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*Food security and better livelihoods  
for rural dryland communities*

# Women, Work and Wage Equity in the Agricultural Sector in Saiss, Morocco.

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## Background

- Limited research on women and agriculture in Morocco
- In 1990 only 3 percent of all employed women and 4 percent of all employed men worked in agriculture. By 2009, those figures had burgeoned to 59 percent of all employed women and 34 percent of all employed men (World Bank, 2013).
- Arab spring and youth unemployment



## Research Questions

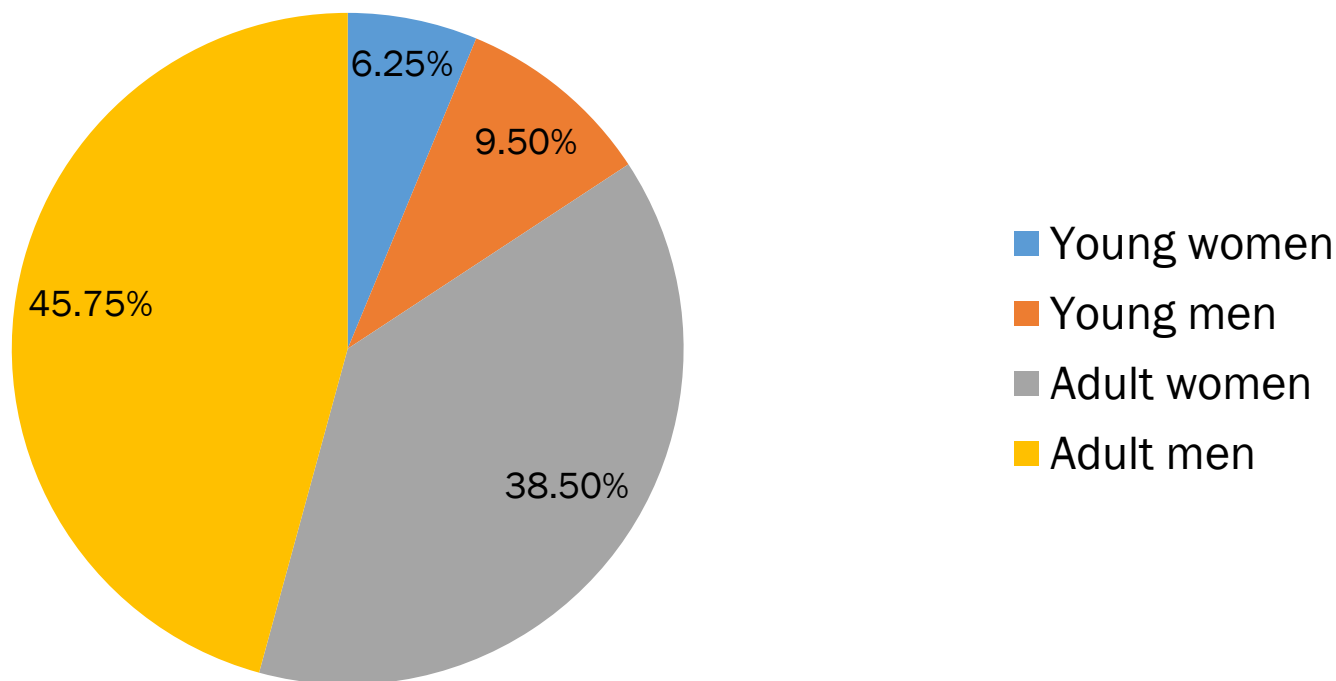
- To understand:
  - What is the gender wage gap
  - What are the working conditions (seasonality, hours of work, technologies, tasks, policies) and how does gender play out
  - What is the role of power and agency in shaping labourers' experiences (decision-making power in participating and controlling income)
- Formulate recommendations which address wage gaps and improve the working conditions

## Methods

- The empirical data for this study was collected through a survey administered to 400 laborers (178 women and 222 men) in Saiss, Morocco. The surveys were conducted in the districts of Betit, A'in Jom'a, and Sidi Sliman because they differ significantly in gender norms, levels of economic development and biophysical dynamics.
- The survey data was complemented with unstructured interviews with labourers, landowners, middle men, and other key informants in paid agricultural labour as well as participant observation



## Respondents (Young=15-24)





## Findings 1: Wage Gap and Tasks

- There is a 25% wage gap between what men only can do and what women can do (usually also men can do)
  - Machine-intensive
  - ‘Tamara’ hard work
  - Skill-intensive tasks that are women-related are 25% less than men’s
- Larger wage gap in wheat-based area (less women are involved)
- Women tasks are seasonal (harvesting, weeding, and planting)
- Men tasks (irrigation and guarding) are more likely to lead to be continuous and include permanent jobs
- For same tasks women are sometimes paid less (women-exclusive groups, 10% less more broadly especially in informal labour arrangements)
  - “Women accept to be paid less”



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## Masculinity, “tamara”, and Technology





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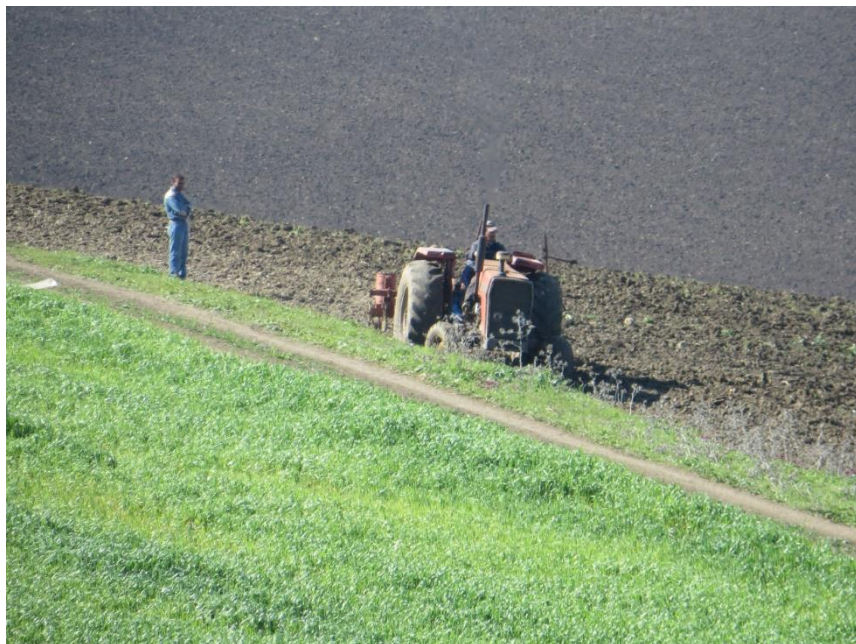




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## Ain Jomaa use their hands and by Semoire





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## Labourers affected by the mechanization



## Tasks only for women (packing and sorting) and tasks only for men (charging)



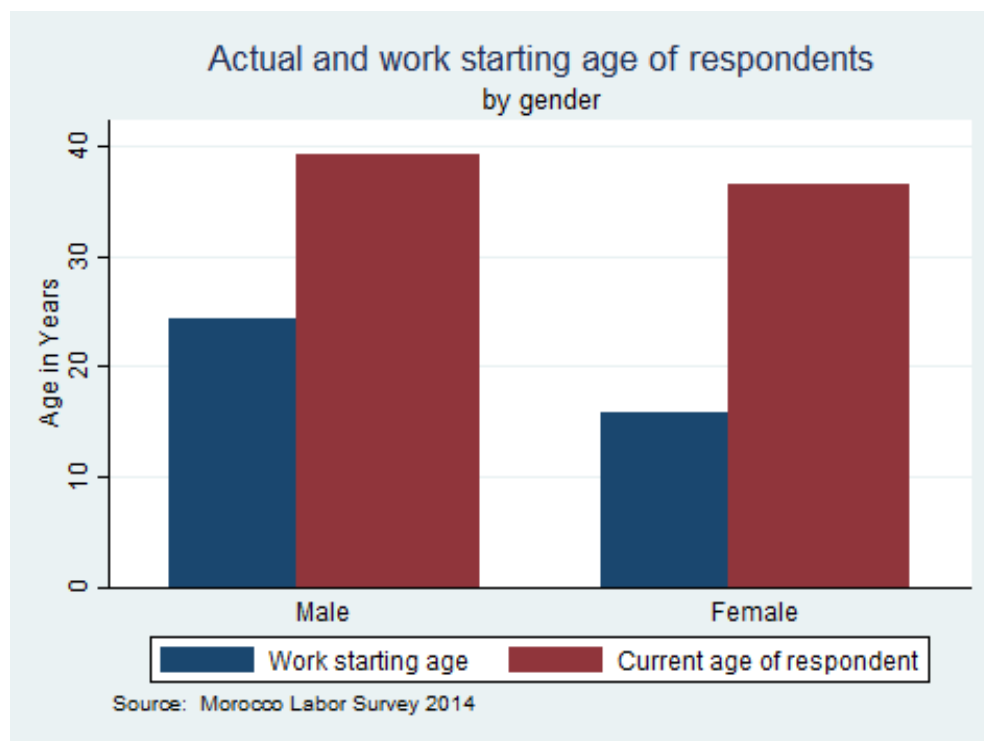
## Finding 2: Working Conditions

- 16% of young women and 9% of adult women complained about sexual harassment (other labourers, chef or corporal)
  - Bad reputation for unmarried girls in general
- Late and reduced payments
- During high demand unreliable work opportunities (especially the case of women)
- Big farms are preferred for benefits (health insurance, pension, overtime, bonus during religious holidays)
- Some men allow their women to only work inside the ‘dawar’

## Finding 3: Role of Power and Agency

- Reduce working hours from 5 to 3 now to 2 or 1 (women and men)
- Women lobbied to increase their pay for tobacco “zlaqa”
- Large portion of women labourers are WHHs (43.58%) with “no skills”, “poverty”, “I have to work” as justification for their work
- In total 54 percent of young women had a say in spending income versus 77 percent of men
- Women start working at a younger age

## Finding 3: Role of Power and Agency





## Recommendations

- Formation of women-inclusive groups (formal and informal)
- High pay skill training for women
- Enforcing equal pay and anti-harassment policy
  - Training for labour lords and middle men on zero tolerance for sexual harassment, respect, valuing of women work (pay equity)
- Social Protection (delink employment status from social benefits)
  - Provides choice to leave or address abusive work conditions





## Stage II Ongoing and Preliminary Findings

- Identify women in power positions and doing masculine roles which are higher in pay (understand how they got there)
  - Samasra
  - Doing grafage and la taille (farmer to farmer training)
- For WHHs how is labour helping them cope as heads of households
  - Stigmatized in their own communities
- Better understanding of labour experiences (focus groups and interviews)
  - Extent of control in the workplace
  - Factors affecting bargaining power
  - Role of innovations and technologies



## Acknowledgements

- CGIAR Dryland Systems for providing funding
- Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA) for assistance in data collection
- Respondents in Meknes for their participation in the study



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Thank you, any questions?

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