



جمعية المرأة العاملة الفلسطينية للتنمية  
Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development



## **PWWSD organizes a community awareness session on the CEDAW convention in Nablus**

The Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development organized a community awareness session on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) at its branch in Nablus. 21 female graduates from Al-Najah and Al-Quds Open University in addition to volunteers from different organizations participated in the session. The event was held as a part of a project entitled "Psychosocial Support and Empowerment for Women Victims and Survivors of Gender-Based Violence", implemented by the Society in the Nablus Governorate and funded by the Swiss Foundation Pro-Victimis. The project aims to increase protection for victims and survivors of gender-based violence by strengthening community capacities to prevent and respond to structured violence and promote social change.

PWWSD's coordinator of the psychosocial counseling program Futna Khalifeh spoke about the project, its activities and expected results for the year 2019. Khalifeh stressed the importance of working together to promote democratic values in order to confront gender-based violence and all forms of discrimination against women and girls. The Society's field coordinator Subhia Daraghma reviewed the human rights mechanisms, structure, and international conventions since 1945 until today. She also highlighted the historical struggle that led to the creation of CEDAW convention as a major treaty for achieving gender equality in all spheres of life, and rejecting discrimination and persecution against women. Additionally, Daraghma reviewed the articles of the Convention focusing on economic, political, social, cultural and civil rights.

The presentation also looked at the articles that call for enacting national legislation to prevent discrimination, and adopt special and temporary measures to advance the equality between women and men. It emphasized the need for taking steps aimed at changing social and economic patterns that perpetuate discrimination. Additionally, Samar Hawash, the coordinator of Nablus community Center, spoke about the challenges faced in regards of the implementation of CEDAW in Palestine, especially after Palestine signed the convention in 2014 with no reservations. These challenges include the existence of the Israeli occupation as a major obstacle for Palestinian women, especially in area "C" which lack prevention and protection services for battered women and survivors of violence. Another challenge is the political split which makes women subject to multiple laws different in the West Bank than the Gaza Strip,



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and the lack of political will among Palestinian decision makers towards establishing a legal and cultural environment based on equality and social justice. Hawash also referred to the obligations the state of Palestine has to fulfill after discussing its first report submitted to the CEDAW committee in 2017.

At the end of the workshop, participants recommended that the Convention should be included in local laws addressing the existing contradictions, and lobbying policy makers for equal laws for women. Areej Abdel-Haq, one of the participants said, "I have heard a lot about the CEDAW agreement, but for the first time I learned in depth about its articles, which strengthened my knowledge about the convention and clarified a lot of things around it. This will reflect positively on my professional and community roles in conveying what I learned to the groups I deal with".

Haneen Dweikat, another participant said: "I had theoretical knowledge about the agreement, but today's session gave me the opportunity to delve into the terms of the agreement through the examples, applications and experiences of discrimination that were reviewed by the participants, in what was a participatory learning process. I think it is necessary to develop lobbying campaigns to include CEDAW in local laws and engage the local community and its institutions" .