

FROM IRAQ

**PUBLICATIONS OF THE GENERAL
FEDERATION OF IRAQI WOMEN**

The General Federation of Iraqi Women (GFIW) has been producing a number of publications (in Arabic), including a series of studies on child care and child education in the Gulf States(1); also an English magazine, *The Woman*, edited by Mrs. Manal Yunis Abdel-Razzak, president of the Federation.

The Iraqi Department of Children's Culture has been publishing two weekly Arabic magazines for children: "Al-Mizmar" (The Flute) and "Majallati" (My Magazine), containing illustrated stories, poems, comics, nature study, historical narratives from Arab and non-Arab lands.

The General Federation of Iraqi Women Secretariat of Legal Affairs has recently published a study of the laws concerning minors, promulgated in 1969, with the aim of showing its defects, the progressive amendments that it has received since that year, and a projection of further reforms proposed for the future.

Another publication regarding the legal status of foundlings has also been produced by the Secretariat of Legal Affairs of the above Federation. In the reformed laws of 1977 regarding the status of foundlings, the State recognizes its responsibility for them in providing nurseries and homes to accommodate them, and schools where they would have the same opportunity for education as other Iraqi children.

The study states that the foundling has the right to obtain an identity, like other children with legitimate birth. If it happens that someone claims him as his child, he becomes entitled to all the rights and duties that such a condition implies. The same status applies to him or her if he or she is adopted by a family, in which case the adoptive family may keep the child for good unless the authentic father reclaims him or her. As a result the adoption contract may be abolished.

**Source : Publications of the GFIW,
Secretariat of Legal Affairs.
Iraqi Department of Children's Culture.**

(1) Al-Raida. Vol. III, no. 12, May 1980, p.6

FROM BAHRAIN

WOMEN'S CONDITION IN BAHRAIN

A national permanent commission for women's condition has been recently founded in Bahrain. The news was officially announced on Sept. 21, 1980. The commission is made up of representatives of the various women's organizations and of those of women employed in the Bahraini ministries. Presided over by Faiza al-Zayani,

FROM LEBANON

**A CHARTER FOR
WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

"The League for the Lebanese Woman's Rights" held a press conference at the AUB Alumni Club on the 8th of October, 1980, during which the chairman read and distributed a list of demands entitled, "The Charter of Woman's Rights", based on the United Nations "Charter of Man's Rights".

The so-called "Charter of Woman's Rights" claimed the complete elimination of sexual discrimination in Lebanon on the ground that this step would serve the cause of true democracy and would represent the will of the majority of the Lebanese population.

The following are the main contents of this charter :

1. Elimination of illiteracy which prevails particularly among women.
2. Ratification and implementation of the law requiring equal pay for equal work among both men and women.
3. Forbidding dismissal of working women on account of marriage, pregnancy or maternity.
4. A paid maternity leave should be extended to three months while the right to reinstatement is maintained.
5. Giving women equal rights with men to social security, promotion and occupation of leading positions for which they may be qualified.
6. Abolition of all forms of sexual discrimination existing in the penal code, specifically article 562 which gives alleviating circumstances to crimes committed by men on the pretense of defending their "honor".
7. Fixing the minimum age for marriage at 18 for both sexes.
8. Giving women equal right with men to make or dissolve marriage contracts, equal rights and duties regarding the responsibility for children, with the understanding that the interest of the latter should receive priority in case of dissolution between spouses.
9. The same rights to inheritance and property should be given to both sexes.
10. Effective measures should be used to fight and eliminate prostitution.

director of social affairs in the ministry of labor, the commission will take charge of defending women's rights in that country, in socio-professional and cultural fields. It will also be in charge of following up the evolution of women's political status on the international level, by keeping in touch with the principal world organizations dealing with woman's condition.

The Bahrain archipelago, about 300,000 inhabitants, was in 1928 the first state in the Arab Gulf to school its feminine population.

(Le Reveil, Sept. 22, 1980)

FROM SYRIA

AN OFFICE FOR INFORMATION SERVICE

In its last meeting, held in Bahrain, summer 1980, the "Board of the Arab Center of Information Studies", which is established in Damascus, decided to create within the center an "Office of Information Service on Arab Women".

The idea was launched during the International Mexico Conference for Women, 1975, when UNESCO, joined by the International Fund for Demographic Activities, called for the creation of information service centers about women in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Arab countries. While the proposal was carried out in the first three regions between 1976 and 1979, it had to wait till about the end of 1980 for its implementation in the Arab countries, through the cooperation of the said Arab Center of Information Studies and UNESCO.

Objectives of the Office.

1. The primary aim of this office will be the coordination of information regarding Arab women with the purpose of promoting their integration in national development.
2. The office will have its seat in the Arab Center of Information Studies, Damascus.
3. It will work on the compilation of all material published about the Arab woman, including written works, films and pictures which reflect her position and her activities in the political, social and demographic fields.
4. It will take charge of classifying the compiled material and distributing it among Arab countries.
5. It will publish a monthly report on the activities of its information service.
6. It will cooperate with the Information Services of

FROM EGYPT

PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL PEACE

The peace promoting policy adopted by the Egyptian Government, since 1978, has been a factor in the forward march of this country on the way to progress and well-being. Education is considered as one of the basic pillars used to achieve national progress and promote world understanding. Education in Egypt is free at all levels. Women educators constitute about 40% of the total teaching staff. The structure and aims of the current themes of the United Nations are being taught in the schools as early as the 6th grade. Plans are being made for integrating ideas of international understanding and friendship in educational curricula.

Promoting Women's Integration in Development.

In May 1979, President Sadat issued a decree according to which a minimum of 30 women

UNESCO, the International Fund for Demographic Activities in N.Y. and any other institutions capable of providing valuable information on women

Conference for Arab Women Journalists.

This conference was held in Algeria, July 1980, with the aim of informing Arab women journalists about the objectives of the Office and how they could contribute to its successful functioning.

In preparation for the Algeria Conference, a preliminary meeting took place in Damascus, grouping 35 Syrian women journalists out of 98 employed in the Syrian Information Service. During this meeting, a survey was made of the general activities of the Arab Center of Information Studies, particularly in the field of woman's integration in national development. An advisory committee was elected, consisting of 8 women representing the various information media in Syria.

The conference in Algeria, which lasted a week, (in July 1980), was attended by 40 women journalists representing 11 Arab countries: Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Eritrea, Tunisia, Lybia, Morocco, Egypt, Syria, Sudan, Algeria and the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

The project of the "Office of Information Service" and its objectives were presented to the conference members. Fourteen of them read papers reporting on women's conditions in their countries, after which the participants discussed the objectives of the Office of Information and came out with a long list of resolutions.

(Condensed from: Ad-Dirasat ul-Ilamiya" (Information Studies), an Arabic quarterly published by the "Arab Center for Information Studies", Damascus, no. 22, Oct. 1980, pp.5-15).

representatives of various governorates would be members of Parliament.⁽¹⁾ Dr. Sohair el-Kalalmawi chairs the cultural committee within this assembly, while several other women representatives are vice-presidents and members of different committees. For the third time, the minister for Social Affairs and Insurance is a woman. For the first time in Egypt a woman was appointed this summer Ambassador to Copenhagen, Denmark.

Besides the big change which occurred this year concerning family-laws for the benefit of woman⁽²⁾, a project is being discussed requesting women's voting to be compulsory. Now 10% of all seats in the local councils and governorates are given to women. A supreme Council for Islamic Affairs has been established, to which three women have been appointed. A Supreme Council for Culture has been created with the appointment of one woman member.

Women are now taking decision-making posts. The post of under-Secretary in the field of Mass Media is occupied by a woman. The vice-minister of Television and Broadcasting is a woman; the vice-minister of Social Insurance and the under-secretary of Higher Education are likewise women. Many other women occupy similar positions.

(Condensed from International Women's News. Vol. 75, No. 3, Sept. 1980, p. 49)

(1) Al-Raida. Vol. III, no. 14, Nov. 1980, p.9

(2) Al-Raida. Ibid.