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“Labour market and graduate unemployment in Tunisia: technological and social innovation to improve employability”

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Innovation plays a crucial role in making the labour market more fluid and in combating unemployment in general, and graduate unemployment in particular, throughout the world and in Tunisia. It adjusts labour supply and demand in the labour market. In developing countries, and in Tunisia in particular, around half of this market is occupied by the informal sector, which is not very receptive to technological innovation. In this proposal, we explore the impact of ICT use on the employability of unemployed graduates in Tunisia. Our proposal is based on extensive fieldwork and studies that have produced commendable results in the capital Tunis, Tunisia. Based on fieldwork carried out in 2021 with more than 400 graduates living in Greater Tunis, we have been led to consider the contribution of innovation, in its broadest sense, to improving the employability of jobseekers in the ‘unemployed graduate’ category.

The first level of innovation concerns the institutional sphere, thanks to the public reforms of labour policy and the development of skills that the Tunisian state has been able to put in place using technological and organisational innovations. From a government perspective, innovation

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can help to align education with market needs and create dynamic labour markets. For graduates, innovation can be seen in three key stages. First, the development of their skills, which can be enhanced through online learning platforms such as *Coursera and Udemy*, coaching career coaching and mentoring via *LinkedIn Learning*, and virtual workshops offering practical training. Secondly, the job search is made more efficient through digital job portals such as *LinkedIn* and *Indeed* and others existing on the Tunisian market and dedicated to executives, social media such as *Facebook*, computer-assisted CV creation tools and virtual networking events that connect graduates and recruiters. Thirdly, recruitment and employment opportunities are being expanded through remote and hybrid working, freelancing on platforms such as *Upwork and Fiverr*, entrepreneurship through social media and e-commerce platforms, and personal branding via *LinkedIn* and online portfolios. By integrating innovation into every stage of the employment process, graduates can improve their job prospects and adapt to changing labour market demands.

Last but not least, and combining technological and social innovation, is the organisation of mass social movements via social networks, mainly FB, to assert the rights of unemployed graduates.