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## GFI Newsletter: Project Updates

### GFI to conduct Tunisia's first survey of informal workers

GFI's Program Manager, **Halima Gellman**, traveled last week to Tunisia to meet with the **TILI** (Tunisia Inclusive Labor Initiative) team. It was her second trip to Tunisia but her first since the hiring of the complete project team.

While there, she and the team hired ISTIS to administer the FIRST survey on informality in Tunisia. The survey of 1,000 informal workers from six different regions throughout the country will provide comprehensive data on the realities of life in Tunisia's informal sector -- including access (if any) to medical coverage and social security, the barriers preventing workers from joining the formal sector, taxes, and other characteristics of informal work.

The TILI team has formed an important partnership with the Center for Research and Studies (CRES), a public institution that is part of the Ministry of Social Affairs. CRES has received funding from the African Development Bank to conduct research on certain target populations within the informal sector. The TILI team and CRES will collaborate on creating the methodology and the survey questionnaire.

Survey questions will be informed by the eight focus groups already conducted with informal workers in Tunis, El Kef, Sfax, and Kasserine. In addition, partnerships with dozens of civil society organizations that work with informal workers throughout the country have been an important source of information and support. The survey will be completed in the next six weeks and the results shared with the public in a conference in early June.

Along with collecting and providing information on Tunisia's informal sector, the TILI program aims to assess and expand the government's capacity to collect accurate statistical data to help it develop effective frameworks for an inclusive economy. The team is in the process of interviewing dozens of government workers in various ministries to map all government programs and policies

related to the informal economy. They are simultaneously analyzing the government's data collection process. The mapping and analysis should be complete by the end of April. Along with the survey results, this information will guide the multi-stakeholder engagement phase of the project, in which participants will develop suggested strategies for addressing the issue of informality in Tunisia.

## **TILI to establish advisory committee**

The TILI team is currently identifying potential candidates for a special advisory committee to guide and support the program. This committee will provide feedback and recommendations as well as contributing expertise and professional networks for the advancement and success of the project. In return, the TILI team will keep the committee informed of all activities and progress, relying on the committee to be a key stakeholder in the creation of a formalization strategy.

The committee will meet monthly, beginning in April, to help facilitate coordination and collaboration among the various project stakeholders. The eight to twelve members of the committee will be drawn from these stakeholders -- government ministries, unions, CSOs, multilateral organizations, and academic institutions directly or indirectly involved with the informal sector. As the project progresses, the committee will support the TILI team in drafting proposals, conducting an awareness campaign, and advocacy for and implementation of final recommendations.

## **University of Michigan students to visit salt farmers**

GFI has partnered with the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business to empower women salt farmers. On March 16th four MBA candidates from the University of Michigan will travel to Gujarat, India to work with GFI, SEWA, and the thousands of salt farmers in the Little Rann of Kutch. As part of their multi-disciplinary action curriculum, the students are working closely with GFI's Salt Workers Economic Empowerment Project (SWEEP) to build a business case for the project. The students will assist the farmers in identifying market potential and opportunities for introducing renewable energy technologies and increasing their income. The end result will be a data-driven solution that connects the benefits of sustainable initiatives, international best practices, and local supply chains. Stay tuned for more information on the students' two weeks in India, meetings the farmers, and recommendations that can help GFI and SWEEP build a model for innovation and poverty alleviation.

## **International Women's Day is March 8th**

On March 19, 1911 the first International Women's Day was held in a few European countries with one million women and men participating in events to rally for women's political, economic, and social rights. A hundred and one years later, millions of people around the world will renew the call for equality in thousands of organized and spontaneous events.

GFI honors the countless women working as informal laborers, with little pay and no benefits, and continues its efforts to empower the world's poorest workers and build inclusive economies.

[Click here to find an event near you.](#)

"Women play a critical role at each stage of the value chain; from production of raw materials to marketing, distribution, and support to the final consumer, women are workers, managers, entrepreneurs, marketing agents, or consumers."

Michelle Bachelet  
Executive Director, UN Women

### Apply for the SAPIN FELLOWSHIP

GFI is currently accepting applications for the summer and fall 2013 Sapin Fellowship.

Email Nora Mara at:  
[sapinfellows@globalfairness.org](mailto:sapinfellows@globalfairness.org)

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