

The National Committee for the Follow up of Women's' Issues

LEBANON

Historical Background

- The National committee (NCFUWI) was formed on October 19th, 1993, for the preparation of the Beijing convention in order to stage an effective participation on behalf of the Lebanese women.
- Half of the members of the National Commission for the Lebanese Woman Affairs were selected from among members of the NCFUWI
- The NCFUWI includes men and women experts, vocational trade unions, women organizations and civil society institutions.
- The NCFUWI was established according to decree number 71/AD issued on June 12th, 1996.
- The NCFUWI uses networking as a means to establish units in all Lebanese regions: Beirut – Mount Lebanon – North Lebanon– South Lebanon/ Nabatieh and the Beka'a Area.
- The NCFUWI completed its organizational and administrative structure in 2000.

Objectives

- To develop the participation of women at all levels of social, economic and political aspects of life, also to revise the role of women and to eliminate all types of discriminations against women.
- To upgrade awareness concerning the concept of gender and to work towards its integration within the National Policies.
- To enable women to participate in the decision- making process, and to exercise their rights and responsibilities in planning and designing National Polices.
- To consolidate the norms and values that respect human rights, including rights of women.
- To encourage intercommunications among women on the local, regional and international levels.

Accomplishments

1994 – 1995

- Declaration of the establishment of the NCFUWI by initiative from the Lebanese Council of Women.
- Participation in the preparation of the National report for the Beijing Convention, in cooperation with the National Commission for the Lebanese Women Issues.
- Preparation for the Fourth Convention for Women in Beijing.
- Participation in all the National and Arab preparatory activities for the Beijing convention.
- Representing Lebanon in the convention and the forum.

1996 – 1997

- Prepared a National strategy for the Lebanese women in collaboration with the National Commission for the Lebanese Women's Issues.
- Published the Lebanese working paper, that includes five study projects for the next five years- in association with the National Commission for the Lebanese Women's Issues, and submitting the projects to donor countries.
- Participated in the Arab Forum for Non Government Organizations (NGOs) in Amman.
- Participated in the National Campaign for the Support of the Participation of Women in Political Life.

- Educating, enlightening and training women for leadership in order to activate women's participation in the local authorities.
- Organized 144 meetings and workshops in Beirut and the Lebanese governorates to encourage women's participation in local authorities.
- Established regional units and launching communication networks in all Lebanese governorates.
- Institutionalizing the National Committee within the plans of action of UNIFEM, to support the National Women institutes.
- Prepared and implemented five training sessions on “empowerment of women for leadership roles”, in collaboration with the National Committee of UNESCO.
- Prepared a methodology to upgrade the awareness of semi-illiterate women on how to provide educational opportunities for girls, and organizing practical training session within this context in collaboration with the UNESCO Regional Office

1998 - 1999

- Organized a press conference to support women candidates running for the local authorities' elections, and to introduce their programs at the press syndicate headquarters.
- Organized an evaluation conference for the “National Campaign for the Promotion of Women Participation in Local Authorities” that was carried out by the National Committee.
- Participated in the debate and discussion of the law that was proposed by the “Justice and Administrative Committee” of the parliament.
- Implemented the project for the support of the national structures and organizations of women in establishing the (G.E.P) organizational units within the NGOs.
- Launching the National Campaign for the “Elimination of all Types of Legal Discrimination against women”, in collaboration with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), OXFAM, and the Lebanese Bar Association.
- Prepared the Lebanese Document for the "Elimination of all types of Discrimination Against Women" in collaboration with the Lebanese Bar Association and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).
- Capacity building of the regional units regarding the Lebanese document on "Elimination of all types of Discrimination Against Women".

2000 - 2001

- Organized 50 central and regional meetings in all governorates to create legal awareness in connection with the Lebanese legal document.
- Prepared the Shadow Report on the progress achieved in the implementation of the (CEDAW), supported by UNIFEM & UNICEF.
- Prepared the national report of the NGOs' (Beijing + 5) that was adopted by the National Commission for the Lebanese Woman, in cooperation with the Lebanese Women Council.
- Organized a convention to evaluate the first stage of the “National Campaign for the Elimination of all Types of Discrimination Against Women in Lebanese Laws “.
- Organized a seminar about political participation, democracy and peace with the German Minister of Justice, in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).

- Trained Trainers (TOT) on gender, in collaboration with UNIFEM.
- Held 36 central and regional meetings in Beirut & the governorates to create and spread legal awareness about the Lebanese legal document including 37 participants from various NGOs.
- Established a website, home page: <http://www.cfuwi.org>
- Supported women participation in political life.
- Prepared the cognitive material on (members of parliament's duties and tasks, summary of electoral laws).
- Training and capacity building of women in the regions.
- Organized a press conference to pave the way for women candidates to introduce themselves and their programs.
- Participated in the Arab Nations' Convention for coordination and planning post Beijing, and Cairo conventions.
- A convention for the evaluation of the National Committee accomplishments during five years (its networks and supporting associations).
- **2002 – 2003**
- A workshop to discuss institutionalization and future plans.
- Within its position as a primary partner with UNIFEM, NCFUWI implemented the following activities:
 - Participated in a regional workshop on gender strategic planning in Amman.
 - Three training sessions on the concept roles & needs of gender in relation to the development process, in South Lebanon, North Lebanon and the Beqa'a region.
 - A workshop for integrating gender within the primary axis of the National strategies.
 - A training session on the use of internet, information technology, and communication, at ESCWA.
 - Educational seminars on citizenship and public affairs in Beirut, South Lebanon, the Beqa'a valley, North Lebanon and Mount Lebanon.
- Published a book entitled "Supporting Political Participation of Women- the NCFUWI experience 1998 – 2001".
- Established a gender center for training, creating awareness and studies.
- Presented a list of demands to the three presidents in cooperation with the National Council of women including:
 - Demanded the strengthening of women participation in decision-making.
 - Equal opportunities in the election process.
 - Equality between both sexes in the citizenship law.
- Follow up of the awareness campaign on "Abolishing all Forms of Discrimination Against Women".
- Follow up the educational and awareness meetings on gender with high school and university students (10 meetings).
- Follow up the project of Women Participation in Political Life.
- Established the cultural forum: aiming at improving general knowledge and culture of women, and encouraging women to participate in systematic discussions and debate, and to adopt the concepts of human rights that are based on equality and social justice among sexes.

2004

- Implemented the campaign for activation of women's participation in local authorities in alliance with the Democratic Forum of Lebanese Women and the Lebanese Association for the Democracy of Elections:
 - Held meetings in all the Lebanese governorates to promote women's participation in election as a voter and as a nominee.
 - Organized four training workshops for the observation of the election process from a gender perspective.
 - Organized an evaluation conference in Beirut for the above- mentioned campaign.
- Continued the implementation of the project of raising awareness on gender concept in universities and high schools.
- Continued the implementation of the cultural forum: seminars and meetings in Beirut & the regions:
 - Pioneer women, women movement, pros and cons -North Lebanon.
 - Democracy & its effect on changing the positions and status of women - Beirut.
 - Pioneer women in Mount Lebanon.
 - Reproductive health of women in the Beqa'a Valley.
 - Women & politics in South Lebanon.
- Prepared the 2nd Shadow Report on the achieved progress in the implementation of CEDAW, supported by UNIFEM and UNFPA.
- Published issue #7 of the newsletter "QADAYA".
- Participated in various regional and international forums.
- Initiated the establishment of a network of institutes and organizations of the civil society for that was called" The Lebanese Network of Women" and prepared its establishing document.
- Renewed the website in collaboration with the Embassy of the kingdom of Holland.

2005

- A project for the preparation of the second document on " Eliminating all Forms of Discrimination Against Women in the Lebanese laws" including:
 - Revision current Lebanese laws and assessing their compliance with the (CEDAW), funded by AMIDEAST.
 - Amendments to existing laws or drafting new laws.
 - Formulated pressure groups to affect legislative authorities to discuss and act on the set of suggested amendments.
 - Selected, qualified and experienced lawyers in the legislative field researched and studied current laws.
 - Organized round tables with judges and lawyers of both sexes.
 - Organized round table for Women Associations and civil society organizations.
 - Organized a National conference to present the legal document.
 - Organized 12 awareness meetings in all the Lebanese regions.
- A project to "Empower Gender Participation in Political Life". Supported by the Embassy of the kingdom of Holland.
 - Prepared a summary for some suggested electoral laws.
 - Trained trainers (TOT) on skills related to activation of women's participation in political life from a gender perspective.
 - Organized twelve (12) meetings in Beirut and the Lebanese regions.

- Organized an evaluation workshop.
- The Cultural Forum that includes meetings and lectures highlighting Lebanese women pioneers, in Beirut and the regions.
- A project for gender readings and analysis of text- books of the elementary stage supported by OMSAR/ AFKAR I
- Continuation of the work in the Lebanese Women Network, to carry out and implement campaigns aiming at amendments of existing laws or preparing new laws that guarantee true equality between sexes.

2006:

- 1- NCFUWI celebrated the 10th anniversary of its establishment, by presenting its accomplishments in the fields of women's development, training, empowerment and studies. NCFUWI built various relationships with NGOs and decision makers through local, regional and international conferences.
- 2- NCFUWI conducted a training workshop to activate the Participation of Women in Political Life followed by evaluation conference supported by UNIFEM. It included:
 - Two roundtables with lawyers and judges and with representatives of civil society organizations to discuss the proposed electoral laws.
 - Training courses for trainers "TOT" about participation of women in political participation.
 - Organized 14 meetings in the various Lebanese regions about the importance of activating the participation of women in political life.
 - A roundtable for a number of male and female parliamentarians and specialized people about the political participation of women in political life, and electoral laws.
- 3- A project entitled "Building up women's capacities to face family violence especially for children and youth of both sexes" (supported by UNIFEM) through:
 - Implementation of 6 days training workshops at two stages
 - Organization of an evaluation conference.
- 4- A project entitled "Creating Awareness in Women about AIDS, its Dangers and how to Deal With it" through:
 - A training course for trainers (TOT)
 - 25 meetings in the various Lebanese governments
 - An evaluation conference
- 5- NCFUWI continued to work with the "Lebanese Women Network" and participated in educational campaigns about legal and economical issues. Participated in a lot of local, regional and international seminars, conferences and workshops covering various topics of interest, attended by selected members of the NCFUWI.
- 6- Participated in the New York meeting (Committee of Women) to discuss the CEDAW reports, both the National official one and the shadow report.

2007:

- Implemented a project supported by UNFEM entitled "Creating awareness in Women about AIDS, its dangers and ways of dealing with it". A book was published on the topic.
- Conducted a study about "Women and Politics" supported by UNIFEM. A book was published on the topic.

- Organized six training courses about gender discrimination in school textbooks for the teachers of the elementary schools of the private sectors in cooperation with the Educational Center for Research and Development and for the trainers of the ECRD and school directors.
- A project on Political Education supported by the Dutch Embassy in Lebanon. The project targeted the sector of male and female youth for a period of two months. It covered 10 topics and was implemented simultaneously in the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the Saint-Joseph University (USJ). The project was culminated by an evaluation conference and a book was published on the topic.
- The NCFUWI continued implementing the project on “Abolishing all Forms of Discrimination Against Women” through campaigns that were implemented in five Lebanese governorates. The topics of the campaigns are: “Crimes of honor”, “Right of the mother has the custody of her children till the age of 18”, “The right of women to give their citizenship to their children” and “marriage and divorce in Islam”. Selected members were trained on the steps of preparing a project and organizing and implementing a campaign. They prepared relevant educational material: questionnaires, brochures, posters and booklets. Educational meetings were organized in the governments. Five booklets, one on each topic were published.
- Prepared the 3rd “Shadow Report” in cooperation with concerned and active women organizations. The report monitors the achievements accomplished with Lebanese laws in accordance with CEDAW. It will be presented in the conference that will take place in Geneva in January 2008.

Major Publications

- The National Committee for Preparation and Participation in the Fourth International Conference of Women in Beijing 1995 – a summary of objectives – activities and plans.
- Proceedings of the seminars and working sessions that were held in connection with the preparations for the Beijing conference (1994 – 1995).
- The National Report of NGO’s in Lebanon on the accomplishments of implementation of the Beijing plan of Action 1995, in collaboration with the Lebanese Council of Women, UNIFEM, OXFAM and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).
- Shadow Report on the implementation of the CEDAW – part 1 & part II in 2004.
- A summary of the electoral laws in collaboration with the Lebanese Council of Women and Friedrich Ebert.
- The Lebanese document for eliminating all forms of discrimination against women in collaboration with the Bar Association, Frederick Ebert and OXFAM.
- Supporting women participation in political life in Lebanon. The parliamentary and local elections 1995 in collaboration with Frederick Ebert.
- Newsletter "QUDAYA" which is a specialized quarterly publication by The NCFUWI. Eight issues have been published, the first of which was published in May 2002.
- A study by Dr. Aman Chararani and Dr. Fahima Charaffedine about “Discrimination in the Books of Reading of Civil and National Education” in the elementary stage supported by the European Community under AFKAR I,

and another study on “Discrimination in the books of reading of civil and national education” of the intermediate stage supported by the European Community under AFKAR II.

- Training parcels on the various topics and project implemented in 2006 and 2007 were prepared and distributed to trainees.
- A book about “Creating awareness in women about AIDS, supported by UNIFEM.
- Published the Lebanese document about “Abolishing all Forms of Discrimination Against Women in the Lebanese Laws” in cooperation with the Christian Organization for the blind using “Breil technique”.
- A book on women and politics supported by UNIFEM.
- Five booklets on:
 - 1- Crimes of Honor (1)
 - 2- Custody Right till the Age of 18 (1)
 - 3- Women’s Right to give their citizenship to their children (2)
 - 4- Marriage and Divorce in Islam.

STRUCTURE

The constituent body

Dr. Aman Chaarani, DR. Fadia Kiwan, Dr. Lamia Rostum, Ms. Nelly El Helou; Dr. Nour Salman, Dr. Fahmiya Sharafeddine, Ms. Majida Al-Khatib.

The Administrative Body 2004 – 2006

Dr. Aman Kabbarah Chaarani	President	Ms. Huda Adra
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Ms. Hind Masri	Accountant	Dr. Carmen Boustani
Ms. Mona Ibrahim	Treasurer	Ms. Nadia Issa
Ms. Widad Chakhtoura		Ms. Naziha Sayyed
Ms. Afifa El Sayyed	Executive secretary	Ms. Natallie Za'arour

Names of Organizations and Institution Members In the National Committee

The Cultural Council for South Lebanon.
The Women Democratic Forum.
The Lebanese Association for Human Rights.
The Association for Educational Development.
Beirut Association for Social Development.

Names of Supporting Organization and Institutions

The Press Syndicate
The Bankers' Association
The Lawyers' Syndicate
The Teachers' Syndicate
The Editors' Syndicate
The General Labor & Trade Confederation
The Lebanese Industrialists Association
The Hariri Foundation
The Teachers' Bureau
The University Teachers league

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