



Media Gathering for Arab Women's Day: Morocco Lifts CEDAW Reservations



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Women's rights do not "concern women alone, but also men", said Rabih Al Shaer, advisor to Lebanese Minister of Interior and Municipalities Ziad Baroud. He called on Lebanese women to "take responsible actions either in running for, or casting their votes in, the upcoming parliamentary elections with full consciousness and liberty".

Al Shaer voiced his call on Friday 6 February 2009 at the UN House in Beirut,

where UN-ESCWA hosted a media gathering for the occasion of the Arab Women Day, and the lifting of all reservations on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) in Morocco. The gathering was organized by the Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action (CRTDA), "My nationality: a right for me and my family" and "Equality without reservation coalition" campaigns. It tackled the experience

of Morocco in lifting the reservations.

The gathering was also attended by representative of First Lady Wafa Suleiman, Leila Azouri, former Minister Wafa Dika Hamza, Moroccan Ambassador to Lebanon, Ali Oumlil and his wife, Nazha Oumlil, Syrian Charge d'Affaires to Lebanon Ali Shammatt, and a number of representatives of women organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

Success in the Field: The Iraq Experience

Yet another success story has emerged from UN-ESCWA's field interventions. Within its mandate in Iraq, the Regional Commission has implemented many Public Sector Reform projects benefiting the conflict-inflicted member country, including the "Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening of the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works" project. Within the scope of that project, a total of 13 training activities were implemented from October 2007 until April 2008, to further build the capacity of the Iraqi Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (MMPW) staff with regard to the delivery of municipal services.

Speaking of the experience, Imad Sleiman, Project Manager at the UN-ESCWA Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues Section (ECRI) said: "Trainees had a positive evaluation of the workshops. They valued the material and were very serious about the regular attendance of the trainings".



Success in the Field: The Iraq Experience (Cont.)

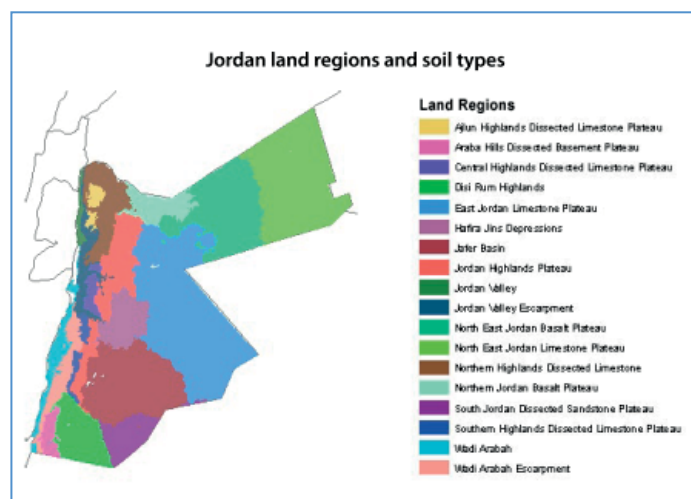


The Directorate of Human Resources at the MMPW has recently released the “Training Plan 2009” emphasizing the adoption of modern trends in management and administration and promoting a client-oriented culture. The Plan offers many training courses based on those designed and implemented by UN-ESCWA, which shows among other things the benefits of UN-ESCWA’s project on an institutional level, where the MMPW has become able to disseminate the knowledge and training acquired from this project.

“The trainings were all governance-related, tailored to the particular needs of the country”, Sleiman said, “In the future, more trainings can be tailored and implemented, depending on the needs that arise”.

In view of the success of the trainings, UN-ESCWA is studying the possibility of replicating this experience for other countries in post-conflict situations like Yemen, Palestine, and Sudan. ■

Facts and Figures: Jordan land Regions and Soil Types



Source: Land Degradation Assessment and Prevention: Selected Case Studies from the ESCWA Region, UN-ESCWA, 2007.

Media Gathering for Arab Women’s Day: Morocco Lifts CEDAW Reservations (Cont.)



Delivering the speech of CRTDA, director of the Collective Lina Abou Habib pointed to the “important step forward that Moroccan King Muhammad VI took in withdrawing all reservations to CEDAW last December, in parallel with the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”. She voiced her hope that “the Moroccan initiative constitutes a motivation for other Arab countries”.

Then Miranda Hawa, Officer in Charge of the UN-ESCWA Center for Women said, “The United Nations makes great efforts to assist member countries in implementing

CEDAW and withdrawing reservations to it”. She pointed to the assistance UN-ESCWA provides many Arab countries, in the form of technical cooperation and trainings to clarify their commitments to the convention that was adopted at the UN in 1979.

In her speech for the occasion, Mrs. Omlil expressed her happiness for the “feminine occasion par excellence, which celebrates an achievement in the good interest of women that is the lifting of all reservations to CEDAW in Morocco”. She affirmed as well that this Moroccan achievement will soon “bear a general Arab aspect”. ■

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