



Democracy and
Workers' Rights
Center in Palestine

For immediate release
Ramallah
28/06/2018

Workers in beauty salons and kindergartens are still deprived of the minimum wage, although its implementation started five years ago

Ramallah, 28/06/2018 –As part of its efforts and mobilization to obtain the enforcement of the minimum wage, achieve equal pay for work of equal value, obtain justice, and fight poverty and unemployment that affect women, the Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development (PWWSO), organized a sit-in in front of the Palestinian Cabinet in Ramallah, in partnership with the Democracy and Workers' Rights Center (DWRC), the National Committee for Minimum Wage and the Kindergarten Workers' Union. Dozens of women from various sectors joined the protest from all West Bank governorates, raising slogans demanding the enforcement of the law, and drawing attention to the fact that a very high percentage of women still receive only a fraction of the minimum wage.

At the end of the protest, participants delivered a letter from PWWSO to the Prime Minister, Dr. Rami Hamdallah, demanding the application of the minimum wage law. A union representative read the letter in front of the workers, which calls on competent ministries to meet their responsibilities towards ensuring the implementation of the minimum wage for the protection of working women, in particular the Ministries of Labor and Social Development.

PWWSO had previously conducted two TV hearing sessions in Nablus and Gaza addressing the challenges and realities of enforcing the minimum wage, with a main focus on beauty salons and kindergarten workers. Representatives from the Ministry of Labor and trade unions were hosted to provide their input on the topic. The TV sessions emphasized the situation of kindergarten and beauty salon workers, who are exposed to clear violations of their rights in the labor market, exemplified by the low salaries they earn, which are below the minimum wage, and usually range between 100 – 1,000 NIS per month, whether in the West Bank or Gaza Strip. This situation is worse in kindergartens in the Gaza Strip, where most of the workers receive a monthly wage of 200-300 NIS per month. These TV sessions were implemented as part of the project "Enhancing the Rights and Freedoms of Palestinian Workers" project, which is being implemented in partnership with DWRC and COSPE, and is funded by the European Union.

Statistics indicate a wide gap between men and women, whose salaries are below the minimum wage, as 38.9% of women wage workers were paid below the minimum wage in the West Bank and 48.6% in the Gaza Strip, compared to 10.97% of male wage workers in the West Bank and 77.48% in the Gaza Strip in 2017.

There are still many gaps in the application of the minimum wage law. During the TV session, Mrs. Angham Sayf, Legal Consultant of the General Department of Inspection at the Ministry of Labor, indicated that issues faced include the unavailability of records in some sectors, such as



for secretarial work, the fact that most workers fear to lose their jobs if they disclose their real work conditions and the low wages they receive, persistent violations of the law by some employers and the absence of specialized labor courts. According to Mr. Nae'm Abu Zarour, Secretary of the Kindergarten Union in Nablus, the reason given for non-abidance with the minimum wage is that some employers lack the financial resources to do so. In the Gaza Strip, the causes given are related to the issue of the political division, the continuing blockade and an understaffed Ministry of Labor, which has only 8 inspectors.

In order to improve the situation, the minimum wage law should be activated and enforced, as well as the role of the Employment Fund. In addition, unions representing kindergarten and beauty salon workers should reinforce their role. As for the government, it should provide assistance to workers, who do not obtain the minimum wage, and oblige companies competing in government tenders to abide with the minimum wage law.

END.

For more information, please contact:

Shatha Odeh
Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development
Tel: 02-2981977

This Project is Funded by



EUROPEAN UNION

#EU4HumanRights