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Replies to the list of issues and questions for consideration of the second periodic report

Algeria

Reply of the Government of Algeria to the list of issues and questions drawn up by the Pre-session Working Group of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

This document contains the reply of the Algerian Government to the list of issues and questions drawn up by the Pre-session Working Group following the consideration of Algeria's second periodic report under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

In accordance with the suggestions contained in the communications from the Pre-session Working Group, the statistical data are given in the annex.

More detailed information on any questions not covered by this reply will be provided to the Committee by the Algerian delegation when it presents its periodic report at the thirty-second session of the Committee, to be held in New York from 10 to 23 January 2005.

1. Reservations

At a meeting of the Council of Ministers held on 8 March 2004, at which ways and means of enhancing the promotion of women's rights were considered, the President of the Republic announced that Algeria had decided to strengthen the existing legal framework and take the necessary positive action to enable women to free themselves from social constraints and take full and effective advantage of their rights under the Constitution.

He went on to say that the Government should, in that context, take the necessary measures to align the country's legislation with the development of

international law pertaining to the protection of women's rights. It should proceed with the ratification of instruments relating to the legal status of women and review the question of whether the reservations made by Algeria when acceding to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women remained appropriate.

The Algerian Government subsequently undertook a review of the Family Code and the Code of Algerian Nationality. Once the proposed amendments are introduced, it will be possible to consider withdrawing the reservations.

Constitution, legislation and national machinery for the advancement of women

2. (a) International treaties and the internal legal system

Article 132 of the Algerian Constitution establishes the principle that any ratified international convention takes precedence over domestic law. This principle was recalled in a decision by the Constitutional Council, dated 20 August 1989, concerning the Electoral Code. The Council also stated the following in the preamble to its decision:

> "Considering that article 28 of the Constitution embodies the principle of equality of citizens before the law, under which there may be no discrimination by reason of birth, race, sex, opinion or any other personal or social condition or circumstance;
>
> Considering that, once ratified and published, any convention becomes part of domestic law and, pursuant to article 132 of the Constitution, acquires an authority higher than that of the law, allowing any Algerian citizen to invoke it before the courts, and that this applies to such conventions as the United Nations Human Rights Covenants of 1966, which were adopted under Act No. 89-08 of 25 April 1989 and to which Algeria acceded under Presidential Decree No. 89-67 of 16 May 1989, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which was ratified by Decree No. 87-37 of 3 February 1987, all legal instruments that solemnly prohibit discrimination of any kind."

It is worth recalling that the National Commission on Judicial Reform, established by the President of the Republic in 2000, recommended that domestic legislation should be brought into line with the international conventions ratified by Algeria. The process, under way since 2001, of reviewing the Civil Code, the Code of Civil Procedure, the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Code of Algerian Nationality, the Family Code and the Commercial Code forms part of the same approach, namely to align Algerian legislation with the various international conventions that the country has ratified.

2. (b) Publicizing the Convention

At the institutional level, the official report of proceedings in the National People's Assembly (Parliament) has recorded all the relevant statements by members of the Government and by members of the Assembly. The issue of this document was followed by the publication of the Convention in full in *Official Gazette* No. 6 of 24 January 1996.

Furthermore, the authorities and community organizations are engaged in a constant process of Disseminating the Convention to as many people as possible by:

Including the Convention in a number of "Public Freedoms" modules taught in university law schools and in judges' training courses at the National College of Magistrates;

Organizing meetings, seminars and symposiums of experts on Human Rights Day and Women's Day every year, which endeavour to raise awareness, analyse and expound the issues involved;

Establishing, in 1995, the UNESCO Chair in Human Rights at Oran University, which has helped to promote an integrated system of human rights research, training and documentation.

2. (c) The courts

Article 132 of the Constitution provides that "treaties ratified by the President of the Republic under the conditions provided for by the Constitution shall take precedence over the law". Specifically, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women may be invoked before an Algerian judge in accordance with the conditions that Algeria accepted at the time of its accession, namely that the provisions of the Convention and are applicable and may be invoked by citizens before the Algerian courts, except with regard to the articles on which reservations were made.

Any citizen may thus apply to the court, if he or she believes that there has been any failure to observe the provisions of this international legal instrument.

To answer the question specifically, there has been no case relating to the Convention, although the courts remain available to any person choosing to invoke it.

3. Review of the Family Code

As the basic instrument regulating family relationships, which determines the legal status of the members of the family, the nucleus of society, a country's Family Code reflects the level of its social, economic and cultural development.

The Family Code has not been amended since its adoption under Act No. 84-11 of 9 June 1984. The numerous changes that have taken place in Algerian society during the intervening period, together with the need to align the country's domestic legislation with the international conventions ratified by it, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, mean that it clearly should be revised.

That is the context in which, in October 2003, the President of the Republic instructed the Minister of Justice, Keeper of the Seals, to undertake a revision of the Family Code. The Committee established for that purpose on 26 October 2003 found that the Algerian family had gradually changed from a patriarchal model, headed by the husband, to an arrangement based on mutual assistance. It therefore recommended that the Code should be amended as a matter of urgency to align it with the Constitution, which provides for equality among all Algerians, and with Islamic law, which fights injustice but also promotes equality, demonstrating a

capacity to adapt to the various changes through which a society passes while, at the same time leaving the door open to *ijtihad* (exegesis).

The principal amendments proposed involve the elimination of certain provisions that discriminate against women; among other things they harmonize the minimum age for marriage and for mutual consent to marriage, abolish guardianship for adult women when a marriage is contracted — thus establishing equality between spouses — and provide better protection for children in the event of divorce.

The amendments proposed by the Government are currently being discussed by politicians, the media and the society as a whole. The Algerian delegation will explain the amendments in detail when it presents the periodic report.

4. Focal points and units dealing with women's issues within the governmental framework

The Ministry for the Family and the Status of Women answers directly to the Head of Government, who provides the resources required for the Ministry's activities.

The Ministry implements government policy on the family and the status of women. It conducts and coordinates government activity to promote the status of women, the protection of children, preventive health care, the struggle against social marginalization and the mobilization of women to contribute to the economic and social well-being of society. It also encourages the community organizations that operate in these fields.

In addition to this Ministry, a number of other ministerial departments are directly involved in promoting the status of women in their respective spheres of activity, especially the Ministries of Justice, the Interior and Local Communities, Health, Education, Agriculture and Rural Development, Employment and National Solidarity, and Labour and Social Security.

In the wake of Algeria's accession to the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and with a view to promoting a comprehensive policy with regard to women, the National Women's Council, an advisory body answerable to the Head of Government, was established.

The Council's mandate is to implement a coherent and effective policy relating to activities aimed at women and women's programmes; to contribute to the promotion and development of community organizations working for women; and to promote the advancement of Algerian women within the regional and international women's movement, coordinating their representation.

The Council, whose presiding officer must, in accordance with its statute, be a woman, comprises representatives of all ministerial departments, five representatives from State institutions and advisory bodies, five representatives of trade unions and employers' organizations, 20 representatives of community organizations working for the advancement of women and four individuals chosen for their personal qualities.

5. Relationship between the Ministry for the Family and the Status of Women and the National Advisory Committee on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

Among the institutions involved in protecting women's rights, the National Advisory Committee on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights plays quite a significant role. Established on 9 October 2001 by the President of the Republic, to whom it submits an annual report, this independent body, comprising 45 members of whom 13 are women, performs monitoring, early warning and assessment activities in the field of human rights. The Minister for the Family and the Status of Women is a member of the Committee.

Violence against women

6. Domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape

Parliament, in suppressing of all forms of violence, makes no distinction with regard to "victims"; in the eyes of the law, there is no discrimination whatsoever between men and women.

Courts responsible for trying cases involving violence apply the provisions of the Criminal Code dealing with acts of wilful violence, contained in articles 264, 265, 266, 270, 271 and 422. While no specific legislation deals with women victims of violence, the law states that for all types of injuries, civil compensation shall be awarded at the judge's discretion, whether a man or a woman is involved. This explains the lack of judicial statistics on women victims of violence. Yet it must be recognized that in Algeria, as in many other societies, domestic violence is an unacknowledged and taboo subject. Nonetheless, the question of violence in all its forms (marital rape, aggression, sexual assault, harassment) regularly forms the subject of scientific conferences, university research and studies.

The two committees established in January 2000 by the Minister of State and Justice to begin the revision of the Civil Code, the Code of Civil Procedure, the Criminal Code, and the Code of Criminal Procedure made a number of proposals in their recommendations, which were adopted by the Government and debated in Parliament in September 2004.

Accordingly, the offence of sexual harassment was included in the draft revision of the Criminal Code, as follows (new article 341 bis):

> "Any person who abuses the authority conferred by their function or profession by giving orders to others, making threats, imposing conditions or exercising pressure, for the purpose of obtaining favours of a sexual nature is deemed to have committed the offence of sexual harassment and shall be sentenced to a term of imprisonment of two months to one year and a fine of 50,000 to 100,000 dinars."

With regard to rape it is worth reiterating that it has not yet been defined as an offence by the Criminal Code although proposals were put forward, within the framework of the recommendations made by the Committee when Algeria presented its initial report in New York in 1999, to define rape, to include domestic or marital violence and to institute the practice in the higher and lower courts of keeping

statistics on women victims of violence, in keeping with the procedure followed in cases of harassment in all its forms.

7. Punitive measures in the case of rape of a minor

With regard to the willingness of the perpetrator of the rape of a minor to marry his victim in order to put a stop to criminal proceedings, as referred to in the list of issues and questions formulated by the Pre-session Working Group, it is worth stressing, firstly, that such rape is a criminal offence punishable under articles 336 and 337 and following of the Criminal Code, which provide for "10 to 20 years' imprisonment for the rape of a minor".

Despite any settlement that might be reached with the victim or her parents, the perpetrator of the rape is prosecuted, referred to the Criminal Court and tried for an aggravated criminal offence, because the victim is a minor. The victim may bring a criminal indemnity action only, the criminal action being strictly within the jurisdiction of the Government Procurator's Office. The perpetrator is never exempted from criminal prosecution.

Complaints and denunciations are lodged with officers of the judicial police (police and *gendarmerie*), who undertake the preliminary investigation. They are required to write a report of their operations and immediately to inform the Government Procurator of the indictable offences which have come to their attention. As soon as they complete their operations, they must immediately submit direct to the Government Procurator the original and a certified true copy of their reports together with any related instruments and documents, and objects seized. The Procurator then invokes the public right of action to initiate criminal proceedings against the perpetrator of the rape.

It is worth noting that the public right of action can be extinguished only if the perpetrator is executed, the action is time-barred, an amnesty is granted, the criminal law is repealed or the matter is declared *res judicata*. The public action is also extinguished if the complaint is withdrawn where a complaint is necessary if the prosecution is to proceed, as for example in cases of adultery or theft committed between persons related by consanguinity or marriage up to and including the fourth degree.

In fact, prosecution does not proceed unless a complaint is filed by the offended spouse in the case of adultery, or the injured party in the case of theft. Accordingly, a pardon or the withdrawal of the complaint terminates the proceedings. In the case of rape, there is no legal way in which the perpetrator can absolve himself of the crime he committed by offering to marry the victim. Such a course of action never extinguishes the right of public action.

8. Education, awareness-raising and training measures relating to violence against women

In this connection it should be noted that, in general, human rights are taught to students at the National College of Magistrates, the National School of Prison Administration and the National Police Academy, and in military academies and schools of the National *Gendarmerie*.

The various training units of the Criminal Investigation Department include in their curricula topics dealing with violence in general, as well as the various forms

of violence to which women are subjected, such as sexual assault, abuse and rape. In addition, courses are given on ways to prevent and combat marital or familial violence and on case-management practices relating to women victims of violence. These courses are designed for students aspiring to the rank of senior police officer, police inspector and police officer, as well to members of the police force who must undergo training in order to be promoted to a higher rank.

Sustained awareness-raising campaigns concerning violence against women are conducted at the national level as a result of the efforts of the women's association movement, the media, local communities, and educational institutions. All of these participants are involved in the effort to influence current thinking, in particular through education and action to eradicate illiteracy and poverty, with a view to establishing in actual fact rigorous respect for and protection of women's rights and helping women to become aware of their legal rights.

A counselling and assistance centre for victims of harassment was established on 29 December 2003, under the auspices of the National Working Women's Support Commission formed on 17 March 2002 and affiliated with the Algerian General Workers' Union. In addition, reception centres for girls and women who are victims of violence and living in difficult situations were established by executive decrees and placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Employment and National Solidarity. The principal functions of the centres consist in:

Providing clients with temporary shelter and medical, social and psychological care;

Diagnosing and evaluating the psychological problems of girls and women, who are clients of the centre, with a view to providing specialized, individual case management;

Offering training or apprenticeships, as appropriate, to clients;

Organizing activities in cooperation with relevant institutions and bodies, with a view to reintegrating clients into society and their families and providing them with legal assistance;

Providing medical and psychological follow-up, gynaecological examinations in cases of physical violence, and other related tests (pregnancy, HIV/AIDS).

The associations, for their part, play an important role in supporting women victims of violence through the opening of counselling units and reception centres.

9. Women victims of terrorist acts

All strata of Algerian society have for many years been the object of a campaign of terrorist violence, which has targeted women and children in particular.

It should be emphasized that women victims of terrorist violence, whether in the form of murder, abduction, rape or degradation by torture, are provided with medical and legal services comprising an interview, a medical examination and counselling facilities. They are also cared for in reception centres for women victims of violence or in crisis situations, established in Algiers, Tipaza, Tlemcen, Oran and Constantine. Toll-free calling services have also been put in place.

In addition, women victims of terrorism receive compensation from the Ministry of the Interior and Local Communities within the framework of a specific

global case management provision for victims of the terrorism that has affected tens of thousands of families. Accordingly, article 145 of the amended and updated 1993 Finance Act provides for compensation in the form of a monthly allowance for widows with children or a lump-sum for widows without children. Included in that provision was the principle that such allowances to victims would be maintained and paid to the widows, pending regularization of their compensation dossiers. The way in which the allowance is divided clearly favours widows, who receive 50 per cent of the total amount. The rest is divided equally between victims' children and relatives (a minor child's share being paid to the mother). The provision does not conform to the principles governing the right of succession based on the Shariah.

With regard to victims of sexual violence, instructions have been given to all local authorities for practical socio-economic case management that takes into account each victim's status (allocation of housing, work tools, medical and psychological assistance, etc.).

Beginning in 1998, victim-of-terrorism status has been extended to women victims of rape, and a directive was issued making therapeutic abortion possible.

With regard to abduction, the abductees' salaries are maintained and paid to the spouse. In the case of unemployed victims or those working in the private sector, families receive financial assistance from the victims' compensation fund.

The Ministry of Employment and National Solidarity assists the wives and families of victims with re-entry into the workforce by providing them with financial aid and the material means of creating work. It also makes external consultations at specialized establishments available to victims and assists, within the framework of a programme financed by the National Solidarity Fund, in providing them with housing. Under this programme, the 48 prefectures (*wilayate*) have benefited from quotas of 100 housing units each.

It is worth noting that the policy of civil harmony and reconciliation introduced by the President of the Republic since his election in 1999 has contributed greatly to the re-establishment of security and the return of the Algerian people, to the secular values of tolerance and dialogue, thereby encouraging the continued expansion of the scope of freedom.

Participation by women in decision-making

10. Statistical information about the number of women in elective bodies

In the context of its overall strategy of accession to international human rights instruments, especially those designed to strengthen women's rights, Algeria acceded on 8 March 2004 to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in resolution 640 (VII), on 20 December 1952. The instrument of accession was deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 5 August 2004.

Participation by women in decision-making is guaranteed by the Constitution and the law. Although women's participation in decision-making and their access to high-level government positions may seem rather limited when compared with the situation of men, steady progress is being made in that regard.

With regard to high-level government positions, it is worth noting that women were appointed to four posts in the most recent government in 2004, and that the following officials are female: two ambassadors, one secretary general of a ministry, four chiefs of staff in ministries, one prefect (head of a *wilaya*) appointed in 1999, two specially appointed prefects, one deputy prefect, three secretaries general in prefectures, three inspectors-general in prefectures and seven sub-prefects (head of a *daïra*).

With regard to the judicial branch, women occupy the following posts: one President of the Council of State, three presiding judges in the higher courts; 34 out of 56 presiding judges in the lower courts, one Procurator-General, 115 out of 404 examining magistrates, 11 presidents of division, of whom five are at the Council of State and six at the Supreme Court. Out of a total of 2,811 magistrates, 922 are women.

At the Chancery level, out of a total of 146 senior officers 22 are women. Of the 13,737 officials across the establishment as a whole, 6,024 are women and of 10,210 Registry personnel, 4,917 are women, i.e. an increase of 48.16 per cent in the proportion of female staff. A woman has been appointed vice-governor of the Bank of Algeria, and another woman was appointed as a member *intuitus personae* of the Bank's Currency and Credit Council, the highest financial authority in the country. The faculties of natural science, science and technology and the arts are headed by women.

It is worth noting that the authorities have taken highly encouraging steps to increase the number of women in fields which until recently were viewed as a male preserve. Algerian women are represented in ever greater numbers in the different branches of the armed forces, the National Police and in the sector of the police force involved in community outreach and reporting services for women victims in the police stations.

Thus, in each sub-prefecture (*daïra*), there is at least one woman official who greets and provides guidance to women. The goal is to humanize police stations and encourage women to discuss their problems calmly; women police and security officers are now a visible presence in airports, ports and the courts. In urban sub-prefectures there are women who hold the rank of senior officer and commissioner. A woman holds the post of Chief Superintendent.

It must be emphasized that the recruitment of women as representatives of the law and the establishment of community policing have made it possible to deal with this specific category of women victims of abuse by listening to them and providing them with guidance and follow-up until the perpetrators have been brought before the competent courts.

The scope of the plan can be best appreciated in terms of the proactive measures taken in the areas of recruitment and remuneration. For the three years 2002, 2003 and 2004, the following women police were recruited:

Police officers:	500 (2002-2003)	205 (2004)
Police inspectors:	150 (2003)	75 (2004)
Senior police officers:	50 (2002-2003)	34 (2004).

In addition to the women police recruited, there are 2,957 female support staff who play an important role. Their number is set to increase particularly in the special services.

To date, the Criminal Investigation Department has 6,423 women on its staff, 3,466 of whom are police officers of various grades and 2,957 support staff.

In the Civil Defence Department the involvement of women in tasks that are traditionally viewed as essentially masculine has led to the integration and promotion of women within the administrative and operational areas of civil defence.

Accordingly, despite the distinctive character of the corps, various initiatives have been undertaken since 1992 to overcome the hindrances and psychological barriers impeding the recruitment of female personnel, particularly in intervention units.

In fact, implementation of the regulatory provisions governing the civil defence corps, in particular Executive Decree No. 91-274 of 10 August 1992, opened up certain sections of the organization to women. In that context, the medical assistance sector has experienced the highest increase in the number of female staff. Although the recruitment and employment of women doctors were slow at first, they will expand exponentially over time despite the difficult working conditions.

At the present time, the civil defence services can draw upon 101 female medical intervention officers distributed according to need throughout the 48 prefectures (*wilayate*). They are subject to the same labour and disciplinary rules as their male counterparts.

In addition, women have been integrated into the ranks of civil defence personnel, beginning in 1996 with the first intake of engineering officers, and they have been entrusted with positions of responsibility in the command structure of the organization which, it is worth noting, obeys strict rules of discipline in keeping with the demands of a very hierarchical body. The number of posts at the managerial or command level occupied by women is a clear indication of the status and the role of women in the Algerian civil defence services.

Thus, the two posts of sub-director, for social action and major risks, respectively, are occupied by a woman doctor holding the rank of captain and a university graduate who holds a diploma in engineering. Gender mainstreaming has also opened more high-level posts to women: there are eight women in high-level posts, 158 women are officers and 14 are deputy officers.

More detailed statistics regarding women in the civil service and other State organizations are given in the attached tables.

11. Participation by women in political life

There is no legislative or regulatory provision that prohibits or restricts participation by women in the country's political life. The Constitution and Order No. 97-07 of 6 March 1997 setting up the electoral regime guarantee women the right to vote and to be elected. The same text establishes voting requirements, which are the same for men and women.

The following statistics show the extent of participation by women in local elections in 2002:

Electorate: 18,094,555 voters, of whom 8,349,770 were women, i.e. 46.14 per cent

Women candidates in various elections (2002)

Number of women candidates

National People's Assembly: 695 out of 10,052, or 0.06 per cent

*Departmental (*Wilaya*) People's Assemblies*: 2,697 out of 32,627, or 0.08 per cent

Communal People's Assemblies: 3,705 out of 119,636, or 0.03 per cent

Number of women holding seats in Parliament

Council of the Nation (Senate): 3 women out of the third of the total membership appointed by the President of the Republic.

National People's Assembly: 23 women elected (out of 389)

Number of women holding seats in local assemblies

Departmental People's Assemblies: 115 women elected (out of 1,960)

Communal People's Assemblies: 149 women elected (out of 13,464)

Number of women presiding in an elected assembly (CPA): 1

Participation by women in local and legislative elections is as follows:

	1997		*2002*	
	Candidates	*Elected*	*Candidates*	*Elected*
CPA	1 281	75	3 679	147
DPA	905	62	2 684	113
NPA	322	11	694	27
Council of the Nation	-	-	-	3

Under this heading, it is worth noting that a woman, the head of the Workers' Party, was a candidate in the presidential elections of 8 April 2004.

Employment and economic empowerment

12. Women's participation in the labour force

In general terms, the number of women workers has increased significantly, although their overall share in the labour force remains low. The distribution of the labour force by sex is as follows:

Sex	*2000*	*2001*	*Difference*
Total number of workers	6 178 992	6 228 772	+49 780
Men	5 381 909	5 345 223	-86 366
Women	797 083	883 549	+86 466
Women's share in the labour force	12.89%	14.18%	+1.28%

In 2003, the share of women in the labour force reached almost 20 per cent; in addition, there were more than 600,000 women in informal employment. According to available statistics, 56 per cent of women workers are under 40 years of age and half of these women are aged between 24 and 29 years, while 21 per cent of women workers are aged between 20 and 24 years.

One of the main characteristics of women's employment in Algeria is their strong representation in certain fields and occupational groups, such as teaching and education (49.62 per cent in 2000), health care (54 per cent in specialized medicine and 73 per cent in pharmacy) and law (30.75 per cent).

Like men, women have benefited from various programmes initiated by youth employment agencies at both the regional and sectoral levels and from the economic recovery programme and the national agricultural development plan, launched in 2001 and 2000, respectively.

There was thus significant demand for microcredit from women wishing to establish private enterprises. The proportion of applications received from women increased year on year, from 19.99 per cent in 1999 to 16.59 per cent in 2001 and 33.9 per cent in 2002. Women represent 15 per cent of the agricultural labour force, including investors (59,712) and permanent or wage-earning workers (293,527), as well as 41,793 women heads of household working at home (according to the latest agricultural census, taken in 2002).

In January 2004, a set of four decrees was adopted. They included a decree establishing a microcredit scheme to encourage unemployed persons and persons with no source of income to create their own jobs, including home-based activities, through such measures as:

– Providing bank loans in amounts ranging from DA 50,000 to DA 400,000;

– Providing State assistance in the form of interest-free loans for projects costing more than DA 100,000;

– Providing interest-free loans for the purchase of raw materials costing less than DA 30,000 or tax relief on interest paid on bank loans. In 2004, DA 21 billion was mobilized under the scheme to support youth employment in cooperation with banks.

The Ministry of Labour and National Solidarity has established several mechanisms in recent years in the context of the Algerian Government's efforts to combat unemployment and, in particular, to promote women's integration through employment schemes. Such mechanisms include the Allowance for Performing Socially Useful Activities (IAIG), the Labour-Intensive Public Works Programme (TUPHIMO), Pre-Employment Contracts (CPE), the Local Initiative Employees (ESIL) Programme and microcredit and microenterprise programmes.

The table below shows the percentage of women among beneficiaries of these schemes:

Category	*Total number*	*Percentage of women*
IAIG	168 626	41
TUPHIMO	203 632	-
CPE	9 022	65
ESIL	141 000	45
Microcredit	11 216	30.49
Microenterprise	52 393	12.11

Against a background of economic recovery and renewed growth, the mechanisms established by the State have brought about a very significant reduction in the unemployment rate. According to the latest statistical data, the overall rate fell from 29 per cent in 1999 to 23 per cent in 2003.

13. Leave of absence for raising a child under the age of five

In accordance with article 55 of Labour Relations Act No. 90-11 of 21 April 1990, as amended and supplemented, women workers may be accorded certain facilities in addition to maternity leave during the pre- and post-natal periods, in the conditions stipulated by the employer's own rules.

It should be pointed out that article 17 of this Act does not relate to parental leave. Algerian legislation contains no explicit provision on parental leave for men.

14. Right to equal pay and assessment of Labour Relations Act No. 90-11 of 21 April 1990

Act No. 90-11 of 21 April 1990 specifies the rights and duties of workers without distinction as to sex. In addition, it provides protections for certain categories of workers, such as young workers and women, particularly with respect to night work and prevention of occupational hazards.

As to salaries, there is no discrimination between workers based on sex, since the wage paid by the employer depends on the post, not on the incumbent (male or female) of the post.

Workers receive the same pay and benefits for the same work, provided that they are equally qualified and equally productive.

Every employer is required to ensure that workers receive equal pay for work of equal value without any discrimination (Act No. 90-11, art. 84).

Also, under this Act, the signing of a collective labour convention or agreement containing provisions that create discrimination between workers with respect to employment, pay or working conditions is punishable by a fine (arts. 17 and 142).

A comprehensive assessment of Act No. 90-11 is under way. In addition, on the basis of this ongoing assessment, a think tank is to make the necessary amendments to the Act to align it with the new economic and social context.

15. Part-time work

Executive Decree No. 97-473 of 8 December 1997 on part-time work specifies the conditions of remuneration for this category of workers.

Under articles 10 and 11, part-time workers' pay must be proportional to that of employees who are equally qualified and occupy equivalent posts on a full-time basis with the same employer, unless more favourable terms are agreed upon. The allowances that may be claimed by part-time workers under the law and/or labour agreements are proportional to the actual amount of time worked. Sex-disaggregated data on part-time employment will be provided when the report is introduced.

16. Women working in the informal sector

Taking into account the nature of this type of work, it is difficult to establish the number of women working in the informal sector.

17. Programmes to address the economic situation of women heads of household

The Algerian delegation will provide more detailed information on this subject, in addition to the information contained in paragraph 12 above, when the report is introduced.

Education and stereotypes

18. Education and career choice

Currently, secondary education consists of two main branches: general and technical secondary education and vocational secondary education.

While there are more girls than boys at the secondary level, fewer girls take vocational courses.

However, it must be noted that the number of pupils taking vocational courses constitutes a small proportion of the total number of pupils in secondary education, namely 13 per cent.

This is mainly due to the rejection of these courses by parents and children themselves, since such courses are still undervalued in Algerian society, and to the preference for traditional general education courses, which offer a wider range of career choices and better prospects than vocational courses, which are more specialized and thus more limited in terms of job opportunities.

As stated in the report, all courses are open to all pupils without any discrimination, based on their preferences and abilities.

It must be pointed out that, under the current guidance system, the best pupils are steered, depending on their results, towards general education courses, which, ordinarily, prepare pupils for the *baccalauréat de l'enseignement général* (certificate of general secondary education), paving the way for fairly lengthy academic university studies. Other pupils, generally less able, are steered towards vocational secondary education courses, which allow them to study for a *baccalauréat de technicien* (certificate of vocational secondary education) and lead to relatively short technical and semi-professional training courses.

As girls are generally more successful than boys, they opt for general and technical education more often and frequently go on to academic university studies.

However, it must be noted that, although the number of girls in general education is relatively large compared with the number of boys, they still account for one third of the total number of pupils in vocational education, which is not insignificant. Moreover, this phenomenon is not peculiar to Algeria; it is a global trend, which demonstrates that girls are less oriented towards vocational education than boys.

The following figures show the distribution of pupils across all courses in secondary education.

There are 1,122,395 pupils in secondary education of whom 645,782, or 57.53 per cent, are girls.

In the first year of secondary school, there are 411,815 pupils of whom 220,885 are girls. Of these pupils, 355,252, including 205,879 girls, are following the general education common-core syllabus, while 56,583, including 14,986 girls, are following the vocational education common-core syllabus.

In the second and third years, there are 644,864 pupils in general secondary education of whom 401,468, or 62.25 per cent, are girls. Distribution by subject is as follows:

Subject	*Number of pupils*	*Girls*	*Per cent*
Literature	281 762	200 045	71.14
Natural and life sciences	278 628	163 305	58.61
Exact sciences	15 423	7 095	46.00
Economic management	45 389	23 968	52.80
Civil engineering	7 714	2 725	35.32
Electrical engineering	8 620	2 522	29.25
Mechanical engineering	7 328	1 398	19.07

In the second and third years, there are 65,716 pupils in vocational education of whom 23,449, or 35.68 per cent, are girls. Distribution by subject is as follows:

Subject	*Number of pupils*	*Girls*	*Per cent*
Industrial production	12 412	1 718	13.84
Electronics	5 339	1 488	27.87
Electrotechnics	9 675	2 904	30.01
Construction and public works	10 043	2 874	28.61
Chemistry	9 349	4 595	49.14
Accountancy	18 893	9 870	52.24

The reform of the education system will lead to the restructuring of secondary education; the new structure will enter into force in September 2005. In the context of this reform, a new branch will be established, namely, vocational and

professional education. It is anticipated that, in the medium term, the number of pupils in this branch will increase to 30 per cent of all pupils in secondary education; the number of girls will thus increase, too.

19. Data on women teachers

The number of women teachers is steadily increasing. There are almost as many women teachers as men in the various stages of the education system, except for higher education, where further efforts are needed. It should be noted, however, that women constitute one third of the teaching staff at the higher education level, and that is no mean achievement.

The breakdown of staffing levels in the various stages of the education system is as follows:

Primary education:	170,031 teachers, 49.75 per cent of whom (84,598) are women.
Intermediate education:	107,898 teachers, 52.53 per cent of whom (56,683) are women.
Secondary education:	59,177 teachers, 47.19 per cent of whom (27,925) are women.
Higher education:	22,650 teachers, 32.6 per cent of whom (7,309) are women.

20. Evaluation of the literacy programme

The literacy project for women and girls (1990-2001) was initiated within the framework of the International Year declared by UNESCO at the World Conference on Education for All, held in Thailand in 1990, and the beginning of the United Nations Literacy Decade.

The project was officially launched in 1991 and targeted women and girls of childbearing age (18-39 years). Its main objective was the advancement and economic, social and cultural empowerment of 30,000 women.

The choice of *wilayat* to be involved in this project was made in two stages. In the first, the following four *wilayat* were chosen: Adrar, Médéa, Mostaganem and Ain Defla. In the second, the following ten *wilayat* were chosen: Adrar, Batna, Bejaia, Bechar, Tamanrasset, Tlemcen, Oran, Tindouf, Tipaza and Ghardaïa.

In the first stage, the project had only thirty-two classrooms, but that number grew, reaching 333 by the end of 1991. In the second stage, 200 classrooms were opened in ten *wilayat* with high illiteracy rates.

With regard to the outcome of the project, it should be emphasized that the illiteracy rate has been reduced from 43 per cent (according to the 1987 General Census of Population and Habitat) to 31.9 per cent (according to the 1998 General Census of Population and Habitat).

Following these results, the National Literacy Centre changed its name as of 20 May 1995 to the National Office of Literacy and Adult Education, having been awarded a prize and diploma by the International Reading Association through the good offices of UNESCO in Beijing in September 1995.

Implementation of the project has also made it possible to prepare a set of educational tools and resources for the three levels, to produce a video under the Iqra' Society label (Iqra' is active in the literacy campaign) and to train a large number of male and female trainers throughout the country.

In terms of project evaluation, UNICEF has commissioned the National Centre for Study and Analysis of Population and Development (CENEAP) to carry out a project evaluation study, the results and recommendations of which will serve as tools for improving the project strategy.

21. Combating stereotypes

Algeria launched the reform of its education system in September 2003. Its objective is to construct a modern and republican school system to dispense quality education to the country's children and to train the citizens of tomorrow.

It is a far-reaching and radical reform involving improving the qualification level of teaching staff, totally overhauling school curricula and textbooks, setting in place a new organizational system, new methods of operation for educational establishments and new roles for the various actors, from heads of establishments to teachers, pupils and parents.

New elements have been included in the curricula, namely, human rights education (the Convention on the Rights of the Child, international humanitarian law, etc.), population education, health education, global education and environmental education. All in all, it adds up to a real education in citizenship.

The principles taught are those linked to the universal values of peace, tolerance, respect for others, mutual assistance and solidarity, which are found in Civics syllabuses but which are also linked to the content of Islamic education and other disciplines in the context of a cross-fertilization between curricula and the complementarity of disciplines.

The religious principles taught are therefore those related to the values cited and belonging to the values of our religion.

Although in the past school textbooks contained images or made references that were of a discriminatory, stereotypical nature, that is not the case now.

In fact, all school textbooks are subject to prior systematic and rigorous evaluation and their distribution in schools is subject to approval being given by a commission of experts on the subject.

Prior to the beginning of the 2004 school year, two textbooks were denied that approval simply because they contained images reflecting discriminatory stereotypes, even though they were of very high quality from an educational point of view.

Health

22. Reforms of the health system

The reforms of the national health system has involved both the hospital and the extra-hospital sectors.

With regard to the hospitals, the reforms have related to the introduction of the new hospital establishment project which concerns methods of organization and management, with the emphasis on analysing and controlling costs and improving performance.

At present four basic specialities are involved in the hospital reforms: obstetric gynaecology, general surgery, paediatrics and ophthalmology.

As to the extra-hospital reforms, the concept of basic health care has been redefined following the second national conference, held in March 2003, and now extends beyond the ambit of essential care to incorporate reproductive health and family planning, chronic diseases and extensive pathologies and specialized medical care. As regards the provision of services, the reforms involve the offering of alternative forms of care linked to hospitalization, home care and mobile teams; the reorganization of services through the hierarchization of intervention levels and the identification of references, especially for maternity care; the establishment of incentives for medical personnel to ensure a more balanced distribution of specialists, in particular, and to improve health coverage in disadvantaged regions; standardization of the technical capacity of maternity clinics to provide emergency obstetric and neonatal care and the basic specialities mentioned above.

On the basis of the list of health services, a national process has been initiated with new defining organizational standards for medical activities, including the private sector in the national health system; normalizing the setting up of private and semi-public hospital establishments; and formulating a national and regional plan for the distribution of public and private heavy equipment.

A continuing impetus is being given to training, because the development of human resources through continuing training and improved status is viewed both as an end in itself and as a health reform tool of primary importance. The budgets allocated for continuing training and research currently represent 10 per cent of the operational budget for the health sector. The priorities naturally include maternal and prenatal health and continuing training for service providers is given annually at both the central and decentralized levels.

National priorities in health matters afford pride of place to maternal and neonatal health and to extending the provision of reproductive health services, including family planning. This is why the strategic and organizational readjustments made during the reform process have involved improving the quality of, and access to, services in these areas, especially in the disadvantaged regions of the country.

23. Survey of maternal and perinatal mortality

The national maternal mortality survey has estimated that the maternal mortality rate is 117 deaths per 100,000 live births, with variations between regions and *wilayate* ranging from 23.37 per 100,000 in the north of the country to 239 per 100,000 in the south.

The survey data and a careful analysis of maternal risk factors have led to the “maternity without risk” programme being reactivated through the establishment of the national committee for combating maternal and perinatal mortality and morbidity and the adoption of a plan of action covering several years, at a national workshop held in March 2001. This plan involves, in particular, intensified training

of service providers; formulating care protocols for pregnancy and childbirth; and standardizing services by making essential medicines and products available and standardizing the technical capacity of maternity clinics with regard to essential and neonatal obstetric care. The latter area has benefited from a substantial contribution in the form of cooperation with UNFPA, which has helped to standardize the technical capacity of some sixty maternity clinics which are the points of reference for twenty disadvantaged *wilayate*.

The dissemination of protocols and technical guidelines has led in particular to:

The formulation of national standards for obstetric and neonatal care, with the support of a distinguished international expert and the help of national consultants, and

The production in various formats — as a handbook, a video-cassette and a video compact disc — of a guide on the reanimation of newborns in the delivery room, with a contribution from an international expert and support from the UNFPA cooperation programme.

These tools have been widely distributed to service providers and form the basis for training activities in the areas concerned. It is worth mentioning that in 2003 a regional training programme was organized for trainers in newborn reanimation, in order to strengthen the national capacity to prevent and deal with neonatal emergencies.

In fact, it appears that, given the significant progress made in the 1- to 12-month age group, neonatal and post-neonatal deaths constitute a large proportion of infant deaths and, according to some hospital data, can reach as much as 60 per cent. The infant mortality rate is one fifth of what it was three decades ago, falling from 142 per 1,000 in 1970 to 33.3 per 1,000 in 2002. Future progress in this area would imply improving perinatal and neonatal care within an integrated approach targeting mothers and newborns.

The introduction of the late perinatal and neonatal death certificate (May 2004) should help not only to improve the national statistics system with respect to the civil registration of infant deaths but also to achieve a better understanding of perinatal mortality, so that the quality of care for this vulnerable age group can be significantly improved.

It should be added in this connection that an executive decree on the standardization of the operation and organization of neonatal and perinatal services will be issued soon. Furthermore, the process of establishing a system for continuous monitoring of the causes and circumstances of maternal mortality (a clinical audit) is being initiated in the form of pilot projects in five maternity clinics.

In addition, Algeria is currently participating with 53 other randomly selected countries in a WHO project to establish a database on maternal and perinatal health. The object of the project is to determine whether there is a causal relationship between the quality of care and the outcome of pregnancies, and hence to steer countries towards the strategic guidelines and programmes that will ensure quality care. The study involves a sample of 23 maternity clinics (with more than 3,000 births per year) in four *wilayate*, including the capital, Algiers.

24. Objectives of population and reproductive health policy up to the year 2010

The demographic data emerging from vital registration records, from the latest census and from the most recent Algerian Family Health survey, carried out in 2002, are evidence of the speed of the demographic transition, which has already had a clear impact on age structures, particularly with regard to the age brackets comprising the young and the elderly.

The level of natural growth in 2003 was 1.58 per cent, as against 1.51 per cent in 1999, a slight increase. That was due to a generational effect rather than to renewed growth, since the latter was anticipated and predicted in the population projections established following the latest census, held in 1998. The slowdown is expected to resume during the second half of the present decade.

The birth rate was 20.36 per 1,000 in 2003, as against 19.82 per 1,000 in 1999 and 19.68 per 1,000 in 2002;

The general mortality rate was 4.55 per 1,000 in 2003, as against 4.72 per 1,000 in 1999 and 4.41 per 1,000 in 2002;

The infant mortality rate was 32.5 per 1,000 in 2003 (34.6 for males and 30.3 for females), as against 39.4 per 1,000 in 1999 (40.2 for males and 38.6 for females);

Life expectancy in 2003 was 73.9 years (72.9 for men and 74.9 for women). In 1999 it was 70.9 years for men and 72.9 for women, the average being 72;

According to the 2002 survey, the total fertility rate was 2.4 children per woman (2.7 in rural areas and 2.1 in urban areas). By way of comparison, the total fertility rate in 1992 was 4.4 (5.3 in rural areas and 3.6 in urban areas).

Reproductive health indicators show a steady increase in contraceptive use and a significant reduction in variations according to area of residence. Overall, there is a trend towards a more widespread use of modern contraceptive methods and a significant decline in traditional methods.

Contraceptive prevalence, using any method, was 57 per cent in 2002 (59 per cent in urban areas and 54.4 per cent in rural areas), compared with 50.7 per cent in 1992 (57.5 per cent in urban areas and 44.4 per cent in rural areas). Modern methods accounted for 51.8 per cent in 2002, as against 43.1 per cent in 1992. The prevalence of traditional methods declined from 8.8 per cent in 1992 to 5.2 per cent in 2002. In the light of the significant rise in age at marriage,[1] the age bracket affected by contraceptive use is 35 to 39 years old, whereas in 1992 the spread was 34 to 39.

Prenatal care has also become more widespread, being available to over 81 per cent of women, although there is a 10 per cent variation between urban and rural areas.

The national average for assisted childbirth is 91.2 per cent (84 per cent in rural areas) and tetanus vaccination levels for pregnant women have reached 44 per cent, as against 13 per cent in 1992.

[1] In 2002, the average age at first marriage was 33 for men and 29.6 for women.

With regard to improvements in population and reproductive health at the national level, changes in strategy were ordered in December 2001 following consideration by the Council of Ministers of a national policy document on population. These changes are predicated on the importance of reducing persistent variations and inequalities, since seven out of the country's 48 *wilayate*, mostly those situated in the south and in disadvantaged regions, have not yet effected the demographic transition and lag 10 years behind the *wilayate* situated farther north. The orientation of national population policy at the targeted *wilaya* level is therefore the main purpose of the *wilaya* population committees recently established under Executive Decree No. 02-312 of 2 October 2002. This should in itself contribute to the attainment of the objectives established at the national level up to 2010 and 2020.

25. Combating sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS

The adoption of the strategic planning process in May 2002 by all the parties concerned, following studies coordinated by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)-Algeria, resulted in the provision of support for activities aimed at facilitating the implementation of the strategic planning process, including sero-monitoring sentinel surveys covering tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, surveys of behaviour, attitudes and practices, improved medical care and procedural training activities for non-governmental organizations.

Other notable events during the period in question were the adoption of the Tamanrasset declaration on sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS and the launch of a pilot project initiated by the coastal States and adopted by the seven countries concerned. The project is currently operational.

Algeria reaffirmed its political will with regard to HIV/AIDS in its statements at the highest level (at the fifty-fourth World Health Assembly and the twenty-sixth special session of the United Nations General Assembly). An important development took place in that connection when Algeria became eligible for assistance from the International AIDS Trust, following its application for funding of about $9 million for three years. The application covered as many as 17 sectoral departments and three thematic non-governmental organizations in relation to operational projects focusing on five activities:

Mobilizing all participants in State sectors, civil society and the private and semi-public sectors;

Improving the system for providing epidemiological information on sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS;

Reducing the effect of HIV/AIDS on people living with the condition and its economic and social impact;

Reducing HIV/AIDS transmission, using innovative prevention procedures;

Reducing vulnerability to sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS.

The international funding process has been initiated by the expert evaluation of national capacities for financial management and resource mobilization in the framework of the Country Coordination Mechanism and the identification of an auditing body. The process will soon be completed, making it possible for action programmes to begin.

26. Information on the study of young adults and adolescents

The survey of young people's sexual and reproductive health needs was conducted using a sample of 613 people, of both sexes, attending school or university and resident in the capital, in the 15 to 32 age bracket. The findings of the study were filled out by means of a qualitative survey involving focus groups and interviews.

The main purposes of the survey were to establish how much young people knew about reproductive and sexual health, what effect specific socio-demographic variables had on the nature, degree and application of such knowledge and, conversely, what effect an individual's position in society and the family group had on his or her level of knowledge.

The results of the survey included the following findings:

Respondents thought that the modal age for the introduction of sex education was 13.5 years, at the beginning of the second stage of basic education (the last year of primary education);

The ideal age for marriage was thought to be 28.1 years for men and 23.8 years for women, which is five years lower than the actual age of first marriage according to the latest census;

Virtually all young people know about sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS (95 per cent, with a slightly higher rate among girls). This degree of knowledge, however, relates specifically to AIDS, whereas knowledge concerning other sexually transmitted diseases (syphilis and others) is very limited (2.9 per cent);

Knowledge of how infection with a sexually transmitted disease occurs is closely bound up with the notion of risk behaviour ("relations with sexually promiscuous persons"), which was mentioned by 56 per cent of respondents;

Knowledge of contraceptive methods was also very good, at 94 per cent, but with wide variations in the number and type of methods known. For example, the pill and condoms, whether mentioned on their own or as two alternatives among other methods, were the best known, whatever the status or sex of the respondent, although it is noteworthy that girls were better informed than boys and university students knew less than high school pupils.

As for sexual activity, about 50 per cent of respondents adopted the hard-line approach that sexual relations were permissible only within marriage, yet at the same time 51 per cent of young people claimed to have an amorous relationship with a member of the opposite sex. Those admitting to have had full sexual relations, however, constituted a small minority (4.58 per cent), while about 15 per cent claimed to have had less intimate relations (short of full sexual relations). Such relationships were formed at school or university or elsewhere.

Attitudes to sexual activity outside marriage and to virginity varied according to the family's social and economic level and the level of education of the parents, particularly the mother; they did not seem to reflect the influence of the educational system in any way. There was a close correlation between more permissive attitudes with regard to relations with the opposite sex and respondents from disadvantaged

groups of a low social and economic level, where the mother was uneducated; the percentage difference was between 8.5 per cent and 29 per cent.

One direct outcome of this study has been the incorporation of reproductive health into the work of screening and follow-up units and preventive medicine units, through the training of trainers within the multidisciplinary teams operating in such units (four regional training workshops) and by the provision of audio-visual equipment for 26 pilot units, with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). This process, which is being carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education, will soon be reinforced through the establishment of specialized centres for young adults and adolescents within health centres. In the multisectoral context, young adults and adolescents are now catered for, with the active participation of community organizations. In that connection, particular efforts are being made with regard to the regular updating and expansion of the database on these segments of the population.

The Algerian Family Health Survey[2] combined two separate modules "young people" and "elderly people". The subsample in the first category consisted of 3,500 young people aged between 15 and 29. Of these, one third were unmarried and a quarter were attending educational establishments. About 32 per cent engaged in an informal activity (about 50 per cent of the men and 13 per cent of the women). One third of respondents worked occasionally. Young people, regardless of their sex, were greatly in favour of raising the educational standards to be attained. As for their opinions on marriage, respondents declared themselves to be in favour of choosing a current or future spouse but expressed outright opposition to marriage between blood relations (68 per cent). About 30 per cent of young people intended to emigrate (43 per cent among men), the main motive, at 49.3 per cent, being employment. Forty-two per cent of young people aged between 15 and 29 had already experimented with smoking. The respondents also stressed the need for leisure facilities and occupational training and cultural centres.

With regard to contraception, 80 per cent of the respondents (88 per cent among women) knew about it and 71 per cent of the total were agreed on the need to use it, although numbers varied significantly according to sex (women 86 per cent, men 60 per cent).

27. Care of older persons

The demographic transition has had a considerable impact on population structure, partly as a result of longer life expectancy due to reduced mortality and fertility rates. The ageing of the population, which had been forecast, is being given increasing priority in the strategic planning process concerning population and development and in implementing health and social policy. Identifying the social, family and health needs, both quantitative and qualitative, of the third-age population was central to the Family Health Survey.

[2] Carried out in 2002 as part of the Pan Arab Project for Family Health (PAPFAM), with support and financial assistance from the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations and in collaboration with United Nations agencies, including UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization.

A series of questions aimed specifically at women at the age of menopause was also included in the survey, which demonstrates the authorities' commitment to establishing appropriate programmes and policies.

The prevention and care of non-transmissible diseases, including chronic or neoplastic diseases, have become national health priorities, in view of the epidemiological and demographic transition. The prevalence of chronic disease is 11.4 per cent in the general population, rising significantly with age, so that over two thirds of people over 60 are affected.

With regard to the specific question of women at the age of menopause (50 to 59), the survey showed that 20 per cent of women in this age group had had a gynaecological examination, generally in a private room. As to health problems, 5.3 per cent had suffered fractures as a result of menopause-related osteopenia, while the classic symptoms of menopause were extremely common in approximately two out of three women. Fewer than 50 per cent of women had been seen by a doctor in such cases.

As to marital status, two thirds of people aged 60 or over are married and one quarter are widowed. Widowhood is more common among women.

Over 80 per cent of older persons are illiterate and 8 per cent (2 per cent of women) are engaged in a gainful occupation. A total of 45.5 per cent (11.7 per cent in the case of women) have a previous or past occupation. About 50 per cent of older persons are financially self-supporting, while 38 per cent are supported by another person. The latter percentage is particularly high in the 80-plus age group. There is a significant variation between the sexes: two thirds of women are supported by another person. Whereas 52 per cent of older persons live on their retirement income, 28 per cent receive financial assistance from their children and only 1.3 per cent receive non-State assistance. Only 23 per cent say that their income is sufficient to cover their needs.

The main thrust of the strategic plan is to improve the health system, on the basis of the framework law on health and health reforms, through the introduction of alternative policies such as care for patients at the end of their lives, or home hospitalization, a multisectoral approach involving civil society. It may be noted that the health sector development plan for the period 2005-2009 includes the establishment of two geriatric centres.

With regard to the increase in life expectancy, the priority components of reproductive health care policy have been extended to women at and after the age of menopause. This includes appropriate medical care for women's hormonal state, the management of health problems during menopause, the prevention of common diseases and their complications and the prevention of genital cancers, which are the most common cause of cancer morbidity and mortality among women.

By the same token, the list of contraceptives includes hormonal and barrier methods appropriate for women in this age bracket. General medicine and midwifery training courses have been reviewed in the light of new discoveries in that area, taking into account the fact that the specialized services are involved in prescribing specific treatment.

The national screening programme for the early detection of cervical cancer, introduced in 2000, has also seen consequent improvements in both peripheral structures and hospital services, in accordance with the national strategy.

The programme is to be extended to include breast cancer. The consensus workshop planned for 2005 should help identify the major focuses for treatment and strategic approaches, bearing in mind the available resources and health and population projections.

In view of their prevalence and their social and health impact, the care of gynaecological cancers has received State support in the form of financial measures and resources as one element of the national action plan to combat cancer.

The question of older persons, and their continuing role within the social and economic system, is a crucial aspect of social security reform, particularly in relation to pension provision and specific measures relating to non-wage-earners and certain specific categories.

Rural women

In general, the steps taken for the advancement of rural women have been in keeping with the strategy for sustainable rural development and its plan of action to mainstream gender into development elaborated in 2000 and currently being implemented.

28. (a) Integration of women in the initiation and formulation of projects

In the overall framework of social integration and to ensure that social groups, including rural women, are not excluded from development, the rural development strategy now being implemented seeks to involve women by creating new employment opportunities and income-generating activities. That is why women have been given a growing role in initiating and formulating rural community development projects as members of the recipient communities. This entails the inclusion in such projects of new measures to emphasize farm production and handicrafts capable of generating income for women.

28. (b) Greater awareness of the problems of rural women

In order to shed light on the problems of rural women and to establish appropriate action programmes for their advancement, the Ministry in charge of rural development initiated a study this year on the social and economic role of rural women which has now been completed. The results of that study have been incorporated in the sustainable rural development strategy.

28. (c) Training of female experts to assist rural women

Action in this area involves the continuing implementation of the programme for the training of female rural extension workers in the gender-based approach, information techniques, education and communication and reproductive health, particularly in the framework of the project implemented by the United Nations Population Fund and the National Agricultural Extension Institute. A total of 67 female experts have thus been trained in the gender-based approach, 77 in the area of communication and rural outreach and 77 in reproductive health.

These trained experts work in rural areas, implementing extension programmes in the agricultural and rural development sector and intersectoral programmes (as in the case of reproductive health).

28. (d) Integration of women in agriculture

The policy implemented in this area, which has greatly favoured the advancement of rural women, has been reflected in their increasing involvement in various programmes.

As of August 2004 some 17,409 women had become farmers by obtaining a farmer's card, which offers them advantages such as access to various sources of financing, particularly State subsidies and loans.

28. (e) Access to financing

Within the framework of development programmes, rural women engaged in handicrafts have been given access to financing facilities under an agreement between the Ministry of Small- and Medium Sized Enterprises and Industries and the Craft Industry and the Ministry in charge of rural development, which was confirmed by the signing of an inter-ministerial circular. This has resulted in the launching of 810 microprojects benefiting women in 35 *wilayate*.

28. (f) The gender dimension in rural development projects

The gender dimension has been integrated into all three rural development projects in mountain regions, initiated in cooperation with the International Fund for Agricultural Development, two of which are being implemented while the other is at the development stage.

– The rural development project in mountain areas north of the *wilaya* of M'sila (2004-2010) targets unemployed persons, particularly women and girls.

Community mutual societies plan to provide loans to 5,358 people for the development of income-generating activities, the crafts industry and microenterprises, 4,782 of these people, i.e. 89 per cent of the beneficiaries, are engaged in handicrafts and small-scale stockbreeding activities normally performed by women and girls. A functional literacy campaign reaching 3,500 persons, 2,000 of whom are women and girls, is in place.

Furthermore, this target group will benefit from other measures envisaged in the project aimed at improving the quality of life, the provision of drinking water and the opening up of isolated areas.

– With respect to the pilot project for mountain agriculture development in the Wadi Saf-Saf basin (2003-2009), the programme includes specific measures for the advancement of women such as promoting functional literacy, providing information on income-generating trades and activities, supporting women's associations and granting access to microfinancing.

To reach those goals the project has set aside $3 million out of a budget totalling $24 million.

– In phase II (2004-2009), the rural employment project implemented by the forestry service in the framework of a World Bank loan has a programme for

rural women targeting 6,207 beneficiaries in 6 *wilayate* in central Algeria. The programme includes the following activities:

– Beekeeping, involving 1,870 women with 10 hives each;

– Poultry farming, involving 1,187 women with 80 hens each;

– Rabbit breeding, involving 650 women with 20 rabbits each;

– Crafts, involving 2,500 women with one machine each.

The priority target groups are people without means, such as widows and women whose spouses and/or children have no income. These women will also benefit from other project activities, particularly the opening up of isolated areas through the creation and maintenance of tracks in rural areas and forests.

– The Office of the High Commissioner for the Development of the Steppe regularly includes in its annual programme measures aimed at rural women in steppe areas. In the period 2003-2004 the programme involved:

– The development of rabbit farming: 130 hutches and some 200 quintals of food granules have been given to 130 women in 16 *wilayate*;

– Forty-seven women in three *wilayate* have been provided with 2,171 plants for tree planting;

– 168 women in three *wilayate* have received a total of 20,780 atriplex plants for rangeland regeneration and 150 solar kits.

29. Nationality

Algerian nationality is defined by law under article 30 of the Constitution. In its legislation on the matter, Algeria has opted for jus sanguinis to determine nationality. The conditions for the acquisition, retention, loss and deprivation of Algerian nationality are determined by Order No. 70-86 of 15 December 1970, establishing the Code of Algerian Nationality, which makes no distinction between men and women *with respect to the general conditions for acquisition or loss of nationality.*

Nevertheless, with a view to aligning national legislation with the provisions of article 9 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Government has proposed a bill that amends and complements the Code of Algerian Nationality.

This bill is designed to promote gender equality, protect children as regards nationality and take into account new situations that have arisen as relations develop within society.

The cases of children born abroad of an Algerian mother and foreign father and of children born in Algeria of an Algerian mother and unknown father were among the most urgent situations to be addressed. The main changes proposed in the new bill include the following points:

– Affiliation to the mother has been retained so that her children can benefit from her Algerian nationality;

– A foreigner may acquire Algerian nationality through marriage with an Algerian national;

– The effects of acquiring Algerian nationality may be extended from the father to his minor children, who have the option of renouncing that nationality within two years after they reach their majority;

– The loss of Algerian nationality does not extend to minor children;

– Deprivation of nationality may not be extended to the spouse and to minor children;

– The effects of deprivation of Algerian nationality may be extended to minor children if the deprivation involves both the father and the mother;

– In exceptional cases and without conditions, foreigners who have rendered exceptional services to Algeria, have been injured or fallen ill in the service or interest of Algeria or whose naturalization is of particular interest to Algeria may be naturalized;

– Foreigners who during their lifetimes could have fallen within the first two aforementioned categories and whose spouse and children so request may be granted Algerian nationality posthumously;

– The difficulties encountered by children born in Algeria of an unknown father and whose mother's name alone is listed on the birth certificate without any other indication proving the mother's nationality are dealt with through the presentation of their birth certificates and certification by the competent services;

– The age of majority provided for under article 40 of the Civil Code is confirmed in the interest of harmonizing national legislation in that regard;

– Lastly, the Office of the Government Procurator is entrusted with the role of the principal party in all courts involved in implementing the Code, because these courts deal with matters of public policy (*ordre public*), and consequently the Office of the Government Procurator plays a fundamental role.

30. The Optional Protocol

The issue of Algeria's accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women will be examined after the pertinence and possible withdrawal of the reservations made when Algeria acceded to the Convention have been reviewed.

31. The national solidarity system

The action taken by the government to benefit the most disadvantage groups includes a number of measures adopted by the Ministry of Employment and National Solidarity to help people in need. The figures contained in the annex, disaggregated by category of beneficiary, including women, attest to the considerable efforts made by Algeria in this area. The measures taken have included, in particular:

(a) Social justice:

– The provision of a monthly allowance for any person who is 100 per cent disabled and at least 18 years old;

– The provision of a flat-rate solidarity allowance (AFS) forming part of the social safety net for the most disadvantaged people;

– The provision of a flat-rate solidarity allowance, institutional care and financial assistance to older persons;

– An increase in the kinds of help provided to children receiving assistance: institutional care; and paid home day care, involving some 21,115 children; and provision of a monthly financial allowance of DA 1,300 for able-bodied children and DA 1,600 for disabled children.

(b) Social integration:

– Payment of an allowance for activities of general interest, which forms part of the social safety net for disadvantaged people and is designed to strengthen social cohesion;

– The Local Initiative Employees programme (ESIL), which seeks to create temporary employment for unemployed persons under the age of 30 in various areas of activity, public utility works and service;

– Labour-intensive public utility work which helps to combat poverty and the various forms of marginalization. This programme relies upon the private sector for the development of entrepreneurship;

– The establishment of community units that serve as intermediaries in the implementation of social advancement programmes and programmes providing assistance to disadvantaged people in the areas of hygiene, health, psychological support and educational guidance;

– Participatory community development, which involves improving the living conditions of the communities concerned through the implementation of public projects or community-level activities.

Annex I

Statistics on forms of violence suffered by women

		Nature of acts				
Year	*Number of victims*	*Physical violence*	*Sexual violence*	*Abuse*	*Sexual harassment*	*Murder*
2001	4 974	3 661	192	985	125	11
2002	6 060	4 291	245	1 359	143	22
2003	5 559	3 755	231	1 394	158	21
Total	**16 593**	**11 707**	**668**	**3 438**	**426**	**54**

Annex II

Status of the recruitment of women by the Criminal Investigation Department

	Rank		
Year	*Police Officer*	*Police Inspector*	*Senior Police Officer*
1995	00	00	00
1996	00	00	00
1997	00	00	00
1998	500	150	50
1999	500	100	50
2000	500	100	50
2001	500	150	50
2002	500	00	50
2003	500	150	50
2004	205	75	34
Total	**3 250**	**725**	**334**
Total			**4 309**

Annex III

Women employed in the Criminal Investigation Department

Rank	*Number*
Chief Superintendent	01
Chief of police	05
Police commissioner	32
Senior police officer	298
Senior security police officer	02
Police inspector	552
Police lance sergeant	17
Principal police investigator	103
Police sergeant	47
Police investigator	93
Police officer	2 316
Total	**3 466**
Support staff	2 957
Total	**6 423**

Annex IV

Women occupying senior posts in the Criminal Investigation Department

Functions	*CS*	*CP*	*PC*	*SPO*	*Total*
Director of research	01				01
Human resources management				02	02
Coordination officer			01		01
Head of General Administration				01	01
Branch heads — General intelligence				03	03
Brigade Commander			02	12	14
Brigade Commander, Air Border Police				02	02
Bureau Chief		01	04	05	10
Centre Chief				03	03
Wilaya Chief of Service — General Police and Regulations		01		03	04
Wilaya Chief of Service — Social Affairs and Sports				02	02
Wilaya Chief of Service — Telecommunications			01		01
Chief of Urban Security		01	07	18	26
Training officer		03			03
Instructor			02	08	10
Total	**01**	**06**	**17**	**59**	**83**

N.B.: This table only shows women belonging to the police corps and excludes women members of the support staff occupying senior posts.

Legend

CS: Chief Superintendent;
CP: Chief of Police;
PC: Police Commissioner;
SPO: Senior Police Officer.

Annex V

Women employed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

		1990	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004 (as of 15/09/ 2004)*
Central Administration	Total staff	1 128	1 144	1 140	1 157	1 088	1 033	1 047	1 033	1 016	1 015	976	978	1 218	1 158	1 225
	Female staff	159	182	230	192	191	203	218	219	218	229	221	238	326	378	351
	Female staff %	14.10%	15.91%	20.18%	16.59%	17.56%	19.65%	20.82%	21.20%	21.46%	22.59%	22.64%	24.34%	26.77%	32.64%	28.65%
External Services	Total staff	685	648	620	665	756	812	669	678	642	653	628	736	564	692	745
	Female staff	25	29	36	35	47	57	48	49	48	50	52	62	74	100	124
	Female staff %	3.65%	4.48%	5.81%	5.26%	6.22%	7.02%	7.17%	7.23%	7.48%	7.66%	8.28%	8.42%	13.12%	14.45%	16.64%
Aggregate	Total staff	1 813	1 792	1 760	1 822	1 844	1 845	1 716	1 711	1 658	1 668	1 604	1 714	1 782	1 850	1 970
	Female staff	184	211	266	227	238	260	266	268	266	279	273	300	400	478	457
	Female staff %	10.15%	11.77%	15.11%	12.46%	12.91%	14.09%	15.50%	15.66%	16.04%	16.73%	17.02%	17.50%	22.45%	25.84%	24.11%

Women occupying senior posts

		2000	*2003*	*2004 (as of 15/09/2004)*
Central Administration	Total number of senior posts	17	10	27
	Assistant Directors, Attaché Cabinet, Bureau Chief			
	% of senior posts	1.74%	0.86%	2.20%
External Services	Women occupying senior posts (Ambassador)	0	4	4
	% of senior posts	0.00%	0.58%	0.84%
Aggregate	Total number of senior posts	17	14	31
	% of senior posts	1.06%	0.76%	1.57%

Annex VI

The following statistics indicate the evolution of women's participation in various elections held from 1997 to 2004.

Gender distribution for various elections

	Presidential elections		*Legislative elections National People's Assembly*		*Local elections Communal People's Assemblies*		*Local elections Departmental People's Assemblies*	
	15 April 1999	*08 April 2004*	*5 June 1997*	*30 May 2002*	*23 October 1997*	*10 October 2002*	*23 October 1997*	*10 October 2002*
Total number of voters	17 494 136	18 094 555	16 773 087	17 981 042	15 809 341	16 726 268	15 809 341	16 726 268
Male votes	9 353 276	9 744 785	8 786 544	9 891 593	8 304 671	8 920 981	8 304 671	8 920 981
	53.50%	53.85%	52.39%	55.02%	52.53%	53.34%	52.53%	53.34%
Female voters	8 135 860	8 349 770	7 986 543	8 089 449	7 504 670	7 805 287	7 504 670	7 805 287
	46.50%	46.15%	47.61%	44.98%	47.47%	44.66%	47.47%	44.66%
Number of seats	01	01	380	389	13 123	13 981	1 880	1 960
Total number of candidates	07	06	7 750	10 052	72 715	119 636	11 607	32 627
Number of male candidates	07	05	7 421	9 357	71 435	115 931	10 702	29 930
			95.75%	93.08%	98.24%	96.90%	92.20%	91.74%
Number of female candidates	00	01	349	695	1 280	3 705	905	2 697
			04.25%	06.92%	01.76%	3.10%	07.78%	8.26%
Total number of elected officials	01	01	380	389	13 123	13 464	1 880	1 960
Number of men elected	01	01	367	364	13 043	13 315	1 813	1 845
			96.58%	93.57%	99.39%	98.89%	96.44%	94.13%
Number of women elected	00	00	13	25	80	149	67	115
			03.42%	06.43%	0.61%	01.11%	03.56%	05.87%

Annex VII

National solidarity system

1. The microcredit programme

Loans were granted for 16,161 projects of which 1,531, or 9 per cent, were operated by women.

2. Community units

Forty-nine community units employing a total of 240 people have been established in 41 *wilayate*. Women make up 53 per cent of the staff and men, 47 per cent; 62 per cent of the supervisory posts are occupied by women and 38 per cent by men.

3. Participatory community development

The community development programme focuses on improving the living conditions of vulnerable groups by implementing public projects and community-level activities. In the period 2002-2003, 34 *wilayate* benefited from 116 completed projects and 25 ongoing projects. The overall budget for these projects amounts to DA 290,000,000.

In 2004, plans have been made to implement 316 projects in 46 *wilayate* with a projected overall budget of DA 861,000,000.

4. Disabled persons

Disabled persons receive a financial allowance of DA 3,000 paid monthly to any person who is 100 per cent disabled and at least 18 years old with no resources. There are 111,777 disabled persons in Algeria and the budget allocations for the financial year 2003 amounted to DA 3,599,100,000.

5. Assistance to children

Children receiving assistance are placed in special homes or provided with paid home care. There are 21,155 such children who receive a monthly allowance of DA 1,300 for able-bodied children and DA 1,600 for disabled children. Budget allocations for 2003 amounted to approximately DA 119,350,000.

6. Flat rate solidarity allowance (AFS)

The flat rate solidarity allowance (AFS) forms part of the social safety net. It is paid as part of the effort to combat poverty, unemployment and social exclusion, in a spirit of national solidarity with the most disadvantaged social groups.

The allowance amounts to DA 1,000 per month and DA 120 per month for each dependant, up to a maximum of three.

In 2003, 612,719 persons received the allowance, 289,232 of them men and 323,487 women, who accounted for 52.75 per cent of the total.

7. Allowance for activities of general interest

This allowance forms part of the social safety net and is designed to include the disadvantaged in society and to strengthen social cohesion through national solidarity programmes protecting the basic social rights of disadvantaged people. The allowance amounts to DA 3,000 per month and the team leader receives an additional responsibility and supervision allowance of DA 1,200 per month.

The total number of beneficiaries in 2003 was 180,419, 103,648 of whom were men and 76,771 were women, who accounted for 42.55 per cent of the total.