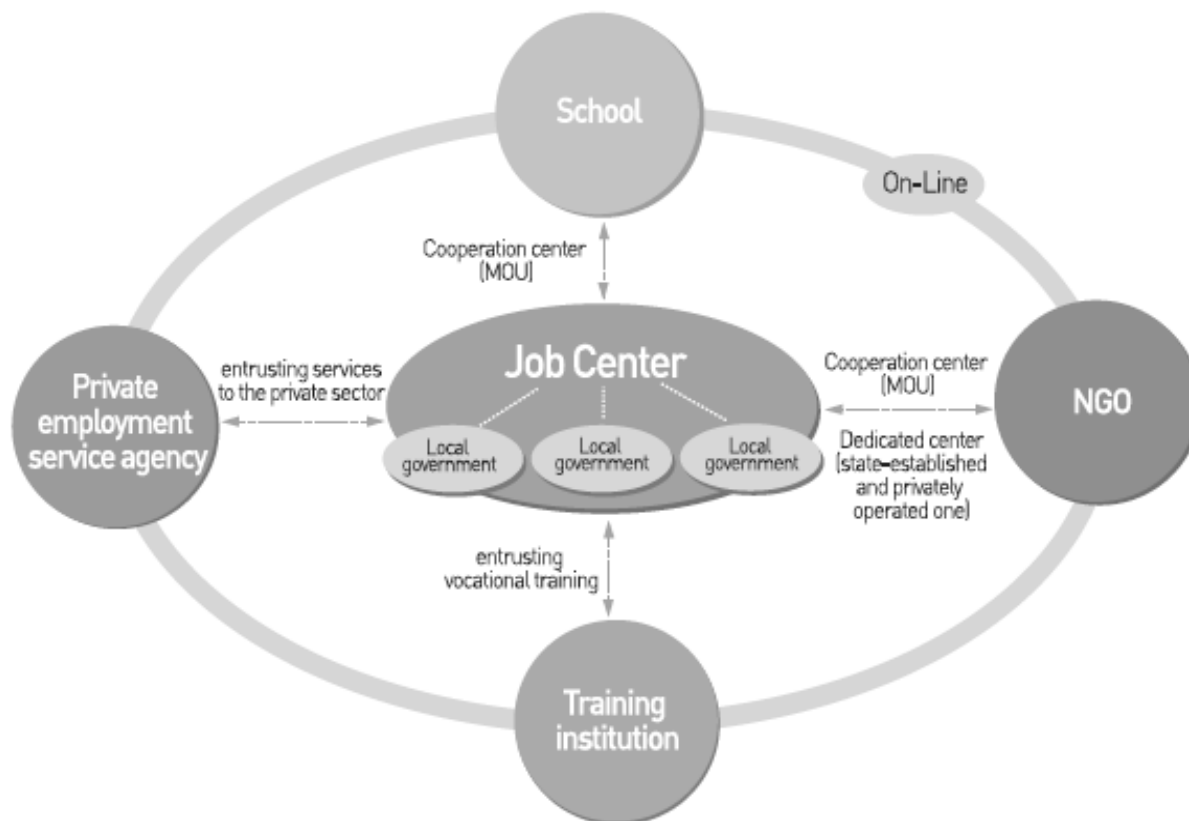
Employment services

In tandem with vocational and technical education programmes, the government has established an extensive network of employment services to act as a safety net for job seekers, and broad efforts have been made to innovate and expand the services. Nevertheless, compared with other advanced countries, Korea lacks an employment service network that encompasses both public and private employment services, while the institutional device for luring the working poor into the labour market is also insufficient. Consequently, the NEP (p. 40) prioritizes a renovation of the employment services network, including building infrastructure, innovating public and private services, and expanding employment services for the working poor (Figure 8).

The government has made a bid to expand human, physical and information infrastructure by hiring more public officials at Job Centres, as well as expanding new Centres into metropolitan areas where offices can provide services. Staff will also provide individually customized employment services for vulnerable groups, as well as training counselling to help job seekers to participate in training that meets market demand and fits their characteristics. The KNEP also lays out comprehensive measures to promote the use of Job Centres by SMEs, so that the Centres can benefit both those offering jobs and those seeking them (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 48). Given the advancements made in employment services during the last years, the number of job seekers and companies using employment services at Job Centres has largely increased, while the proportion of persons who have successfully found jobs have continued to rise as well. (ibid. p. 45)

⁶⁹ See Ito Peng "The Political and Social Economy of Care in the Republic of Korea" (Peng 2009).

Figure 8. Korea's National Employment Service Network



Source: Republic of Korea 2008, p. 46

Moreover, the government has been building a comprehensive Korea Employment Information Service (KEIS) to analyze employment information and monitor public and private employment services (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 41). With the aim of providing advanced employment services and building a demand-oriented vocational skills development system, the Government also set up Work Net, an information hub that combines job opening information from public and private employment portals, to give people better access to information (Republic of Korea p. 41). These information systems are also customized to support youth, women and short-term job seekers (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 41).

Private employment services are also being encouraged to participate in the government's support programmes, and their excellence is certified by a national certifying agency. Overall, the extent to which employment services are entrusted to the private sector will be broadened in order to promote competition and to guarantee coverage for job seekers and job providers.

Given the targeted nature of these reforms, as well as the type of information that these services will provide, it seems that women, especially vulnerable and/or unemployed will benefit strongly. However, a technical evaluation of the type and efficacy of information these employment services provide for women would be helpful to understand the degree to which women benefit.

Access to resources, SMEs and business development services (BDS)

In an attempt to improve the investment environment to attract inflows of foreign investment, the government has undertaken a number of measures to streamline investment regulations and grant tax incentives to foreign investors. Continued efforts on structural reforms in the corporate and financial sectors have served to boost the competitiveness of the Korean economy, as well as to foster the creation of a number of SMEs and start-ups.

SMEs

The government has provided a number of business and tax incentives for SMEs, including government-guaranteed loans and tax exemptions/concessions for new start-ups. So-called “Angel Funds” are provided to venture firms that provide venture capital to start-up businesses, and the government grants tax incentives with respect to the amount of investment in venture firms and any capital gains from the investments. Start-up incubator centres in which start-up businesses can co-locate, rent space, and share business facilities and equipment have also been subsidized by the government (Hong Kong Legislative Council Secretariat 2003).

To promote female entrepreneurship, the government provides loan for collateral for unemployed female household heads to open a shop worth 100 million won (USD 950) or less; women working within SMEs (as well as the young, both of whom are targeted) have access to extensive vocational and technical training subsidized by the government. There has also been a subsidy introduced to reduce hours at SMEs in order to ease mounting corporate burdens due to the 40-hour work week system (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 84). This move is also seen to benefit women, whose care responsibilities often require more flexible and/or shorter hours. Moreover, the establishment of small merchant support centres that provide government-subsidized on-site support is seen as a way to support women’s start-ups and facilitate their growth. The Women Resource Development Centre is a primary hub for the provision of resources, technical support and solidarity networks to support working women.

However, despite government interventions to encourage the development of SMEs and entrepreneurship, women remain substantially under-represented in the field. The proportion of women-owned businesses remains about 30 per cent of the total in OECD countries. When women do start businesses, they do it on a smaller scale than men and in a limited range (most often, less capital-intensive) of sectors; they also rely substantially less than men on loans, both for starting up and financing their activities. Moreover, self-employed women frequently earn 30 to 40 per cent less than their male counterparts. Two key differences between female and male entrepreneurs help explain these relatively low returns: women start their enterprises with limited management experience and devote much less time to their businesses than men (OECD 2012, pp. 12-13).

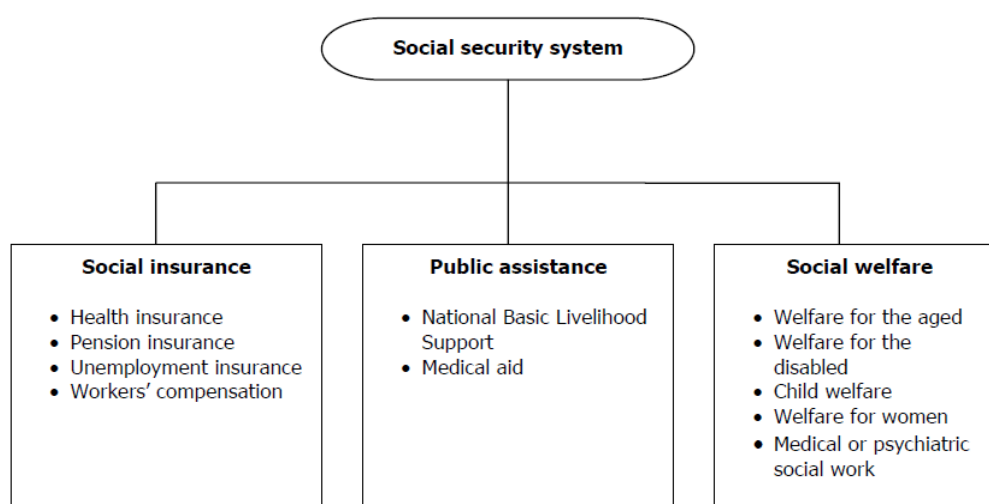
Notably, the government has introduced an Employment Permit System which allows SMEs with labour shortages to hire foreign workers through a legitimate process and prevents infringements upon the human rights of foreign workers. It designated 15 countries as worker-sending countries by signing MoUs. Given the large number of foreign female “marriage migrants”, as well as domestic workers and entertainers,⁷⁰ the new regulations on migration will have strong implications for women’s work opportunities.

⁷⁰ See Lim 2009 “Who is Korea: Migration, Immigration and the Challenge of Multiculturalism in Homogeneous Societies”; Ahn 2012 “Immigrated, interculturally-married women in South Korea: Mental health status, health care utilization and suggested policy directions”

Social protection

One of the primary thrusts of the KNEP, as well as past labour and employment policies in Korea, has been to improve workers' quality of life by strengthening the social safety net and increasing "flexicurity" in the labour market (Republic of Korea 2008, p 8). The expansion of "productive welfare", influenced by "third way" centrism (Kim 2003), has placed more emphasis on welfare, including the expansion of the coverage of social insurance programmes, integration of medical insurance societies into the national health insurance, as well as the introduction of the National Basic Livelihood Security Act. The employment insurance (EI) system was also fortified, as previously discussed, with the added provision of social welfare services covering the elderly, disabled, women and children (see Figure 9). A number of these interventions, especially within the EI system, have been explicitly designed to facilitate a more harmonious work-family balance for women workers. Maternity benefits, childcare leave, flexible working hours, care facilities and health promotion for women have been laid out to combat cultural and demographic challenges limiting women's access to labour markets, as well as to counteract rising inequalities in income and job performance among men and women.

Figure 9. Social security system in Korea



Source: Peng 2009, p. 8

The KNEP lays out the purpose, coverage, benefits and exclusions from the four primary social insurances: employment insurance, industrial accident insurance, compensation insurance and national pension health insurance (Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 36-37). Most interesting for this analysis are the policies for reconciliation of work and family, the impacts of the pension system on working women, and the employee welfare system.

Work-family policies

Since the 1990s the Korean state has taken on a larger role in regulating, providing and financing social care services, with a primary aim to increase the number of jobs that enable the reconciliation of work and family. This move comes in response to evidence from time use surveys that reveals that women continue to take on a large share of unpaid care work within households, despite increased state support (Peng 2009).

Measures to provide greater flexibility for women workers have included institutional improvements to promote part-time work (including granting the right to claim fewer hours of work for women with childcare responsibilities), advances in pre- and post-natal maternity leave (lengthening leave from 60 to 90 days, financed by the general account and the Employment Insurance Fund), “Return to Work Centres” that provide one-stop services to women on job information, vocational training and childcare services (with the aim of having 100 centres by 2012), and subsidies for establishing and operating in-company childcare facilities (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 34). The government has also created a number of public day-care centres for low-income workers to promote female employment. Tax benefit programmes have also been introduced to help families with children,⁷¹ both as a means to promote birth rates and to encourage women to go back to work. In addition, to encourage the use of childcare leave, the Government has extended the eligibility to childcare leave to include both male and female employees (ibid. p. 58) – the first instance of long-term “paternity leave” in East Asia.

As previously discussed, the government has implemented a number of support services for female employment promotion, including generous subsidies to encourage employers to hire and retain female workers before, during and after pregnancy. Flexible working hours for mothers with children are also meant to support women’s extra responsibilities without penalizing long-term employment prospects. Routine labour inspections are designed to help police the policies and make sure that employers are enforcing the regulations (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 60).

However, despite the positive changes of the last decade, huge gaps remain in the provision of benefits and societal perceptions of responsibility. The fact remains that it is primarily women who take advantage of family-friendly policies like flexible working arrangements, thus perpetuating the idea that family responsibilities are a women’s affair. Analysis has shown that despite the expansion in social welfare and social care, particularly child care, there had not been much change in the amount of unpaid work undertaken by women in the household or in the distribution of unpaid care work between women and men (Peng 2009). While there have been positive trends of more parents utilizing public and private care services and flexible working hours, pressure on women remains. Rather than breaking down the rigidity of dual labour structure, labour market flexibility has actually led to a reduced number of regular full-time jobs and opened up the non-regular employment sector into which women have been drawn in remarkable numbers (Peng 2009, p. 21) – jobs which pay less, have less opportunity for upward mobility and which are more precarious.

Moreover, the fact that the birth rate has remained low for more than a decade could lead one to conclude that women are not having children for a reason. As specialists in the country have hypothesized, because women’s strategic gender interests are not being met and because childbirth is such a professional liability, many are choosing not to have children.⁷²

⁷¹ Tax benefits include 1. an annual income tax deduction of up to 1 million won per child for families with children under six years; 2. a deduction of 2.5 million won (USD \$2,300) from annual taxable income for families with two or more children under 20 years; 3. an annual income tax deduction of up to 2 million won (USD \$1,840) for education fee for families with children three to five years old attending kindergarten and childcare facilities; 4. an annual income tax deduction for medical expenses for children in amounts exceeding 3 per cent of income; and 5. a tax exemption for up to 100,000 won (USD \$92) per month of childbirth and childcare allowances paid by employers (Korea Institute of Child Care and Education 2008, cited in Peng 2009, p. 14).

⁷² Personal correspondence with Nelien Haspels, ILO Bangkok.

Pension

The Retirement Pension System was introduced to provide enough old-age income security for workers, and there are three types of public pension schemes: the National Pension, the Government Employees Pension, and the Private School Teachers Pension. There has been a series of attempts to broaden the coverage of and maintaining the fiscal stability of the national scheme (Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 93-95), and the current Retirement Pension System covers approximately 60 per cent of the population (OECD 2011, p. 109).

However, the gendered nature of employment patterns in Korea affects the outcomes of the pension system drastically; women tend to have shorter working lives, accept more temporary contracts (irregular work) and lower wages due to child bearing and rearing responsibilities. They also tend to live longer than men and are likely to experience severity of income loss in widowhood when they become most economically vulnerable. As such, the benefits of the pension system are more unevenly distributed and are less comprehensive. Moreover, given the rapidly aging demographic of Korea, it is estimated that by 2050, there will be 1.5 people to work in support of each pensioner, down from 7 now (OECD 2011). This trend stands to impact women quite strongly, based on the previous analysis of working lives and aging patterns. However, no consideration is given within the NEP to the gendered implications of pension in either the short or long term.

Employee welfare system

The government also promotes workers' welfare through housing support,⁷³ support for employee welfare facilities, livelihood security loans, support for scholarship programmes for workers, employee stock ownership plans and the Employee Welfare Fund System. These programmes are designed to ease the burden of living and social costs on low-income workers and to allow for more equitable access to educational, medical and social outcomes. There has been no analysis of the rate at which women take advantage of these programmes, or the extent to which such policies are beneficial to poverty alleviation.

Social dialogue

The expansion of basic labour rights and the vitalization of trade unions since late 1980s have marked a profound change in labour relations, with a promotion of cooperation, dialogue and compromise. Workers, employers and the government concluded the Social Agreement for Overcoming the Economic Crisis in 1998 and the Social Pact for Job Creation in February 2004. This helped to establish a tripartite partnership and made great contributions to the overcoming of the economic crisis and social integration (Republic of Korea 2008, pp. 98-99).

The Economic and Social Development Commission (formerly the Tripartite Commission) has been given the task of discussing substantial measures to create decent jobs and to advance the labour relations system, as well as to lay the groundwork for revitalizing the economy through the implementation of programmes. Further, a Labour-Management Cooperative Programme is being undertaken via the Korea Labour

⁷³ The Workers' Housing Programme allows for houses to be sold directly to workers through housing developers (labour welfare housing), or houses to be rented by workers from their employers (employee rental housing). This move has allowed for greater security for workers and their families, especially those below the poverty line.

Management Foundation,⁷⁴ an organization for labour-management partnership in a bid to promote cooperation in the workplace (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 14). These initiatives have also undertaken to protect vulnerable groups of workers, while at the same time increasing labour market flexibility – and through negotiations, have managed to draft comprehensive measures to protect non-regular workers, the Law on Non-Regular Workers (ibid. p. 109).

However, much like patterns of representation within the labour market, women are not equally represented in the wider industrial relations arena. There are a number of unions with sizable female membership, the most notable being the Korean Women's Trade Union (KWTU) and the Korean Federation of Women Workers Union, with 5,820 and 3,155 members respectively. Both welcome male members, though the bulk of constituents are female. "Mainstream" unions are enterprise based, and as such do not organize workers "outside" the organization, notably excluding part-time and/or temporary workers (which, as was established, are predominately women). Female workers are far less represented than male workers: 391,867 women v. 1,328,005 (Republic of Korea 2011). This trend is due in large part to the number of irregular workers and those employed in companies with less than 10 workers (Korean Women's Trade Union 2009). The extent to which KWTU and other women's unions work within the tripartite structure is unclear.

As the ILO (Baccaro and Lee 2003, p. 21) has pointed out, the greater involvement of women, both at the enterprise level and at the national level, does not just have an impact on the content of the collective bargaining agenda, but also on the approach and culture of collective bargaining, often bringing a more consensus-based and problem-solving approach. Building a modern industrial relations system in Korea must ensure that this gender dimension is explicitly addressed.

KNEP formulation, implementation, monitoring and budgeting

In 2010, the Korean government set up a National Employment Strategy Meeting to establish a comprehensive, government-wide plan to stabilize employment and create more jobs. The meeting brought together heads of each government ministry, political parties and related government institutions, including the Bank of Korea and the National Economic Advisory Team, as well as the Presidential Policy Coordinator, Chairperson of the Presidential Council for Future and Vision, National Policy Planning Chief, and the Presidential Economic Advisor for Social Sector (ILO 2012k p.39). There have been consultations at the national level with a number of representatives from the government, workers and employers, as well as strong cooperation at the regional and international level (including the ILO, UN, APEC, WTO and IOM) (Republic of Korea pp. 135-138). International, national and local cooperation are essential for the successful implementation of the KNEP, and the Government calls on social partners and ministries alike to allow for the successful operation of the KNEP and its associated programmes.

In terms of monitoring and evaluation of the NEP, there have been no targets set, although there is extensive sex-disaggregated data available from the National Statistics Office. Moreover, the government has established the Employment Impact Assessment, a system for assessing the impact of government policy on employment and encouraging the establishment and implementation of job-friendly policies. The assessment utilizes quantitative analysis to track policy impact on job growth, taking a study conducted between 2006 and 2009, as a starting point. In 2010, an employment impact assessment

⁷⁴ The Korea Labour Foundation changed its name to the Korea Labour Management Foundation in 2007.

trial was conducted on seven major projects of each ministry and local government. Based on this experience, employment impact assessments on government policy have been formally conducted since 2011 (ILO 2012k, p. 46).

The “Current Share of Male and Female Employees by Occupation and Status” is submitted by workplaces to track the share of female employees and managers (notably, this survey showed an increase of 1.6 per cent in the share of female workers and 0.8 per cent of female managers after the introduction of affirmative action in 2007) (Republic of Korea 2008, p. 56). The Ministry of Economy and Labour also conducts a review and assessment of the employment insurance programme, with the results used to improve projects and to assess and redirect government funding (ILO 2012k p. 50). These mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating various components of the KNEP are quite comprehensive and embedded, although the KNEP does not mention them. Nor is it clear to what extent a gender perspective is entrenched in the methodology; such information would be helpful for transparency and gendered employment targeting of the KNEP.

Finally, while the KNEP does not include an explicit budget plan, the government’s social expenditures are 9.3 per cent of its GDP (the lowest among OECD countries and less than half the OECD average [OECD StatsExtracts 2012]), and its general fund covers the majority of the proposed programmes. The jobs budget, overseen by the Ministry of Strategy and Finance, is detailed in its budget overview, and has expanded from KRW 8.9 trillion (USD \$8.35 million) in 2010 to KRW 9.6 trillion (USD \$9 million) in 2012 (ILO 2012k, p. 37). While gaps in coverage still exist (notably in terms of funding the national pension system in the long term), Korea is financially self-sufficient in its labour and employment policy.

Conclusions

The KNEP is a strong example for other countries to use as a means of supporting female employment and coping with the often difficult balance between work and family life. The policies that have been implemented in the last decades have made an enormous impact on some employment outcomes, and in many cases have allowed for greater workers’ rights, labour standards and quality of life. Public policy, driven by a unique public/private mix in education and health service, has allowed for strong outputs and wide coverage, although as this report has shown, challenges remain.

Nonetheless, it is important to note how exceptional Korea is in terms of its economic performance and level of human development; it is not a fair expectation to imagine that all countries surveyed could accomplish the same results on the budget that many have available. The particular history of Korea (including a period of rapid industrialization characterized by problematic political institutions and troubling working standards), its position within the larger global economy and the particular relationships between women and men and among families, have allowed an unprecedented level of growth in a remarkably short period of time. Nationally, mechanisms for developing and utilizing human capital aligned with industrialization, hand in hand with redistribution policies that benefited rural areas, promoted growth and employment. Export-oriented industrialization, fuelled by low-paid and precarious jobs (primarily women workers) helped to propel the state to the point it is at now. Extensive research on the processes, institutions and actors who have helped facilitate this process has been undertaken (UNRISD 2012), and understanding these relationships is crucial to appreciating how such a transformation was possible. As ever, it is crucial to understand the context-specific environment of individual states in order to promote durable, equitable forms of policy change.

What remains, however, is the reality that gender inequality has been an enduring social cost of Korea's development trajectory. Policies to combat discrimination and disparities in rates of participation have been undertaken, which is perhaps the most useful example that the Korea case can provide to other countries. But the tough reality remains: a dual labour market structure that disproportionately provides permanent, full-time, higher paying "career track" jobs to men, while women are far more likely to be found in temporary, part-time, flexible, lower paying and vulnerable jobs. The dual labour market structure with women predominantly in the lower tiers is caused in part by prevailing gender stereotypes that women's role is in the home, leading to serious gender discriminations at all stages of the employment cycle. While this phenomenon is certainly not unique to Korea, it does remain a liability for Korea's future economic growth and one that needs to continue to be addressed in future NEPs.

Box 16: Middle Eastern NEP trends

Issues of security, migration and post-conflict state-building have the strongest impact on the direction of a policy (in the occupied Palestinian territories, for example, all strategies focus on the reality of on-going insecurity of the Israeli occupation, so “flexibility and adjustment are key”; in Iraq, there is a huge influx of foreign funds for social protection and a push for public/private cooperation, but negligible skills at the local level; in Jordan, foreign labour must “compliment but not substitute for Jordanian labour” and refugees/migrants warrant special attention);

The prioritization of gender by foreign donors has precipitated well-documented, sex-disaggregated data collection. Further, countries in the region seem more likely to utilize gender quotas to promote women’s integration (Iraq, 30 per cent quota in ministries; political quotas in Jordan and the occupied Palestinian territories).

Jordan

For two decades, Jordan has undertaken a series of economic, political and social reforms to reinforce the foundations of the economy. Economic reforms to stimulate growth, ensure macroeconomic stability, and attract investment and private sector participation have led to strong rates of growth, increased exports and increased regional and international integration. However, the social effects of reform have not always been as laudable; the unequal distribution of benefits combined with the removal of subsidies, stringent financial policies and soaring energy and food prices have contributed to limited progress in addressing poverty, especially in rural areas, and patriarchal gender norms remain.

ILO involvement and a Decent Work Agenda

Jordan has a long-standing relationship with the ILO as the first Arab country to sign a Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) in 2006. The first Jordan DWCP (2006-2009) was completed at the end of 2009. The Programme had three chief priorities:

- To enhance employment opportunities and economic integration for young women and men;
- To improve governance and social dialogue; and
- To enhance social protection.

The ILO Country Programme for Jordan 2002-2007 underwent an independent evaluation in 2008, and since then, Jordan was selected as one of nine countries globally - and the only country in the Arab States region - to pilot the Global Jobs Pact (GJP). Adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2009, the GJP contains a portfolio of policies to promote jobs and protect people, based on the Decent Work agenda (ILO 2011c).

The ILO launched a Rapid Assessment of the Effects of the Global Financial Crisis in April 2010, followed by the more in-depth Jordan Global Jobs Pact (GJP) Country Scan Report in November 2010. The Scan Report provided an overview of the impact of the economic and financial crisis on Jordan, a detailed description of policy responses using the GJP portfolio as checklist, and recommendations on how national policies can contribute to shaping a fair and sustainable globalization. In this way, the GJP exercise sought to establish tripartite consensus around a recovery package that will go beyond the crisis to include long-term considerations for inclusive and equitable growth (ILO 2012j).

Based on the results of the Global Jobs Pacts scan, a series of DWCP priorities were set through a wide range of tripartite plus consultations. The DWCP 2012-2015 is closely

aligned with Jordan's National Agenda, which also extends until 2015, and will be an integral part of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2013-2017. It will be implemented through partnerships with the tripartite partners, with focus on the following three priorities:

- Decent work opportunities for young Jordanian men and women are expanded through the promotion of better working conditions, non-discrimination and equal rights at work;
- A minimum level of social security is extended to the most vulnerable groups of society through the social protection floor, as part of a more comprehensive social security system in Jordan;
- Employment opportunities are enhanced, with focus on youth employment.

In addition, the cross-cutting issues of social dialogue, international labour standards and gender equality will be mainstreamed under the three priority areas mentioned above (ILO 2012j).

The ILO has also supported a number of technical assistance projects, specifically targeting women's pay equity, youth employment, technical and vocational training, SME support, maternity insurance, social security reform and social dialogue. In the case of Jordan, it seems that the presence of gender specialists on the ground has been quite helpful in promoting an agenda of cooperation and mutual learning.

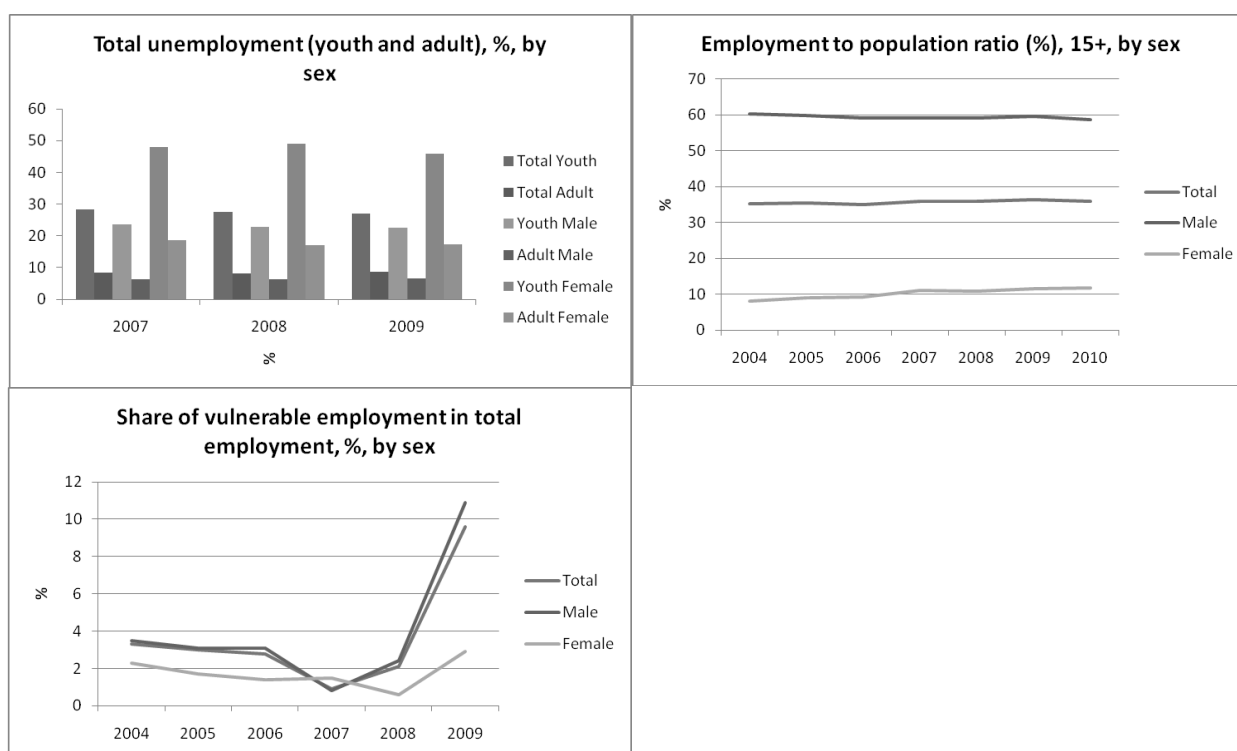
Socio-economic context

Jordan is currently ranked as an upper middle-income, high human development country with a population of approximately 6.4 million people. Despite high economic growth prior to the international financial crisis (7 per cent on average between 2004 and 2009), unemployment rates remained between 12-13 per cent (13.1 per cent in 2009 [10.2 per cent male vs. 25.9 per cent female] and 12.9 per cent in 2011 [10.3 per cent male vs. 24.1 per cent female]). While overall labour force participation rates have stayed at similar levels since 2007 – with huge gaps between male and female rates - youth employment (especially of women) has shrunk by nearly 1 per cent since 2007. Youth unemployment rates are more than triple the overall rate of unemployment, with nearly 50 per cent unemployment rates for women under 25. The overall employment-to-population rate is still quite low at 36 per cent (58.7 per cent male vs. 11.9 per cent female). The share of vulnerable employment in total employment has also increased sharply since 2007, from 0.9 per cent (0.8 per cent male vs. 1.5 per cent female) to 9.6 per cent in 2009 (10.9 per cent male vs. 2.9 per cent female) (see Figure 10). As such, economic growth rates have failed to translate into the creation of a sufficient number of quality jobs, leaving 180,284 unemployed in 2009 (ILO KILMnet 2012; ILO 2012j).

Interestingly, the economically inactive are overwhelmingly women, and overwhelmingly less educated. Among the economically active, men are entering the labour market at normal rates but exiting early, while women are not entering the labour market at sufficient rates and those who do are exiting too quickly. Unemployed men are mainly unskilled, while unemployed women are primarily university graduates (Government of Jordan 2012, p. v).

Nearly 80 per cent of the working population is engaged in the services sector (77.2 per cent male vs. 89.7 per cent female), less than a fifth (18.7 per cent) engaged in industry (20.5 per cent male vs. 9.3 per cent female), and only 2 per cent engaged in agriculture (2.2 per cent male vs. 1 per cent female). Employment in the services sector has been expanding for the last five years, while agricultural work has shrunk

Figure 10. Jordanian employment patterns



Source: ILO KILMnet 2012

Note: Youth refers to the age group 15-24, while adult refers to 25+

significantly (ILO KILMnet 2012). Further, the Government of Jordan estimates that approximately 26 per cent of total non-agricultural employment is informal (with no labour contract or social security), many of whom are younger, poorly educated and low-skilled. Interestingly, contrary to patterns in other regions, research has shown that more males work in the informal sector and as employers or are self-employed (Government of Jordan 2012, p. 62).

Jordan is a country that both imports and exports labour. Using data produced by the Government's Department of Statistics and the Ministry of Labour, the World Bank estimates an average of 44,500 new jobs created annual between 2001 and 2005 – of which 16,500 were taken by Jordanian workers and nearly 28,000 by foreign workers. As a result, between 2005 and 2009, migrant workers occupied up to 63 per cent of jobs created, while 180,000 Jordanians remained unemployed (ILO 2012j). Today, there are between 300,000-500,000 foreign workers in Jordan, mainly employed in manufacturing and construction in low-skilled, low-paying jobs that are unattractive to Jordanian workers (Government of Jordan 2008). Interestingly, only about 17 per cent of those workers are female (ETF 2005, p. 24). This factor means that unskilled migrant labour depresses wages in work areas which are likely to be taken up by unskilled women. As for Jordanians who migrate outside Jordan these are usually skilled workers who migrate to the Arab Gulf Region and who are mostly men.

Importantly, Jordan has also been affected by the rising tide of protests throughout the Arab world surrounding unemployment, low wages and political discontent. A recent wave of unrest has swept the country, with more than 550 labour-related protests and strikes taking place since January 2011. Due to mounting political pressure, the King reshuffled the government and appointed a new head of government in October 2011 to spearhead national dialogue and “implement a political reform process with clear milestones, not just arbitrary timelines” (ILO 2012j). The Government has also

accelerated the pact of reform, placing employment and decent work at the heart of its response strategy and formally endorsing a NEP in May 2011. In direct response to the National Employment Strategy, and in line with tripartite priorities, jobs, freedom of association and rights at work will be at the forefront of a new DWCP for Jordan.

National Employment Policy

The Jordanian National Employment Strategy 2011-2020 (hereafter JNEP) derives its vision from that of the National Agenda (2006-2015), with the aim of improving standards of living for Jordanians through increased employment, wages, benefits and productivity improvements. The JNEP uses an integrative approach that examines investment policies, fiscal and monetary policies, education and higher education, vocational training and social welfare, all through the lens of employment. Thus, the JNEP tackles the issue of employment across the various themes of the National Agenda (Government of Jordan 2012). The JNEP focuses on:

- Economic policies that generate economic growth and quality jobs for Jordanians;
- A well-trained and motivated labour force, especially in the school-to-work transition years;
- Social protection for all workers, including those in small, micro and home-based businesses.

In crafting the JNEP, the Jordanian Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation built on a long list of strategies, research papers, policy reports and pilot projects⁷⁵ developed in the past decade. The National Agenda of 2005 has been a cornerstone, as well as the ILO's Global Job Pacts Country Scan for Jordan (ILO 2011c).

The specific pillars of the JNEP include gradually replacing foreign workers with Jordanians; supporting employment projects and programmes; enhancing the training of Jordanians according to the needs of the labour market; supporting vocational education and training; enhancing investment in employment; supporting entrepreneurship culture; supporting people with special needs; decreasing restructured employment; supporting labour market employment projects; supporting workers' rights (including social security, insurance, etc.); and supporting tripartite dialogue.

Demand-side considerations

One of the key stated aims of Jordan's NEP and National Agenda has been to create enough jobs and to move up the value chain to result in better wages and working conditions for Jordanian workers. To accomplish this goal, the strategic aim has been to enable the private sector to move up the value chain and increase value added, to improve its productivity, and to expand its ability to export products and services. Since 2008, the JNEP has cited a strong push for employment-friendly public investment, high quality infrastructure, fiscal and price stability, investment-conducive monetary policy,

⁷⁵ Including the ILO's "Employment Policies" paper and action plan prepared with the Ministry of Labour (ILO 2007b); the World Bank's "Resolving Jordan's Labour Market Paradox of Concurrent Economic Growth and High Unemployment" (World Bank 2008b); the "Jordan Human Development Report 2011" (UNDP and MOPIC 2011); a series of ERF papers analyzing the Jordan Labour Market Panel Survey (JLMPS) of 2010; the database produced by the Department of Statistics based on its various surveys; analysis from the Manar Project based at the National Centre for Human Resource Development; policy reports prepared by the Ministry of Labour in cooperation with CIDA's "BEST Project," the USAID supported "SABEQ," and World Bank project reports.

and positive incentives for employment in sectors with high productivity (Government of Jordan 2012, p. 10). These sorts of reforms, while not explicitly gender responsive in nature, are designed to reduce unemployment and poverty, as well as to encourage growth.

The JNEP provides a detailed analysis of how to pursue sustainable fiscal and monetary policies for economic growth with job creation (including long term fiscal policy, reducing the deficit, capital expenditure and borrowing, public revenue, fiscal stimulus and monetary policy), revealing a desire to pursue “socially productive investments” in human and infrastructure capital which enhance the productivity of the economy, short-term tax relief in the knowledge sectors (R&D activities, new export-oriented products) rather than in traditional sector, the establishment of a Credit bureau that will provide credit at lower rates for micro enterprises, and a “bottom up” form of stimulus to benefit employers and the unemployed (Government of Jordan 2012, pp. 80-81).

Employment sectors and sub-sectors

The JNEP focuses on mapping the various sectors of the Jordanian economy vis-à-vis employment creation, levels of education required by each sector, and each sector’s exposure to international competition.⁷⁶ The economy is largely either “traditional” or service-based, with space to utilize a much higher skill set, with higher value added. Diversification, medium-high technology-intensive products and expanding exports are three areas in which greater investment is being prioritized. The economic strategy seems to move away from the “traditional” sector, with less focus on industry, construction, trade, agriculture, and mining – though making these industries more water and energy efficient – and more reliant on “knowledge” sectors to build a competitive environment (Government of Jordan 2012). However, there is no discussion of the implications of this kind of sectoral shift on the workers within particular industries; yet given the high education levels of Jordanian women and their strong performance in technological education at the university level, it is hoped that these otherwise gender neutral industries may encourage women’s participation.

There has historically also been a sizable gap between employment in the public and private sector, with far more women opting for the former: 45 per cent of public sector employees are female, compared to 13 per cent in the private sector.⁷⁷ Given that the public sector often offers workers better entry level wages, benefits, working hours, job security, social benefits and working conditions (especially in terms of provision of maternity coverage), this preference is hardly surprising. Interestingly, given that from 2000-2008 almost 42 per cent of all jobs created were in the public sector (Government of Jordan 2012), this pattern has seemed to (perhaps inadvertently) favour job creation for women. This is not the case in civil service, however, where persistent discrimination against women remains.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ The analysis is split into the High Skilled-High Tradability sectors (HSHT), or those often referred to as export-oriented/knowledge-based sectors. The second quadrant represents the High Skilled-Low Tradability sectors (HSLT), mainly the service sectors which require fairly advanced skills in finance, health, and education. The third quadrant contains the Low Skilled-High Tradability sectors (LSHT), such as agriculture, mining, and “traditional” manufacturing involving unskilled or semi-skilled labour. The fourth quadrant includes the Low Skilled-Low Tradability sectors (LSLT), such as wholesale and retail trade, construction, and hotels and restaurants (Government of Jordan 2012, pp. 28-29).

⁷⁷ For a full analysis of the trends of public/private sector employment and gender, see Government of Jordan 2012, pp.11-13

⁷⁸ At the 101st session of the ILC (ILO 2012g), CEACR Committee, it was noted that: “The Committee recalls that for a number of years it has been pointing out the persistence of occupational segregation of

Given problems with excessive hiring, long waiting lists and large wage gaps at the bottom and top wage pyramid, the Government is attempting to curtail public sector employment and align wage structures in order to close gaps between private and public employment. While these changes should have no negative repercussions on current positions in the public sector, there could be positive changes for jobs in the private sector in terms of the provision of benefits, wages, working hours and job security – which perhaps will help to encourage more women to enter. Moreover, proposed reforms to the Civil Service Bureau, the entity responsible for public sector hiring, to make recruitment more competencies-based may help to reduce discrimination.

Employment targets

In setting targets for growth and development, Jordan has been proactive in establishing a comprehensive set of indicators to track progress and provide transparency in labour market growth – and many of these indicators are sex-disaggregated. In addition, the Jordanian Department of Statistics collects extensive data on a number of employment targets for women, including employment by status in employment, employment-to-population ratio, labour force participation rate, proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment, unemployment by level of education, and unemployment rate. Using this information as a basis for comparison, the Government has aimed to better target its strategies for education, higher education, vocational training, and economic development. Further, the National Employment Strategy target indicators (Government of Jordan 2012, p. 90) provide both baseline and targets to help track development and change over time.

However, given that current patterns show that women tend to choose training and educational fields in which the market is saturated and which therefore cannot offer them job opportunities (often in social and personal services, health and education – jobs associated with “traditional” gender roles), there is clear a need for further reform. Expanding the range of professional occupations and career paths in the public sector for women, as well as diversifying the professional horizons of female students to fill technical jobs could help to counteract these patterns. Further, setting targets or quotas within particular fields of study or occupations may also help to encourage women to diversify their career options.

women in the civil service and has pointed out that the criterion of seniority, when applied for purposes of promotion into higher posts, should not lead to indirect discrimination against female civil servants. The Committee had urged the Government to take effective steps to address occupational gender segregation, and to address the issue of women having an insufficient number of accumulated years of experience and knowledge. The Committee notes from the statistics provided by the Government, which unfortunately do not provide an indication of the particular year they cover, that women continue to be underrepresented in the civil service, especially at higher levels, such as in leading posts where they account for only 10.1 per cent of workers at that level, and in supervisory posts, where they represent 37.9 per cent of workers, the majority of whom are in the education sector (60.45 per cent). The Committee notes that the Government once again does not provide information on the specific steps taken to address occupational segregation, to ensure an equitable application of the criterion of seniority and to promote women to higher level posts, but rather indicates that the Civil Service Regulations ensure equal opportunities for men and women in all positions, including in high-ranking, leading and supervisory posts and that the criteria used to appoint officials in the civil service ensures equality between men and women. The Committee stresses that the Government has the obligation, under the Convention, to address both direct and indirect discrimination based on sex, with respect to employment and occupation in the civil service.” (p. 525)

Supply-side considerations

One of the most serious concerns addressed in the JNEP is the mismatch of supply and demand in the labour force. Every year, around 120,000 students take the high school *tawjihi* exam (the graduation exam equivalent to the Baccalaureate), and about 60,000 pass it. Of those who pass, around 45,000 go to Jordanian universities and 6,000 go to community colleges. Jordanian universities graduate around 40,000 students per year. But on the demand side, out of around 76,000 jobs created in 2009, only about 24,000 were taken by university graduates, while 6,500 were taken by community college graduates; the rest, around 46,000, were taken by workers with a high school education or below (and a substantial proportion of those went to foreign workers). Thus, around 15,000 new university graduates enter the ranks of the unemployed or economically inactive every year (Government of Jordan 2012, p. vi).

Education and school-to-work training

In terms of gendered dimensions of education and employment, there appears to be an inverse relationship between level of education and employment status: while over 75 per cent of unemployed males have a high school education or below, the opposite is true for females - over 75 per cent of unemployed females have diplomas or higher.⁷⁹ Given that women are more likely to enter the labour market, if they have a diploma and still suffer from higher rates of unemployment despite their diploma, a complicated series of interactions between labour supply and demand emerge. Women at all levels of education have higher rates of unemployment than their male counterparts, and even a university diploma is not enough to counteract that trend (Government of Jordan 2012). The statistical analysis presented in the NEP undertakes to understand this trend, but the correlation/causation is far from straightforward. Graduates of diplomas have persistently high rates of unemployment because of the low quality of education and the lack of relevance within the labour market. Further, job generation in Jordan has targeted towards more low-skilled workers, which mostly go to migrants, under-utilizing the skills of university graduates. Moreover, though, there is a crowding effect of women's education and jobs. Women study and apply for the same jobs, primarily those which are seen as "socially acceptable". As a result, there is less of a skills "mismatch" and more of a lack of demand for skills.

University level education in Jordan is on the increase for both males and females. While females aged 15-34 have already overtaken males in secondary, post-secondary, and university education, males tend to dominate in applied sciences (53 per cent males to 47 per cent females), while females dominate the humanities (54 per cent females to 46 per cent males). Overall, the number of students specializing in education, humanities, and non-technical and professional fields (predominately women) continues to exceed demand (Government of Jordan 2012). Further, the system of community college education, initially envisioned to provide a technically skilled workforce, has drifted into offering "bridging" programmes to allow students who cannot get a university degree to "bridge" back into a university programme. This has created an inverted pyramid such that there are too many engineers and not enough engineering assistants/surveyors; too many dentists and not enough dental assistants; too many pharmacists and not enough pharmacy assistants (ibid., p.38). Given that women with an intermediate diploma (e.g. from a community college) have seen a noticeable increase in unemployment levels – and are unemployed at more than three times the rate of their male counterparts (Government of Jordan 2008) – this is an area in which improvements must be made.

⁷⁹ For a full analysis of patterns of education, labour and gender in Jordan, see Manar Project Database 2009 and the European Training Foundation (ETF) report "Unemployment in Jordan" (ETF 2005)

The government is scaling up national-level school-to-work programmes in an attempt to combat unemployment rates and to help to orient supply and demand within the education system. In combination with a number of national, regional and local programmes sponsored both by international donors and by the Government, attempts are being made to develop appropriate skills that will be more useful in the labour market, as well as to teach technological change and entrepreneurship. Further, the programmes detailed in the JNEP provide sex-disaggregated information on the beneficiaries, and a detailed breakdown of the populations the programmes are meant to reach.⁸⁰ While school-to-work programmes and skills development might not reduce overall unemployment among youth in the short term, in the mid-term there should be an impact.

Technical and vocational training

Beyond secondary and tertiary education, the government has also undertaken a comprehensive series of programmes to promote technical and vocational training, although reforms have been historically weak and fragmented. Beyond the conventional public programmes, not-for-profit and private training providers are making considerable innovations. However, in spite of a strategic focus in the National Agenda and considerable donor funding, reforms are slow, coordination is lacking, and quality control is weak or non-existent.

Since 2010, the government has offered specialized vocational training in many different fields to 10,000 nationals across a range of disciplines (ILO 2011c). While not all trainees were placed in permanent jobs afterwards, recent experience in Jordan suggests that a well-targeted training programme could achieve a 30 per cent placement rate or better. Combined with subsidies for six months to a year, the placement rate could rise even further (Government of Jordan 2012).⁸¹

One of objectives in the JNEP Strategy Action plan is to increase opportunities of educational, vocational and technical training and training in the workplace aimed at women. Moreover, the JNEP Implementation Plan lays out measures to ensure that vocational training programmes are demand driven to meet the needs of the labour market in quantity and quality terms, including expanding the current pilot programmes that allow direct on-the-job training with the private sector for both women and men (Government of Jordan 2012). However, both the JNEP and the Implementation Plan fail to address tangible criteria for how to increase female participation in educational, vocational and technical training, nor are there targets for the rates of participation of women in training programmes. The Government has aimed to expand awareness campaigns to improve the image of vocation and technical education and training, although with no particular focus on targeting women. As such, the degree to which technical and vocational training will reach women, especially given prejudices in society that limit women's access to such programmes, remains ambiguous.

⁸⁰ See Government of Jordan 2012, pp. 41-42 and 100-116

⁸¹ According to the Government's Implementation Plan for 2010, vocational education is expected to move into an advanced technological level, extending technological inputs and providing training for teachers that would correspond to the needs of the labour market. Along with this move, it is envisaged that the percentage of students enrolled in vocational training will increase to 15 per cent while 800 teachers in the areas and specialties of vocational education and modern technological systems will receive training. In the area of skills upgrading, an agreement has been signed between the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) and Globe Williams Corporation to prepare the better-trained workers to engage in real estate management including technical maintenance, as well as in the areas of security, recycling, food and beverage and energy supply (ILO 2011c, p. 45).

Further, there is little proof that the vocational structures in place actually produce better or more employable workers, especially women workers. The historical lack of collaboration with the private sector in vocational training has led to an increasingly widening gap between the private sector's needs and the training system (Government of Jordan 2008). There is also a fairly gendered nature to the types of skills being taught and the beneficiaries who are targeted. While many of the computer skills classes are split evenly between male and female participants, programmes focused on hospitality and hotel training, training on land area, and training for air conditioning skills had only male participants, while those for teaching had strong female participation (Government of Jordan 2012, pp. 100-116). Whether this trend is due to self-selection or external factors is unclear, but such trends need to be taken into account when the planning and budgeting for vocational trainings are established.

The JNEP suggests that changing the way the sector is funded through the Employment, Technical and Vocational Education Training (ETVET) Fund in terms of governance and incentives will greatly improve performance. The Fund, responsible for the provision of resources and the supervision of a number of subsidiary organizations,⁸² has already seen improvements in management and financing criteria,⁸³ but more needs to be done. Along with internal overhaul, the ILO is working at the policy level to enhance the policy coherence of employment policies and programmes to combat fragmentation and programme duplication. To this end, the ILO will provide direct technical support to the Ministry of Labour in the evaluation of active labour market programmes and the implementation of the National Employment Strategy (ILO 2012j).

Discrimination in recruitment, hiring and treatment

Jordan joined the ILO in 1966, ratifying Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No.100), Discrimination [Employment and Occupation] Convention, 1958 (No 111) and CEDAW, although with reservations. While Jordan has addressed gender as a cross-cutting issue in its policies, concerns remain regarding the extent to which non-discrimination legislation is enforced, with enduring criticisms that Jordan has persistently failed to provide information on measures taken to promote and ensure equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation.⁸⁴ Moreover, the

⁸² The Employment, Technical and Vocational Training Council; the National Training Employment Project; and the National Company for Employment and Training. Vocational and technical training is broken into three segments: the high school level vocational training is under the Education Council; community college and university level training is under the Higher Education Council; and the VTC and the NET are under the ETVET Council. The ETVET Council has not been able to effectively coordinate implementation on supply side policies (education and higher education), so there is a critical need to review the roles and responsibilities to ensure clear division of labour/complementarities among them, especially when it comes to financing training activities, accreditation, and quality control (see Government of Jordan 2012, p. 65).

⁸³ See Government of Jordan 2012, pp. 129-137 for a complete breakdown of interventions aimed at revamping the ETVET.

⁸⁴ At the 101st session of the ILC (ILO 2012g), CEACR Committee, it was noted that "...for a number of years, the Government has persistently failed to provide information on measures taken to promote and ensure equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation, and to address de facto inequalities which may exist with respect to the grounds covered by the Convention, other than sex...The Committee notes that in its most recent report, the Government, referring to sections 6 and 23 of the Constitution and section 2 of the Labour Code, merely states that the provisions of the law apply to all workers regardless of sex, nationality, race, colour and religion and that any other rights and privileges specified in the law apply to all workers without discrimination. The Committee notes that sections 6 and 23 of the Constitution guarantee for all Jordanians the right to work and their equality before the law without discrimination based on race, language and religion, and that section 2 of the Labour Code defines a "worker" as being a "any person, male or female, who performs work in return for wages or who is attached to an employer, and under his order, including young persons, and

2011 CEDAW Shadow Report (Arab Women Organization 2011) found that: “The government of Jordan has not taken any measures to incorporate CEDAW into the national legislation. This impedes the judiciary and courts to end discrimination and injustices” (p. 12).

It should also be noted that the Jordanian Personal Status Law, based in part on *Shar'ia* law, regulates inheritance practices of women and men, which are unequal. There is no legal presumption of joint ownership of property between the husband and the wife, no joint titling of major assets (such as land or the marital home) between the husband and wife, and men's and women's shares of inheritance are not equal (IFC/World Bank 2012). The JNEP does not make mention of inheritance, access to land markets or other reforms to combat gender gaps in control over/access to productive resources.

Moreover, while Jordan does have laws mandating equal pay for equal work, there are no laws to mandate non-discrimination in hiring practices on the basis of gender, to protect employees from sexual harassment in the workplace, or to prevent an employer from asking questions about a prospective employee's family status during a job interview (IFC/World Bank 2012).

The issue of pay equity has also been raised, with aggregated data confirming a sizable wage gap between women and men. The gap is wider in the private sector (e.g., the average male wage is 1.24 times higher than the average female wage) than in the public sector (where the average male wage is 1.17 times the average female wage). Taking educational attainment into account, the wage gap is larger for university graduates than it is for graduates of community colleges, high school, or below (Government of Jordan 2012, p. 56). In an attempt to combat this trend, the government has launched the Jordanian National Steering Committee for Pay Equity (NSCPE) in July 2011, co-chaired by the Ministry of Labour and the Jordanian National Commission for Women, and includes representatives of workers' and employers' organizations, as well as of civil society organizations. The NSCPE's mandate is to promote cooperation among its members in implementing a pay equity national action plan and to coordinate activities aimed at achieving pay equity for work of equal value (ILO 2012j). The NSCPE is seen as the first step towards creating a strong institutional framework for action on pay equity in Jordan.

The ILO has undertaken a project titled “(Re)valuing Women's Work: A Pay Equity Pilot Project Initiative for Jordan” that aims to enhance the capacity of the Ministry of Labour to monitor and implement employment and migration policies and of the social partners to implement sound wage policies, working conditions and social protection for workers, including vulnerable groups, improved through the improvement of the legislative framework and its enforcement, and improved women's access to the labour market. This project proposes to contribute to the effective implementation of ILO's Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), as well as the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) in Jordan. In addition, plans include: (a) the greater coordination between the Ministry of Labour, the ILO and the Jordanian National Commission for Women, and (b) the establishment of a complaint bureau for women also at the Jordanian National Commission for Women (ILO 2011c, p. 59).

persons who are under probation or training”. The Committee must observe, however, that the above provisions fall short of effectively prohibiting discrimination on the grounds enumerated in *Article 1(1)(a)* and with respect to all aspects of employment and occupation. The Committee draws the Government's attention to the importance of reviewing continually the protection afforded by the national legislation to ensure that it remains appropriate and effective” (p. 525).

Further, wider provision of maternity insurance (discussed below) has been prioritized in the NEP in order to reduce discrimination, especially in the private sector.⁸⁵

Labour market policies

Jordan has experimented with a number of different types of labour market policies during the past decade, with notable successes and some failures.⁸⁶ Broadly speaking, the most successful instances of interventions have been derived from either: a. vocational and employability training programmes targeted towards specific sectors in which the sector representatives themselves are heavily involved in the design of the curriculum and hire their own graduates; or b. on-the-job training in which targeted fields and students are subsidized through basic salaries/vouchers for short periods ranging from six months to one year. While even the best of these programmes do not guarantee job placement, they can play a crucial role in subsidizing an employer's cost of training, and provide an incentive for the unemployed to get real life training experience and payment (Government of Jordan 2012, pp. 75-76).

Active labour market policies

Special youth employment measures – including education and vocational training mentioned previously, as well as employment services – have been a key component of the JNEP. Practically all active labour market programmes in Jordan, from training to microcredit, target the youth in some way or another – although it is rare that the gender of the beneficiaries is taken into account in the design or implementation of the programmes.

There has also been an effort to provide incentives and subsidies to hire those who are channelled through various employment and training funds, the agricultural sector or specific components in active labour market programmes. Most incentives and subsidies have centred on agriculture and construction in the hope that Jordanian job seekers would start replacing the large numbers of migrant workers employed in these sectors. Overall, there appears to be no targets or subsidies to encourage the hiring of women, although, perversely, the Ministry of Labour cooperation with the private sector is expected to secure jobs for 500 male nurses and 500 IT university graduates (ILO 2011c, p. 44).

Self-employment has been promoted by the government through both specialized vocational training and the expansion of microfinance opportunities – particularly for women. As part of the comprehensive vocational training provided by the government in 2010, 2,670 new trainees were expected to enrol in different training and employment programmes, including training programmes for wage employment and self-employment for females, and technical courses for new university graduates in the fields of nursing and information technology and communications.

Other targeted programmes such as public employment guarantee schemes, emergency public works, and other direct job creation schemes have not been recorded in either the NEP or the Global Job Pacts Country scan.

Passive labour policies

The government has not prioritized unemployment insurance or other types of income replacement schemes in the JNEP, although unemployment cash benefits were

⁸⁵ See ILO 2007b, pp. 21-23

⁸⁶ See Jordan's Global Jobs Pact Country Scan (ILO 2011c).

slated to be introduced in 2011 (GESS/ILO 2012)⁸⁷. The benefits are paid for up to 3 months with contributions of less than 180 months, or up to 6 months with contributions of 180 months or more. Seventy-five per cent of the covered wage is paid for the first month; 65 per cent for the second month; 55 per cent for the third month; and 45 per cent for the fourth to sixth months. More widely, though, due to the costs and lack of immediate results, Jordan has preferred to invest in interventions that facilitate access to employment, rather than those that do not encourage active job searching. Further, given that the employment challenge in Jordan affects largely the young population, who are mainly first-time jobseekers, many would not qualify for unemployment benefits based on their lack of previous employment history (Fortuny and Al Hussein 2010).

Notably, however, cash assistance programmes, under the auspices of the National Aid Fund offers social assistance to nearly 71,000 families, and the Government aims to strengthen that social safety net by improving the targeting mechanism of the cash assistance programmes. In the area of social assistance and social services, the Executive Programme 2011-2013 envisages around 60 programmes organized in 6 themes to be implemented mainly by the National Aid Fund, the Ministry of Social Development, the Supreme Council for Disabled Persons and the Zakat Fund (ILO 2011c, pp. 52-53). These social transfers, in cash and in kind, are designed to provide a minimum income and livelihood security. Social transfers include cash for basic health care, assistance for the unemployed and poor, child benefits, and basic universal pensions (old age and disability benefits) (ILO 2012j, p. 30). A wide range of reforms to social protection, many specifically impacting women, are discussed below.

Employment services

The Government has made an effort to both develop and reform employment services in order to ensure the availability of relevant statistical data, information and analyses to support the decision making of policy makers, investors, academic institutions, and job seekers. By developing legislation on information sharing and the right to obtain information, expanding job searches, employment services and counselling aimed at the unemployed, and encouraging the usage of modern means to connect job finders and suppliers, the Government has aimed to expand opportunities and services (Government of Jordan 2012). There have been several nascent attempts at expansion, notably through the National Employment Centre (ILO 2011c, p. 44); however, despite initial enthusiasm, this initiative was unsuccessful and has since closed down.

Many of the public employment services remain inefficient, loaded with outdated procedures and lack for IT support, while private ones concentrate on the recruitment of foreign workers (mostly domestic workers) and Jordanian workers abroad (Majcher-Teleon and Ben Slimène 2009). Change, although projected, has remained slow and fragmented.

⁸⁷ In May 2005, the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan launched the Global Campaign on the Extension of Social Security for all, through which it expressed its intention of extending social security to a wider range of the population and to extend its scope to further social security branches. This included the provision of unemployment benefits, slated to be implemented in 2011. As the Global Extension of Social Security website notes, however: “Unemployment benefit included in the social security insurance was designed by the SSC in consultation with the World Bank. It is currently being phased-in as a defined contribution scheme. The scheme works as a savings account which means that it lacks the redistribution element. This type of programme may provide some protection in case of unemployment to those workers who have built up sufficient savings in their individual accounts. In case the insured person has drawn more unemployment benefits than he or she contributed in the lifetime, upon retirement the pension will be adjusted downwards. In view of the ILO these two features are against international standards” (GESS/ILO 2012).

Despite changes at the Governorate level, women's mobility and access to information regarding employment opportunities has remained limited. Prospective female workers have less access to job opportunities outside their locality than male workers, as well as less access to information about job opportunities. Such information tends to flow through informal networks, which tend to be male dominated. Even with the advent of online job search programmes, women with no direct access to the internet (especially those in rural locales) can be at a disadvantage vis-à-vis men who might frequent internet cafés more easily. Better public transportation offering reliable regional services might partly address the issue of distance for some. Mobile phone job search services, increasingly common in the Arab region, would level the field in terms of access to information. As such, the JNEP Implementation Plan has put in place measures that will evaluate and expand employment services (both public and private), and prioritize the utilization of mobile phone-based job search programmes to facilitate access by women (Government of Jordan 2012). Options like the Electronic Labour Exchange⁸⁸, the Professional Career Counselling⁸⁹, and the Human Resources Information and Knowledge System⁹⁰ have proved attractive to women, given their easy online accessibility and anonymity.

Access to resources, MSMEs and business development services (BDS)

The growth of enterprises and entrepreneurial activities has been prioritized in the NEP, with a number of interventions to equalize women's access to productive resources. The provision of credit, support for MSMEs and home-based businesses, and technical support for start-ups and small businesses have all been expanded, although the specific gendered implications are still ambiguous.

Access to productive resources

As mentioned, the NEP does not make mention of inheritance, access to land markets or other reforms to combat gender gaps in control over/access to productive resources. Unequal inheritance practices and a lack of joint property ownership, engrained in religiously-based *Shar'ia* law, limit women's access to productive resources.

In regards to women's economic resources, however, the Government has prioritized the provision of credit, especially to MSMEs and entrepreneurs, and made microfinance and microcredit more widely available, particularly in rural areas.

MSMEs

Both the JNEP and the National Agenda have emphasized the need for an improved enabling environment for business and investment, with the objective of enhancing the competitiveness of the economy and creating jobs. The aim to improve technical support for start-ups and small and medium-sized businesses, including accounting, human resources, banking services and marketing, has been engrained in the JNEP (Government of Jordan 2012, p. 119). Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) represent 60 per cent of

⁸⁸ A free web-based employment service that matches employers and employees or jobseekers using technical internet tools.

⁸⁹ Increases the awareness of career counselling in educational institutions, developing tools and access to accurate labour market information which provides both counsellors and individuals with on-line career development.

⁹⁰ Aims at creating a specialised national labour market database, maintaining and updating it, publishing labour market and human resource development indicators, and coordinating among LMI producers and users.

the total private sector, and provide jobs to 37 per cent of the total people employed in Jordan. The actual and potential contribution of SMEs to job creation is considerable, with small new businesses serving as the largest single contributor to job creation during 2002-2007. As of 2008, there was a total of 146,707 SMEs in Jordan, providing employment to a total of 431,609 persons, only 14 per cent of which are women (ILO 2012j). Self-employed women in micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) account for only 6.5 per cent of female employment, far below the proportion of men as owners (20.6 per cent of employed males) (Government of Jordan 2012, p. 57).

Expanding opportunities for women to start their own businesses has a multiplier effect on employment of women; when women do start their own firms, they are more likely to employ other women (Jordan Human Development Report 2011). While traditional businesses of food, handicrafts, and beauty salons will continue to dominate, the challenge is to diversify the types of businesses women start. To that end, two Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) have been signed between the Development and Employment Fund (DEF), the National Company for Employment and Training and the National Training and Employment Project to encourage trainees to start-up businesses financed by the DEF. Moreover, the signed MoU with the National Training and Employment Project includes targeted training of women for self-employment, especially in remote and vulnerable areas (ILO 2011c, p. 47).

In general, the government has looked to facilitate the access of MSMEs to finance by creating a credit facility programme (credit line) to enable banks and specialized financial institutions to increase loans to MSMEs. There has also been proposed establishment of the Centre of Credit Information (Credit Bureau) which would expedite the process of MSMEs in obtaining credit (Government of Jordan 2012, p. 118). Expanding the registration of home-based businesses to all governorates of the Kingdom, expanding programmes funded by donors that provide technical support for start-ups, and reducing administrative barriers to small businesses have also been earmarked by the government.

Against this backdrop the ILO has worked closely with the Jordan Chamber of Industry to expand its SME support services, through its recently established SME Unit. The ILO will provide an assessment of the enabling environment for sustainable enterprises, looking at access to finance, SMEs in the industrial sector, and constraints to SMEs in terms of market expansion. Based on the findings of this assessment, the ILO will provide technical assistance to the Chamber to lead efforts in advocating for a better enabling environment for sustainable enterprises. This work will contribute to the formulation of a National SME Strategy for Jordan, to be done jointly with the Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation (JEDCO), allowing for great policy coherence in national policies, legislation and frameworks impacting the SME sector (ILO 2012j).

Microcredit and microfinance

The DEF, the specialized independent agency that focuses mainly on start-ups through microfinance, is the main microfinance institution in Jordan. It has provided financial support to around 48,000 Jordanians who initiated projects that created 65,000 work opportunities. It offers credit as well as insurance, capacity building and technical training, including accounting and management skills for entrepreneurs (Government of Jordan 2012, p. 47). Many other smaller microfinance institutions (MFIs) are project based or donor driven.

The demand for microcredit is expected to increase as a consequence of the economic slowdown. Indeed, since the 2009 financial crisis the DEF has seen an increase in applications by aspiring Jordanians to set up their own businesses – recording

an increase of 28 per cent in lending volume up to the first quarter of 2009 (ILO 2011c). The JNEP sites anecdotal evidence that every JD 2,500 (USD \$3,525) in microcredit creates one job (Government of Jordan 2012, p. 74).

According to the 2011 Arab Microfinance Regional Report (Sanabel 2011), women borrowers for micro projects represented over 70 per cent of total people who had access to microcredit facilities, with some programmes (including FINCA and Tamweelcom) lending to 97 per cent or more women. The JNEP tracks the number of microcredit borrowers and aims to more than double it by 2020 (Government of Jordan 2012), as well as setting a regulatory framework to permit the expansion of microfinance countrywide.

A notable microfinance programme is the MicroFund for Women, a non-profit that started in 1994 as a pilot program initiated by Save the Children. The company provides sustainable financial services to exclusively women micro-entrepreneurs in the form of group loans, individual loans and seasonal loans. As of 2011, the MicroFund for Women had 63,651 active borrowers, a gross loan portfolio of USD \$24.5 million and an average loan balance per borrower of USD \$385.60. Aside from loans, the Fund also provides micro insurance, credit and special youth savings – making it one of the most comprehensive and wide-reaching companies in the country (Isaia 2005; Sanabel 2011). Such programmes are designed to combat both unemployment and poverty, especially in rural areas and among women and youth.

The JNEP prioritizes increasing rates of microfinance and microcredit in the provinces with technical support in the production and marketing in partnership with the private sector (Government of Jordan 2012).

Social protection

Social protection policies and reforms are high on the government's agenda, with key areas of reforms including social insurance, social assistance and public health care. The JNEP has prioritized measures to ensure that all workers of the public and private sectors are obtaining social protection in terms of retirement, work injuries, health insurance, unemployment benefits, and maternity benefits as granted by labour laws and regulations⁹¹ – and many of these measures are specifically gender responsive. Given that the level of social protection is a prime reason for male and female youth to prefer public sector jobs over private sector jobs, and large private sector enterprises over small and micro enterprises, providing a universal social protection system would greatly reduce the market segmentation between the public and private sectors (Government of Jordan 2012).

A new Social Security Law was passed in April 2010 that made provisions for unemployment insurance, maternity insurance and increasing the coverage of the health insurance. The law plans to increase the social security coverage by including all companies regardless of their workforce size, while the new Provisional Amended Labour Law provides for covering agricultural workers and home workers, introducing benefits for the social partners, improving inspection procedures and enforcement without discrimination, and revisiting the fees for migrant workers (ILO 2011c).

⁹¹ See ILO 2011c, pp. 52-53 for a breakdown of the envisaged expenditure on social welfare 2011-13 by area, size and agency.

Maternity insurance

The Temporary Social Security Law No. 7 (2010) lays down the implementation of maternity insurance, valid after 2011. These maternity benefits include 10 weeks of wages, paid by the employer, through a 0.75 per cent payroll contribution paid by the employer on behalf of both male and female employees. Distributing the cost across women and men reduces the “per head” cost and effectively “socializes” the cost across gender, removing the incentive to discriminate in hiring decisions due to maternity benefits. The institutional framework goals are to establish a level playing field of social protection and access to insurance, independent of whether workers are in the public or private sector,⁹² and regardless of the size of the enterprise (Government of Jordan 2012, GESS/ILO 2012). These measures were designed to reduce discrimination against women, especially in the private sector, and enable more women to return to work after maternity leave.

The ILO carried out a feasibility study and a related financial assessment on the establishment of a maternity insurance scheme in Jordan (ILO 2007b). The ILO also assisted in the drafting of the legislation. However, as the scheme is not yet fully in compliance with the ILO social security standards, the ILO is now working with the Jordanian Social Security Corporation (SSC) to bring the scheme into accordance with international requirements, particularly extending the paid leave period from 10 weeks to 12 weeks and eliminating the limitation of paid maternity leave to four deliveries. The aim is to have the revisions of the maternity insurance scheme adopted by parliament along with the Temporary Social Security Law in 2013.

Under Jordanian labour laws, however, women are guaranteed the right to return to the same job after maternity leave. Paternity leave or joint parental leave is not provided by law, however, nor is flexible or part-time work schedules (IFC/World Bank 2012). Childcare is implicitly the full responsibility of the mother.

Childcare assistance

Research has suggested that for women, getting their first job in the private sector depends partly on their marital status: 72 per cent of single women get their first job in the private sector, compared to 57 per cent of married women. While this probably reflects preferences by women workers for public sector jobs which offer more benefits to mothers (as previously discussed), it also demonstrates the preference of private employers not to hire married women – most often because of their child bearing and childcare responsibilities (Government of Jordan 2012). Women with children face the constraint of adequate and affordable childcare in case they decide to work outside the home, and this dilemma often reduces the number of women who work, the duration of time during which they work and the type/sector of employment they undertake.

The JNEP has endeavoured to establish services (run by a private non-profit organization) that will provide care and education for children in facilities provided by public and private sector employers. Expanding the compulsory preschool education programme to five-year olds in the next four to five years, and to four-year olds in the next decade, will provide a healthy learning environment for the children, provide job opportunities for women in the education sector, and allow greater flexibility for working mothers (Government of Jordan 2012 pp. 55-56). Further, the establishment of the National Committee on Workplace Solutions to Child Care (ILO 2012j, p. 28) may

⁹² Married females can be seen as “less appealing” by the private sector, and if hired, they face the risk of being laid off or “encouraged” to quit before delivery (Government of Jordan 2012, p. 55).

be a step forward in the realization of these plans, and demonstrates a commitment by the Government to providing services for women.

Health insurance

While the extension of social security coverage, maternity benefits insurance and creation of an unemployment fund were underway in 2011, health insurance for private sector workers remains a major gap. A draft health insurance scheme was prepared by the Social Security Corporation (SSC) to cover all social security contributors not covered by public or private schemes.⁹³ The SSC proposed an independent health fund (so as not to subject other schemes to additional financial risks), financed by payroll deductions of 5 to 6 per cent shared by employers and employees (two-thirds and one-third, respectively); the scheme would realize cost reductions through agreements with health providers based on economies of scale. Implementing such a scheme, whether offered by the SSC or another public entity, should be a priority if the overall vision of the JNEP is to be realized. This plan would gradually make compulsory health insurance coverage for all employees working in companies not covered by any insurance plan.

While expansion of social security coverage, including maternity and unemployment benefits, is expected to reach 75 per cent of workers by 2014 (from about 50 per cent in 2009), a health insurance scheme would have upfront requirements in terms of systems, procedures, and protocols, and thus needs to be introduced gradually. Thus, it is not expected to reach the 75 per cent target until the medium term (Government of Jordan 2012).

Social Protection Floor

The Social Protection Floor (SPF) initiative in Jordan emanates from a global recognition that social security is a human right, and a social and economic necessity.⁹⁴ The ILO began raising awareness around the SPF in Jordan in June 2011, subsequent to the 100th session of the International Labour Conference, and its conclusions on social protection. A UN Inter-Agency Task Force for Jordan, co-led by the ILO, UNICEF, and WHO, was put in place in July 2011.

To inform policy decision-making, a Rapid SPF Cost Assessment was to be conducted in 2011 to evaluate the cost of policy options, and evaluate the long-term financial sustainability of the SPF. Once national consensus is garnered around a specific SPF framework, the ILO will build national technical capacities for the management, administration and implementation of the elements of the SPF. The ILO will also develop a series of communications products on the social security reforms package to promote a greater understanding and encourage national ownership of the Social Protection Floor (ILO 2012j).

Social dialogue

Jordan has made some tangible achievements in the direction of increased social dialogue in recent years. Milestones include the establishment of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 2009 to facilitate dialogue on economic and social policies, followed by the official endorsement of the National Tripartite Labour Committee – representing the business sector, labour union representatives and the government - in

⁹³ A detailed summary of health insurance options considered by the Social Security Corporation in 2009 is included in the NEP, Appendix 13 (Government of Jordan 2012, p. 161).

⁹⁴ See “Social Protection Floor for a Fair and Inclusive Globalization” (ILO 2011d).

Jordanian labour law in 2010. These tripartite social dialogue platforms, however, remain weak and largely inactive.

Despite recent advancements, there are real legal restrictions on freedom of association and social dialogue in Jordan. Restrictions on freedom of association in Jordan are enshrined in law, including the prohibition on public sector workers to organize and the inability of non-Jordanians to establish trade unions. Otherwise only one trade union may be established in any given sector, for which the GFJTU is responsible for drafting the internal bylaws. Social dialogue in Jordan has, as a result, historically suffered from weak institutional capacity of the social partners, and similarly weak social dialogue platforms.⁹⁵

At the forefront of populist economic demands are higher salaries, freedom of association and jobs. Amidst a continued increase in the cost of living, the controversy over the minimum wage has come to the forefront of workers' demands. In response to popular demands, the minimum wage was successfully increased to 190 JD (USD \$268) per month in December 2011. The decision to increase the minimum wage, however, excludes non-Jordanians, whose minimum wage remains unchanged – a discriminatory policy which has not yet been addressed by the Government.

Women have historically played a small role in social dialogue in Jordan, especially in positions of leadership. The Jordanian Women's Union is one of the few representative bodies for women workers, with approximately 7,000 active female members from all areas of Jordan. While it is notable that a number of the technical team members for the formulation process of the JNEP were women (especially from the ECOSOC Representatives of Employers and Representatives of Workers and Trade Unions), there still remains a gap in women's participation within workers' and employers' organizations – especially in roles of leadership.

JNEP formulation, implementation, monitoring and budgeting

Jordan's National Employment Strategy was constructed with the assistance of a formidable technical team, with representatives from a number of ministries, the Department of Statistics, the Chamber of Industry, the Chamber of Commerce, representatives from the ECOSOC (Representatives of Employers and Representatives of Workers and Trade Unions), civil society, the ILO, World Bank and EU, among others.⁹⁶ The prioritization of tripartite social dialogue is evident in the final product, and the overall process of JNEP formulation, implementation and monitoring can be considered fairly gender responsive.

In conjunction with the JNEP, the technical team laid out a comprehensive Strategy Action Plan (Government of Jordan 2012, pp. 117-128) and an Implementation Plan (*ibid.* pp. 129-137), with detail objectives, constraints, and proposed projects to address objectives/constraints, the responsible entity, and a timeframe for action. Combined with the comprehensive set of target indicators established in the National Agenda and tracked by the Department of Statistics, the potential for the coordination and implementation of specific actions seems strong.

The JNEP also lays out a National Employment Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Matrix (*ibid.*, pp. 162-165) that includes objectives and proposed indicators, many of

⁹⁵ See ILO's Global Jobs Pact Country Scan (2011c) pp. 64-66 and ILO's Decent Work Country Programme (2012i) pp. 11-12 and 26-27

⁹⁶ For a full list, see Government of Jordan 2012, pp. 94-56.

which contain sex/gender disaggregation. Monitoring and evaluation is to be carried out by the Governmental Administrative Unit and the Delivery Unit, with an additional independent evaluation carried out by the National Centre for Human Resource Development. The JNEP is envisioned to be completely updated every three years, which will require evaluating the implementation experience as well as taking into consideration various changes in social, economic, and political factors that affect the conception of the NES itself (Government of Jordan 2012, p. xii).

The JNEP itself does not include a budget for its activities. However, the Global Jobs Pact Country Scan provides a comprehensive list of expenditures on employment, training and social welfare (ILO 2011c, pp. 31-32; 52-53).

Conclusions

The JNEP, in combination with the National Agenda, the ILO's Global Jobs Pact Country Scan and the Decent Work Country Programme, have defined the priorities of the Jordanian government in the short-, medium- and long-term to create an agenda that will both improve the outcomes of the labour market and meet the needs of the Jordanian citizens. On paper, the JNEP is comprehensive and gender responsive in nearly every category of analysis, with demonstrative qualitative and quantitative analysis of the gendered impacts of policies on society. If successful, this strategy could redefine labour, employment and growth in both Jordan and the region.

However, the biggest concern that arises from a thorough reading of the policies is the capacity of the government and stakeholders to implement such gender responsive policies. Despite proactive and conscientious policies over the last decade, there have been very few tangible changes on the ground in terms of gender equitable outcomes. To the contrary, high unemployment persists, gender gaps in performance remain, and traditional patriarchal attitudes persevere, despite seemingly "good" policies. This pattern raises interesting questions regarding the embeddedness of gender transformation within society: in short, at what point do gendered societal attitudes change? Do changes come from the top down or from the bottom up? And what policies and measures are necessary to bring about such societal change?

Jordan is a unique case study to analyse the impact of employment policies on the ground, at both the micro- and mezzo-level and over time. With so many ministries, departments and initiatives involved in the goal of gender equitable employment outcomes, as well as the degree of external technical assistance from the ILO, World Bank, EU and others, there should be a fair amount of change in a relatively short period of time. If this ends up not to be the case, it will be equally motivating to understand why that is. In the meantime social justice, decent jobs and respect for fundamental rights (of both women and men) must remain at the heart of Jordan's employment policies for the foreseeable future.

V. Conclusions

This report makes clear that labour and employment policies and issues are gendered in nature. A complex series of economic, demographic and behavioural factors contribute to persistent and increasing gender gaps in the labour market. Consequently, proactive and remedial national employment policies can reverse negative trends and help to include gender equality in employment outcomes at the national level.

Gender relations play an important role in the division of labour, access to productive resources, and the overall distribution of work, income and wealth. As such, if NEPs are to be inclusive and successful in generating growth, they must be linked to the household, the family and a larger welfare system. Overall, gender equality must be at the centre of all productive employment and decent work for men and women. Improving women's position in the labour market and promoting a more effective and holistic approach to employment policies and programmes must be placed at the heart of any NEP in the future.

The results of this study reveal some global trends, as well as some strong “good practices” from the case studies of Serbia, the Comoros, the Republic of Korea and Jordan. Perhaps the strongest message that comes out from the report is that strong economic performance or high levels of human development is not necessary or sufficient to promote gender equitable outcomes. Gender equality in capabilities and access to opportunities can accelerate economic growth; however, economic growth alone is not enough to ensure significant progress in including important dimensions of women's economic empowerment and employment in employment policies. The Comoros is a perfect example: a poor country with low development indicators, emerging from decades of conflict, the country has nevertheless promulgated a gender responsive NEP that addresses many of the challenges of gendered employment patterns, high female unemployment and low levels of skills and education. While the policy is far from perfect, the Comoros demonstrates that gender responsive national employment policies do not need to be the exclusive privilege of rich countries. To the contrary, other surveyed countries such as China and even the Republic of Korea and Serbia show that even richer countries still have their fair share of problems in embedding an agenda of decent work and gender equality in employment policies at the national level.

This report shows that overall, the degree to which ILO priorities have been embedded within policy formulation is quite strong. The Decent Work Agenda characterized by the prioritization of promoting decent and productive employment, guaranteeing rights at work, expanding social protection and promoting social dialogue is evident in many of the NEPs analyzed. Further, the prioritization of anti-discrimination legislation at the national level is unmistakable, and there appears to be a strong commitment to promoting gender equality in most countries under review. Yet, there are many challenges, misconceptions and obstacles that prevent policy makers from designing effective, gender sensitive employment policies and strategies for employment.

Globally, there is a habitual separation of economic and social policies, with gender issues often relegated to under-resourced and under-prioritized social policy. There is often an assumption that pro-growth employment policies will have, as a by-product of growth, an implicitly social agenda that will benefit the poor and marginalized – which is not always the case. Further, many of the mechanisms used to promote employment fail to take into account the specific and different needs of women and men and gender concerns.

- Employment data is often not sex-disaggregated;

- Gender blind macroeconomic policies do not recognize the gendered division of household work, nor do they value unpaid care work;
- Education, skills and human resources development do not necessarily result in increased participation of women in the labour market;
- Social protections, especially old age pension and health insurance, remain mostly linked to full-time, regular and long-term employment, significantly disadvantaging women who often work in short-term, precarious or informal jobs, and cumulatively less time in their lives than men;
- Women are more constrained by unequal access to productive and other resources, as well as employment services;
- Gender-based discrimination in the labour market persists, both in terms of access and pay; and
- Women continue to bear the brunt of unpaid care work, bearing and caring young children.

As a result, it becomes clear that while integrating the Decent Work Agenda does facilitate a more gender responsive, socially equitable policy environment, these measures alone may not be sufficient to guarantee that states adopt and implement employment policies for the benefit of all, both men and women.

Further, as the data show, it is imperative that employment policy-making includes a gender lens. Within policy formation, tripartite social dialogue and bipartite collective bargaining are essential tools to advance gender equality in the world of work. Gender equality is still rare in national dialogues, as well as in collective agreements that are negotiated at sectoral and enterprise levels. Nonetheless, it is clear from the data that the promotion of gender equality and social dialogue are inextricably linked and mutually beneficial, both in policy formation and policy implementation.

The four country cases raise interesting trends that speak to larger themes of equality of employment policies and outcomes:

- Serbia has close links to the European Union Framework for Employment and strong domestic prioritization of equality in stimulating employment, leading to gender sensitive budgeting, strong labour laws that provide for unemployment insurance and pension, and a number of key social reforms that provide services to marginalized populations. This kind of external support and gender equitable norm-setting helps to promote a linked and proactive agenda of gendered employment policies and socially equitable social policies.
- The Comoros have prevailed over budgetary constraints and internal conflict to expand microfinance and microcredit opportunities to vulnerable populations and to propose innovative entrepreneurship programmes for women. A strong legislative framework of labour standards has also strengthened the NEP. Utilizing the human resources available, including a large proportion of young and workers eager to contribute has helped to re-energize the economy after periods of crisis.
- The Republic of Korea has striven for equality of employment outcomes by promoting gender positive measures to combat discrimination and labour market segmentation. Reforms to technical and vocational education, youth training opportunities and innovative social protection programmes have helped to promote both growth and equality. Despite its more wealthy status, the Republic of Korea has demonstrated the benefits of redistribution and universalization to promote growth and equality for vulnerable populations.
- Jordan has a long-standing relationship with the ILO and has led the region in employment reforms. Gender responsive employment services and employment

targets for women, facilitated by a comprehensive system of sex-disaggregated data collection, have allowed for directed and flexible responses to labour market concerns. Gendered social protections including childcare assistance and maternity insurance have helped to overcome cultural and economic barriers to women's active participation in the labour market, and transparency in policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation has allowed for on-going policy transformation.

Overall, data shows that if NEPs are to be inclusive and successful in generating growth, they must be linked to the household, the family and a larger welfare system. Overall, gender equality must be at the centre of all productive employment and decent work for women and men. Improving women's position in the labour market and promoting a more effective and holistic approach to employment policies and programmes must be placed at the heart of any NEP in the future.

VI. Policy recommendations

What follows are a series of policies and practices that should help to improve the gender responsive nature of national employment policies, both in terms of employment outcomes and overall gender transformation within society. The ILO's Guidelines on Gender in Employment Policies (ILO 2009b) provide a number of international policy instruments and frameworks that help countries to mainstream gender within their poverty reduction, development and employment strategies.

The focus of **macroeconomic policy** should be on the generation of decent work and on improving social conditions, not exclusively income growth:

Orthodox economic rationale has often assumed a "trickle down" effect, in which policies are targeted to the perceived stronger economic sectors with benefits eventually reaching the more vulnerable segments of society including marginalised women. In contrast, a policy framework embedded within a Decent Work agenda and capabilities approach establishes that rather than being a by-product of growth, equality measures are instrumental in creating new opportunities and growth. Within such a framework, policy makers no longer need to grapple with perceived trade-offs between equity and efficiency since there are strong synergetic links between the two. Addressing decent work deficits requires a comprehensive approach with strong gender dimensions in areas such as governance and rights, economic upgrading, organizing and mobilizing. Further, legislation on minimum wage (indexed to inflation) and anti-discrimination, as well as the regulation of working conditions, must be prioritized (Elson 2002; ILO et al. 2012; Damill et al. 2012). However, these policies require greater regulatory capacity on the part of the state and workers' and employers' organizations. While some of the surveyed countries have prioritized macroeconomic policies that are gender responsive (i.e. policies that show an understanding of the interdependency of paid [productive] and unpaid [reproductive] work), in general policy makers will have to pay particular attention to the agricultural sector, public investments in the social sectors, and, most importantly, the employment content of growth in order to achieve inclusive development paths.

Employment policies should promote **both macroeconomic stability and the capability of workers** to capture productivity gains:

Classical economic models often do not recognize power relations and a gender division of labour in the household, the labour market or the larger economy. This results in gender blind economic policies that often negatively impact women. Tightening monetary and fiscal policies, and free trade and capital flows has not

proved conducive for either widespread development or extensive improvements in well-being and gender equality. There is growing support for alternative macroeconomic policies that, while aiming for macroeconomic stability, take more heed of development and social goals. This must include monetary and fiscal policies that are more expansionary, as well as taxation policies that provide governments with adequate revenues to fund social expenditures. If economic growth is to be broadly shared, it is necessary to introduce a set of labour market policies and related interventions that can affect wages and working conditions in diverse employment situations, and rectify gender imbalances and discriminatory practices. This also must include increasing women's access to productive resources, land, wealth, capital, information, jobs, networks and technology.

Social protection policies and programmes should address workers' living standards and economic security:

Access to social protection mechanisms including health services, maternity benefits, pension and cash transfers must be foremost on the agenda of governments, workers' organizations, employers' organizations and civil society. However, the way in which some social protection measures are designed and implemented can obstruct women's access to them. This is especially true with social insurance programmes that are linked to formal employment, such as pension or health care. Assuming full-time, formal, life-long employment as the norm implicitly discriminates against women and can disadvantage the vast majority in the long term. By making social insurance programmes more inclusive of women by making affiliation mandatory and by partially subsidizing contributions, social protection can be universalized more successfully. Pension programmes can also be made more inclusive by creating or strengthening a government-financed solidarity pillar to enhance the pensions of workers with some contributions but low pensions, as well as through non-contributory social assistance pensions – as is the case in the Republic of Korea.

Social assistance programmes should be targeted to women, where appropriate, to improve social outcomes at the family level:

Social assistance programmes such as cash transfer schemes targeted to women (on behalf of their children), which have been extended in many of the countries surveyed in this report, can act as a useful tool for social protection. The design needs to take into account gender stereotypes so as to avoid a “gender trap”, thus burdening women even more and demonizing men. While cash transfers can enhance children's access to public services, the quality of those services should be constantly evaluated and improved through adequate state funding and regulation. Most importantly, social assistance programmes such as cash transfer schemes should be seen as one component of a much broader set of social protection instruments, rather than a panacea for women's economic and social empowerment.

Considerations should be made to **value women's unpaid work** by balancing the provision of unpaid work and paid labour:

If gender inequalities in labour markets are to be rectified, society as a whole has to seek specific means of both progressing toward a better balance between the provision of unpaid reproductive work and paid labour, and facilitating greater gender equality in both domains. This means investing in well-functioning and accessible public health, education and care services that can also become a source of decent employment; broad-based and redistributive social insurance programmes; and public provision of a range of complementary goods and services such as clean water, subsidized food items, sanitation, electricity, transport and housing. In addition, the provision of subsidized

flexible working hours, parental leave (split between parents) and the provision of good quality accessible care services can give women the option of engaging in paid work. NEPs and associated macro- and microeconomic policies should prioritize the provision of services that reduce the gendered “liability” of unpaid care work on female workers.

Policies should **measure women’s work, both paid and unpaid**, requiring comprehensive sex-disaggregated data:

One of the persistent challenges and obstacles that prevent policy makers’ from designing effective, gender sensitive strategies is the issue of development and utilization of sex disaggregated data and the development of indicators. Indeed, gender sensitive measurements are critical for building the case for taking gender (in)equality seriously, for enabling better planning and actions. Measuring change means tracking the degree to which, and in what way, changes take place over time. From a gender perspective, measurements of change might address changes in the relations between women and men, changes in the outcomes of a particular policy, programme or activity for women and men, or changes in the status or situation of men and women with regards to a particular issue such as levels of poverty or economic participation. A poignant example is the time use survey undertaken in China by Dong and An (2012) which shows the tension between paid and unpaid work, as well as the economic liability that market reforms have had on the provision of care. The data from China’s first large-scale time use survey in 2008 has been invaluable not only in academic studies, but also in helping policy makers to better understand trends which limit women’s access to employment.

Reviewing the gender dimensions of national employment policies and strategies is just the first step in understanding the themes, trends and anomalies on the ground:

This report has addressed only policy instruments, including how and the degree to which each NEP incorporates gender responsive interventions and gender equality concerns. To date, the ILO has not been strongly involved in supporting countries to keep track of policy impacts. A useful next step in the research would be to analyze the results of each policy on the ground in order to see the degree to which there is a gap between policy documents, implementation and outcomes. Such an intervention would require the collaboration of a number of key actors in each target country, as well as a concerted effort to track qualitative and quantitative indicators. It could be resource-heavy yet it would be an important future means to understand gender egalitarian policy change.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Gendered Considerations of NEPs

Scope for action	Considerations	Benin	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Burkina Faso	Cameroon	China	Comoros	Honduras	Iraq	Jordan	Liberia	Macedonia, FYR	Madagascar	Malawi	Moldova	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	Occupied Palestinian	Republic of Korea	Senegal	Serbia	Seychelles	Tanzania, United	Uganda
Organization of common interest groups	Does the policy guarantee freedom of association/collective bargaining?						*	*			*		*		*		*		*	*			*	*	
	Does the policy promote institution building?	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
	Ministry/institution in charge of employment			*	*		*	*	*		*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
	Trade unions	*	*	*	*		*	*	*		*		*	*	*			*	*	*		*	*	*	
	Employers' organizations		*				*	*	*		*		*	*	*			*	*	*		*	*	*	
	Does the policy promote social dialogue?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Development of marketable skills	Does the policy include provision for skills development?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Workers' skills development, skills upgrading and re-skilling	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Targets for women?		*	*	*		*		*	*	*	*			*		*			*	*	*	*		
	Appropriate education skills and opportunities to participate in the labour market	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Targets for women?		*	*			*			*		*	*		*	*				*		*	*		
	Skills for technological change	*	*	*	*		*	*		*		*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
	Targets for women?		*				*						*						*						
	Skills for entrepreneurship	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Targets for women?		*		*		*		*	*					*				*	*		*	*		
	Has there been reform or development of employment services?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Public employment services?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

	Private employment services?					*	*		*				*	*	*					*		*	*	*	
	Collaborative employment services?	*	*	*	*		*			*	*		*		*				*	*	*	*	*		

Scope for action	Considerations	Benin	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Burkina Faso	Cameroon	China	Comoros	Honduras	Iraq	Jordan	Liberia	Macedonia, FYR	Madagascar	Malawi	Moldova	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	Occupied Palestinian	Republic of Korea	Senegal	Serbia	Seychelles	Tanzania, United Republic of	Uganda
Demand side considerations	Does the policy include proactive changes to monetary policies?		*	*	*		*	*	*	*		*		*				*					*		
	Gendered implications?								*	*															
	Does the policy include proactive changes to fiscal policies?		*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
	Gendered implications?		*							*					*										
	Does the policy include proactive changes to financial policies?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Gendered implications?	*	*				*													*					
	Does the policy include proactive changes to investment policies and investment climate, including infrastructure?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*
	Gendered implications?		*				*		*																
	Does the policy include proactive changes to trade and regional integration?	*	*	*		*	*	*		*		*	*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Gendered implications?		*				*															*			
	Has foreign direct investment been prioritized?		*	*			*	*	*	*			*	*		*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*
	Have efforts been made to set labour standards and wages?							*		*			*	*	*		*			*	*		*		*
	Specific gender equality consideration?																			*					
	Does the policy disaggregate employment sector and sub-sector by sex?		*							*	*			*						*	*	*			*
	Has there been a focus on sectoral policies that employ women?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Agriculture	*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*			*	*		*	*	*	*	*
Industry	*	*	*			*	*		*	*		*		*			*	*		*	*		*	
Services	*	*			*	*			*	*		*		*			*	*		*	*	*	*	*
Does the policy promote high labour absorbing sectors and methods of production?		*	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*
Specific gender equality consideration?									*										*	*	*			
Does the policy include employment targets for women?						*			*		*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		*			
Targets for employment by status in employment								*	*												*			
Targets for employment-to-population ratio		*							*												*			
Targets for informal employment								*	*					*			*				*			
Targets for job creation		*	*						*	*			*								*			

Scope for action	Considerations	Benin	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Burkina Faso	Cameroon	China	Comoros	Honduras	Iraq	Jordan	Liberia	Macedonia, FYR	Madagascar	Malawi	Moldova	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	Occupied Palestinian	Republic of Korea	Senegal	Serbia	Seychelles	Tanzania, United Republic of	Uganda
	Targets for labour force participation rate		*							*									*						
	Targets for share of wage employment in non-agricultural employment									*		*										*			
	Targets for unemployment by level of education																								
	Targets for unemployment rate		*						*	*	*	*	*		*				*			*			
	Other targets		*								*		*						*						
	Is there a goal to reduce low pay rates among women?									*										*	*				*
	Is there a goal to life working poor women out of poverty?	*						*			*														*
	Is there a goal to reduce excessive working hours for women?													*						*					
	Is there a goal to reduce time-related underemployment rates among women?													*											
	Does the policy include provision for development of financial sector (credit, non-wage labour costs)?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Subsidies		*			*			*	*					*			*		*					*
	Tax reductions for the poor		*			*			*			*	*		*					*		*			
	Adjusted rates of interest		*						*	*		*	*			*		*				*			
	Support regulatory environment conducive to job creation	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Specific to women?		*	*			*		*				*		*				*	*					
	Promote good workplace and corporate social responsibility						*	*	*			*	*		*		*			*	*				

Labour market policies	Does the policy promote specific interventions to help the unemployed find work?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Job orientation measures	*	*		*	*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
	Targets for women?		*				*					*		*					*		*			*	
	Self-employment		*		*	*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	
	Targets for women?		*									*		*				*							
	Public works		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			*
	Targets for women?														*										
	Special youth employment measures	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Scope for action	Considerations	Benin	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Burkina Faso	Cameroon	China	Comoros	Honduras	Iraq	Jordan	Liberia	Macedonia, FYR	Madagascar	Malawi	Moldova	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	Occupied Palestinian	Republic of Korea	Senegal	Serbia	Seychelles	Tanzania, United Republic of	Uganda
Labour market policies	Targets for women?		*	*			*						*	*	*	*		*		*	*				*
	Incentives/subsidies to hire	*	*			*	*	*	*	*			*	*	*	*		*		*	*				*
	Targets for women?													*					*					*	
	Skills development/upgrading/re-skilling	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Targets for women?		*				*			*				*					*			*			
	Does the policy promote interventions to provide income replacement to the unemployed?		*			*		*							*				*			*			
	Unemployment benefit schemes		*												*				*			*			
	Targets for women?																								
Discrimination in recruitment, hiring and treatment	Does the policy address gender as a cross-cutting issue?	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Does the state have a national non-discrimination law?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*
	Has the state signed the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*
	Has the state signed the Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value, 1951 (No. 100)?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*
	Does the policy address occupational segregation by sex?	*	*	*						*				*											*
	Does the policy address share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector?													*								*		*	
	Does the policy address the gender wage gap?		*							*				*	*					*		*			*

	Other?								*												*			
	Are systems of quotas or preferential hiring for women utilized?							*					*			*			*		*	*	*	
	Public employment?							*														*	*	
	Private employment?																				*		*	
Decent work deficits	Does the policy promote establish a legislative framework of labour standards?		*	*		*	*	*					*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*
	Minimum working age			*		*							*						*					
	Maximum hours and overtime			*		*												*		*				
	Labour contracts			*		*								*							*			
	Industrial relations			*		*	*						*	*				*				*	*	*

Scope for action	Considerations	Benin	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Burkina Faso	Cameroon	China	Comoros	Honduras	Iraq	Jordan	Liberia	Macedonia,	Madagascar	Malawi	Moldova	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	Occupied Palestinian	Republic of Korea	Senegal	Serbia	Seychelles	Tanzania, United	Uganda
Decent work deficits	Protections for pregnant women/new mothers		*					*	*	*					*					*					*
	Does the policy address gaps labour productivity?			*				*			*			*								*		*	*
	Does the policy address gaps in education of the adult population?	*	*	*						*								*							
	Does the policy address income inequality?								*	*					*					*					*
	Does the policy address gaps in the labour share in GDP?							*																	
	Does the policy address gaps in skills, education and training related indicators?	*	*	*				*		*		*				*	*		*	*	*	*	*		
Work-family balance	Does the policy make provisions for professional care facilities for children, elders, sick and disabled?									*		*			*		*			**		*			
	Does the policy include consideration for flex-time/part-time work?					*			*	*					*					*		*			
	Are gendered social protections/safety nets provided by the state?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	**	*	*	*	*	*
	Preventing AIDS at work	*		*	*		*				*	*	*	*		*	*							*	*
	Health and safety at work				*		*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*	*
	Social security	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*		*		*	*		*		*	*
	Basic health care		*				*					*	*							*					
	Cash transfer schemes										*														*
	Extending social protection for informal workers	*	*	*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*			*	*			*		*		*	
	Family benefits to facilitate children's school attendance		*					*		*		*			*					*		*			
	Maternity protection		*			*				*		*	*		*		*			*			*		

	Other	*	**		*					*	*	*			*					**		*	*		*
	Does the policy include provisions for parental leave?		*						*						*					*			*		
Access to resources	Is there legislation to combat gender gaps in control over/access to productive resources?	*		*			*			*	*		*	*						*		*			
	Inheritance practices																								
	Access to land markets			*							*		*												
	Land reform to increase equal access to land												*												
	Other	*					*				*		*							*		*			

Scope for action	Considerations	Benin	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Burkina Faso	Cameroon	China	Comoros	Honduras	Iraq	Jordan	Liberia	Macedonia,	Madagascar	Malawi	Moldova	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	Occupied Palestinian	of Republic Korea	Senegal	Serbia	Seychelles	Tanzania, United	Uganda
Access to resources	Has the policy development utilized VCA?			*	*			*		*	*		*	*				*			*			*	*
	Has there been a particular gender lens?																								
	Does the policy prioritize a market assessment of skills in demand?			*	*	*	*	*	*		*		*		*			*	*			*			
	Does the policy promote trade policies that take into account the gender impacts on local producers?			*			*													*					
	Preferential grants for women			*														*		*					
	Supporting women producers in design, quality control and marketing strategies?			*			*													*					
	Developing fair-trade initiatives targeting women																			*					
Access to finance and business development services (BDS)	Does the policy promote institution building?		*	*	*		*	*	*	*			*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*		*	
	Trade unions		*	*	*				*				*	*	*			*	*	*		*		*	
	Employer organizations		*	*	*				*				*	*	*				*	*				*	
	Networks of women entrepreneurs			*			*								*										
	Does the policy encourage the mobilization and representation of vulnerable groups (i.e. informal workers)?	*		*			*	*			*		*	*			*	*			*				*
	Does the policy help to link women to trade and export networks, either domestically, regionally or internationally?				*		*	*				*	*					*	*	*					
Support for women	Does the policy include promote specific measure to generate new enterprise growth?		*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*

Subsidies for new enterprises	*	*			*	*		*	*		*								*					
Tax reductions or reductions for the poor		*		*	*			*			*	*		*					*		*			*
Tax relief for childcare											*													
Individual tax structures for women																								
Microfinance institutions	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*	*	*		*			*		*	*	*
Support regulatory environment conducive to job creation	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*
Specific to women?						*			*					*							*			
Does the policy target groups of enterprises and entrepreneurs?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
SMES	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	*	*	*
MNEs									*				*	*										

Scope for action	Considerations	Benin	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Burkina Faso	Cameroon	China	Comoros	Honduras	Iraq	Jordan	Liberia	Macedonia,	Madagascar	Malawi	Moldova	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	Occupied Palestinian	Republic of Korea	Senegal	Serbia	Seychelles	Tanzania, United	Uganda
Support for women and youth entrepreneurs	Cooperatives	*		*			*	*		*			*		*	*		*	*		*	*			
	Entrepreneurs in the informal economy	*	*	*	*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*		*		*			*			*	
	Other	*			*		*		*	*			*					*		*		*	*	*	
	Does the policy explicitly provide support for programmes for women and youth entrepreneurs?	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Does the policy include provisions to combat hostility towards women undertaking non-traditional work?	*					*			*					*		*						*		
	Does the policy make provisions for non-literate populations?	*		*			*				*		*	*							*	*	*		
Provisions for unpaid care work	Does the policy include data from time use surveys?				*		*							*						*	*			*	*
	Does the policy include provisions for social protections to reduce the burden of unpaid work (cash transfers, pension, health insurance)?	*	*		*			*		*		*	*		*					**	*	*			*
	Does the policy give consideration to the creation of public infrastructure to reduce time poverty?	*			*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*		*	*	*
	Affordable transport and communication	*			*		*		*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*					*	*	*
	Secure shelter							*							*			*					*		
	Adequate water supply and sanitation				*					*			*	*	*		*	*		*			*		
	Clean, affordable energy						*	*					*	*	*			*					*	*	

Policy formulation process	Was the NEP formulated with ILO support?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		*	*		*		*	*	*
	Did the formulation process include dialogue/consultations with a variety of actors?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Civil society groups					*				*	*		*	*				*		*	*	*	*		*
	Employers' organizations		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Sectoral ministries		*	*	*		*	*	*	*			*	*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Trade unions		*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	UN agencies							*		*		*	*							*					
	Did the process of policy formation include gender in a meaningful capacity?		*	*			*			*			*	*						*	*	*	*		*
	At the national level		*	*			*			*										*			*		*
	At the regional level																								
	At the local level																								
	Who participated in the dialogue/consultation process?		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Do the goal(s) of the NEP include equal opportunity?		*	*		*	*	*	*	*			*		*		*		*	*	*	*	*		*

Scope for action	Considerations	Benin	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Burkina Faso	Cameroon	China	Comoros	Honduras	Iraq	Jordan	Liberia	Macedonia,	Madagascar	Malawi	Moldova	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	Occupied Palestinian	Republic of Korea	Senegal	Serbia	Seychelles	Tanzania, United	Uganda	
Policy formulation process	Ensure equal opportunities/ prevent discrimination in employment		*	*			*								*		*		*	*		*	*	*	*	
	Protection of workers' rights								*										*					*		
	Reduction of unemployment		*																*	*	*	*	*	*		
	Social inclusion		*			*		*		*		*			*	*			*	*	*	*		*		
	Other		*	*			*			*		*	*		*				*	*		*		*	*	
	Who was the lead actor in formulating the NEP?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Policy coordination and implementation	Does the NEP provide for a national action plan?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*		*	*	*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	
	Regional action plan?							*					*									*				
	Does the NEP provide for any organization and institutional framework for coordinating/piloting the NEP?		*			*	*	*	*	*		*	*		*			*		*	*	*	*		*	
	Involving civil society groups																	*		*	*	*	*		*	
	Involving employers' organizations		*				*	*				*	*		*			*		*	*	*	*		*	
	Involving sectoral ministries		*			*	*			*			*		*			*		*	*	*	*	*	*	
	Involving workers' organizations		*				*	*				*	*		*			*		*	*	*	*	*	*	
	Involving other gendered interests		*			*				*			*					*		*	*	*			*	
	Does the NEP provide for any organization and institutional framework for implementing the NEP?	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*		*	*	*	*
	Involving civil society groups	*		*				*	*					*	*	*		*		*		*		*	*	
	Involving employers' organizations		*	*			*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*			*		*		*	*	*	*	
	Involving sectoral ministries	*		*			*	*		*			*	*	*			*		*		*	*	*	*	
	Involving workers' organizations	*	*	*			*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*			*		*		*	*	*	*	
	Involving other gendered interests	*		*						*			*	*				*	*	*		*		*	*	

Does the NEP include sex disaggregated monitoring indicators?	*	*	*			*	*		*		*	*		*			*		*	*	*	*		
Employment by status in employment		*	*											*				*	*		*			
Employment-to-population ratio		*	*						*	*	*	*		*					*		*			
Informal employment		*				*						*		*			*				*			
Job creation	*		*				*		*	*														
Labour force participation rate		*				*								*				*		*	*	*		
Proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment	*		*			*						*	*							*	*			
Share of wage employment in non-agricultural employment	*					*							*											
Unemployment by level of education	*	*	*			*					*	*		*						*				
Unemployment rate		*				*	*		*		*	*	*	*						*	*		*	

Scope for action	Considerations	Benin	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Burkina Faso	Cameroon	China	Comoros	Honduras	Iraq	Jordan	Liberia	Macedonia, FYR	Madagascar	Malawi	Moldova	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	Occupied Palestinian	Republic of Korea	Senegal	Serbia	Seychelles	Tanzania, United	Uganda
Policy coordination and implementation	Youth not in education and not in employment, 15-24 years		*				*			*				*							*				
	Employment by sector	*	*												*							*			
	Low pay rate												*		*						*				
	Working poor			*				*			*		*	*											
	Excessive hours													*											
	Time-related underemployment rate							*													*				
	Occupational segregation by sex		*				*							*							*	*	*	*	
	Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector																					*			
	Gender wage gap		*				*			*					*					*					
	Labour productivity			*								*	*		*						*	*	*		
	Education of adult population		*				*					*													
	Income inequality		*				*																		
	Skills, education and training related indicators		*	*						*		*	*								*	*			
	Other		*	*			*			**		*	**		*						**	*			

	employment indicators																								
Policy monitoring and	Does the NEP provide for any M&E mechanism?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*			*		*	*	*	*	*
	Has it been implemented?	*				*	*								*					*	*	*		*	
	Who is part of it?	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*				*		*	*	*	*	*
	Civil society groups	*												*						*	*			*	
	Employers' organizations	*	*		*				*		*			*							*			*	
	National bureau of statistics						*	*					*	*	*				*		*	*			
	Employment observatory		*	*			*						*	*									*	*	
	Sectoral ministries	*	*		*						*			*						*	*	*		*	
	Trade unions	*	*		*				*		*			*						*	*	*		*	
	Other	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*										*	*	*		*	
Policy budgeting	Does the NEP mention the need/intention for a budget plan?	*		*		*	*					*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
	Has the budget been elaborated?	*		*			*						*		*	*		*	*		*	*	*		
	Is the budget funded?			*		*							*	*	*			*	*		*	*	*	*	
	National budget	*		*		*	*						*	*	*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*	
	External resources	*		*			*						*		*	*		*	*				*		
	Other						*						*							*					
	Total considerations	82	127	111	70	71	135	92	80	119	75	79	135	103	130	56	54	91	70	140	107	138	96	82	102

Appendix 2: Country-level analysis of gender dimensions of NEPs

Country	# Considerations	Key points	Areas of Strength	Areas of Weakness	Listing
Benin (2011)	82	Policy drafted by the Ministry of Microfinance, Youth and Women's Employment Utilizes a log frame for employment goals, indicators, agents and timeframe Sets out strong links with global frameworks for employment (especial Global Employment Pact, MDGs, La Politique Nationale de l'Emploi, Declaration of the African Summit) Focus on poverty eradication, small business growth, informal employment, governance and remittances from ex-pat Benin workers Fonds National de Promotion de l'Entreprise et de l'Emploi des Jeunes Demonstrates negative link between employment and education Policy formulation with much external collaboration from funders	Valorization of domestic work Concessions made to non-literate populations Public institutes (la Direction de la Promotion de l'Emploi; l'Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi) created to give technical direction to employment policies Strong financial services promoted with potential links to women (le Fonds National de la Micro finance; le Cadre Général de Gestion des lignes de Crédit; l'association pour la Promotion et l'Appui au Développement des Micro Entreprises; l'association pour la Promotion et l'Appui à la Promotion des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises; la Fédération des Caisses d'Epargne et de Crédit Agricole Mutuel du Bénin Microcredit programmes that strongly target women Minister of Economy and Finance : Adidjotou Mathys (2011, female) Land reform (mortgage credit) and access to credit to promote female ownership Strong focus on decent work	Decentralization of responsibility from Ministry to municipalities (and below) Top-down approach, with little interaction with civil society Budget heavily dependent on donors No reference to inequality (gender, income, class, etc.) Strong ties with other economies make Benin quite vulnerable No enumeration on social policies Lack of targets (sex-disaggregated or otherwise)	Gender sensitive
Bosnia and Herzegovina (2010)	127	Policy that prioritizes the development of SMEs, functioning labour markets and active labour market policies, and human resource development Due to its deep integration with European markets, the crisis hit hard. Combined with a rapidly aging population and low birth rate, there's pressure on employment services and social services (pension, health insurance, unemployment benefits) High unemployment, especially for women and youth; low labour mobility; poor market outcomes for vulnerable groups	Targets 2.5 per cent annual increase of women's employment Gender integrated into most facets of administration and policy-building (purported need for gender sensitive evaluation of skills development) Targeted assistance to women for skills building, entrepreneurship, education, technical training, etc. Gendered social protections (maternity rights, pension, health insurance, unemployment benefits) Strong sex-disaggregated statistics	Lack of budget and timeframe Problematises health insurance for the unemployed (incentivizes staying in the informal sector); little effort to work with the informal sector but rather to formalize Highly fragmented government approach (many over-lapping agencies) Employment services remain	Gender positive

		Dramatic variations in employment rates based on education (education more of a priority for women) Social protections: unemployment benefits/insurance, health insurance (universal, for unemployed) health services, pensions, child allowance, maternity benefits Wage subsidies, subsidized employment for long-term unemployed and self-employment prioritized NEP works in tandem with Development Strategy and Social Inclusion Strategy to create a link between poverty reduction and employment growth Strong sex-disaggregated data, strong data collection methodology Little integration currently between workers' and employers' groups and policy-making/implementation, but changing Collaboration at ministerial (Civil Affairs, Labour and Social Policy, Education, Economic Development), regional, local and international level (USAID Enabling Labour Mobility project, ILO) for policy formation Working groups and capacity building activities	(female employment up, unemployment down, inactivity down) Discussions of gendered gaps in access to services, performance and outcomes Specific measures to employ more women (tax reductions, subsidies, trainings) Changes to fiscal policies (longer payment periods of loans, lower interest rates for start-ups, simplified registration, tax and social security cuts to businesses) and investment climate (business zones, clusters, tech parks) with the aim to create opportunities for women and men Gender mainstreaming + targeted interventions	understaffed and over-burdened No mention of labour standards (working hours, wages, industrial relations) Questionable dedication to integration with workers'/employers' organizations (low trust of unions?)	
Burkina Faso (2008)	111	Goals include: 1. Linking employment policy and other national policies by clarifying the linkages that the NEP must have with macroeconomic as well as sectoral policies; 2. Reinforcing dynamics of employment creation by targeting specific levers that generate employment - targeted interventions of micro enterprises and self-employment; 3. Improving employability by improving access to employment as well as vocational and technical training in order to generate higher incomes and additional jobs; 4. Improving the organization and the functioning of the labour market High labour force participation, large underemployment and low labour productivity Remnants of structural adjustment Overall weakness of investment atmosphere (high non-labour costs, transport deficits, heavy	Modernization, diversification and problematization of agricultural dependency; skills development/upgrading, targeting women Emphasis on manufacturing (handicraft and artisan), including home-based Problematizing financial policies of banks reluctant to give credit to small-owners Changes in investment policy for employment outcomes Lower tax, loosening fiscal restraints Recognition of work-family balance for women – mentions, but not elaborates, flex-time and care facilities Legislative action to combat gaps in	Problematic language (“comboleurs leurs [femmes] handicaps”; take into account women's responsibilities of care; references to “femmes en difficulté”) Demand-side economic policies favor the promotion of business structures favorable to employment by maximizing jobs – but nothing about quality of jobs Continuation of child labour, despite efforts to curb it “Traditional” women's occupations, and continued prevalence in agriculture and the informal economy with no	Gender sensitive

		taxation, judicial and administrative environment stifling) Result: low foreign capital investment, low private sector development, no risk-taking 2004 National Policy for Women Provisions for vocational training Elimination of socio-cultural and economic blockages Increase in access to productive resources Monitoring and evaluation of labour laws Support Fund for Women's Gainful Activities Centre for Production and Training for Girls (2,000 young girls affected; agro-pastoral, textiles) Support Fund for Income Generating Activities for Women Farmers (14,000 women in rural areas) Financing at favourable rates Support for projects Proposed special fund for adapting youth to employment and providing loans for entrepreneurial activities Integration of NEP with NDP, macroeconomic, fiscal, investment and manufacturing policies (Plan d'Action en vue de la mise en œuvre de la stratégie de promotion de l'artisanat) Strong focus on microfinance (Organisation professionnelle des institutions de microfinance du Burkina Faso) NEP formulated at national tripartite workshop, including formal and informal consultations with technical ministries, employers' and workers' organizations, strong support from ILO	control over productive resources Funds, Centres and NGOs for women's entrepreneurial and industrial training Favorable rates of finance; support for projects Strong emphasis on microcredit and finance, especially for women (as of 2004, 335 microfinance institutions) NEP formation influenced by strong gender voices (ministre de la promotion de la femme [although man]), ILO Decent Work, ministries of education, training, employment Targets within M&E (job creation, sectoral distribution, unemployment rate, labour productivity, vocational training) Planned budget, funded and means of review (public expenditure review; multiple year rolling budget; results-based budgeting)	solutions Availability of services and flexibility mentioned but not elaborated Limited gendered social protections (health care, insurance, maternity protection, cash transfers, etc.) No explicit mention of discriminatory productive resource access (especially land and inheritance) No infrastructure development M&E not implemented	
Cameroon (2008)	70	Policy aims to: align public policy and stimulate the creation of jobs; develop human resources to meet the needs of the economy; improve the system of information management and employment and training; reduce unemployment, underemployment and poverty; promote youth employment and other targets. Compliments the Declaration of National Policy of Employment (2007), with an 18 point action plan	Prioritization of transportation and communication systems Household surveys (over time) Proposed centralized social protection mechanism Focus on regional integration and cooperation Proposed mechanism to manage migrant flows Investment in integrated labour market	Mismatch between perceived weaknesses in labour markets and solutions (or, lack of tangible steps for solutions) Overall minimal impact on women (job creation schemes, training, education) Women – as a “handicapped” population (10	Gender neutral

		Le Fonds National de l'Emploi (1990) – adopted as a means of promoting employment, and is responsible for: (i) job seekers (support placement, training and support for business creation, (ii) companies by providing many services in terms of recruitment and training of their workforce and in different areas of human resources management L'Observatoire National de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle – provides strong data collection and surveys to ensure transparency and clear dissemination of results NEP still aims to strengthen information systems Household surveys (1993/4, 1996, 2001, 2007) Aims to establish fund for entrepreneurial training (Fond de PME/PMI) and Fond de garantie des activités du secteur rural NEP looks to decentralize employment policies and provide autonomy to local/regional bodies Strong focus on rural economy (especially agriculture), with emphasis on micro- and mutual-level insurance Vocational training and formalizing the informal sector	to promote regional employment	lines, 2 paragraphs) No sex-disaggregated data Over-bureaucratization of solutions (too many ministries working on problems, lack of accountability) No means of financing No implementation plan No agents of actions (who trains? Who teaches?) Weak links with workers' and employers' organizations No link between education and training (no mention of education)	
China (2008)	71	Overall aims: promoting employment, promoting the balance between economic development and the expansion of employment opportunities, and promoting social harmony and stability Special employment funds to subsidize job referrals, occupational training, public welfare positions, occupational skills testing, specific employment policies and social insurance Guarantee of public welfare positions to those who encounter difficulty seeking employment (unfavourable physical limitations, skill levels, family status or loss of land, and those persons who remain unemployed for a certain period of time) Measures in place to ensure that at least one family member in an urban family is working – preferential hiring Vocational training (especially for junior and senior high schools) prioritized	"No employment unit, when recruiting a female employee, shall include a clause in the employment contract imposing marriage or childbirth restrictions on the employee." Considerations for flex-time or part-time work, but not gendered (i.e. for child care) Proposed "system to allocate responsibility for targets related to employment ("targets responsibility system") – not yet implemented Grassroots commentary on the formulation of the NEP Discussion of the formation of a social insurance policy Focus on non-discrimination and fair employment - "safeguard the equality of women with men in their enjoyment	"With the exception of certain types of work positions designated by the state as unsuitable to women, no employer shall refuse to recruit women" – state-defined discrimination? No particular measures in place to promote women, or to understand the role of women in the labour market Complete dismissal of agriculture and rural development No sex-disaggregated data No monitoring targets Vague budget, with funds allocated for special employment fund from	Gender neutral

		Preferential grants, subsidies, and regulatory environment for job creation Strict policies regarding employment service providers (strongly funded, but heavily regulated, with enforcement for violations) Aim to establish sound unemployment insurance system NEP formation took 4-5 years, and incorporated 11,020 comments from grassroots, university students, rural migrants to cities and peasants	of labour rights"	county-level budgets to promote employment Questionable relationship between workers'/employers' organizations and state No problematization of labour standards (working hours, wages, working poverty, minimum working age, worker protections) Wage gap, occupational segregation, inequality – no commentary	
Comoros (2007)	135	Primary aim of policy: 1. Foster an environment conducive to investment and employment; 2. Strengthen labour laws to better promote decent employment; 3. Improve the governance of employment Aims to integrate employment as part of eligibility criteria for public investment programmes Strong macroeconomic reforms (inflation, monetary stability, currency, taxation) and sectoral reforms (transport, infrastructure, energy, telecommunications, justice) Creation of employment commission in parliament; National Employment Promotion; National Fund for the Promotion of Youth; National Guarantee fund (which will restructure banks to allow for greater access to credit for poor and rural people) Entrepreneurial programmes: rural and urban; plan to revitalize education, guidance and information available; form links between entrepreneurs and private business Aim to integrate informal workers, not eliminate Tripartite institution building (government, employers and workers)	Excellent employment data by sector, sub-sector and sex (informal and formal) Promotes a coordinated national system that allows job-seekers (especially youth and women) to learn about opportunities and training; promote public/private partnership Skills development, especially rural, and strengthen/ modernize equipment and skills/technologies Training trainers (linking private businesses to public skills development) Tangible reforms for financial sector (promoting microfinance; loosening fiscal constraints) Haut Intensite de Main d'Oeuvre (HIMO) – labour-intensive skill-building Strong focus on legislative framework of labour standards (minimum wage pegged to living costs, contracts, eliminating child labour) Facilitating access to credit for micro and small businesses (in particular women); cooperative networks to allow women to benefit from markets, services and training/funding Strong focus of female entrepreneurs Creative strategies to fund NEP not	National action plan (Plan National pour l'Emploi) does not yet exist Lack of civil society participation in NEP formation Low focus on gender-specific social protection (education, care, maternity benefits)	Gender positive

			based exclusively on external resources (tax on alcohol and tobacco; reformulating taxation policy) Problematizes past activities (dependence on remittances, foreign aid) Break-down of number of people supported by an earner Apparent use of time-use data to break down secondary-income generating activities		
Honduras (2006)	92	The strategic objective is to contribute to the integral development of Hondurans, improving human capabilities and creating the right climate for investment and decent job creation Economic growth for employment expansion Qualifications, technology and employability Business development Institutions and labour market policies Social protection Social dialogue Tangible aims: economic growth not less than 6 per cent annually; 400,000 permanent (decent) jobs and 757,000 temporary (2006-2010) and 650,000 permanent, 1.15 million temporary by 2015; reduce underemployment from 30-20 per cent. Strong emphasis on decent work agenda (National Plan for the Promotion of Decent Jobs), labour standards, quality job creation Strong bureaucratic grounding: Ministry of Labour and Social Security; Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Industry and Commerce; Economic and Social Council (lead on NEP); Advisory Council on Strategic Poverty Reduction Many different government level programmes for development: National Plan for the Promotion of Jobs; National Policy on Women and Gender Equality in Agriculture; Strategy for Poverty Reduction; National System of Competitiveness, Jobs and Educational Training; National Programme on Entrepreneurship with Social Responsibility; National Agrarian Development	Decent jobs agenda will promote higher wages, more secure contracts, and better industrial relations for women Extensive work to macroeconomic, financial and investment policies to make investment and business creation simpler and less costly Tariffs on non-domestic goods Push to make export sector competitive Uniformization of fees and fines Increased tax collection (18 per cent of GDP) to finance social programmes Reactive trade mechanisms to cope with problems created by historical legacy of trade liberalization (protectionist) Strong promotion of universalized social protection (social security and proposed nationalized pension scheme) Expand social security coverage to include highly vulnerable groups, including domestic workers and dependents of migrant workers Expansion of social security to informal sector Push to encourage micro, small and medium enterprise development (National Fund for the Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises),	Lack of emphasis on women with programming and policy making – trickle down of benefits, but not designed with women's interests explicitly Overly bureaucratic and decentralized approach could lead to overlap, duplication and inefficiencies (and gaps in evaluating) Protectionist approach (tariffs on non-domestic products) could reduce international investment and harm wages/employment opportunities Lack of sex-disaggregated data in sector/sub-sector employment; wage gaps; education; training; informal economy; income inequality Lack of budget and source of budget	Gender neutral

		Programme; Housing Sector Framework Law; Legal Framework for Energy Sector Building the National Commission for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises; National Agency for Defence of Competition and Intellectual Property Protection Growth deficit in trade balance of foreign goods and services; exports of agriculture and raw materials (75 per cent low productivity in agricultural activities), but shrinking agricultural sector (44.6-34.6 per cent 1990-2004); strong service sector (50 per cent of GDP); strong growth of informal sector, especially following economic crisis	and associated openness of regulatory environment Value added agricultural policy to increase productivity, outputs and profits		
Iraq (2011)	80	Private/public cooperation on public works Proposed: National Fund for Development of Small Enterprise Institutional infrastructure (business associations, banks, regional investment banks) National Strategy for Technical and Vocational Training (with particular focus on women) National Occupational classification (ongoing surveys) Prioritization of social protection (social security) Gender quotas within ministries Integration of local and international contractors	Integration of women as a priority group in entrepreneurial expansion Strong promotion of rural development and job creation Focus on high labour-absorbing sectors and programmes that employ women Addresses gaps in income inequality between “vocational” and “intellectuals” Builds strong ties with trade unions and employers’ organizations	Social protection limited to social security Social protection funded from the outside (Emergency Social Protection Project, World Bank) instead of embedded in policy Strongly gendered ideas of flex-time/parental leave (only for women) No budget No plan for implementation No timeline Capacity building focuses on presumed skill set (i.e. no training for illiteracy) Lack of targets Lack of gender disaggregated data	Gender sensitive
Jordan (2012)	125	Development of economic growth focuses on fairer distribution of growth, i.e. increasing wages and benefits, rather than simply profits Aims to limit investments in subsidies, wages and employment in the public in order to focus more on the demand side to add more and better jobs. Foreign labour must “compliment but not substitute for Jordanian labour”, facilitating a number of policies to upgrade wages and	Nuanced analysis of the role played by social protection (especially education) for both social reproduction and time poverty of women There is much continuity between this policy, the National Agenda, and past employment agendas, meaning the document is rich. Focus on rural development, especially through mobile banking and strong	Top-down approach to policy formation: little to no local-level or civil society influence Many actors and institutions do not yet exist or are not effective (Maternity Benefits Insurance, Centre of Credit Information, National Centre for Human Resources Development)	Gender positive

		benefits in menial, low-skill jobs Undertakes a geographic analysis of gendered unemployment to show differences throughout the country Strong investments by the World Bank, ILO (working papers), national governments (e.g. USA, Canada, UK) and ECOSOC have resulted in pilot projects with a range of beneficiaries (M&E processes means sex-disaggregated data) The approach taken to economic development is nuanced and focuses on the demand side heavily A primary focus has been on moving up the value chain of production through diversification and skills training The government has played the most active role in the creation and implementation of the policy, and the creation of the agency responsible for implementation, monitoring and evaluation Situation of refugees/migrant workers strongly impacts policy formation	programmes to expand microcredit (Centre of Credit Information) Financial policies are targeted towards productive public investments in human and infrastructure capital, with less focus on building and real estate (a change which will benefit women) Linking SMEs to foreign markets Maternity Benefits Insurance expansion (though legislated, not effective yet) Extension of social security, maternity benefit insurance and unemployment (independent health fund financed by 5-6 per cent pay role deduction, shared 1/3 vs. 2/3 employee/employer) NES Technical Team, with extensive experience Because of historical strength of donor programmes, well-documented, sex disaggregated data (Appendix 4) Transparency in the NES Technical Team and their work	No budget Non-discrimination legislation: does not provide definition of discrimination, nor procedures to combat discrimination. Donor dependency? Embeddedness of gender equality within society?	
Liberia (2009)	75	Policy based on four priorities: Enhancing national security; revitalizing the economy; strengthening governance and the rule of law; and rehabilitating infrastructure and delivering basic services. Preliminary outline of a proposed future policy, but lacking in agency and funding Ministry of Gender and Development working with the Nike Foundation, the World Bank and Denmark on programme "Building Women's Entrepreneurship" Focus on entrepreneurship, the informal economy, labour-intensive public works projects, education and agricultural labour	National Rural Women's Programme (2008) and the Land Reform Commission have helped progress in access to land markets Prioritization of social protection and employment generation in the informal economy Goal to simplify business regulation to make environment more conducive to investment Strong focus on public works to benefit both job creation and national infrastructure Focus on youth, education and demilitarization Short- and medium-term employment development goals Congruency with other policies, strategies and action plans Log frame to measure goals, budget,	No gender equality law, nor a definition of gender discrimination Prejudicial judiciary system Political quotas, but not enforced Very broad goals, with lack of clear-cut aims and targets Lack of implementation measures Lack of budget Low focus on social protection or passive labour policies No consideration of unpaid work or time poverty No efforts to combat prejudice or discrimination in society Little integration of workers'	Gender neutral

			targets and actors	or employers' organizations Top down, with little investment of local or regional interests outside of government In most cases, women addressed by proxy, instead of as actors in their own right.	
Macedonia, FYR (2011)	79	NEP 2015 builds on the National Strategy for Employment 2010, as well as the National Strategy for the Reduction of Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010-2020 Key priorities to make the corporate sector competitive, to attract foreign direct investment, and to build a favourable business climate (reducing administrative barriers and simplifying procedures, i.e. electronic services) Reduce tax burdens on small and medium corporations Modernize technology and tech/knowledge transfer 2010 – provided 74 million euro in credit to support 266 programmes NEP focuses on reducing unemployment (both men and women, especially youth), educational policies, and combating social exclusion and poverty (through social protections) Keeping deficit and inflation low; 4 per cent growth; 2 per cent increase in productivity; increasing capital expenses Strong ties to the EU (including help in formulating policy and networks linking businesses and entrepreneurs) Healthy pension system, medical care and insurance and unemployment insurance, regardless of status in employment Can provide historical context, as documents from 2010 and beyond exist	National strategies on elderly care and social protection mean progressive coverage (health care, pension, cash transfers to keep children in school, subsidies for electricity, compensation in salary for shortened working hours due to care of child with physical or mental disabilities) Tangible targets to increase women's education, skills and participation in the labour market Strong legislative rights on non-discrimination Ties with the EU mean more monitoring from external sources	Most provisions aim to benefit the overall environment, with little consideration for gendered impacts or outcomes – women exclusively as economic actors Lack of sex-disaggregated data in sectoral or sub-sectoral employment Informal workers viewed as a "problem" No budget or clear means of implementation of NEP Poverty reduction, but no mention of inequality No discussion of gender wage gap, productivity, or access to resources Lack of dialogue between workers' and employers' organizations and government	Gender sensitive

Madagascar (2006)	135	Main goals include: Fostering an environment conducive to growth, investment and employment; supporting the private sector, the main actor in the reduction of unemployment; improving access for informal sector workers and the rural sector in education and vocational training for increased productivity; promoting income-generating activities and employment; facilitating the access of vulnerable social groups in the labour market Increasing the growth rate of GDP from 8 to 10 per cent per year to halve poverty by 2013 Increase in the private sector investment rate from 20 to 25 per cent Negotiate the reduction and debt cancellation Implement the 15 point- programs proposed to stimulate growth and curb poverty CNSPERD – National committee for Monitoring Employment Promotion and Poverty Reduction Priority given to the development of a national strategy for handicraft Aim to create “Emergency Economic Stimulus Credit” programme in case of further financial crisis Programme for the Promotion of social Dialogue in Africa – want to include people and organizations in rural areas to strengthen links, cooperation and markets Aim to create a national database on information about employment (education, vocational training, public-private partnership, etc.) Problematizes the bloated public sector and overabundance of mid-level bureaucrats High portion of population is youth, predominantly rural, low-skills and with a high unemployment rate Look to decentralize the process of job creation Expansion of agency for employability of women and youth Modernize artisanal sector, manufacturing industry and tourism sector Focus on high labour-absorbing sectors and methods (public works)	Strong monitoring considerations, including indicators for employment-to-population, women’s unemployment, low pay rate, working poor, rate of microfinance penetration, underemployment, those benefiting from training (rural, farmers/non-farmers), efficiency of employment services, and coverage of social protection Yearly monitoring evaluation will produce stats through SMIE/INSTAT Budget elaborated and funded through donors, national budget and private-public partnerships Strong participation of social partners and tripartite partners at NEP formation (including microfinance institutions and banks) Promotes strong training and employment services, with skills targets for women Aim to establish governance system of national technical and vocational training Creating regulatory environment conducive to investment Establishing equalized wages Problematizes FDI in the past (lack of security, overregulation, no tech transfer) Strong social protection component: HIV/AIDS, social security, health and safety, agricultural insurance, protection for informal workers Le Conseil National d’Orientation de la Protection Sociale Aim to create pension system funded by Central State Bank Plans to elaborate Un Code Rural Pour l’Emploi Rural; already have legislation regarding women’s access to land markets, credit and land reforms	Overly-ambitious Overly-bureaucratic Lack of transparency for budget Perpetuating stereotypes of “women’s work” – manufacturing, handicraft, agriculture Lack of discussion of gender wage gap, segregation by sector, income inequality, gaps in skills/education/training No gendered social protections for childcare, parental leave	Gender positive
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		NEP formulation – process of more than 5 years, with ILO, PNUD, UN and social partners (civil society, workers'/employers' organizations); included capacity building on project evaluation and monitoring Regional and national plan	Promotes cooperatives of informal workers in informal areas to promote sustainable growth Literacy programmes, especially for women Strong push for public works (water, energy, transportation, roads)		
Malawi (2012)	103	The overriding goal of this policy is to promote and attain full employment as a priority of national, macroeconomic, and social policies, and to enable the economically active population to attain and secure sustainable livelihood through full, productive and freely chosen employment and work Key strategies to achieve include: establishing an effective and efficient labour market information system; promoting occupational safety and health; integrating child labour issues into development initiatives and interventions; reviewing, harmonizing and enforcing legislation on child labour; promoting labour intensive investments in the productive and service sectors; reducing all forms of labour market discrimination; promoting skills development; establishing a robust database of labour and employment statistics, and finally, promoting labour administration systems The priorities and strategies of the National Employment and Labour Policy (NELP) reflect the development priorities and proposed outcomes articulated in the Second Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II) for the period 2011-2016 Increasing population growth (high fertility) means more young people entering the labour markets Good economic performance granted debt relief under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative and Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative NEP is the result of collaboration among the government, ILO and social partners, under the auspices of the National Employment Commission (NEC), which uses all shareholders	Sex-disaggregated data and targets for labour market participation, unemployment, self-employment in substance farming, women in agriculture, youth unemployment, working poor, excessive hours and wage gap Macroeconomic policies prioritized in the past to create a regulatory environment conducive to investment Aim to legislate a minimum wage in the agrarian sector to ensure a living income Decent work agenda means reduction of excessive working hours and time-related unemployment for women Provides incentives to hire women (30 per cent representation in decision-making, subsidies for private sector to hire women) National Gender Policy (2007-11) provides strategies that will increase women's economic rights, resources and opportunities; create a favourable environment for equal employment opportunities and benefits for women, men, girls and boys; and integrate gender issues into overall national development strategies and support from development partners. Proposed reforms to combat gender gaps in access to productive resources (not enumerated) Encourages mobilization and representation of informal workers Integrated Household Survey captures	Unclear budget (MGDS II funding of budget 2012-17) Policy prioritizes foreign growth, but not as much domestic growth (vocational training and education primarily aimed to rural, agrarian sectors) Lack of social protections (due primarily to budget constraints) Need for systematic data collection of sex-disaggregated data Ways of capturing unemployment different (labour force/labour market surveys should be designed in such a way as to inform on the quality of employment and allow further analysis to identify the highly underemployed and those gainfully employed. The low unemployment rates just seen mask a lot of underemployment), and therefore much lower than other means of analysis Same implementing agency as M&E agency, and no break-down of how M&E will occur	Gender sensitive

		a role in implementing and M&E Strongly agrarian society (80 per cent in agriculture), with rising rates of female agrarian employment Establishes need for labour market information system Very new process (The NEP is expected to be formally adopted and launched in the course of November/December 2012), with significant delays in policy formation	time use and gendered division of task (recurrent)		
Moldova (2007)	130	Main aims include: the consolidation of active and preventive activities for unemployed and inactive people; creation of jobs and development of entrepreneurship; promotion of adaptability and mobility on the labour market; promotion of human capital development and continuous learning; increase of the labour supply and encouragement of active ageing; provision of equal opportunities and prevention of labour discrimination; Increasing labour profitability and creation of corresponding incentives; translation of informal labour into official employment; reduction of regional employment and wage differences; managing the impact of migration on the labour market Despite growth in real terms, wages remain low, especially in public sector Aim to reorient wages Institution of professional orientation code in schools Aim to strengthen and increase the number of employment services (public and private) to promote the reduction of unemployment National system of information planned National system of analysis to determine demand Building social infrastructure (roads, water, fuel) to promote employment Generating new enterprise growth through access to credit, tax reductions, microfinance and conducive regulatory environment NEP includes yearly action plan, to be implemented by a variety of actors	Gender mainstreaming, plus targeted initiatives Female employment rates exceed those of male, unemployment is lower, and policies to increase jobs in services and industry will only benefit further Gender wage gap addressed proactively, and combated by 2020 Proposed creation of community and regional networks of women returning to work after maternity leave; training and solidarity Unemployment benefits, pension, social security, family benefits to facilitate children's school attendance Aim to equalize pension benefits between men and women, 2020 Assistance services to provide care, in order to reduce burden on women workers Minimum wage legislation Social infrastructure projects	Pensioners: "limitation of anticipated pension and the prolongation of the active labour life, including by creating flexibility incentives for employers" – forcing elderly populations to work longer, and without access to pensions Lack of sex-disaggregated data in sector and sub-sector employment Deprioritization of agriculture may harm women's employment prospects No targets for type of women's work No attempt to combat gender gaps in access to resources (negatively affect entrepreneurship)	Gender positive

		Strong monitoring indicators (often sex-disaggregated), promoted by ILO standards Budget through GDP, and aim to increase as share of GDP			
Mozambique (2006)	56	Aims: increase in labour demand; strengthening the employability of labour and; improvement of the regulatory framework for the development of the private sector 57 per cent illiteracy; 80 per cent of workforce have no training; 52 per cent are self-employed; 33.7 per cent are unpaid family workers; 11.8 per cent formal sector (4.1 per cent public, 6.9 per cent private) Last 5 years has shown a revision of labour laws and the proposed adoption of the Social Protection Law (not explained further) Proposed National Skills Qualification Framework; proposed Information System for Labour Market Data Funded: Employment and Vocational Training Fund Primary thrust of development strategy is to provide quality vocational trainers who can tailor workers' skills to fit demand, especially youth Provides micro-loans and credit in rural areas Because of HIV/AIDS pandemic, high occurrence of child labour	Public infrastructure investment (roads), and strong emphasis on public works/labour intensive projects Push to reduce HIV/AIDS in the workplace; expand social protection (undefined) to the informal sector	Disregard for gendered employment patterns – reference to women only in passing Lack of disaggregated data, targets or gaps in performance No problematization of gender gaps in control over productive resources No mention of women's primary role in agriculture, nor specific measures to promote labour productivity, etc. No gendered social protection No inclusion of voices of workers, employers or civil society in NEP formation or implementation – top-down Dependency on external resources for funding No efforts to combat illiteracy, seemingly the largest impediment to growth and skills development	Gender neutral
Nepal (2006)	54	A declaration from the king's government outlining prospective changes in economic growth, labour relations and production-oriented employment (by eliminating forced labour practices) 2nd Labour conference, 2006 Priority of the government is minimum investment for maximum output Strong focus on export-oriented industries and special economic zones – with less regard for benefits and workers' rights Merit-based employment, with specific	Skills development prioritized, especially for youth Proposed minimum wage, even in informal sector Positive discrimination (quotas?) for women in public jobs Prioritization of social security to informal sector	Contradictory messages regarding social protection (government wants to pay for nothing, yet still promotes social welfare programmes for workers and their families) "Only minimum level of benefits and entitlements provided by labour laws; all else negotiated with workers' organizations"	Gender blind

		regulations to promote women, youth, disabled, lower class, etc. "Positive discrimination" measures Contentious relationship with workers' organizations (split between anti-labour mobilization on the one hand, and collective bargaining as a necessity on the other)		Entirely top-down, with no input from civil society and little mention of workers'/employers' organizations "Women" included in "minority" categories as special cases "Merit based employment" with no provisions made to make the playing field equal among classes, gender and physical ability Focus on foreign hires for technical skills, less on training own people Special economic zones with no regard for working hours, wages or productivity Non-discrimination law does not provide definition of discrimination, nor is it enforceable Gendered social protections are vague and target only women ("suitable leave facilities") Workers' benefits tied to employment, rather than universal (leaving women as dependents) Anti-labour movement (policies that prohibit striking and picketing) No implementation plan No budget No agents of change No targets or monitoring goals No changes to the overall system, just specific elements	
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Nigeria (2009)	91	The Action Plan presented in this document outlines policies, programmes and projects for employment creation in the following key sectors of the Nigerian economy: agriculture, commerce and industry, power and energy, works, housing and urban development, petroleum, gas and solid minerals, transportation, communication and information, informal economy, education, health, culture, tourism, entertainment and sports and an enabling policy and regulatory environment for employment creation Historical precedence for NEP – built from National Employment Policy (NEP), NEEDS (National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy), SEEDS (State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy), and LEEDS (Local Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy) Currently, 90 per cent of all official employment created is within the informal sector 60 per cent of new jobs created, 70 per cent of all labour force Formal sector is slow-growing and too small to create sufficient employment, even during periods of growth Aim to reduce the growth of the informal economy to less than 10 per cent/year Labour market information is not current enough to provide precise and accurate estimates of national unemployment Development partners have worked strongly to mobilize funds for agricultural development and poverty reduction (WB, ILO, FAO, IFAD, DFID, USAID, UNDP, ADB)	Major strength: NEP coordinating and implementing has strong support from a variety of international actors (ILO, FAO, WB, USAID, DFID, etc.) Huge loans (2 billion N) to farmers Establishment of Nigerian Trade and Competition Commission Changes to macroeconomic policies to promote investment and trade (tax reductions to private sector to encourage skills training for employees) Fostering domestic markets partnerships to incentivize exports Public infrastructure investment (Housing for All 2012; Rural Electrification Agency; Renewable Energy Development Fund)	Gender blind policy Women mentioned explicitly only in relation to farming and informal workers No sex-disaggregated data on level of education, employment by sector, wage gaps, gaps in vocational training/skills upgrading No discussion of inequality (either race, class, gender or ethnicity) No mention of social protection or direct poverty alleviation measures (aside from job creation) No method to see if particular considerations make it to women (or have any impact on women) Not a gendered policy	Gender neutral
Occupied Palestinian territories (2010)	70	All programme strategies focus on the reality of ongoing insecurity of Israeli occupation, so necessary short-term and long-term goals – “flexibility and adjustment are key” Focus on regional cooperation (especially with other Arab states) Strong emphasis on the cooperative sector (linking domestic producers with external actors) Significant text in Arabic, condensed version in	Work with international partners (GTZ, ILO) to draft plan Formulation of national team to formulate NEP (government sector, social partners, supporters and donors) Creation of new national agencies for employment (Vocational Training and Education; Employment; Occupational	Women included only within the same “special” category as special needs and youth No labour statistics No social protection No unpaid work considerations No infrastructure building (transport, schools, etc.)	Gender neutral

		English; more in NDP focus on governance reform Women's employment issues addressed through "Women's Empowerment" initiative (NDP) UNCT Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	Health and Safety; Organizing Collaborative Work) Creation of fund for cooperatives (Vocational Training and Development Fund; activation of Palestinian Employment Fund)	Vague aspirations (i.e. decrease unemployment, but no target; "should" link women to regional markets, but no action plan)	
Republic of Korea (2008)	140	NEP prioritizes cooperative labour relations; dynamic labour market; and customer oriented labour policy Due to past periods of jobless growth, signed the Social Pact for Job Creation and pledged to create 2 million jobs by 2008 Highly educated youth, but few jobs available (more in SMEs, but not desirable) Improvement of National Technical Qualification Test System Creation of Job World for youth (simulate work in different sectors, information about training opportunities, etc.) Strong push for the development and perfection of employment services (public and private) – 2006 Report Meting on the Reform of National Employment Services Aim to expand more coverage to vulnerable workers Foreign workers: MOU signed with 15 sending countries; regularized contracts and clear requirements for employment; rights and benefits available to foreigners Special youth employment measures: Training 100,000 global leaders (50,000 overseas jobs; 20,000 volunteer services; 30,000 overseas internships) Job Development Account System for skills development; will expand more to youth, former military, SMEs and non-regular workers Government reimbursed training courses	2006 "Measures to Promote Employment of Women" 1-7 April "Period for Equal Employment" campaign Subsidy for female employment promotion Subsidy for re-employment of female employee after giving birth (2007) Subsidy for childcare leave and replacement of workforce Subsidy for reduction of working hours for employees with child care responsibilities Subsidy for hiring replacement workers Subsidy for continuous employment after child birth (hire women during pregnancy and through childbirth without interruption) – fines for non-compliance Push for social service jobs to absorb workers Intergovernmental cooperative network to mediate labour disputes; building capacity for unions and employers' organizations Strong labour standards: 40 hour work week legislated Compensation for wrongfully dismissed employee Wage packages Free representation from Public Labour Consultant if rights are violated Industrial relations Flexible working hours (working hours account system; flexible working hour system)	Budget?? Extending mandatory retirement age could lead to the exploitation of seniors, and difficulties in collecting pension Current lack of sex-disaggregated data Wording of policy gives nearly-exclusive responsibility of childcare to women No mention of an informal sector (only "special types of employment")	Gender positive

			Non-discrimination laws, with criminal charges for non-compliance Affirmative action for women Gendered social protections: Right to claim fewer working hours for childcare responsibilities Social security Scholarships for children Strong maternity protection Employment security net (counselling, vocational training, on-the-job training, referrals) Unemployment insurance available to all workplaces with more than one employee Special training for women entering workforce from home Health promotion for women Return to Work Centres – job info, vocational training and childcare services Parental leave (subsidized; 90 days) – both men and women Child care facilities: subsidies to open in-company facility; labour costs subsidized Female-run start-ups offered loans and collateral (6 year rentals) Cost of granting regular worker status to non-regular workers exempt from tax Promoting social entrepreneurship Secure shelter guaranteed for low-income workers Survey: Current Share of Male and Female Employees by Occupation and Status (2007) Government provides awards to companies who promote exemplary employment equality		
Senegal (2010)	107	Policy states explicitly that the social component, gender component and youth component are contained in separate	National Fund for the Promotion of Female Entrepreneurship, created in 2004 with the mission of promoting the	Problems in the past mobilizing funds for projects, and guaranteeing a	Gender sensitive

		comprehensive policies – nevertheless, very strong and comprehensive policy that addresses macroeconomic policy, sectoral growth, decent work, entrepreneurship and training, and targets of how to achieve goals The vision of the NPNE strong economic growth balanced with strong social growth, with slowed rates of unemployment, underemployment and disguised unemployment by 2015; realization of full long term employment by 2025, with levels of total unemployment, underemployment and disguised unemployment, which should be comparable to current rates recorded in developed countries. Promotion of employment in economic policies and structural reforms to promote employment Support for the promotion of employment in traditional sectors Development of specific government programs to create jobs Capacity building of the Ministry of Employment and improving management system of labour markets Strategic management of employment is primarily economic policy Government. However, the concrete act of job creation is the exclusive responsibility of the company in all its dimensions and in all sectors. National Action Fund for Employment (FNAE); National Fund for the Promotion of Youth; National Fund for the Promotion of Female Entrepreneurship; The Support Programme for Integration of socio-professional Graduates of Institutes and Universities of Arabic language; CSA project / Employment – Youth; Promotional initiatives more focused on certain activities and / or areas; Service Civique National for 2 years of job training; "Maison de l'Outil" for young farmers' training; National Rural Infrastructure Programme La Charte nationale sur le Dialogue Social Strong data collection : The System of Information On Employment (SIME),	employment of women between 2004 and 2005, fund has financed 137 projects for a total of nearly a billion FCFA, allowing the creation or consolidation of 940 direct and indirect jobs. Good understanding of the composition, dynamics and productivity of the informal sector Proposing massive study to understand employment, training, productivity, income (public, private, parastatal, self-employment, etc) Proposed time-use survey to capture employment patterns Strong M&E - The NPNE includes four strategies for 23 programs with 65 lines intervention in total. Once developed, it will result in hundreds of elementary actions and practical activities which will ensure regular monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation of all these measures will be carried out in the part of the monitoring and evaluation of PRSP-2 for the remaining year (2010) as well as the period 2011-2015. Job creation; informal employment; employment rate; disguised unemployment; unemployment by education; productivity; sectoral targets; pay rates (formal and informal); job seekers utilizing employment services; job seekers in NFEA projects; satisfaction of entrepreneurs; turnover rates of middle management within Min. of Employment Repertoire Operational des Metiers et Emplois; Centres d'Initiatives pour l'Emploi Local; Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (438 youths); 10 Year Education and Training Programme	sustainable budget The financial crisis has limited market opportunities and shrunk foreign investment, leaving the markets more volatile; growing population of working age employees has increased unemployment (job creation slated at 50,000/year, need 218,000) Delinking of social policy and employment, youth and employment, and gender and employment by referring to separate policies Excellent rhetoric, but narrative lacks substance – made up for in log frame at the end	
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		implemented in within the Ministry for Employment and allowed the realization of several technical activities, including: A "General Census of job seekers" (1999); A national Survey of daily work (2001); A follow-up study of graduates to become professional studies superior, technical education and vocational training (2002); A diagnostic study on the system of employment and training information for potential users "Feasibility study for the establishment of a National Observatory Employment and Vocational Qualifications (ONEQP) "	(2000) Le Fonds National de la Promotion de l'Entreprise Féminin (2004); Jeunes Filles en Affaires Proposed tax reductions for companies that create more than 50 jobs to contribute to national growth ; tax subsidies in NPZs Evaluation and update of Code of Social Security Proposed annual National System of Accounts to monitor effectiveness of funding		
Serbia (2011)	138	NEP: "Post-crisis economic development and growth model" Overall aims: 1. Stimulating employment in the less developed regions and developing regional and local employment policies; 2. Enhancing the quality of human capital; 3. Development of institutional capacity and expansion of active labour market policies; 4. Reducing labour market duality Reduce public expenditures from 20.5-12.4 per cent by 2020 Employment-to-population ratio to exceed 60 per cent by 2020 Activity rate to 68.8 per cent by 2020 Decrease unemployment from 20.0-10.8 per cent by 2020 (See pp. 51-58) Due to the financial crisis and association volatility of international markets, a primary aim is to reduce dependency by making sure that the rate of domestic demand is higher than real GDP growth to ensure the sustainability of foreign debts Raising share of export goods and services; reductions of limitations of coverage of import goods and services with foreign exchange reserves EU ascension process has strongly impacted financial goals, monitoring and evaluation, labour reforms, and labour rights	Gender mainstreamed throughout policy, with particular considerations given to monitoring and sex-disaggregated data Trends have shown that women have lost fewer jobs than men; sectoral policies favouring development in areas that will particularly benefit women; targets for job creation Targets for employment, education and training for women (with other degrees of marginalization) Foreign direct investment and export-oriented programmes prioritize Strong data gathering shows amount and value of contributing family workers and own-account workers Job-orientation measures; vocational training National classification of occupational systems National Career Guidance and Counselling Programme National system of qualifications Youth Employment Fund Aim to further expand capacity of private employment services (currently: 60) Quotas for women working in the security sector	EU austerity measures require harsh cuts to public expenditure (20.5-12.4 per cent by 2020) Politics of domestic resource mobilization should be expanded upon Residual questions of corruption and feasibility of policy enforcement within such an environment Ongoing challenge of removing gender stereotypes within vocational education/training to reduce labour segmentation	Gender positive

		EU Priority Reforms: include flexicurity (greater flexibility of employment patterns while ensuring a number of rights for the employees) to reduce labour market segregation Reduce size/magnitude of informal workers Strong labour statistics to monitor change over time Goal of NEP: fully align the employment policies and labour institutions with EU acquis Trends in the last 5 years have shown rising unemployment since the crisis, with more people shifting to inactivity rather than unemployment Increase in poverty Fewer jobs in agriculture, more in industry, more in services Youth are returning to education instead of job market Steep decline in vulnerable employment (self-employment and contributing family members); 2 – 20.6 per cent from April 2008 – October 2009 Increase in salaried employees Despite job losses, fewer women have lost jobs compared with men (job losses within industry sectors); + 1.6 per cent Strong labour laws that cover many of the active and passive labour policies: Law on employment and unemployment insurance; law on vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities NEP does not target women as a group because of their diversities of life experiences, but instead focuses on other vulnerability factors (age, income, ethnic minority, etc.) Can allow for comparison over time	Nuanced consideration for flex-time/part time work and care facilities (aim to increase birth rate) Legislation to increase access to credit and productive resources Gendered social protections (unemployment benefits/insurance, health care, social security, pension) Trade unions working with partners to reduce informality Budget is funded (National Employment Service; Development Fund; Investment and Export Promotion Agency); aim to increase from 01 per cent of GDP to active programmes “Restructure public expenditures to promote women’s access to programmes and equal resources” – Gender sensitive budgeting Policy implementation at the national and regional government level, with strong assistance from workers’ and employers’ organizations, civil society, and education/training institutes Large variety of actors working to implement targets for women’s employment (SORS, UN Women, MoERD, NES, MoLSP, MF, Gender Equality Directorate)		
Seychelles (1999)	96	Analysis includes Employment Policy (1999), Strategy 2017 and Decent Work Country Programme 2011-2015 (2010) Overall aims include: permanent and meaningful consultation/coordination within government agencies; cooperation and dialogue among social partners (government, employers and workers); and sound economic policy	Strong efforts to promote social dialogue, including inclusion of workers’ and employers’ organizations in the Decent Work consultations Decent Work Programme provides clear framework/log frame for action, including monitoring indicators (sex-disaggregated) and agents of actions	Lack of diversity within economy means fewer opportunities for women, fewer openings of entrepreneurship, and limited agricultural options (fishing). Relaxing financial regulations and opening banks to off-	Gender sensitive

		Two macro-economic reform programmes undertaken in 2002 and 2008 2002: privatization; 2008: unemployment relief Establishment of Social Welfare Agency and Employment Tribunal Strategy 2017 places high value on tourism, fishing and offshore financial services Double GDP by 2017 Curtail role as economic actor; instead economic facilitator (business-friendly economic environment; streamlined regulatory systems; capable human resources) Vocational training promoted in schools, with links forged between private industry and education (primarily fishing) Decent Work Country Programme: reviews labour legislation and dispute resolution; promotes quality employment and reduction of unemployment, especially for women and youth; effective tripartite/social dialogue Overall goal: gender sensitive labour laws and gender mainstreaming within judicial systems, tribunals and institutions	(including workers'/ employers' organizations Integrated work with ILO over time – and evident progress Legislative and ministerial moves to create more nuance in employment policy (Employment Tribunal; National Committee on Employment; Health and Safety Board) Progressive monetary and fiscal policies to promote growth Affirmative action policies to promote women in business (50 per cent women in key national positions and in government) Gender mainstreaming and gender “sensitization” prioritized, with budget Gender Secretariat of the Social Development Department consulted throughout policy formation Strong female presence during policy formation (Civil society, employment department) Gender focal points within agencies	shore investment means reduced tax revenue and two-tiered system that discriminates against citizens Promoting measures to create foreign business, not local Push towards privatization of services (health care, provision of infrastructure) gives fewer options Limited prioritization of social protections/nets Counter-intuitive goals for equality – reducing instances of termination of employment on grounds of discrimination; reduction in terminations based on victimization by employers Laudable goals (reduce occupational gender stereotyping by 20 per cent) but no action plan how; confusing terminology (gender transformative career guidance training and retention)	
Tanzania, United Republic of (2008)	82	The overall vision of this National Employment Policy is to have society engaged in decent gainful employment capable of generating adequate income to sustain it, and reduce poverty as envisaged by the Tanzania Development Vision 2025, the National Strategy for Growth and the Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA), as well as facing the challenges of labour market gaps in the globalised economy The Specific Objectives of the National Employment Policy are: Enhance skills and competencies for those in the formal and informal sector especially rural areas; Promote the goal of decent and productive	Sectoral policies (especially in agriculture) that employ women (manufacturing, tourism) Opening of financial sector, and making credit widely available for small businesses and entrepreneurs “Affirmative actions will be undertaken to facilitate easy access to productive employment opportunities among women both in wage and self-employment in the public and private sector” Integration of NEP with other poverty, growth and development plans for a coherent approach to employment	High-handed approach to relations with employers' and worker's organizations (“Stakeholders will be sensitized to know their rightful roles and obligations in mainstreaming employment targets in other sectors of development plans”) Restrictive immigration of foreign workers, and exploitation of their skills Increasing labour productivity through increasing size of	Gender neutral

		employment as a national priority and enable all participants in the labour force to gain productive and full employment; Promote equal access to employment opportunities and resources endowments for marginalised and vulnerable groups, including women, youth and People with Disabilities (PWDs); Put in place conducive and enabling environment to promote growth of the private sector and transformation of the informal sector into formal; Ensure income security and social inclusion; Safeguard the basic rights and interests of workers in accordance with International Labour Standards; Foster faster economic growth and adequate allocation of investment resources to employment potential sectors such as agriculture, non- farm activities in rural areas, manufacturing and agro-processing industries, and infrastructure and social services sectors Promote a common understanding of the unemployment problem among key stakeholders and generate collaborative and current efforts towards solving it; Improve collection, analysis and timely disseminations of labour market system at all levels; Address crosscutting issues related to environment, gender and HIV/AIDS in employment. Policies in place that complement NEP: Poverty Reduction Strategy (2000/1-2002/3); Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (2005-2010); Strategic Cross-Border Placement and Recruitment Services Unit 2005/6 Integrated Labour Force Survey – shows agriculture decreasing (80.9-75.1 per cent, though still 50 per cent of GDP), private sector increasing (13-19.3 per cent) and decreasing unemployment in rural areas, but high in Dar es Salaam and with youth (pre-economic crisis)	generation Microfinance and microcredit prioritized in rural areas National Employment Council formulated NEP with ILO inputs, employers' and workers' organizations, and stakeholders continue to have a say in implementation and evaluation of policy Other gendered interests (media, academia, training institutes, NGOS) included in implementing policy NEC aims for sex-disaggregated data in the future for M&E Household surveys to determine time use and unemployment/underemployment	farms (agro-processing foreign investment prioritized) at the expense of small-share farmers Lack of concrete plans to accomplish goals (how to promote an open regulatory environment for investment? How to train people, and where?) Focus on labour standards, but no discussion of working hours, wages or working age (except to eliminate worst forms of child labour) Social protection so far limited to formal wage workers and urban dwellers – should be expanded New enterprise growth promotion gender blind Need targets and monitoring indicators (sex-disaggregated) No budget or means of financing M&E still vague and difficult to implement (responsibility of National Employment Creation Committee to present annual evaluation, but how?) Lack of gendered social protections (pensions, health care, insurance, cash transfers, public works programmes, child care)	
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		Planned: LMI system, working with employers' and workers' organizations and the National Bureau of Statistics; a review of the Tanzania Standard Classification of Occupations; Youth Development Policies; National Employment Council (tripartite) Narrow scope for immigration to safe-guard domestics jobs; prioritize skills transfers from foreign to domestic workers to limit time for foreign visas			
Uganda (2011)	102	The goal of the NEP is to provide productive and decent employment for all women and men, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity through: Employment-intensive growth - Labour market information - Labour Productivity, skills development and training - Promotion of agriculture and rural employment - Improving informal sector, micro and small-scale enterprises - Improving Labour administration and Labour Standard - Externalization of Labour - Employment of Vulnerable Groups and Promotion of Gender Equality - Promotion of Youth Employment Policy is in line with the NDP (2010-15) whose theme is "Growth, Employment and Socio-Economic Transformation for Prosperity" Strong growth (6.5 per cent average over 20 years), but also high population growth (3.2 per cent) due to high fertility Poverty reduction 56 per cent (1992) – 24.5 per cent (2009) Large population (75 per cent) young workers 25 per cent illiteracy rate of labour force (34 per cent women) 70 per cent of agriculture is low productivity (people spend 25 per cent of time); 58 per cent of agricultural workers are women National Household Survey 2009/10 Report on Labour Market Conditions (2007)	5+ years of NEP formation, with extensive inputs from ministries, workers'/ employers' organizations, civil society Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development responsible for NEP formation Budget: "Permanent Secretary Ms. Christine Gewatudde Kintu and Assistant Labour Commissioner Ms. Harriet Luyime of the Ministry of Labour, Gender and Social Development have submitted a ToR and budget for ILO support since May 2011; 770,000 USD for Youth Entrepreneurial Training Programme Gender responsive career guidance and counselling at all levels of education and training Aim to increase productivity through a proposed Productivity Centre, as well as monitoring indicators Focus on agriculture (horticulture, floriculture) that strongly impacts women producers Sex-disaggregated stats on share of women in wage employment in non-agriculture (increase from 12 per cent to 25 per cent) Gendered active labour market policies: job orientation measures, youth employment, incentives to hire women (private sector) and HWD	Insufficient budget for planned programmes Lack of institution building for workers'/employers' organizations Low-tech promotion Foreign direct investment and EPZs without labour standardization/wages Lack of targets for employment ("Envisages the setting of targets for men and women, and continuously monitoring and evaluating progress using indicators") Low coverage of social security, health care and pension No problematization of gendered gaps in access to resources (especially land) or credit Weak macroeconomic reforms (unspecified) No sex-disaggregated data on all sectors/sub-sectors (especially in industry and services)	Gender sensitive

		Urban Labour Force Survey (2010) Gender Productivity Survey Developing: labour market information system; national workplace productivity programme	Supporting East African Common Market Protocol to establish a decent wage floor Social protections: pilot cash transfer scheme, health and safety; pension (National Social Security Fund and Public Service Pension Scheme – less than 5 per cent covered, and not enough government funding for benefits); insufficient social security system Mobilization of youth and small enterprise owners Enterprise growth (1st year tax free)		
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