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REPORT ON THE CET  
(Centre d'Education & de Travail)

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REPORT ON THE CET

1. General description.

The CET (Centre d'education & de travail; also known as "ouvroir", "nādī", and officially in arabic as markaz at-tarbiyya wa at-tashghīl) is administratively connected to Entraide Nationale (Arabic: at-ta<sup>c</sup>āwan al-waṭanī), which is, in turn, a part of the Ministry of Artisanat and Social Affairs (Arabic: wizārat as-sāni<sup>c</sup> at-taqlīdiyya wa ash-shu'ūn al-ijtimā<sup>c</sup>ī).

Most centers were founded between 1973 and 1975, and are located in unspecialized structures, usually houses and some churches. They are staffed by a directrice (mudira), an accountant (although this position is sometimes filled by the mudira), a number of monitrices (mudaribāt), and a doorman and cleaning lady. The girl who comes to the center is known as a rā'ida; in theory the ages of the girls range between 8-20, but it is common to see younger girls. All are girls (binat) in the sense that they are unmarried. Centers vary in population from around 100 for the smallest to several hundred for the largest. The hours of operation are 8:30-12:00 and 2:30-6:00, with a half day on Saturday. They observe vacations like schools. In the centers the language of instruction is Arabic or Berber; French is not used. The areas of instruction include some set of the following topics: embroidery of five types, including both hand and machine work; knitting; crochet; sewing, both traditional and modern; belt making; and rug making. Most centers also offer anti-illiteracy instruction, and a few give instruction in sports, music, hairdressing.

2. Instruction and work: production

In every center some of the girls are new and still learning while others have been at the center for as long as four years and have learned everything the center offers. An essential feature of these centers is the fact that they are now organized for production. Either some group of the

girls or some segment of the working day is designated for production. This production is sold, either in displays put together for national holidays or in permanent outlets such as in the local artisanat or in a center store (as in Rabat). The revenues of the sales--the products are both valuable and saleable--go to the center's bank account, and thereafter to Entraide Nationale via the provincial delegue. For their labor the girls receive no payment. On the contrary, they must pay five dirhems per month to attend the center.

### 3. Why do the girls attend?

According to everyone I talked to there are two reasons why the girls come: 1) for the instruction offered; 2) for the flour and oil that used to be distributed. A certain ideology exists regarding these centers which holds that the skills learned at the centers have become a requisite part of a young woman's formation. She is considered lacking if she does not have such skills. There are four possibilities commonly spoken of for girls: to be at school, at the center, sitting at home, or in the street. If she has missed her chance to be in school or has left school, then she is "lucky" to be at a center. No girl wants to be at home.

It is also frequently pointed out that girls are so poor that they will do anything, learn any skill in order to get the distributions of flour and oil. But, as one delegue observed, this is not to say that they want to learn embroidery, knitting, etc.

### 4. The cut-off of flour and oil

Although the centers have received no official statement on the subject, the American flour and oil stopped coming to them between 1980-81. Both the center staff and the girls once received allocations, with each girl being entitled to

a bag of flour and a half tin of oil. The cut-off created the most important crisis in the short history of the CETs. Everywhere I visited I was told of how centers lost one-half to two-thirds of their girls, and that ever since centers have had a difficult problem with absenteeism. Generally, it is thought, the girls who have remained are <sup>from</sup> more well-to-do families which can afford the five dirhems per month. Only one mudira told me she was pleased when the cut-off occurred since it cleared her building of the pure poverty cases forced to come by their parents just to get the handouts, leaving her with the girls who wanted to learn. Another view is that the girls are hanging on at the centers in the hope that some day the assistance will be restored and they will be duly registered. (This sense of "hope" applied also to the chance that new programs may be instituted in the future, with those girls who have stuck it out being the first in line.)

In some CETs located near other types of Entraide Nationale centers (CES, day care, etc.) the bags of flour are before the girls eyes, stacked in storerooms. The cut-off has caused some problems for the CET leadership on both the center and provincial levels, since it is commonly thought that officials are simply holding back or selling the flour and oil. At least one center requested a ministry letter about the cut-off to be posted on their center bulletin board. There is a general problem of accountability and a lack of official clarity in this sensitive area. At least one long-established center is still making distributions, and it is common to offer flour and oil as an "encouragement" at a newly instituted center.

##### 5. CETs and COOPs

The most fundamental change that has occurred in the CET system concerns the advent of cooperatives (ta<sup>c</sup>awaniyyāt).

Coops appeared, where they have appeared, three to five years after the establishment of the CET in an area; most date from 1978 and following years. It was probably the case that the CETs were producing trained girls who no longer needed to be at the CET but who had no place to go with their skills. The Coops are composed of girls who have graduated from the CET and have received a ministry diploma. Like the CETs the Coops are composed entirely of girls, that is, unmarried young women, usually from fifteen to twenty-two years old.

In theory an initial capital for the coop is composed of the one-time share contribution of fifty dirhems from each girl, although many coops have not as yet taken this organizational step. Coop girls make no monthly payment of money, and they do receive monthly distributions of two bags of flour and one can (bidon) of oil. Coop staff is unlike CET staff since the latter get ministry salaries while the former are considered to be like the other coop girls, and receive flour and oil monthly in the same way. The head (ra'isa) of the coop is a working coop member. In one coop there was, in addition, a mudira who kept track of absences. Monitrices in a coop are called mustashārāt (advisors) and are also coop members.

Production is the raison d'être of a coop. In theory, revenues from the sale of products are distributed to the producing girls. In fact, however, such distributions rarely, if ever, occur. Production is of two types: that made for sale in occasional displays or permanent outlets, and goods made on order from private individuals and institutions. This second type of production predominates in most coops. The individual provides the coop with the raw materials and the coop charges for labor. The labor charges may be figured either on a piece work basis (according to units of thread) or as a lump sum contract. When girls are paid for work, they receive, in theory, one-half of the return while one-half

goes into the coop treasury. From inquiry into a few example products, however, it seems clear that the share of the producing girl is far less than one-half of the sale price.

The number of girls in a coop is limited by ministry dictates for each location. A specified number of units of flour and oil is provided for particular coops. One of the reasons girls are held in the CET system is that there are no authorized places for them in local coops, if there is a nearby coop. Many CETs, in theory, feed a coop located across town, in an adjoining room, or on the other side of the same large room.

#### 6. The CETs and their competitors

A number of other institutions provide overlapping, competing, or conflicting opportunities or programs.

a. Jeunesse et Sport--foyer feminine--offers a program identical to that offered in the CET, except for the addition of cooking instruction. Foyers are found in most places where there are CETs. It is thought to give better pay to monitrices and to give them training as well. It is a much older ministry than the twenty-five year old Entraide Nationale, which is thought to account for its superior organizational and financial resources.

b. Ittihād an-nisā'ī--centers for girls and women offering similar programs, with volunteer staff [(see Pam Pine)]

c. Centers for professional formation (CFP, markaz at-takwīn al-mihanī, which may be of several ministerial affiliations (e.g. Entraide Nationale, wizārat at-tajhīz, and perhaps others). Mostly they offer training in job skills for males, but some have classes for girls or women.

d. Centers and coops attached to the Artisanat-Handicrafts wing of the Ministry of Artisanat and Social Affairs. In each province there are two delegates, one for Entraide Nationale and a second for Artisanat-Handicrafts. There is little

interchange between the two branches of the same ministry. Whereas Entraide Nationale subsists in minimal physical circumstances of converted houses and church buildings containing the bare requirements of furniture and equipment, its sister branch of the ministry has large new complexes in many urban centers. While no flour and oil is provided, a small stipend (minha) is given to those learning in various types of craft centers, and in the coops there appears to be a more equitable return of the value of the production to the producers. In general, the coop idea is far more elaborated in this wing of the ministry, including such activities as rug making, embroidery, leather workers, mat makers, tailors, jewelers, baking, and dyeing. Most, but not all involved are males.

e. Private instruction: ranges from the former Singer schools to the current Pigier institutes to the small ateliers set up by skilled craftswomen where they have a few paying students.

f. Private enterprise: rug factories, etc. where the girls are young, the pay is almost non-existent, the hours are long, and the working conditions are bad. Morocco is notorious for its abusive child labor in such rug factories (see J. Tebbaa, "Des Esclaves en Culottes Courtes..." al-Bayane, May 1, 1982).

## 7. The question of innovation

In brief visits with little time to get beyond the shock of a ministry letter of introduction, frankness is at a minimum and the task of assessing an individual's capacity for innovation is difficult. Since time was short I confined my discussion to the Entraide Nationale provincial *delegue*, *the* <sup>what region?</sup> *regional directrice* (mudira jihawiyya), and the mudira and accountant <sup>where?</sup> at the CET. As for governors--I believe it would be impossible to find an official at this level who <sup>would</sup> not be supportive of new projects. To some extent the same is true of the E.N. officials at the provincial and local levels I talked to, especially since I was unable to provide them with the crucial information of what sort of innovation is

contemplated. Nevertheless, I was able to come up with a subjective impression of people and places where innovation would be likely to succeed or fail--these evaluations are found later in this report where the CETs I visited are ranked and described.

The ideas for innovations solicited from the officials I met were all "known" in the sense that such new skills are found in other CETs (e.g., hairdressing, cooking) or can be found in other programs or in the private sector (e.g., plumbing, electrical work, carpentry, typing, stenography, welding).

Something ought to be said for the idea of improving the existing format of offerings in CETs. The products are quite beautiful and there is a certain level of demand in the Moroccan marketplace. There is some talk also of exportation. Many of the points which follow can be taken to apply to reform of the present activities of CETs as well as to the introduction of innovations.

#### 8. General recommendations

a. CETs and COOPs. It ought to be the case that a girl goes to a CET for a limited period of time to acquire the skills necessary to make her a producer. She should not be held over in "training" while in fact she has already become an unpaid worker. She should complete her training and move on to the Coop where she should receive fair compensation for her labor. A general rationalization of the CET-Coop relationship is badly needed and should be encouraged at the ministry level. Additionally, coops should be flexible enough to allow the producers' entrepreneurial wisdom to guide them in relation to local market demand.

b. Innovations may be intended either to prepare young women for employment in the public or private sectors,

or for work in the coop format. It was the general opinion of the people I contacted that the coop format would be far more successful, and that there are only limited possibilities for women finding employment on their own--at least in the regions of the country I visited.

c. A further reason for stressing the coop formula is political. The King has placed emphasis on the role of cooperatives in his introductory letter accompanying the recently issued 1981-1985 Plan. Any innovative schemes that would utilize the coop formula ought to be in tune with the work of the Office du Developpement de la Cooperation (maktāb tanmiyya at-ta<sup>c</sup>āwan; part of the Ministry of Planning) which has issued numerous publications concerned with coops. At the present time a comprehensive "charte cooperative" is making its way between the Council of Ministers and the Parliament. (see Le Matin du Sahara, April 18, 1982). This new law will provide guidance for coop structure and operation irregardless of what ministry they fall under.

d. Situations of exploitative labor must be avoided. Except for the charitable veneer of the anti-illiteracy campaign, etc., the CETs have an appearance not far removed from that in exploitative private rug factories. In such places there is both child labor (girls five to ten years of age working) and the more general phenomenon of work without compensation, under the rubric of "training" and apprenticeship. At present, revenues return to the coffers of E.N.; there is virtually no income generation for girls participating in the CET-Coop system.

e. Watch for duplication of already existing programs in this and other ministries. There already exists strong competition within M.A.S.A. The CET - Coop system

can specialize in young women. Older women already work in mushghals (little producing groups), also under E.N. auspices. The Artisanat-Handicrafts side of the ministry and the professional formation centers tend to specialize in young males, but there are some girls. And the CET now has some young men--two tailors in the Rabat CET. What can be done is to offer young girls in the CETs some of the job skills learned at centers specializing in young men. The CETs, in their specialization in young women, are in direct competition with the several other types of public and private institutions I listed above in point 6.

f. Innovations must be fine-tuned to local needs and possibilities. Ideas for innovations could be obtained from local-level social workers. Innovative ideas under consideration should be passed before regional and local officials of the five pilot locations for their recommendations. Regional differences in Morocco are extreme. Even such outwardly similar regions as two irrigated perimeters can be quite different in the context they provide for female labor (eg., extensive female wage labor in the orange producing Gharb versus virtually none in the wheat producing Doukkala).

g. Severe personnel problems exist in the CETs. Any introduction of new personnel to instruct in innovative areas must confront this issue. In the CETs I have recommended, the personnel have managed to cope with the problems they face, but this is not to say that problems do not exist there (see point 9, below).

## 9. Training needs

When asked what sort of training monitrices needed the universal answer of administrators high and low was "takwin", i.e., formation. Virtually no one had any more specific suggestions: the monitrices need everything. The only concrete suggestion was that their training be practical not theoretical. As Tyszka's questionnaire shows, the monitrices have very low educational levels. One delegate asked that those with the highest levels be trained first.

It could be argued that the individuals who need training first might be the mudiras who could then transmit their knowledge to their monitrices.

The main problem of mudiras and monitrices across Morocco is that their salaries are three to four months in arrears; also flour and oil distributions to them have been cut. The general sentiment is that if there were any other work they would leave the CET. Even previous mudiras at a couple of CETs were said to have left for "good" jobs. Monitrices are paid a little under 350 dirhems per month, while mudiras, except for a few who are on "official" (rasmiyya) salaries, receive about 400. In much the same way that the girls stay in the centers in the hope that something better will come, so the monitrices live on hopes that their pay situation will improve. One rumor had it that their salaries would rise to 500 dirhems and the flour and oil would be restored. Present salary levels are inadequate.

There is jealousy of the CES centers and the Jeunesse et Sport centers where there is better pay and training.

Among the mudiras, some had previous administrative or work experience in other types of centers (such as Jeunesse et Sport), others came up through the ranks. Many mudiras are married to men who are also employed locally. All, it must be remembered, are specialized in the skill areas the CETs presently offer. There are widely varying levels of

consciousness about their leadership rôles. In general, the energies and styles of mudira set the tone of their establishments. It is these women who are also responsible for contacts outside the CET, especially with the various officials.

Many of the monitrices had their own ateliers before the CETs were set up, or worked at such places as the old Singer centers. Many still do their own production in their homes. Another category of monitrice is younger women who graduated from the CET.

#### 10. Recommended sites: ranking

1-Rabat	Recommended
2-Taroudant	
3-Fkih ben Salah	
4-Chaouen	
5-Ouarzazate	
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6-Beni Mellal	Recommended with qualifications
7-Suq al-Arbaa	
8-Sidi Bennour	
9-Agadir	
10-Meknes	
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11-Azrou	Not recommended
12-Sidi Smail	

Note: Taroudant should be considered in the city category, not the desert category

#### 11. Site descriptions

1-Rabat, #61. An excellent center in terms of its exceptional building, wide offerings, and sophisticated leadership. A special hairdressing school and a center store adjoin the CET. 200 girls, 20 monitrices.

2-Taroudant, #213. Located in the former building occupied

by Petit Soeurs--spacious and school-like. Associated with a complex of related institutions, including 2 CESs, a mushghal for older divorcees and widows, a coop, and a day care center; it is a very active place. They have an unusually strong anti-illiteracy program and a number of special programs rarely encountered in CETs (sports, music, cooking, rug weaving, hairdressing). It is a dynamic place. 315 girls, 30 monitrices. Taroudant is still linked to the E.N. delegue in Agadir: he is an insightful man. The regional directrice is also good. The Taroudant governor is embarking on a large program of expansion in the town, providing an air of new opportunities. The coop is, however, barely off the ground.

3-Fkih ben Salah. Located in an old church, one large room houses a CET and a coop, and a small room is the office. Strong leadership in evidence--a tangible esprit in the air. No production in the CET: the girls train on samplers. Some absenteeism problem among coop girls during the orange harvest. Beni Mellal delegue and the regional directrice want change, not more of the same. A well-run rural center. 200 CET girls, 100 Coop; 7 monitrices.

4-Chaouen, #16. Delegue, regional directrice, and CET, Coop located in church complex. Here the one room is noisy and the mudira is average, but the nearby offices of the E.N. delegation provide strong support. Another center in town is located in a house and would also benefit from the proximity of the delegation leadership. Girls here are relatively well educated. Some absenteeism problem. c.80 CET, 60 Coop; 11 monitrices.

5-Ouarzazate, Taourirt. Physically cramped; CET in mornings, Coop in afternoons. Mudira is wife of the E.N. delegue--they both seem capable and good. Limited range of offerings. The girls have little educational background. Ouarzazate is a boom town, people are willing to work and learn new skills. Substandard buildings occupied

by the E.N. contrast with the huge new complex for Artisanat. 130 CET, 100 Coop; 3 monitrices.

6-Beni Mellal. Leadership from mudira of the CET up to the delegue seems strong. Located in a house. A thoroughly average center, neither strikingly interesting, nor especially beset with problems. 160 girls, 11 monitrices.

7-Sug al-Arbaa, #106. A church and house next door. house CET, Coop, mushghal for divorced and widowed women, and day care. Main problem: the mudira now lives in Kenitra following the transfer of her husband, and she only comes to the center a couple of days per week. Center seems dynamic, although I would be concerned about the situation of the mudira. 60 CET, 100 Coop, 75 mushghal women; 7 monitrices.

8-Sidi Bennour, #83. Small, inadequate building. Long leadership experience in mudira, perhaps too long. The center lacked dynamism. Morning and afternoon division of 170 girls. Provincial delegation seemed good. 6 monitrices.

9-Agadir, #212. A large new building shared by the CET with a CES and a day care center. Perhaps the best E.N. building I saw outside of Rabat. While the delegation leadership is quite good, the center has new inexperienced leadership who are not prepared to handle a new program. 140 CET girls, 8 monitrices.

10-Meknes, hayy al-mers. Several large old houses contain a CET and a CES and a Coop. Apparently still distribute flour to CET girls, although the mudira seemed hazy on this. 700 girls divided into morning and afternoon sessions; 21 monitrices.

11-Azrou. Special problem with their building--shared with needy old men. Good personnel seem generally demoralized. 75 girls, 8 monitrices. Administrative problem: still tied to Meknes delegation even though Azrou is part of Ifrane province.

12-Sidi Smail. A quiet, unexciting center. The mudira is unsuited for handling a pilot project. 75 girls. 5 monitrices.