

*The Role of Civil Society Communication in Supporting Women Entrepreneurship in Algeria
A Field Study of the "Union for Social Development" Association*

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Abstract :

This research paper aims to explore the role of associative organizations—through their communication strategies—in supporting and accompanying women entrepreneurs in several countries, including Algeria. The study adopts a descriptive approach to examine the nature of associative institutions, and a qualitative approach to gather data on the communication process within these organizations in their role of accompanying women entrepreneurs. It also investigates the network of actors involved in this associative mediation by using case study and life story methods, relying on tools such as participant observation, structured interviews, and questionnaires.

The study concludes that:

- Associative support for women entrepreneurs in Algeria is carried out through: awareness-raising, information dissemination, guidance, training, follow-up, and participatory problem-solving to help overcome challenges faced by female-led enterprises. This is done through dialogue and collective discussions and takes place within the broader context of strong influences from family and social networks on the woman's entrepreneurial journey.
- The research also highlights the positive impact of associative support, which contributes to empowering women by enhancing their managerial and leadership skills, and reinforcing their social, legal, and professional standing. This is achieved through the development of a clear, strategic communication plan by the associations to support and accompany women entrepreneurs.

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1. *Introduction*

In recent years, numerous civil society organizations have emerged in Algeria, framing initiatives for women entrepreneurs, in parallel with government policies and programs. These initiatives aim to support women's entrepreneurial journeys by providing projects within their environment, offering guidance, and addressing various challenges they face. However, despite these contributions, the participation of the female workforce in entrepreneurial projects remains weak, as indicated by the 2020 Algerian Trade Register statistics, which estimated it at 7.9% (equivalent to 152,392 out of 1,762,303 enterprises).

Similarly, the National Agency for Youth Employment Support (ANSEJ), which funded 385,166 entrepreneurial projects from its establishment in 1996 until December 31, 2019, reported that only 40,147 (10.42%) were women-led projects—a notably low percentage. On the other hand, the Minister of National Solidarity, Family, and Women's Affairs revealed on September 19, 2020, that the National Agency for Microcredit Management (ANGEM) had supported and accompanied approximately 586,879 women out of 923,308 projects in various sectors such as agriculture, small-scale

industry, construction, and traditional crafts, representing 64%. Rural women benefited from 32% of these projects (187,567 beneficiaries). Additionally, as part of the state's focus on women, the National Unemployment Insurance Fund (CNAC) financed 15,864 women-led projects out of 152,613 (10.4%) (1).

1.1 Problem Statement

From the above and comparative analyses of various civil society experiences, it is evident that women's entrepreneurship in Algeria—often termed "soft entrepreneurship"—is characterized by low participation in business activities. This is directly linked to deficiencies in the economic empowerment of women entrepreneurs and the weak presence of civil society organizations as vital social capital and key pillars in the development cycle, given their role in promoting women's participation in entrepreneurial investment.

1.2 Research Questions

- What is the reality of civil society organizations' presence in accompanying and monitoring women's entrepreneurship in Algeria?
- What are the levels of their intervention and their degree of influence on the general environment of women entrepreneurs (family, socio-cultural, legal, economic, and even international)?
- What are the qualifications and capabilities of civil society organizations in supporting and empowering women entrepreneurs?

These concerns lead us to the central research question: **What is the role of civil society communication in empowering women entrepreneurs in Algeria?**

To answer this, we posed the following sub-questions:

- How does civil society mediation and accompaniment function amid the influence of family and social networks on women entrepreneurs' journeys?
- What is the civil society organization's vision regarding women's qualifications to establish and manage their enterprises?
- What are the components and characteristics of the communication plan deployed by associations to present, frame, accompany, and market women's entrepreneurial projects in their environment?
- What are the most significant communication obstacles faced by civil society organizations in accompanying women entrepreneurs?

Hypotheses

1. Associations partially mitigate the influence of family and social networks on women entrepreneurs' journeys.
2. Civil society organizations possess a specific vision for empowering women entrepreneurs based on their skills and qualifications, including personal traits, training, leadership skills, financial and human resources, and communication and marketing competencies.
3. The association's role in accompanying women's entrepreneurial projects faces a set of communication challenges and obstacles.

1.3 Study Objectives

- Highlight the positioning of women's entrepreneurial projects in Algeria's economic fabric and examine the influence of family and social networks on their entrepreneurial journey.
- Examine mechanisms for empowering women entrepreneurs by framing their qualifications in establishing and managing their enterprises.
- Assess the levels of civil society intervention in accompanying and empowering women entrepreneurs, particularly describing the communication plan designed for this purpose.
- Identify key communication obstacles faced by civil society organizations in supporting women entrepreneurs in Algeria.

1.4 Study Significance

- Exploring the experiences of associations supporting women entrepreneurs in Algeria (e.g., the Union for Collective Development, a local association, and networks like the National Volunteering Association "Touiza" and the Algerian Women Entrepreneurs Association "SEVE"). This includes analyzing their resources, strategic vision, objectives, programs, communication plans, activities, messages, skills, and relational networks (cooperation and competition).
- Understanding how associations contribute to introducing women's entrepreneurial projects to society, particularly to family and social network actors, and enhancing their managerial experience by reinforcing their professional capacities and

accompanying them to mitigate obstacles.

- **1.5 Conceptual Definitions**

- **1.5.1 Communication as a Function of Civil Society Organizations**

- **Association:**

Associations play a crucial role, covering all social activities. They are described as "the only citizen capable of carrying all social nationalities." In the social and political context, their role is fundamental as mediators encouraging communication among groups, fostering dialogue, and organizing collective action to solve problems (2).

- Michael Louis Rouquette defines **civil society communication** as:

"The production, transmission, and transformation of the association's social ideas about itself and its environment, considering how to leverage diverse opinions and create a logic that defends these ideas." (3)

- A distinctive feature of civil society work is the active presence of volunteers who feel responsible for others despite no obligatory relationship. Voluntary work responds to societal needs, embodying the *socialization*

function (4), encouraging voluntary participation in community service under organized frameworks.

- Given the diversity of civil society activities, communication has become intrinsically linked to social issues, given its strong social influence and decisive role in social change. In Algeria, many associations focus on women's issues, framing and accompanying their developmental demands. This is evident in our study through the Union for Collective Development in Souk Ahras, which has addressed this topic since 2008 in partnership with national associations like Touiza, SEVE, and the Algerian Businesswomen's Association (AME).
- The objectives of civil society communication differ from other forms, as it not only shapes alternative attitudes and behaviors but also encourages individuals to adopt positive stances capable of addressing social fragmentation and imbalance.

1.5.2 Accompaniment and Support

Most literature indicates that **accompaniment** as a concept emerged in academic circles in the early 21st century, particularly in the works of Kokou Dokou (2001) and Leger Jarniou (2008). Since then, interest in this topic has grown academically and professionally,

though its definition remains ambiguous due to varying frameworks and fields of practice (5). In Francophone contexts, accompaniment is defined as: *"The interpersonal relationship between a project holder and their mentor, and the learning process resulting from this interaction."*

In Anglophone literature, it is: *"An organizational structure aimed at developing managerial capacities and supporting enterprise creation and growth."* (6)

It intersects with terms like assistance, advice, consultation, training, and care. Though these terms have subtle differences, accompaniment encompasses all these meanings. The mentor advises, trains, and develops the project holder's skills in managing an enterprise (7).

Operational Definition:

In our study, accompaniment refers to:

A mechanism to support innovative women with new entrepreneurial ideas by guiding them, providing necessary information, and ensuring the realization, success, and sustainability of their projects.

From a communication perspective, accompaniment is a process between a sender (the supporting organization, specifically the civil society entity) and a receiver (the woman entrepreneur) to provide essential assistance, enhance capacities, and enable women to lead projects while overcoming challenges through advice, guidance, and solutions.

1.5.3 The Woman Entrepreneur

Concept of Women's Entrepreneurship:

Key definitions include:

- *"A woman who seeks self-realization, financial independence, and visibility*

by launching and operating her own business." (8)

- *"A woman with specific traits enabling her to undertake business risks independently, characterized by initiative and risk-taking spirit."* (9)
- *"Any woman who, alone or with partners, establishes, acquires, or inherits an enterprise, becoming financially, administratively, and socially responsible for its management, creatively developing products and entering new markets."* (10)

Operational Definition:

In our study, a **woman entrepreneur** is:

A determined woman who raises the bar of challenges to succeed in her personal project, linked to her skills and capabilities, seeking a new role in her socio-economic environment by creating and presenting an innovative addition that enhances her societal and economic position in Algeria.

Methodology and Tools

Research Methodology:

The **case study method** was adopted, defined as:

A systematic approach where the researcher focuses on a single case, studying it in depth while specifying all its aspects, whether an individual, family, institution, or small community. (11)

This method allows researchers to generate hypotheses, identify problems, and rank them by importance. The studied case could be a social institution (association, factory, club, university) or a small community (village, neighborhood, tribe) (12).

For this study, the case study method was applied alongside biographical analyses of women entrepreneurs:

- Historical framework of the Union for Collective Development in Souk Ahras (establishment, field of activity, charter, vision, mission, values, internal regulations, objectives, human resources, organizational structure, projects, functions—especially institutional communication—tasks, programs, activities, financial and material resources, partnerships with local, national, and international associations).
- Temporal context of addressing women's issues, particularly economic empowerment through entrepreneurial investment (motivations, strategies, training activities, and communication plans).
- Communication and public relations strategies at internal and external levels.
- The association's project for women entrepreneurs (programs, objectives, content), values conveyed through messaging.
- Coordination with external networks in women's entrepreneurial empowerment (the association's relational network, competition, and partnerships).
- The association's communication plan (the association as a media tool for women's entrepreneurship in Algeria).
- Media policy for accompanying women entrepreneurs in three directions:
 - Communication directed at public opinion to position women entrepreneurs in state policies, legislative, economic, socio-cultural, educational, family, and international contexts.
 - Institutional communication through internal coordination to unify efforts for women's entrepreneurial success.
 - Crisis communication: Challenges in accompanying women entrepreneurs include personal barriers, lack of preparedness, fear of failure, socio-cultural barriers (beliefs, mentalities, mobility issues), administrative hurdles, financial constraints (lack of funding), economic obstacles (difficulty in guidance and empowerment amid competitors, suppliers, and market challenges).
- SWOT analysis of the association's position in accompanying women entrepreneurs, allocating space for women entrepreneurs in its organizational structure, and financial resources dedicated to training and funding.
- Diagnosis of internal communication and its relation to members' sense of belonging to the association's identity.

Research Population and Sample

Defining the research population is a critical methodological step, as it determines the study's execution, design, and result validity. Given the difficulty of accessing all relevant individuals, a **non-random purposive sampling** method was used, relying on voluntary participation.

Research

The population refers to *all*

Population:

observations relevant to the study (13).

Sample:

A sample is a suitable number of individuals from the original population, selected through specific methods (random, stratified, etc.) (14).

In our study, the **voluntary sample** was chosen, where individuals participate based on willingness rather than statistical criteria. The sample consisted of 46 women beneficiaries of the Union for Collective Development's accompaniment.

Study Limitations

1. Spatial Scope:

The field study was conducted at the Union for Collective Development in Souk Ahras.

2. Temporal Scope:

Given the case study method's requirement for in-depth engagement, the research period was divided into:

- **Exploratory Study:** October 2008 – December 2012: Observing the civil society phenomenon locally and nationally, focusing on communication practices in accompanying women entrepreneurs.
- **Field Study:** January 2013 – December 2019.

Data Collection Tools

Data collection tools are scientific means and primary sources for researchers to gather necessary information. In this study, they were used in two phases:

1. Exploratory Phase (October 2008 – December 2012):

This phase involved immersion in the civil society phenomenon, observing communication practices in accompanying women entrepreneurs. Two tools were employed: **participant observation** and **structured interviews**.

Participant

The researcher engaged in the association's communication and training activities, recording observations in real time. As a trainer and supervisor of several entrepreneurial workshops, the researcher documented interactions, events, and dynamics.

Key

The association ensured proper preparation of spaces for gatherings, meetings, training sessions, and lunches, involving all members in organization and facilitation. Communication activities were diversified between the association's headquarters, vocational training institutes, youth centers, and public halls.

Structured

Conducted with key association members (president, project manager, spokesperson, project coordinator, and media officer).

Key Findings:

- The association (established January 16, 2005) focuses on combating poverty, unemployment, rural development, and supporting rural women through gender-sensitive approaches (training and accompaniment).
- It contributes to creating micro-enterprises and investment projects for youth and the underprivileged, offering technical solutions for collective development projects.

Scale	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number of Items	Reliability Coefficient		
Women's Entrepreneurship	Individual	43.8000	7.700	28	Before Correction	After Correction	Correction Method
	Paired	41.750	8.200	34	0.614	0.619	Spearman-Brown

- Communication programs include youth training for entrepreneurship, media campaigns, guides on enterprise creation and management, and awareness sessions in youth centers.

2. Field Study Phase (Validation Phase):

A questionnaire was developed, and its reliability was verified using Cronbach's alpha, Spearman-Brown coefficients, and pre-testing. Results:

Scale	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Women's Entrepreneurship	62	0.646

Field Study (Field Verification Phase):

Scale	Comparison Group	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-Value	Degrees of Freedom	Statistical Significance
Women's Entrepreneurship	Lower Group	46	2.4444	0.84732	12.983	45	0.000
	Upper Group	46	1.8478	0.96534			

Internal Consistency Validity Coefficients for the Women's Entrepreneurship Scale:

Dimensions	Correlation Coefficient	Statistical Significance
The Family and Social Network and Its Impact on Women's Entrepreneurship	0.619	Statistically Significant
The Qualifications for Establishing and Managing Women's Entrepreneurship	0.875	Statistically Significant
Support as a Function of Community Organizations in Strengthening Women's Entrepreneurship	0.512	Statistically Significant

Table Showing the Scores, Percentages, Ranking, and Nature of Women's Entrepreneurship:

Dimensions	Sample Size	Total Scores	Percentages	Dimension Ranking	Nature of Response
The Family and Social Network and Its Impact on Women's Entrepreneurship	46	5460	72.69%	2	Positive
The Qualifications for Establishing and Managing Women's Entrepreneurship	46	4550	65.82%	3	Positive
Support as a Function of Community Organizations in Strengthening Women's Entrepreneurship	46	5875	87.68%	1	Highly Positive
	//	15885	75.39%	//	Positive

Analysis and Interpretation of Results: The Impact of Family and Social Networks on Women Entrepreneurs

The study examined the influence of family and social networks on women's entrepreneurship through multiple variables: age, entrepreneurial status, residence location, marital status, education level, housing tenure, pre-entrepreneurship employment status, housing type, presence of children, household responsibilities, financial contributions to household expenses, level of family and social support, marital influence on business

creation/management, childcare duties, fulfillment of family obligations, participation in family decision-making, and family role in business success.

Additionally, the research assessed broader societal factors including: public perception (streets/community), institutional support (government agencies), civil society organizations, media representation, and facilitator roles. The study also evaluated whether entrepreneurial activity was established or emerging, along with general societal attitudes toward women entrepreneurs.

Key Findings:

- The table shows that the predominant age group among women entrepreneurs in the sample was 30-35 years (37%), followed by 36-41 years (26.1%).
- The table indicates that the status of business owner characterized most responses (73.9%), which lends credibility to the respondents' answers as they are actively engaged in the field.
- The majority of respondents reside in urban areas (89.1%).
- Most project holders are married (58.7%).
- Most respondents have a university education level (37%), followed by those with secondary education (30.4%).
- The majority of respondents live independently (52.2%).
- Previous professional status: most respondents were self-employed (43.5%), followed by employees (30.4%).
- Housing type: most respondents live in apartments (37%) or villas (34.8%).
- Legal housing status: the majority own their homes (73.9%).
- Presence of children: have children (52.2%), no children (23.9%).
- Living arrangements: independently (52.2%), with parents (41.3%), with in-laws (6.5%).
- The majority of respondents are the main providers for household tasks (34.8%), followed by support from parents (28.3%) and support from husbands (21.7%).
- The majority of respondents (39.1%) voluntarily contribute to household expenses, with a significant proportion (34.8%) choosing to participate in household expenses.
- The majority of respondents found encouragement from their families to enter entrepreneurship (91.3%).
- For married respondents, marriage had a positive impact on the decision to establish and manage their businesses (47.8%).
- The majority of respondents delegate childcare to their families (43.2%).
- The majority of respondents do not believe they neglect their family duties (6.6%).
- The majority of single respondents stated that their entrepreneurial activity increased their participation in family decision-making (63%).
- The majority of married respondents stated that their entrepreneurial activity increased their participation in family decision-making (41.3%).

Based on the above, we can conclude that:

The advancement of women's status depends on 'their entry into the workforce and earning their own income, which gives them greater self-awareness.' Women's work has provided them opportunities to participate in decision-making and share authority alongside their husbands." This economic activity contributes to changing and redistributing social roles for both spouses, as husbands now share in household tasks like cooking, laundry, and childcare...just as wives assist with tasks outside the home that were previously the husband's sole responsibility, such as shopping and expenses...etc. (17)

- The majority of respondents (58.7%) believe women cannot establish an entrepreneurial project and achieve the desired success without family support. Participation in the family's

economic process leads to "improved social conditions and increased understanding and affection between spouses, as women now occupy two complementary social roles simultaneously: as homemakers and as employees or workers outside the home. This has helped strengthen and support their position and social reputation." (18)

According to respondents' answers, women's motivations for entrepreneurship are as follows:

- First: Self-actualization (32.6%)
- Second: Achieving ambitions (30.4%)
- Third: Professional future (17.4%)
- Fourth: Taking responsibility (8.7%)
- Fifth: Leading an activity (6.5%)
- Sixth: Belief in full societal membership (4.3%)

Responses were nearly equal regarding the presence of a pioneering female entrepreneur role model in their social circle who inspired them, with "No" at 54.3% and "Yes" at 45.7%.

For those who answered "Yes" (21 respondents, 45.7%), they described these role models' qualifications as:

- Someone who knows what they want to do: Ranked first (23.9%)
- Successful track record in their activity: Ranked second (15.2%)
- Succeeded due to their network of relationships: Ranked third (4.3%)
- In control of their work: Ranked fourth (2.2%)
- Do you think society encourages women's entrepreneurship? Responses were nearly equal, with "Yes" at 52.2% and "No" at 47.8%.

Research studies indicate that the professional and entrepreneurial achievements attained by women, particularly working women and female investors, have significantly transformed their social status both within the family and in society at large. These women have become active participants in family decision-making processes and now assume more substantial social roles. Academic research demonstrates that a woman's social influence grows in direct proportion to her educational level, awareness of contemporary issues, and ability to adapt to modern developments across educational, economic and social domains. Field studies specifically confirm that "women with higher education levels gain significantly greater respect from their spouses." From an economic perspective, education provides women with professional qualifications that prepare them for workforce integration while enhancing their ability to adapt to technology and engage with modern civilization. In terms of child-rearing, studies show that a mother's educational background directly influences parenting approaches, with educated mothers predominantly employing encouragement-based methods in raising their children (19).

- This convergence appeared in their responses when assessing the degree of influence of different societal components, with the dominant answers indicating a high level of acceptance from parents (father and mother) at a rate of 91.3%.
- Regarding the respondents' opinions on the husband's support for women's entrepreneurship, the

answers were mixed among married, divorced, and single women, with a significant level of acceptance at 73.9%.

- For brother and sister encouragement, the acceptance rate was 78.3%.
- As for neighbors, the acceptance rate was 43.5%.
- Regarding colleagues and friends, the answers showed an acceptance rate of 60.9%.
- Concerning society in its broader sense (the street), the approval rate was 50%, while the rejection rate was 32.6%.
- For the administration, according to the responses, the level of encouragement was 65.2%.
- Regarding civil society institutions, the approval rate was 45.7%.
- For media, the approval rate reached 60%.
- For the facilitator, the acceptance rate was 71.7%.
- According to the responses, the answers were close regarding whether women's entrepreneurship in the region is common or new, with yes answers at 54.3% and no answers at 45.7%.
- The responses expressed that the surrounding environment views women entrepreneurs with an acceptable perspective at a rate of 63%, and with a somewhat acceptable perspective at a rate of 23.9%.

Second / Qualifications for Women to Establish and Manage a Business:

- In a question about: If you held or practiced a job prior to your entrepreneurial activity, did it help you in practicing entrepreneurship?

There was a close margin in responses regarding the extent to which a previous job contributed to the practice of entrepreneurship as an activity, with **yes** answers at **54.3%**, and **no** answers at **45.7%**.

If yes, is this due to:

- Among those who answered *yes*, the most prominent reasons were that the previous job:
- Helped in *human contact with the field or the business institution*, at a rate of **32.6%**, and
- Allowed integration into the *structural functional system of the enterprise*, at a rate of **19.6%**. It is worth noting that the remaining sample (21 individuals or **45.7%**) answered *no*.

Are you aware of the institutions that offer services and facilities for business creation?

- The majority of the sample is aware of these institutions, at a rate of **58.7%**.

What is the source of funding for your new project?

- Responses varied, with the source being:
 - *Personal assets*, at **39.1%**, followed by
 - *Previous savings (family or friends grants)* at **28.3%**.

Type of entrepreneurial project?

- The majority indicated that the most prominent entrepreneurial projects for women are in the **commerce and services sector**, at a rate of **69.6%**.

Age of the enterprise?

- According to the respondents, the age of the business was:
 - *Less than 3 years* at **32.6%**, and
 - *Between 6 to 10 years* at **26.1%**.

What is the income of the project according to your estimation (amount in million centimes)?

- Most responses calculated the business income on a yearly basis, at 45.7%, followed by monthly estimates at 37%.

Regarding the location of the business project:

- Most responses stated that the business is located in the same area as the woman entrepreneur, at a rate of 82.6%.

Do you manage the project income independently?

- The majority responded that they **personally manage** the returns from the project, at a rate of **95.7%**.

The changes that women have undergone have led society to recognize their role and responsibility, and thus their full equality with men in rights and duties, especially within the family. As a result, women become the primary beneficiaries due to the financial independence they gain from their work. This independence may also help them

secure small housing for their nuclear families, away from patriarchal family systems based on submission, and instead reinforce a family structure based on understanding, openness, education, and women's employment.

Being in this position allows women to play a role in making key decisions for the benefit of the family alongside their husbands. They also create an emotional and communicative atmosphere within their families, supporting a democratic environment for discussion and dialogue among family members. Some studies have confirmed that a woman's educational level and the type of activity she engages in has enabled her to shape the lifestyle she prefers today, particularly within a nuclear family model. This model has seen wide spread, especially in urban areas, where women are continuously seeking to use their prominent and effective roles within their families under favorable conditions. (20)

For those who answered "No," two responses (4.3%) indicated that the husband manages the business proceeds.

Question: Did you face difficulties during the establishment or management of your enterprise?

- The majority of responses (80.4%) reported facing difficulties during the establishment or management of the enterprise. The obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs according to the study sample were as follows:

Primary obstacles:

- Weak entrepreneurial culture among women
- Problems with the economic environment (market at all levels)

- Legislative and legal environment
- Social and cultural environment
(Note: Some respondents also ranked these in second place)

Secondary obstacles:

- Difficulties in financial project studies and feasibility studies
- Challenges in preparing loan application files
- Difficulties in loan acquisition procedures and bureaucracy
(Note: Some respondents also ranked these in third place)

Tertiary and quaternary obstacles:

- Difficulties in dealing strictly with project files at relevant organizations and administrations

Fifth-level obstacles:

- Difficulties obtaining spousal approval for women's entrepreneurial work

Sixth-level obstacles:

- Family pressure in the case of single women

Eighth-level obstacles:

- Differential treatment of women entrepreneurs' files compared to men's (lack of appreciation or special treatment)
- Lack of attention to requests by the concerned administration

Tenth-level obstacles:

- No attention to requests by the administration
- Not being valued or having project files treated the same way as male entrepreneurs

- Husband's insistence on leading the enterprise despite the project being in the woman's name

(Note: No one mentioned ninth-level obstacles)

What is your current position in the enterprise?

- Most responses (78.3%) indicated that women entrepreneurs currently hold the position of General Manager.

How do you evaluate the nature of your interactions with your assistants?

- According to responses, the prevailing approach in managing the enterprise with assistants is cooperative (78.3%).

What matters to you most as a head of an enterprise?

- The respondents expressed that what matters to them most as heads of enterprises is the **success of their institutions**, at a rate of **58.7%**, followed by **being a good manager**, at a rate of **21.7%**.

Do your assistants and employees under your management accept the orders you give?

- The majority of responses considered that **orders given by the woman entrepreneur are always accepted**, at a rate of **78.3%**.

What are the socially rooted constraints that you consider concerning for your future in managing the enterprise?

- The socially rooted constraints considered concerning by the women entrepreneurs are as follows:
 - Inability to travel for work alone, at 47.8%.
 - Inability to accept a business dinner invitation, at 39.1%.

Have you been able to separate your family life from your role as head of the institution?

- Most responses indicated ease in separating family life from the role of the woman entrepreneur, at a rate of 43.5%, followed by a normal level of separation at 37%.

Are you satisfied with your position as a woman entrepreneur?

- The key responses regarding satisfaction as a woman entrepreneur ranged between:
 - Very satisfied, at 58.7%
 - Somewhat satisfied, at 26.1%
 - Not satisfied, at 15.2%

Have you ever lost a market or order due to family problems?

- Most responses expressed that they have not lost a market or order due to family issues, at a rate of 60.9%, followed by sometimes losing due to family problems, at 34.8%.

Do you have membership in any association?

- The majority of respondents do not have formal and permanent membership in any association, at a rate of 69.6%, while the rest expressed having membership, at a rate of 30.4%.

If yes, what is the association's field of activity?

- Among the respondents who answered *yes* to membership, the majority belonged to associations working in the social field, at 19.6%, followed by those in the cultural and economic fields, at 4.3%, noting that the total number of respondents with association membership is 14 out of 46.

Does this association participate in the national development process?

- The majority of respondents with association membership (14 individuals)—specifically 12 of them, or 26.1%—believe that their association is concerned with participating in national development, while 2 members only expressed that their associations are not concerned, at a rate of 4.3%.

And is this because:

- In the same context, the 14 respondents expressed that association activity is:
 - A field for expertise and exchange, at 15.2%
 - One of the drivers of social change, at 13%
 - A place to open up to reality, at 2.2%

If associations are concerned with women's investment in development, is this because:

- The motivations for associations' interest in women's investment in development were:
 - Associations are a place for internal training and interactive solidarity to enhance women's entrepreneurial conditions: 17.4%

- Associations are a place to utilize energies and capabilities, at 6.5%
- Associations are a space to gather competent women with various ambitions, at 6.5%

Have you heard of associations for women entrepreneurs?

- All respondents with association membership (14 individuals) have heard of associations that are concerned with female entrepreneurship, equivalent to 30.4%.

Third / Associative Communication Interventions in Supporting Women Entrepreneurs:

In an effort to gain a closer understanding of how women entrepreneurs interact with the uses of associative communication mobilized by the **Union for Community Development Association** in support of the targeted group of women entrepreneurs, the researcher conducted a structured interview. This was done on the sidelines of a luncheon to which the women were invited, as part of the association's regular meetings held in **May 2010**.

This luncheon provided a more favorable environment for conversation, allowing for deeper explanations and more detailed insights on this topic, which had already been included in the interview guide — specifically in the **fourth axis**, titled:

Associative Organization: Supporting and Accompanying Women's Entrepreneurship

This is due to the importance of direct personal communication, where the spoken word is considered one of the oldest and least costly channels for conveying information. Among the most important of these is **direct interviews**, which are a form of interpersonal communication commonly used by public relations departments across various institutions. These involve a face-to-face encounter between two or more individuals engaging in a conversation or discussion around a specific topic in order to achieve a certain objective.

Particular emphasis was placed on the technique of **meetings**, which involve the participation of a relatively large number of individuals aiming to achieve specific goals. The significance of such meetings lies in their ability to create opportunities for the exchange of ideas among participants, which in turn promotes a **shared understanding and behavioral alignment** among them.

Conversations rank first in terms of responsiveness and liveliness, as they provide a greater opportunity for understanding and reaching sound opinions.

Based on the findings, it is clear that the concept and process of *accompagnement* (or support) is well known among the group of women entrepreneurs. Moreover, **option (B)**—which defines accompaniment as encompassing:

- Reception and guidance
- Structuring the project before presenting it to the accompaniment board
- Sponsorship
- Institutional follow-up
- Creation of an entrepreneurs' club

This option was selected by **56.52%** of respondents, indicating that they opted for the procedural and technical understanding of the accompaniment process and that they comprehend all the components involved in this support mechanism.

If the associative organization is supporting women's entrepreneurship, how should the types of support be ranked in order of importance (from 01 to 07)?

By analyzing the results, it is evident that **option 7**, which defines the form of accompaniment as follows, ranked first:

- **Empowering women to expand their enterprises, ensure sustainability, and foster development** through the following activities:
 1. Practical training in organizational, human resource, and financial management techniques.
 2. Enabling women to access **new sectors of entrepreneurship** such as industry, construction, automotive, textiles, information and communication technologies, and service marketing.
 3. **Finding solutions** to various issues faced by women-led enterprises through **group discussions and dialogue**, especially challenges like:
 - Difficulty accessing bank financing
 - Strong competition in pricing
 - Difficulty in ensuring customer loyalty
 - Shortage of qualified personnel

This option ranked **first with 15 repetitions**, due to the importance of its components, which cover the training aspect of entrepreneurship, supervision in multiple fields favored by women for investment, and—most importantly—the **participatory approach** in

developing solutions and alternatives to the major challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.

It was followed by the same option with **12 repetitions** in second place, and **10 repetitions** in third place, making this option the most selected among all responses.

To achieve the goals of supporting and accompanying women's entrepreneurship, it is essential to define the communication plan that associations must adopt to support female entrepreneurs:

Most responses agreed that: The credibility of the association's message and its influence are crucial, along with the necessity that its reference points be based on short-, medium-, and long-term objectives, aligning with the stages of development in women's entrepreneurial experiences.

Goals of Associative Organizations in Supporting Women's Entrepreneurship:

The responses indicate that option chosen 18 times was: "Investing women's potential in broad developmental projects to increase household income and thus improve the financial well-being of community members."

It is observed that options 3 and 4 together reflect the Algerian family's need for financial support from both men and women, especially in light of societal changes. This is followed by option 4 alone, with 14 selections, which emphasizes the increase in household income and financial comfort for individuals. This shows that financial motives are a top priority for most respondents and are a

key driver behind women investing in entrepreneurship.

Communication Techniques and Tools Used by Associations to Support Women's Entrepreneurship:

According to the responses, options (01, 02, 03, and 04) combined received the highest number of selections (24 times). This shows that the majority of participants believe that all available communication tools used by associations are necessary to encourage and support women's entrepreneurship.

This is followed by **option 4**, selected **14 times**, which refers to **mediation with supporting agencies** through:

- Providing information and guidance
- Assisting with the technical study of project files
- Accelerating access to financial loans

This indicates that women entrepreneurs rely on associations to obtain necessary information from official bodies, showing the trust they place in these organizations for both moral support and facilitation of access to support mechanisms.

Barriers to Associative Communication in Supporting Women's Entrepreneurship:

Responses show that options (03, 04, 07) combined ranked first with 17 selections, highlighting the main obstacles women entrepreneurs face during the accompaniment process, especially:

- Inability to convince women to invest in fields traditionally dominated by men
- Mentality challenges, especially within families

- Difficulty accessing technical project information found in the communication materials of associations

These represent environmental and semantic communication barriers as the dominant challenges. Next comes option 4, selected 12 times, which relates to the family mindset—a barrier that the association has neither addressed nor attempted to understand in terms of whether the family environment encourages or discourages women entrepreneurs.

Associations must consider:

- What types of family support (as seen from the association's perspective) are necessary
- How to address domestic burdens, mobility challenges, client/supplier relations, and market access difficulties

Discussion of Results and Hypothesis Testing:

Within the framework of the main research question, we posed the following sub-questions:

SQ1: How does civil society mediation and accompaniment for women entrepreneurs function amid the influence of family and social networks on their entrepreneurial journey?

The findings reveal that while family and social networks influence women entrepreneurs' trajectories, they don't constitute the strongest driver for civil society support. The mediation and accompaniment mechanisms manifest through:

1. Awareness and Capacity Building:

- Information campaigns and guidance
- Training and consulting services
- Family-level interventions to encourage familial support

Key interventions include:

- Sector-specific framing in female-friendly investment areas
- Collective problem-solving for major challenges through group discussions, particularly regarding:
 - Access to bank financing
 - Price competitiveness
 - Customer retention
 - Shortage of skilled labor

2. Practical Empowerment:

- Hands-on training in organizational, human resource, and financial management
- Awareness campaigns through regional workshops and forums
- Field visits and community outreach programs
- Educational seminars for leadership development
- Mediation with financial institutions for:
 - Technical file preparation support
 - Faster loan processing

3. Business Growth Support:

- Assistance in business expansion and sustainability
- Diversification into new sectors:
 - Industry
 - Construction
 - Automotive
 - Textiles
 - ICT
 - Service marketing

SQ2: What is the civil society's perspective on women's qualifications for establishing and managing businesses?

The positive perception of women entrepreneurs across family, social, and economic spheres has led civil society organizations to provide support through:

- Local development integration
- Gender parity promotion in entrepreneurial projects
- Large-scale female workforce mobilization
- Household income enhancement

This demonstrates civil society's commitment to highlighting women's entrepreneurial capabilities through comprehensive pre-establishment, operational, and post-establishment support, thereby:

- Enhancing social standing
- Professionalizing their ventures
- Ensuring business continuity through social solidarity

Communication Components:

Strategy

The responses indicate the communication plan comprises:

- Awareness campaigns and regional forums
- Field visits and grassroots outreach
- Leadership training workshops
- Institutional mediation for:
 - Information dissemination
 - Technical file assistance
 - Financing facilitation

Key Challenges in Civil Society Communication:

1. Organizational Constraints:

- Limited resources for sustained support
- Volunteer-based operational challenges

2. Perceptual Barriers:

- Resistance to female entrepreneurship in male-dominated sectors
- Family mindset obstacles
- Communication gaps regarding:
 - Domestic workload
 - Travel constraints
 - Client/supplier relations
 - Market access

3. Technical Barriers:

- Accessibility of technical information
- Communication material limitations

Accordingly, the answer to the main question is as follows

What is the role of associative communication in supporting women entrepreneurs in Algeria?

Associative communication is a vital and dynamic function within the life of an association. It plays a qualitative role in framing, accompanying, and ensuring the success of women's entrepreneurial projects in Algeria.

Conclusion:

Following the examination of research questions, the hypothesis testing yielded these key findings:

1. Confirmed Hypothesis: Civil society organizations do help

mitigate the influence of family and social networks on women entrepreneurs' trajectories ($p < 0.05$).

2. Confirmed Hypothesis: These organizations possess a distinct vision for empowering women entrepreneurs based on their:

- Personal competencies
- Professional training
- Multidisciplinary expertise
- Leadership capabilities
- Financial and human resource management skills
- Communication and marketing qualifications

3. Confirmed Hypothesis: The accompaniment function faces significant communication barriers including:

- Organizational constraints (limited resources)
- Cognitive obstacles (gender stereotypes)
- Technical challenges (information accessibility)

Recommendations for Enhanced Support:

1. Strategic Communication Plan:

- Bridge the gap between women's capabilities and socioeconomic realities
- Develop family engagement mechanisms to foster support networks
- Implement evidence-based advocacy for women's inclusion in development

2. Awareness Campaigns:

- Multi-platform media initiatives (traditional/digital)
- Interactive educational programs promoting female entrepreneurship
- Cultural interventions challenging gender norms

3. Institutional Strengthening:

- Reposition civil society as key economic development actors
- Highlight social capital value in women's economic empowerment

- o Special focus on liberal professions and entrepreneurial ventures

4. Policy Framework:

- o Establish legal provisions for women entrepreneurs
- o Develop specialized entrepreneurship guidelines
- o Diversify investment opportunities
- o Enhance resource allocation for supporting organizations

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